

## Snowbates Back In Season For Minnesota

The state's production incentives program returns--this time TV commercials are included thanks to industry lobbying. In-state and out-of-state producers are eligible for reimbursements if they meet certain requirements.

See page 4

## India's Prime Focus Expands Into U.K.

Mumbai-headquartered post firm has controlling interest in London's The VTR Group, orchestrates buyout of visual effects boutique Clear, and sets its acquisition sights on the stateside market. Move into the U.S. could be in the offing

See page 6

## Doug Scott Visits SHOOT's Chatroom

Ogilvy & Mather's executive director of branded content & entertainment shares views on the ever evolving marketplace and provides a broad-stroke rundown of projects the agency has in development for several of its clients.

See page 10

## Visual Efx Series: CG Thespians

Industry moves closer to Holy Grail of photoreal digital humans.

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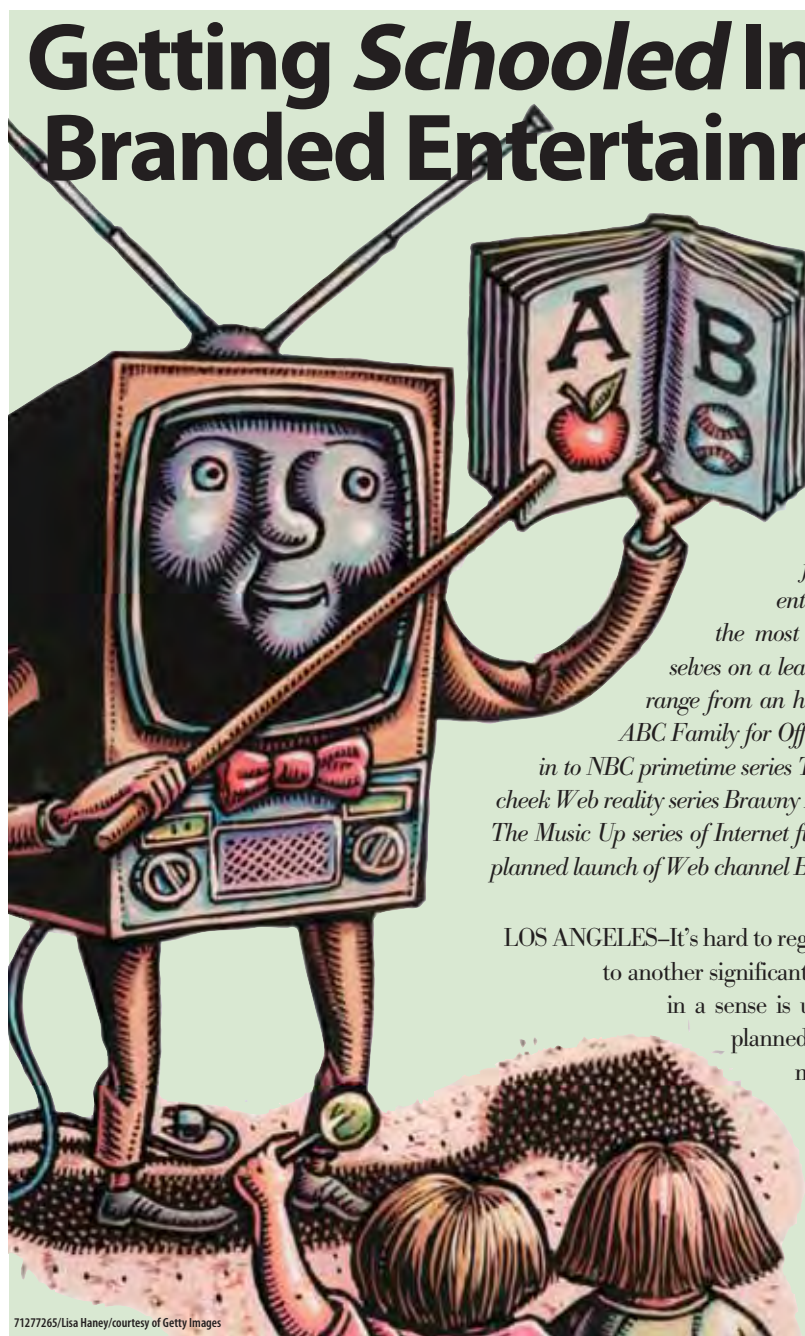


71086526/John Fox/courtesy of Getty Images

# Getting Schooled In Today's Branded Entertainment Biz

By Robert Goldrich

*This week SHOOT explores agency perspectives on branded entertainment, gaining insights from some of the leading artisans entrusted with helping to shepherd ad shop endeavors in this brave new world. We find that deals can make strange bed-fellows, that being "raided" for talent has a silver lining, and that even the most savvy creative people find themselves on a learning curve spanning projects that range from an hour-long TV special, *Schooled*, on ABC Family for OfficeMax, to the 24 Hour Fitness tie-in to NBC primetime series *The Biggest Loser*, to the tongue-in-cheek Web reality series *Braun Academy*, a Katrina-inspired *Start The Music Up* series of Internet films for Southern Comfort and the planned launch of Web channel Bud TV in 2007.*



71277265/Lisa Haney/courtesy of Getty Images

LOS ANGELES—It's hard to regard the Super Bowl as a precursor to another significant marketing event, but that's what in a sense is unfolding with Anheuser-Busch's planned launch of an online entertainment network, Bud.TV. The new venture is expected to go live on February 5, the day after the Big Game, and it will include sports, stand-up comedy and programs ranging in length

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# Controversy Over Spot Emmy Win

By Robert Goldrich

NORTH HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—The precedent-setting tie between FedEx's "Stick" and Hallmark's "Required Reading"—resulting in both winning a primetime commercial Emmy Award last month—would not have happened if the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (ATAS) awards committee had decided to strictly adhere to eligibility rules.



"Required Reading" was a two-minute-and-45-second spot—that's 45 seconds longer than what is specified in the Emmy competition entry requirements which state that an eligible commercial has to run anywhere from 30 to 120 seconds.

SHOOT sought an explanation from John Leverage, ATAS' senior VP, awards, who responded that the 30-120 seconds requirement is descriptive of the general running time of TV commercials. "The Hallmark commercial," he related, "ran longer than 120 seconds, which is typical to what they run on their exclusively sponsored programming (*Hallmark Hall of Fame*). It was only a few days before the Creative Arts Awards, during the timing of the show, that we

Continued on page 13

# IBC Explores Digital Pipelines; Da Vinci's Colorful Ascent

By Carolyn Giardina

AMSTERDAM—On the fourth day of the 2006 International Broadcasting Convention (IBC), which attracted 45,000 delegates Sept. 7-12 to the RAI Convention Center in Amsterdam, a Master Class on the "All Digital Movie" presented the notion that components have evolved to a place

where it is now possible to assemble a fully digital production pipeline.

That actually underscored the message in many technology categories, including cinematography, color grading and data management, as well as some of the big show themes that ranged from HDTV and Digital Cinema to IPTV and mobile content delivery.

While much was clearly moving forward, more still needs to be done. During the Master Class, speaker David Stump, ASC, challenged the manufacturing community to develop an open interoperable system of handling metadata. He also encouraged the production

community to articulate its technological needs to the manufacturing community to enable the industry to proceed forward with efficient workflows.

"We need the ability to move metadata through the stream so that it is accurate and

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more inside  
A Rundown Of New Postproduction/Edit Technologies  
Showcased At 2006 IBC Confab



## SHOOT Publisher's Take One

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By Roberta Grier



## New Look, Same Commitment

This week *SHOOT* debuts its new look thanks to Phyllis Busell, a wonderfully talented art director and publication designer. Phyllis immediately was able to translate our vision and introduce a new look to an industry fixture with a 46-year history among creatives, producers, and executives on the frontlines of the most cutting edge visual trends. Not an easy task.

The goal was an updated look to complement the editorial expansion begun early last year and to showcase new editorial content. The final strong yet simple reader-friendly design turns out to also provide a great backdrop for advertisers, without visually competing against/or looking like advertising—something that happens when a publication tries to “look cool” but ends up with a design hodge

podge that gives readers a headache. Within our three main sections—news, ScreenWork and features—we will be rolling out several new editorial columns and attractions over the next few issues. The first is a new interview feature called Chat Room (page 10) where we will introduce you to a

**The goal was an updated look to complement the editorial expansion begun early last year and to showcase the new content.**

variety of interesting executives, creatives and artisans. Also in this issue (page 17) is “Workspace,” highlighting additional creative projects within “ScreenWork”.

Watch for more debuts including “Talent & Casting,” “Making a Scene” and “Photo Op” in the coming issues. We can’t wait to show off our October 20<sup>th</sup> Directors Issue where many of the new design and editorial elements will come together.

With a new West Coast office on

the Raleigh Studios lot in Hollywood, a reinvigorated staff including two new associate editors in our East Coast office, and a new West Coast sales executive, we are bringing new energy to everything we do. We are in the midst of conducting *SHOOT*’s First Annual New Cinematographers

search and will soon announce a New Cinematographers Showcase Event that will take place in Los Angeles later this year in conjunction with a special *SHOOT* Forum event. Also watch for upcoming announcements on how to sign up for two new weekly HTML e.editions we’ll be launching this fall: iSpot, the digital newspaper for broadband video advertising; and Brand New(s), cool tools for creative people. If you’re not already a shootonline.com registered user (it’s free),

be sure to sign up to stay up to date on all the latest news, information and great work. And, make sure to place your free company listing information in the shootonline.com online directory. Make it easy for your brand and advertising agency clients to find you!

I’d like to thank those of you who have been so generous with positive feedback during the last 21 months since we went independent and began the journey of *SHOOT*’s evolution and development of a digital plan for a new Web site and HTML e.editions. We share your optimism for the industry’s future and remain committed to bringing you the news, information and insights you need to help ensure success in an ever changing marketplace.

## Industry POV

By Hughes Winborne



## Letter From An Editor

*At the recently held Trailer Park Festival in Chicago (SHOOT, 9/8), a competition designed to showcase the cutting prowess of up-and-coming assistant editors, participants heard excerpts from a letter containing words of encouragement from Oscar-winning editor Hughes Winborne (Crash). Trailer Park honorees received a copy of the letter, which reads, in part, as follows:*

I, for one, am eternally thankful to the assistants who have worked with me. I have relied on them not only for technical assistance, but also, and more importantly, for their creative input. There is nothing more fun in the editing room than sitting around with my assistants analyzing a scene, a shot or a performance—trying to solve a problem, trying to make the movie we are cutting better. I cannot count the number of times I’ve been saved or inspired by one of their ideas.

In this letter I will give you guys an overview of my career, the ups and downs...I hope it may be in some small way instructive....I got my first assisting job on a film called *Girl from*

*India*. It was a horrible movie and I was never fully paid. First lesson: get paid. 90 hours a week, horrible and hilarious footage. But I didn’t care. I was working on a real movie. .... Well, it was shot on 35mm anyway.

My next film was a horror film, *The Mutilator*. What is really interesting about this job is how I got it and where it led. I heard about *The Mutilator* from my father of all places. He told me there was a local attorney, Buddy Cooper, who was going to make a horror film in Atlantic Beach, NC. I called Buddy and asked if I found an editor for him, could I be the assistant? “Sure,” he said. So I found him an editor and had my second feature. Two months into the job, I arrived for work one morning and Buddy was sitting having a conversation with the editor. When he saw me, he asked if I would mind going to have a cup of coffee and come back in 30 minutes. When I returned, Buddy was sitting by himself. He had fired the editor and asked if I would finish the film. I was stunned....I had my first feature editing job.

The first three weeks were terrifying. I was OK when I was working,

but at night I would go home, drink a couple of beers and get into the tub and shake. I went on to not only cut the picture, but the sound as well. How long would it have taken me to cut my first feature without this lucky break? I have no idea. But I can say this—after I got a taste of being the editor, I wanted to stay an editor. Besides...I was a lousy assistant.

After *The Mutilator*, I got work cutting industrials at AT&T. Now this wasn’t working in features, but someone was actually paying me good money to be an editor....After a couple of years at AT&T, I found my way to early reality TV and then to CBS’s *48 Hours*...when it was still very much a verite show. Skippy scripts, tons of  
*Continued on page 22*

## Flash Back

**September 21, 2001** The industry mourns commercial producer William “Bill” Weems who was among the victims of hijacked United Airlines flight 175, which terrorists crashed into the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11. He was 46....The ad community copes with tragedy, perspective and logistics in the aftermath of 9/11....ABC plans to broadcast its primetime dramas and comedies in HD during the ‘01-‘02 season....

**September 20, 1996** Terry Rainey has been named chief staff executive of the International Teleproduction Society (ITS). Additionally, the organization is moving its headquarters from New York to Washington, D.C....Feature filmmaker Barry Sonnenfeld has joined Atlas Pictures, Santa Monica, for spot representation....The directing team of Dayton/Faris and still photographer/director Dewey Nicks have signed with bicoastal Reactor Films....Producer Sue Dawson has joined the Santa Monica office of Mad River Post....

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PRODUCTION

# Nico Beyer Launches Satellite At Crossroads

**By Robert Goldrich**  
NEW YORK—Director Nico Beyer and executive producer Kathrin Lausch have teamed to launch an as yet unnamed U.S. shop. The new venture is a satellite of Crossroads Films, bicoastal and London. The Paris-based Beyer had formerly been represented stateside via Chased By Cowboys, Venice, Calif. He is no longer part of the Chased by Cowboys U.S. operation, but continues to main-

touch and then recently reunited in search of a roost not only for commercials but also movies and branded entertainment. They gravitated to Crossroads, based in large part on their high regard for that company's partner/executive producer Cami Taylor, whom Lausch has known for the past couple of years. Lausch, who's based in Manhattan, most recently served as an exec producer at Creative Film Management Interna-

gained him recognition in the music video business.

The director then joined Midi Minuit Partizan, Paris, helming videos and commercials. His credits included an international campaign for Swatch, a German Art Directors Club-honored package for German news channel

NNTV, a short film for fashion designer Thierry Mugler, and videos for such artists as Suzanne Vega, They Might Be Giants, Deelite and the Cocteau Twins.

Beyer then caught the attention of Propaganda Films, directing a mix of videos and spots. His subsequent

stateside affiliations included Passport, Compass and NSF USA. Beyer's American ad endeavors have been for Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, Infiniti, K-Swiss, Pennzoil, Coca-Cola and Ford, among others. Internationally he has helmed a Gold and Silver Cannes  
*Continued on page 22*



## Director Nico Beyer Reunites With Exec Producer Kathrin Lausch To Form Stateside Shop

tain that company shingle in Paris and Dusseldorf for representation in Europe.

Beyer and Lausch have a track record together of some 10 years, first teaming at Passport Films and then Compass Films until the latter was sold to Neue Sentimental Film (NSF) in 2001. They continued to keep in

tional, New York.

Beyer made his first mark working for acclaimed video artist Horst H. Baumann after graduating from Dusseldorf Graphic and Design School. The relationship with Baumann translated into Beyer getting the chance to direct his first work for MTV Europe, a series of bumpers that

# Minnesota Enacts Spot Incentives

**By Robert Goldrich**  
ST. PAUL, Minn.—The state legislature has passed and Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R-MN) has signed an appropriations bill for fiscal year 2006-'07 that reinstates Minnesota's Snowbake production incentives program, which had fallen by the wayside in 2002 due in large part to budget cutbacks triggered by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

However, now the Snowbake incentives pot has been sweetened considerably with the inclusion of commercials, music videos and documentaries as qualifying projects to accompany theatrical features and TV series. And the reimbursement has increased to

15 percent of money spent in Minnesota. Originally the reimbursement was five percent and applied only to features from '97 to '00. TV series were added to the mix in 01-'02, with the reimbursement upped to 10 percent.

The new Snowbake program has already taken effect with state film commissioner Lucinda Winter, who's executive director of the Minnesota Film & Television Board, reporting that she's received reimbursement applications for filming of several projects. A fund of \$1.7 million has been apportioned for the reimbursements through June 30, '07. The rebates will

run through that end of fiscal year date or until the fund runs out.

To be eligible, a TV spot must have national distribution (a broadcast buy that covers more than 50 percent of U.S. households, as proven by the submission of a media plan) or a total production budget of at least \$200,000—and in either case, 60 percent of the total project's budget (production and post) must be spent in Minnesota.

Commercial producers from out of state can qualify for the 15 percent reimbursement as long as they file a certificate of good standing affidavit. The program regulations were writ-  
*Continued on page 22*

# Director Allen Coulter Debuts In Movie Land With *Hollywoodland*

*Hungry Man Helmer Reflects On His Feature Experience With All-Star Cast*

**By Nicole Rivard**  
HOLLYWOOD—While it may seem too early for Oscar buzz, there is already some swirling around *Hollywoodland*, the feature film debut for director Allen Coulter, whose commercial making home is bicoastal/international *Hungry Man*.

Ben Affleck already snatched up best actor honors recently at the Venice Film Festival, where the film premiered.

"I couldn't be happier," said Coulter of Affleck's win. Working with actors like Affleck, Academy Award winner Adrien Brody, Academy Award nominee Diane Lane and Academy Award nominee Bob Hoskins was one of the most satisfying aspects of Coulter's experience on *Hollywoodland*.

Written by Paul Bernbaum, *Hollywoodland* fictionalizes one of Hollywood's most infamous real-life mysteries, the death in 1959 of actor George Reeves, played by Affleck, who portrayed Superman on TV's *Adventures of Superman*. The death was ruled a

suicide.

Reeves left behind a fiancé— aspiring starlet Leonore Lemmon, played by Robin Tunney, and millions of fans who were shocked by his death. In the film his grieving mother will not let the questionable circumstances surrounding his demise go un-addressed. She hires private detective Louis Simo, played by Brody. Simo soon discovers that the torrid affair Reeves had with Toni Mannix, played by Lane, the wife of MGM studio executive Eddie Mannix, played by Hoskins, might hold the key to the truth. The detective also uncovers unexpected connections to his own life as the case turns more personal and he learns more about Reeves himself. Reeves, who was considered a huge star to younger fans, resented how playing Superman on TV kept him from having what he thought was a legitimate movie career.

"It was a wonderful story about an era in Hollywood when the studios were losing their power and television was on the ascen-



Allen Coulter

dancy. It was also a time of social and cultural change in the United States that I find fascinating. It was, if you will, the end of one era and the beginning of a new age which is the age we live in now. And in addition, it's a wonderful and cautionary tale of the price exacted by the pursuit of fame," Coulter said of why this was his choice for a feature debut.

*Hollywoodland* is not the first time a buzz has surrounded Coulter's work. As the first director to be signed to a full-time contract by HBO, he directed  
*Continued on Page 12*

# The Newest Original: Director Frank Vroegop

**By Robert Goldrich**  
LOS ANGELES—Director Frank Vroegop, well established in the European ad market via Paris production house Le Pac, has come aboard bicoastal Original Film for exclusive spot representation in the U.S. He is best known for his prowess in storytelling, often with big production value, as evidenced by such spots as Nissan's "Crazy Dwarf" for TBWA, Paris, and Opel Zafira's "Vertigo" for McCann Erickson, Frankfurt.

In "Vertigo," a large Macy's Parade-like oversized balloon character turns mischievous and breaks away from the procession on an adventure through the city. Turns out it is attached to a Nissan X-trail SUV, which clamors to go off the beaten path.

In "Vertigo," an Opel takes a freefall from a plane accompanied on this skydiving expedition by a fleet of daredevil parachutists. It was this ambitious commercial that caught the eye of Original partner/executive producer Bruce Mellon who sought

out the director and found him via Tim Smythe, CEO of Filmworks in Dubai, through which Vroegop has done some work over the years.

This in turn led to Original executive producer/partner Jeff Devlin ar-



Frank Vroegop

ranging a meeting with Vroegop at this year's Cannes International Advertising Festival. The two developed a rapport and Vroegop decided to take his first major plunge stateside.

While Vroegop has helmed large scale productions like "Vertigo" and "Crazy Dwarf," on the other end of the spectrum he has scored with more modest executions, most notably Mannix condoms' "Fingerprint," in which the product's sheerness is showcased via a simple fingerprint demonstration. Out of agency BDDP & Films, Paris, "Fingerprint" won a Gold Lion at Cannes six years ago.

"Frank has a track record of work with high-end production value," said Devlin, citing the Nissan and Opel commercials. "They are big concepts  
*Continued on page 13*

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## India's Prime Focus Expands in U.K.; Sets Sights On Stateside Market

By Carolyn Giardina

MUMBAI, India—Prime Focus—a publicly traded, Mumbai headquartered postproduction group that employees roughly 400 and offers post services to feature, TV and commercial clients—is continuing an initiative to build bases in key production centers around the world. London is already happening—and the company next has its sights set on the U.S., particularly Los Angeles, which it intends to enter through acquisition and potentially within the next six months. Dubai has also been identified as a target.

In London, the plan began earlier this year when Prime Focus bought a 55 percent controlling interest in The VTR Group—encompassing London-based postproduction house VTR, editorial and post house Blue, visual effects arm Hive and standards conversion and duplication business The Machine Room. More recently, Prime Focus orchestrated a management buyout of privately owned London-based visual effects boutique Clear.

Now, the VTR Group encompasses all of these businesses, employs approximately 200 and has been rebranded Prime Focus UK. A restructuring has started with an aim of building a massive postproduction conglomerate in the London market with strong ties to India and the world.

Clear has absorbed Hive and is moving its commercial and long-form visual effects operation into the Soho building occupied by VTR, which will offer telecine and DI services to long-form and commercial projects. Blue will focus on long-form broadcast post, including editorial and sound services; and The Machine Room will continue to offer its current services. Clients can either do work in London, or have it completed at lower rates at Prime Focus in India. A network will be installed as the backbone of this effort.

“There are such pressures on the London market. There is still a place for the high end, but we can provide alternatives for clients,” Clear man-

aging director Simon Hutala told *SHOOT*. “This is our lifeline for the long term survival of the post business in the U.K.”

Adding that technology, talent and rent are expensive while budgets are falling, he concluded, “something’s got to give.”

As for the team, Simon Briggs, the managing director of the former Hive, is now managing director of Blue; Neil Lane, previously operations director of the VTR Group, is managing director of Prime Focus UK and will also head VTR. Hutala reported that all creative talent remains with the company; there were some layoffs in management and operations due to redundancies.

As for technology, Prime Focus has purchased two Grass Valley Spirit 4K scanners—one for VTR in London, and the other for Prime Focus in Mumbai. Additional technological decisions were being made at press time. The VTR reconstruction is expected to be finished by year’s end.

### POSTPRODUCTION

## Editor Jinx Godfrey Joins FilmCore

By Robert Goldrich

NEW YORK—FilmCore New York continues to grow its roster, securing editors Jinx Godfrey, formerly of bicoastal Cosmo Street, and Tiffany Burchard who shifts over from FilmCore’s Santa Monica operation. Additionally, FilmCore New York has brought on board a pair of producers: Lisa Greenleaf, a longstanding collaborator of Godfrey, and Julie Johnston (formerly Julie Rechsteiner) who had been a staffer at The Whitehouse, which has shops in London, New York, Chicago and Santa Monica.

Godfrey’s experience spans commercials, documentaries and independent features. Her recent spot endeavors at Cosmo Street include work for Sprint, Milky Way and Boost Mobile. In her first project under the FilmCore banner, Godfrey is cutting her third BP campaign for Ogilvy & Mather, New York. Over the years Godfrey has worked with directors Spike Lee of 40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks, Brooklyn, on Nike, Errol Morris, who’s now with bicoastal/international Moxie Pictures, on American Express and Dante Ariola of bi-

coastal/international MJZ on Levis. She also recently edited an hourlong branded entertainment TV special, *Schooled*, for OfficeMax via DDB Chicago, and directed by Henry-Alex Rubin of bicoastal Smuggler.



Jinx Godfrey

No stranger to longer form fare, Godfrey edited *Wisconsin Death Trap*, James Marsh’s documentary about strange happenings in a rural Wisconsin town at the end of the 19th century. She also cut *The King*, a film that marked Marsh’s debut as a narrative filmmaker. Last year, Godfrey edited *Gnome*, a short film directed

by Jenny Bicks, and co-produced by Moxie Pictures and *Glamour* magazine. The short recently was screened at the Berlin Film Festival.

Godfrey began her career at The Film Editors, London. In ‘92, she was part of a group that formed The Whitehouse, where she enjoyed a nine-year tenure. In ‘01, she relocated stateside, initially working out of The Post Factory, New York, before joining Cosmo Street a year later. Among the factors attracting her to FilmCore New York was the chance to work with editor Jon Stefansson and executive producer Andrew Linsk.

Meanwhile Burchard has been editing at FilmCore since ‘03. Among her credits are spots for Comcast, Geico and T-Mobile. At press time she was wrapping promos for *Jackass: Number Two*, a feature from MTV and Paramount Pictures. Burchard explained that she has wanted to work in New York for some time so she made the move while retaining the continuity of remaining part of the FilmCore family and still being able to service her West Coast clientele.

### Short Takes

#### CORWIN CUTS DYLAN

Editor Hank Corwin of bicoastal Lost Planet has cut the music video for Bob Dylan’s “When The Deal Goes Down,” directed by Bennett Miller, an Academy Award nominee for *Capote* and a spot helmer at bicoastal/international

Hungry Man. The clip stars Scarlett Johansson who plays a nameless young woman in an earlier simpler era. The video captures her engaged in a series of activities, including a ferry ride around Ellis Island, drives through



the countryside and even during an interrupted nap; the clip has a nostalgic romantic feel. Corwin has lent his cutting prowess to videos, assorted commercials and features (*The Horse Whisperer*, *Nixon*, *Natural Born Killers*, *Snow Falling On Cedars*). Lost Planet recently aligned itself with London editorial house Work, enabling clients to collaborate in the U.S. or the U.K. with editors from either shop. Lost Planet’s ensemble of talent has a foothold in London for European assignments while Work’s coterie of talent gains access to Lost Planet’s stateside bases of operation....

#### IDLEWILD

Editor David Checel of Cut+Run, which maintains shops in Santa Monica, New York and London, has cut the music and dance sequences for *Idlewild*, a film that marks the feature directorial debut of Bryan Barber, a noted helmer of spots and videos. (The rest of the film was cut by veteran film editor Anne Gousard.) The film stars OutKast members Andre Benjamin and Antwan A. Patton. Checel additionally edited the film’s title sequence and the accompanying Barber-directed Outkast music video titled “Morris Brown”....



#### PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Flame artist/visual effects supervisor Verdi Sevenhuysen has joined The Syndicate, Santa Monica. He comes over from Riot Santa Monica where his credits included spots for such clients as Lincoln Navigator, Infiniti and Ford Mustang—the latter being the classic spot that integrated

footage of Steve McQueen. A noted European artisan, Sevenhuysen broke into the U.S. at *Encore*, Santa Monica (which later evolved into Riot). He made his major mark on the other side of the Atlantic as a visual effects/compositing artist at *Rushes*, London. Sevenhuysen started *Rushes’* 3-D department. Now at The Syndicate, he is reunited with Flame artist/effects supervisor Les Umberger..... Barbara Genicoff has come aboard visual effects/CG animation house Zoic Studios, Los Angeles, as visual effects producer for commercials. She most recently had been freelance producing for editorial companies on both coasts. Earlier she was exec producer at edit shop King Cut, Venice, Calif., from 1999-’03.....Chicago-based Machete Edit and Design, has added creative editor Michelle Orzechowski. She arrived from Chicago-based S2...Dave Finamore has joined Broadway Video, New York, as senior Avid editor.....New York-based motion graphics and editorial boutique The Wilderness has named Lisa Young as its executive producer. She had most recently served as a freelance producer. Prior to that, she had been co-head of broadcast production at Arnold Worldwide, New York....Bob Fernley has been named director of Digital Intermediate (DI) operations at LaserPacific, Hollywood. Fernley comes from Hollywood-based Efilm, where he had been a DI producer since ‘03, and will be responsible for guiding the postproduction facility’s operations in the DI arena...

## Agency Perspectives On Branded Entertainment

*Continued from page 1*

from several minutes to a half hour. Most of the shows on various Bud.TV channels will have an interactive component.

The Super Bowl itself was a catalyst for the notion of a Bud.TV network being viable. David Rolfe, director of branded production at DDB Chicago, a lead A-B agency, noted that the St. Louis client was amazed to see how many Web site hits its Super Bowl commercials generated from the public at large each year. And the number of those hits has grown steadily from one Big Game to the next. In a mega TV event in which the spots are often more entertaining than the game itself, Anheuser-Busch has indeed been an advertising mainstay with work that has rated high in entertainment value, as reflected in the annual *USA Today* households poll, which gauges the popularity of each Super Bowl commercial.

"The Super Bowl reflects the public's recognition of Bud as an entertainment provider, particularly in such areas as comedy and sports," related Rolfe. "This [an entertainment network] is a natural extension. Just think of the relationships this client has had--and continues to have--with entertainment and sports properties."

DDB will be a key program provider, helping to create, develop and produce content for Bud.TV, along with other agencies and production houses. The latter will include commercialmaking and major Hollywood studio talent.

"It's a fascinating opportunity. We'll be helping them in every phase as their primary administrative facility so to speak," said Rolfe, who embraces this opportunity, which comes on the heels of DDB creating an hour TV special, *Schooled*, that debuted last month on the ABC Family network for client OfficeMax. The well-received project demonstrated DDB's program creation chops to the Hollywood community and underscored for Rolfe the importance of client trust as well as communication not only within the agency but also with outside resources.

On the client trust and agency communication fronts, DDB account person Norm Bilow was key. OfficeMax has a close working relationship with Bilow, making him aware that a monetary commitment to Disney was on the books, leading to discussions

at the agency as to how to best utilize that investment. Bilow informed creative director Vinny Warren of the opportunity, piquing his curiosity.

"Clients maintain relationships and from that, by exploring the Dis-

ney relationship, our creatives were able to fashion a unique property--a charming, humanistic, emotional show," said Rolfe. "And the client had enough trust in us to create the show for them--not to go to Hollywood with

Vinny just serving as an observer or consultant on the shoot. Communication with a dedicated account person, the trust from our client--and its belief that we were best qualified to be true to the brand in the context of enter-

tainment--opened up a great creative opportunity and ultimately resulted in the making of a successful TV show.

"I used to think that a massive call to creatives to think differently in terms of branded content would do the trick," continued Rolfe. "You still

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## Agencies Reflect On Branded Fare

Continued from page 7

have to tap into your creative talent, allow them to be creative. But that's not enough. There has to be client trust, partnership with the client and others within the agency as well as people outside the agency....At DDB we've been having 'new media Mondays' pretty much on a monthly basis, exposing our people to different perspectives and resources from outside—a mobile phone vendor, a video game vendor, a buzz vendor. It's incumbent upon us to build relationships with the right people."

*Schooled* centers on a prank being played on middle school graduates who learn over the summer that they need to pass a test in order to get into high school. After having to figuratively jump through hoops, answering bizarre questions in individual sessions, the students gather in the gym to take the written exam. The sound of drums breaks the silence and the test-taking tension. Slowly a movable gymnasium wall opens to reveal teen heartthrob Jesse McCartney on stage. He then gives a live concert to the thrilled graduating class. During the proceedings, OfficeMax presents the school principal with \$80,000 in gift certificates so that the financially strapped school can make ends meet and reinstitute important arts and extracurricular programs.

The show premiered Aug. 17 on ABC Family, and also reached Google Video users at [vodeo.google.com/schooled](http://vodeo.google.com/schooled), where they can access additional footage as well as info about OfficeMax back-to-school gear and McCartney. OfficeMax stores are also offering a limited edition DVD featuring *Schooled* and McCartney signing songs from his new CD which was released this month.

DDB selected a director with a documentary pedigree, Henry-Alex Rubin of bicoastal *Smuggler*, for *Schooled*. Warren was creative director/creator on the show, with Billow, Shane Colton and Peter Taylor serving as creators, and Rolfe and Brian Smego as exec producers.

"We brought a lot to the table—suddenly the Disney lawyer whose phone calls are in the 323 and 310 area codes is talking to some ad agency in Chicago that he only knew as having done 'Whassup' several years ago," said Rolfe. "Proving to the entertainment industry that the agency could create a Hollywood caliber entertainment property means a lot."

In that same vein, Rolfe observed, "As an industry, the agency community is constructing departments and making moves to relate to the entertainment industry. We're doing all these things to try to figure out how to crack Hollywood—and it's important we establish those relationships. But we lose sight of the fact that they're desperate for us too. Warner Bros tapped into Rich Rosenthal of Young & Rubicam [New York] recently, and CAA [Creative Artists Agency] hired an agency guy. We're all important to each other. Most important of all, though, are the viewers who are a lot smarter than either industry gives them credit for. They're annoyed by a dumb show. They're annoyed by entertainment that isn't entertaining whether its branded or not."

### "Raided" by CAA

The "agency guy" alluded to by Rolfe is Jae Goodman who earlier this summer joined CAA Marketing, Beverly Hills, as creative director. He had been co-creative director at Publicis & Hal Riney, San Francisco, involved in several branded content endeavors,

including client 24 Hour Fitness' tie-in to *The Biggest Loser* primetime reality series on NBC.

The real people participants in that show voluntarily wear t-shirts on which appear their motivation for wanting to lose weight. For instance, a cop's shirt read, "To fit into my bulletproof vest." The reasons were varied—some funny, some heartfelt, paralleling the TV ad campaign Publicis & Hal Riney created for the client in which 24 Hour Fitness members wear their hearts not on their sleeves but on their shirt fronts, with motivations that included losing empathy weight for one's spouse or simply to shed pregnancy pounds.

Jamie King, managing director of Publicis & Hal Riney, San Francisco, and Jon Soto, executive creative director at the agency (and Goodman's former creative partner), said the campaign and the link with *The Biggest Loser* fit their two prime prerequisites for branded entertainment: That the brand be organic to the entertainment; and that the entertainment be supportive of or in alignment with brand attributes. "24 Hour Fitness is trying to be the populist gym," related King. "And here's a show geared to everyday people struggling with their weight. It's a great natural fit."

On the flip side, continued King, *The Apprentice* represents the antithesis of what Publicis & Hal Riney looks for in branded fare. "What does a Tide white-out pen have to do with *The Apprentice*?" asked King. "The show has become a shill for products. I think that's why the show's popularity has dwindled."

While King and Soto miss working directly with Goodman at Publicis & Hal Riney, they still feel a kinship

Continued on page 9

## Legalease



By Jeffrey A. Greenbaum

### Doing a remake?

Alka-Seltzer recently launched a remake of its famous "Try it, you'll like it" commercial from the 1970s. The new commercial takes the old favorite about a restaurant patron who was encouraged by the waiter to eat—"try it, you'll like it"—and updates it with "My Life on the D-List" star Kathy Griffin. We've had the "New Love Boat" and "Superman Returns," so why not bring back old favorites in the commercial world as well? As you would expect, if you're going to produce a remake, there are some important legal issues that have to be addressed up front, otherwise you'll be in for some serious acid indigestion, upset stomach, and heartburn.

### The plot, dialogue, and characters

The original creative elements of a commercial are typically owned by the client. That means that the client should be free to use and adapt the old plot, dialogue, and characters. It's a good idea, though, to make sure that the client has checked the original agreements with the agency and production company. Keep in mind that with older commercials, the law and business practices may have been quite different at the time, and it is not always going to be easy to determine what rights the client actually has.

### Music, props, and other licensed material

There are also likely to be elements of the original commercial which were licensed or commissioned from third parties, such as music, background artwork, and special costumes, as well as props and locations. If the old releases don't give you the rights to use this material in a new commercial—and for some types of licenses there's a good chance they won't—you'll probably have to negotiate for new usage. You should be particularly careful with re-recording music, since sound-alike claims (from the original singer, for example) are often an unexpected, but a very real, risk.

### Taglines

Don't assume that a great tagline that the client used 20 years ago is still available for use today—particularly if the client hasn't used the line recently or doesn't have a current trademark registration. Even if a line was strongly associated with the client a long time ago, others may have rights to it today.

### The Actors

If you're planning to use footage of the original actors (even ones that are dead), you're probably going to have to go back and get permission, unless you are lucky enough to have agreements that are broad enough to cover the new usage (and are not subject to a union contract). If you're going to use the same characters, but with new actors (think Mr. Whipple played by Jason Alexander), you've got another important issue to consider. Even if the client owns the rights to the character, if the character is particularly associated with the original actor, or if you're planning on making the character in the new commercial look like the actor who played the character in the original spot, you may get a claim from the first actor, asserting that this violates his or her rights. To reduce the risk of this type of claim, at a minimum, you should make sure that actor playing the new character looks markedly different from the original. This may not do the trick, though, so you should take extra care to consult with counsel before recreating a character.

It's true that there are many issues to consider when creating a remake, but the rewards can be great as well. You may even come up with something better than the original. Try it, you'll like it.

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This column presents a general discussion of legal issues, but is not legal advice, and may not be applicable in all situations. Consult your attorney for legal advice.

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## Getting Schooled In Longer Form Entertainment

*Continued from page 8*

with him. That in a sense is the silver lining to his having left. "With Jae at CAA, he is a first port of call for us in the entertainment industry--a friendly place and person in Hollywood who we can talk to...I still feel like Jae's a partner," related Soto.

In fact, King said that before he exited the ad agency, Goodman teamed with him and Soto on the development of another show for 24 Hour Fitness. "Jae is still involved in that project and if it comes to pass, it could be quite exciting." Ironically, added King, in the event the show gets a green light, it would entail the agency working with the William Morris Agency, a CAA competitor. "It kind of reflects the fact that this new space can be borderless--competitors can end up being collaborators."

Soto noted, "On every project our creatives are considering and working on mobile marketing, viral, online, branded entertainment--whether or not we're going to ultimately be involved in those components. Branded entertainment ideas have sprouted from this. In fact we have one now that will probably put us on the phone with Jae this afternoon to find out what he thinks about it."

### Comfort zone

While CAA recruited Goodman from the agency arena, Arnold Worldwide looked to the entertainment sector when it formed an entertainment division last year, securing Teddy Lynn, a veteran Hollywood producer with credits that include *Trial & Error* and *Pleasantville*. Lynn is executive producer of the Arnold Entertainment Group while his partner, longtime ad agency artisan Lee Einhorn, is its creative director.

The first major project to come out of the Arnold Entertainment Group is *Start The Music Up*, an integrated branded entertainment initiative for client Southern Comfort, the centerpiece of which is a series of eight shorts telling the personal stories of New Orleans area musicians. Additionally the project includes a branded microsite ([www.socomusicfund.org](http://www.socomusicfund.org)) created by McKinney, Durham, N.C.) designed to link fundraising to the New Orleans Musicians Hurricane Relief Fund and New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity, and a compilation CD showcasing the varied music performers.

The films--which are available on-

line, will be distributed at Southern Comfort domestic music events, and screened internationally at select music and experiential performances (and possibly in cinema venues)--each

focus on a different artist and weave in live performances with personal interviews and footage from New Orleans. The artists span such genres as brass band, hip-hop, rock and funk,

and showcase the unique fusion of sound found in New Orleans.

With roots in New Orleans, Southern Comfort wanted to assist in the Katrina recovery through a creative

content initiative. Initially Lynn said he and Einhorn pitched them on a feature documentary project but the client was hesitant. Subsequent talks helped to define the project in its current form, with the alluded to

*Continued on page 11*

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# Doug Scott

*Ogilvy & Mather's recently named chief of branded entertainment reflects on brave new content world.*



**By Robert Goldrich**

Doug Scott became executive director of branded content and entertainment at Ogilvy & Mather this summer after serving as a consultant to the agency since January. In what is relatively speaking still an embryonic marketplace, he has a notable track record, dating back to his tenure at Hypnotic where as executive VP of marketing he co-executive produced the Chrysler Million Dollar Film Festival, which opened up opportunities for young aspiring filmmakers. The first feature to come out of that initiative—the Jeff Wadlow-directed *Cry Wolf*—was released last year.

Also at Hypnotic, Scott had a hand in Reebok's "Terry Tate: Office Linebacker" phenomenon. Hypnotic acquired the original Terry Tate short from then fledgling director Rawson Thurber, connected with Reebok agency The Ar-

nell Group and the rest is history. A Thurber-directed Terry Tate spot debuted on the 2003 Super Bowl and generated a record number of hits on the Reebok Web site with the public clamoring to see more of the linebacker wreaking comedic havoc at the workplace.

After Hypnotic, Scott launched Matter, through which he co-executive produced the 90-minute MTV special *Diddy in the City*, chronicling Sean Combs' bid to run the New York Marathon and raise \$1 million for New York City's public schools. Scott oversaw corporate and fundraising relationships, helping the project exceed expectations and generate \$2.5 million for the Big Apple public school system. Among those he brought into the fold were Nike, Footlocker, McDonald's and Pepsi.

Next Scott was senior VP for public relations/entertainment marketing agency Bragman Nyman Cafarelli. However he found that a PR firm wasn't the most advantageous roost from which to bring about the kind of progressive branded entertainment fare he envisioned. He left Bragman and began consulting for Ogilvy.

**SHOOT:** Are you looking to the commercialmaking community as a resource for Ogilvy's branded entertainment projects?

**SCOTT:** Good ideas come from anywhere. We're looking at traditional entertainment producers as well as commercial producers. One of the interesting things I'm seeing out there is the desire from the commercial production community to tell a story in longer form. The sensibilities these people have from a marketer's perspective are much more in line with what's needed than those of traditional Hollywood. Their interest in producing branded content and their understanding of how to carry a brand's DNA into the story or the character is key, helping to strike the proper balance between entertainment and marketing. We are definitely fielding ideas and speaking with commercial producers when we go through that branded content brief phase in a development cycle for our clients.

**SHOOT:** In terms of maintaining "the proper balance" you refer to, what's your approach to content?

**SCOTT:** Content is the glue that brings the brand and consumer together. The overall challenge is

balancing entertainment and storytelling on one side with advertising and branding on the other. From the brand's perspective, we look at the fundamental marketing strategy, overall objectives, what the brand is trying to achieve—This first and foremost is going to inform how we deploy content that creates a meaningful dialogue with the consumer.



It will also inform how we measure effectiveness. In this brave new world where time shifting and screen shifting are taking place, it's becoming more critical to look at other metrics outside of reach. The accountability that technology is bringing to brands is much greater.

To create the most relevant content, you need to clearly define what I call the "brandscape," meaning all the marketing considerations that come into play. Coming out of that, you go into a development phase tapping into writers, producers, cre-

atives, trying to assemble a best-of-breed group that can develop different ideas and entertainment that can live on multiple platforms, and that are based on the brand's strategy and its DNA. I think that what @radical.media did with *The Gamekillers* [a scripted reality show about dating and the social scene, produced for MTV, Bartle Bogle Hegarty and

show we're looking to develop, for example, we will fully explore from a marketing perspective how this show is launched and communicated in the marketplace—the PR strategy, a promotional tease, use of TV, radio, events that can be created that allow us to activate locally and to tap into target markets for that brand, a wireless strategy, an online strategy, word

aligned with a well known director and production company. It's a documentary that goes in depth on the brand and its positioning as it relates to the audience it seeks to reach. We are in discussions with several networks to air the documentary as a special, perhaps in an hour format, with plans to screen the longer version in theaters on the film festival circuit.

We also have an unscripted television series built around a brand platform. We are in discussion with a major cable network to carry the series. To promote the series we are talking about doing a national tour, advertising and creating several brand experiences across the country. The project will leverage different sports event sponsorships and other partnerships that the brand maintains.

Additionally we are in development on a brand integration for a miniseries that has been green lit by a network for summer of 2007. Our client is working with writers and a director to map the brand arc to the story arc, and to develop the main character to embody the brand. There's also some product placement involved.

Also in the works are some Web-based shorts for another client. That will debut later this year and continue into 2007.

**While at Hypnotic, Scott lent his marketing expertise to the buzz-generating "Terry Tate" spot and shorts, a 2003 Super Bowl phenomenon for client Reebok.**

Unilever's Axe deodorant] is a great example of a brand's essence being reflected without the physical brand itself being present.

**SHOOT:** What about the marketing of the entertainment properties themselves?

**SCOTT:** The traditional entertainment model is that you develop, produce, market and distribute. We present that complete holistic model to our clients. Certainly marketing is a very important aspect. If it's a TV

of mouth. All these marketing tools need to be explored in order to best promote the core piece of content.

**SHOOT:** What projects are you working on at Ogilvy?

**SCOTT:** Several projects have been given the green light by clients and are in development. I'm not yet able to publicly discuss specifics as to which of our clients are involved but I can share some of what's going on with you in broad strokes. One is a documentary film for which we've

## Agency Artisans Share Branded Content Experiences

*Continued from page 9*

compilation CD being sold for a donation of \$10 or more to the Southern Comfort Music Fund. "Proceeds from this campaign will bring displaced New Orleans musicians back to their neighborhoods, and fund the live performances that help heal our communities," said Jordan Hirsch, administrator of the New Orleans Musicians Hurricane Relief Fund.

Einhorn and Lynn served as executive producers/creative directors of *Start The Music Up*. They brought into the project fold directors Ben Daughtrey and Julia Silverton who both have extensive reality TV and documentary experience. Lynn also secured the services of Los Angeles production house Lucid.

"This is what we envisioned when we joined Arnold Entertainment—being the middle men bringing the advertiser and agency together with the entertainment community, talent like

Daughtrey, Silverton and [Lucid producer] Steve McDonald, to create and produce branded content that served a real purpose, not a forced execution that amounts to little more than a hollow product placement," affirmed Lynn. "This is a natural fit. Southern Comfort has a long history of being supportive of the music and night life scene, particularly in New Orleans."

Though he isn't yet at liberty to discuss specifics, Lynn said that the Arnold Entertainment Group has other projects in development for clients, the primary focus being on TV shows and Web content.

### Brainy for Brawny

Chris Lawrence, group account director at Fallon Minneapolis, got his feet wet in branded entertainment back in '98 when the agency introduced Buddy Lee via a series of mockumentaries on Comedy Central, filling three-minute, late night com-

mercial pods. The Lee Dungarees and Jeans campaign took off; at one point, Buddy Lee even had his own MTV show. "It was easy to justify," recalled Lawrence. "We were targeting younger consumers well versed in new media forms. Trying something different made a lot of sense for this particular client."

"Now," continued Lawrence, "the great experiment is happening all over the place...A true reflection of that is our producing a reality TV show on the Web for a paper towel brand."

Indeed figuratively throwing the Brawny paper towel into the branded entertainment ring has proven to be a success. "Making a marginal change in a paper towel isn't going to change people's lives," related Lawrence. "But making a marginal change in husbands' behavior would be valued...So we decided to tap into the core of this strategic insight, explor-

ing the dynamics between husbands and wives, which lent itself perfectly to a reality series."

In the eight-episode *Brawny Academy* series, the iconic Brawny Man runs a "school," tucked away in a redwood forest, in which real-life husbands learn how to cook, dance, be romantic, help out with household chores and be considerate of their spouses. The online shows contain considerable tongue-in-cheek humor.

Though it is yet to be determined how bottom line sales have been impacted by the show, initial feedback has been positive. "Women are engaged in the content," said Lawrence. "There's a strong value connection. Women's relationship to the brand has measured favorably with an intent to purchase the brand...A buzz has been created for a paper towel."

Additionally the series has been a means, continued Lawrence, "to bring the Brawny Man to life in a way that

made him real and caring, breaking the glass case that most brands keep their icons in. He's a guy that men can look up to and women appreciate. He's an advocate for women. You couldn't do that in 30 seconds. You needed an extended format."

And that need dictated the decision to go with branded content. "We never go into a creative development process with a brief that says we must have a branded entertainment idea," explained Lawrence. "It was the creative and strategic insights that we had for Brawny that took us in that direction."

The online series has proven so popular that there's talk of extending it beyond the Internet, perhaps to TV, noted Lawrence.

*Editor's note: For insights from Doug Scott, Ogilvy & Mather's director of branded content and entertainment, see this week's Chat Room, a new SHOOT feature.*

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## Coulter Returns To Spots After Feature Debut

Continued from Page 4

many episodes of *The Sopranos* and *Sex and the City*, earning four award nominations: three DGAs and one Emmy. A spot he did for Budweiser via DDB Chicago called "Out of Towner," which was part of the "Whassup! Jersey Guys" campaign and broke during the 2002 Super Bowl, was a contender for a 2002 primetime Emmy for best commercial. In 2003, Visa's "Sheens," out of BBDO New York and also directed by Coulter, was nominated for the same award.

"The work in television and in commercials gave me the opportunity to work with first rate actors on frequently tight schedules, both of which were extremely useful experiences when it came to dealing with the wonderful actors I had in *Hollywoodland*, as well as the tight



Adrien Brody stars in Allen Coulter's, *Hollywoodland*, a Focus Features release. Photo by George Kraychyk.

shooting schedule that was a result of a limited budget," Coulter explained. The movie was shot in 40 days—30 days in Toronto and 10 days in Los Angeles.

Coulter said the biggest challenge he faced directing *Hol-*

*lywoodland* had nothing to do with actually shooting the film, but getting the script to a place where both he and the studio were prepared to move forward. "The actual shooting was a pleasure, and a time during which the studio gave me free reign over all artistic decisions. The postproduction period was also difficult in some ways, because, obviously, this is the time during which the movie becomes clearly defined and that definition is frequently a subject of much debate."

Coulter also said he is looking forward to getting back into commercials because "it's fun to do a project on a small scale in a short period of time.

"After all I was involved in the film for almost three years," he said. "I look forward to the change of pace that commercials will provide."

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## Despite Time Overrun, Hallmark Spot Wins Emmy

*Continued from page 1*

discovered the time overrun. The awards committee felt it would be unfair to Hallmark to disqualify their commercial nomination at that very late stage of the game, especially since the accountants [who oversee the awards voting tabulations] advised that the nomination was not disadvantageous to the other nominees.”

Several commercial producers contacted *SHOOT* after the Creative Arts Emmy Award ceremony, perturbed that a spot that exceeded the length set forth in ATAS rules was allowed to qualify for the competition to begin with.

This latest development adds another precedent—albeit a controversial one—to what has been a year of firsts in the 10th annual primetime spot Emmy Award competition. Not only was the tie between two spots precedent setting but so too was the fact that “Required Reading” was made on spec and went on to gain client approval, airtime and then win the coveted Emmy honor (*SHOOT*, 9/8).

“Required Reading” was directed by David Harner, who at the time was a creative at Leo Burnett USA, Chicago. The Institute for the Development of Enhanced Perceptual Awareness, Venice, Calif., produced the Hallmark ad which was conceptualized

at Burnett. Shortly after completing the spot, Harner jumped over to the production house side of the business, joining The Institute to pursue a directorial career. In addition to directing “Required Reading,” Harner served as creative director/writer/art director on the commercial. Burnett group creative director Tim Pontarelli was creative director/copywriter on the job.

In “Required Reading,” an older man, Ed, reluctantly walks into a classroom for reading lessons. The teacher starts him with a children’s book, the title of which he can’t even read. Later that night, he takes the bus home from class as a girl passenger notices the book in his backpack. He “explains” that the book is his daughter’s. Subsequent lessons show Ed slowly yet steadily making progress until he can read on his own. We then see him at home where he opens a box containing greeting cards he’s received over the years. He reads the first one out aloud: “Papa means love. I know this is true. I know it because my papa is you. Happy Father’s Day, Papa.” It is signed, “Love, Jenny.”

Roger Petrusson line produced “Required Reading” for The Institute. Tim Olgerson was the DP. Editor was Bob Ackerman of Avenue, Chicago.

## Original Film Signs Frank Vroegop For U.S. Spots

*Continued from page 4*

executed brilliantly but at a reasonable price, which is a balance that’s valuable not only for commercials but also for alternative media whether it be Webisodes, branded content, for cinema or other emerging forms.”

Mellon said he was drawn to Vroegop’s talent and versatility, his orientation as “a problem solver” and his comfort level shooting all over the world.

Vroegop related that he simply has “trust” in Devlin and Mellon and that while his schedule is typically heavy with projects, he is committed to trying to accommodate select American assignments.

Vroegop started in the music video discipline, doing small clips which often entailed visual experimentation for alternative artists. Based on this largely low budget fare, he came to the attention of the Sony label in Paris

and got his first big-ticket gig, a video for an up-and-coming Dutch grunge band. This opened the door to Vroegop then taking on assorted higher profile videos for major French artists.

This music video pedigree drew interest from Le Pac some eight years ago, leading to his joining there and diversifying into the advertising arena. His spot credits include work for such clients as L’Oreal (Beyonce Knowles, Milla Jovovic, Claudia Schiffer), Audi, Dodge, Cadillac Escalade and Timex. Le Pac produced the aforementioned Cannes Gold Lion winner for client Manix.

Vroegop comes aboard an Original directorial roster that also includes Jonathan Darby, Dennis Dugan and James Tooley. The shop is repped by Devlin on the East Coast, Chris Karabas in the Midwest and Yvette Lubinsky on the West Coast.



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Top Spot of the Week

# Director Aaron Ruell Reels In Two Talking Filet 'O Fish

By Christine Champagne

McDonald's "Filet 'O Fish" finds one filet 'o fish trying to teach another filet the proper pronunciation of filet 'o fish. Their exchange is long and drawn-out—the commercial, part of a five-spot, Internet-based campaign stretches on for more than a minute—and this is exactly what makes it so ridiculously funny. Just when you think it's going to end, it continues, with the filet 'o fish in the role of teacher becoming ever more frustrated with his pupil's lack of ability to get it right.

Aaron Ruell, who directed all five spots, admitted that initially he wasn't quite sure why Chicago's Leo Burnett was interested in hiring him for the job. "I vividly remember on the very first call just asking them, 'Why do you need a director for this?' It was just still shots, and I never do tabletop," recalled Ruell, who works out of Uber Content, Hollywood.

But as the discussion went on, Ruell came to realize that his real contribution would be in finding the right

actors to voice the characters and in directing the voiceovers. "These spots either work or they don't based on the voiceovers," Ruell surmised.

With Ruell on board, the casting process began, and it didn't go so well at the start because casting directors, seeing that the scripts called for talking food, assumed that talent with silly, cartoon-like voices was needed. "And that's not how we wanted to go," stressed Leo Burnett's Victor LaPorte, senior VP/creative director/art director, who conceptualized the campaign with his partner Scott English, senior VP/creative director/copywriter.



Aaron Ruell

## Sans food

Rather LePorte and English—as well as Ruell—envisioned more normal voices in the roles. So in an effort to draw the type of talent they wanted, the scripts were revised, with any reference to talking food removed, and sent out to casting directors again. This second attempt yielded more appropriate candidates.

One of the talents Ruell brought in

for a tryout was Keith Wilfort, a Scottish guy he had met once on a location scout. According to Ruell, English thought it would be funny to hear Wilfort say, "filet 'o fish." And from there, the "Filet 'O Fish" spot, which was not part of the original campaign, was born. "We were writing it as we were recording the talent in the booth at Margarita Mix," Ruell says, noting, "I think all of us knew that was the money spot. That's the way it works in the ad world. The stuff that isn't planned, the stuff that just kind of is more serendipitous than anything else, always becomes the stuff that is most memorable."

While the recording process was rather fun, Ruell said he has a new appreciation for those who direct voiceover work on a regular basis. "It's a lot more difficult than I had anticipated for sure," the director acknowledged. "Everything has to come through in the voice, especially when you're talking about products or characters that aren't moving."

With the voiceovers recorded, Ruell and DP Doug Chamberlain shot the visuals for "Filet 'O Fish" and the other spots at a fully operational McDonald's in Industry, Calif., used solely for the purposes of filming.

## Side by side

Ruell shot his stars—the two filet 'o fish—sitting side-by-side on a food preparation counter. The goal was to make the food look appetizing but not to go over the top. "McDonald's had several stylists there, and they made the [sandwiches] to perfection—they were adjusting shreds of lettuce with their tweezers," Ruell said.

The sandwiches don't move at all during the spot. Was there ever any thought of animating them in some way? Maybe giving them moving mouths? "The creatives, Scott and Victor, had no intention of doing that. Nor did I. That's a different type of comedy and one that doesn't really appeal to me for this kind of spot," Ruell remarked. "It seemed to make most sense, to be funnier to just have these inanimate, immobile products, yet they're talking, which throws you for a loop."

Jim Staskauskus, of Optimus, Santa Monica, cut "Filet 'O Fish." The editing was more complicated than one might assume, according to Ruell, who

explained, "For the comedic timing to work properly, it's all about holding back certain lines or moving them and then matching them with the cut, so it was kind of tricky because the comedic timing had to be dead on."

One has to wonder why we adults find this kind of humor so funny. After all, it is talking food. "It's in a sense an extension of childhood, when you used to pick up inanimate objects and goof off with them," mused Leo Burnett executive creative director John Montgomery.

Might "Filet 'O Fish" and the other spots featured in this Internet campaign migrate to television? "That becomes a client question," Montgomery said, adding, "If something catches fire, there's always a possibility."



School of Fish: On a countertop classroom, a filet o'fish teacher tries to get his not-so-apt filet student to properly pronounce filet 'o fish.

**TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK**

**CLIENT**  
**McDonald's**

**AGENCY**  
**Leo Burnett, Chicago.**  
*Mark Tutssel, chief creative officer, Leo Burnett Worldwide; John Condon, chief creative officer, Leo Burnett USA; Scott English, SVP/creative director/copywriter; Victor LaPorte, SVP/creative director/art director; John Montgomery, executive creative director; Denis Giroux, executive producer; Bridget McHugh, producer.*

**PRODUCTION COMPANY**  
**Uber Content, Hollywood.**  
*Aaron Ruell, director; Doug Chamberlain, DP; Preston Lee and Phyllis Koenig, executive producers; Tracy Broadus, producer. Shot on location in City of Industry, Calif.*

**EDITORIAL/POST**  
**Optimus, Santa Monica.**  
*Jim Staskauskas, editor; Brian Hraster, producer.*

**Optimus, Chicago.**  
*Scott Yurks, online editor; Craig Lefel, colorist.*

**AUDIO**  
**Margarita Mix, Hollywood (recording).**  
*Tor Kingdon, engineer.*  
**Chicago Recording Company, Chicago.**  
*Michael Coyle, mixer.*

**PERFORMERS**  
*Keith Wilfort and Bill Fox.*

The Best Work You May Never See

# Goodby Cleans Up For Calif. Coastal Commission

By Robert Goldrich

Consider it the birth of a notion—an eerie notion at that, but one which hits home the point that the cleanup of California’s coastline is an important priority. Indeed failure to stop coastal pollution has already had negative repercussions. And the offbeat creative approach taken in this public service ad underscores that the situation could get worse, compromising nature and animal life itself. Sadly, what seems like exaggeration may not be all that far fetched.

This animation spot opens on an egg nestled in a bed of grass surrounded by colorful foliage—almost looks like an Easter Egg hunt is in the offing. Even better, the egg starts to crack and we anticipate the emergence of an adorable baby chick.

However, this idyllic scene takes a sudden turn toward the strange. The grass wilts as an odorous plume rises from the egg. Litter appears in what had originally been a pristine environment. And now there’s the unsettling, almost ominous feeling that something not so adorable is going to peer out from his, her or its shell.

Sure enough, a baby chick emerges—but its bill is a lit cigarette. Turns out we have witnessed the hatching of a Cig Egret, a disgusting creature born out of man’s pollution and its profoundly adverse impact on the eco chain. As we view this mutated animal, a voiceover reminds us, “Trash is a non-native species of the California Coast.”

A message then flashes across the screen, heralding the upcoming California Coastal Cleanup Day (which has since taken place on Sept. 16) and other related events slated to run into October. An end tag carries the California Coastal Commission logo, accompanied by its Web site address ([www.coast4u.org](http://www.coast4u.org)).

Titled “Non-Native Species,” this PSA produced by design/animation shop Stardust Studios, Santa Monica, for Goodby, Silverstein & Partners (GSP), San Francisco, has brought to life one of the animal creations from the agency’s poster series in 2005. Those posters featured images of imaginary creatures made from trash, including the Cig Egret, the SporkCrab and ColaBass.

The poster series earned recognition at both The One Show and the Cannes International Advertising Festival earlier this year. Now one of the posters has translated into a TV ad.

The GSP team on the public service spot consisted of creative director Jeff Goodby, associate creative director/art director Paul Foulkes, associate creative director/copywriter Tyler Hampton and producer Michael Damiani.

Executive creative director Jake Banks headed a Stardust coterie of talent that included executive producer Eileen Doherty, designer Kinda Akash,

animator Sam Sparks and effects artist Mikey Plescia.

“What I really like about the finished spot is its style; it’s not quite animation, but it’s not real either,” observed GSP’s Hampton. “It draws people in, and then it’s quite eerie once this creature comes out. Overall it feels like something that will cut through the usual live-action things you see on television.”

GSP’s Foulkes said that the agency turned to Stardust for this “miracle of birth gone wrong idea,” based on past positive collaborations with the studio on end-graphics work for the Comcast campaign. He credited the Stardust ensemble with taking the “Non-Native Species” idea and running with it, resulting in an eloquent pro-environmental spot.

Doherty said Stardust was “instantly attracted” to the project for its potential to do ecological good. “We knew right away that this piece had the chance to motivate people to make a positive difference for California’s coastline.”

The aforementioned California Coastal Cleanup Day draws some 50,000 volunteers to more than 700 marine cleanup sites statewide to conduct what has been described by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as “the largest garbage collection.” Since the program started in ‘85, nearly 700,000 Californians have removed more than 10 million pounds of debris from the state’s shorelines and coast.

**credits**

**CLIENT** California Coastal Commission **AGENCY** Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco Jeff Goodby, creative director; Paul Foulkes, associate creative director/art director; Tyler Hampton, associate creative director/copywriter; Michael Damiani, producer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Stardust Studios, Santa Monica Jake Banks, executive creative director; Eileen Doherty, executive producer; Kinda Akash, designer; Sam Sparks, animator; Mikey Plescia, effects artist **MUSIC/SOUND** Mophonics Music & Sound, Venice, Calif. John Reese, sound designer/composer; Michael Frick, executive producer **AUDIO POST** One Union Recording, San Francisco Eben Carr, audio mixer

Stardust Studios Hatches “Non-Native Species”



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)



santa monica



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new york

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iWork

# Web Site By Dairy Industry And Draft FCB, Chicago; Body By Milk

*Campaign encourages teenagers to drink cow juice and to cut back on the soda pop*

By Nicole Rivard

“Got Milk?” No, not just a milk mustache—do you have a milk body? The International Dairy Foods Association and its agency, Chicago-based Draft FCB, hope that hordes of young people will be saying yes to that question following the launch of their new campaign, Body by Milk. As part of IDFA’s Milk Processor Education Program, the Body by Milk initiative, of which a large component is [www.bodybymilk.com](http://www.bodybymilk.com), is the biggest thing the milk industry has ever done directed specifically at teens to encourage them to have a healthier lifestyle.

“What we set out to do, through some realistic, authentic aspiration, was to get the idea out that, ‘Look, you guys are drinking six sodas a day. You want to take care of yourself a little bit because your ‘self’ is important. So maybe you should take out some of the sodas and replace them with the nutrients in milk you already know you need to look better, to act better, to have a better body, to have a better spirit,’ said Lor Gold, chief creative officer, Draft FCB.

“We’re not telling them to stop drinking soda but to include this as part of their life. And if you do that in a credible and creative enough way and in an environment they truly believe and understand, then you have a shot at them making milk a part of their life.”

He said Body by Milk is an evolution of the National Milk Mustache “got milk?” campaign and tagline but with a more empowering message.

“Body by Milk is about them being in control, which we all know at that age youth wants to be. It’s one thing to say they are in control, but it’s another to put them in control,” Gold said. “Well, the Web is their control system. It’s a two-way conversation. It allows for what we know kids want, which is to discover, not to have it literally shoved down their throat. They get to discover the benefits of milk and why it works.”

Kids can wander the site, resembling a cityscape, and explore and encounter milk messaging in an organic way. For instance, in the Park they will stumble upon milk facts and then take a quiz to earn milk points. The milk points can be used to bid on items in the Milk Shop, an online auction, one of the focal points of the site that also allows milk to be associated with brands that kids care about.

Teens can also use UPCs and expiration dates from milk containers to bid on



*In the Milk Shop, kids can bid on thousands of items, including clothes and gear from hot brands using UPCs or expiration dates from milk cartons.*

goods (one bar code or expiration date equals five milk points) ranging from clothing and accessories to musical instruments and cell phones from popular brands. Body by Milk posters in 45,000 middle and high schools tout the auction.

Colin Kennedy, VP account director, Draft FCB, said that they researched brands that kids are willing to spend their own money on in the top 10 product categories. “Of course there’s an emphasis on brands that also relate to an active lifestyle,” Kennedy said.

Kids can showcase their active lifestyles by submitting a video of themselves showing how choosing milk over a sugary soft drink helps them get their Body by Milk in the Underground Cafe. For inspiration they can visit the Club and check out behind the scenes footage of David Beckham’s Milk Mustache Body by Milk print ad (Lowe New York handled the print portion of the campaign) that features the tagline “Goal By Beckham, Body by Milk.” Milk consumers can even star in their own ad and create their own tagline.

“I think what we are excited about the most with Body by Milk is that it is evolving from a wonderful tagline branding idea to something that really is a part of their lives,” said Gold.

“In the digital world the movement is towards making the brand and the consumer so close together that they actually become the same thing. The closer you can get to pushing the brand as close to the consumer as possible, the more it becomes a part of their lives. And the Internet really pushes it about as close as we have ever gotten.”

credits

**Client** International Dairy Foods Association

**Agency** Draft FCB, Chicago

Lor Gold, chief creative officer; Tina Manikas, chief global retail and promotions officer; Colin Kennedy, VP, account director; Gigi Carroll, VP, concept director; Suzanna Bierwirth, creative director; Jonathan Sackett, SVP, director of digital operations.

SHOOT'S 1st ANNUAL

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Workspace

## A Sobering "Superhero" Perspective

**CLIENT**

Australian Childhood Foundation

**PRODUCTION CO.**

Exit Films, Melbourne

Mark Molloy, director (Molloy is repped stateside by Furlined, Santa Monica); Wilf Sweetland, producer; Robert Humphreys, DP; James Clark, production designer.

**AGENCY**

Clemenger BBDO Melbourne, Australia

Emma Hills, creative director/copywriter; Cameron Hoelter, art director; Sevda Cemo, producer.

**EDITORIAL**

Tide Edit, Sydney

Rohan Zerna, editor

**MUSIC**

"Hurt" written by Trent Reznor, sung by Johnny Cash

**THE SPOT**

A man and a boy—the latter asleep in his bedroom—seem destined to come together in this tale, titled "Superhero," that unfolds in a most unsettling manner. The adult is making his way down a hall as we see the boy stir from his slumber. You can sense the youngster's trepidation as he anticipates the man approaching the room. We see the bedroom door knob turn as the man is about to enter. The door opens slightly—but no further despite the man's efforts. The camera reveals that the boy has a finger pressed against the door,



CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT

stopping the man from gaining entry. Successive supers read: "Unfortunately abused children don't have super powers"; "But you do"; "Become a childhood hero. Donate to the Australian Childhood Foundation."

Spot broke in August

## Bardou-Jacquet Puts On "Game" Face

**Client**

Peugeot 407SW

**Agency**

BETC Euro RSCG, Paris

Remi Babinet, creative director; Eric Holden, art director; Remi Noel, copywriter; Damien Fournier-Perret, producer; Christophe Caurret, music supervisor; Simon Chater-Robinson, producer (from parent ad shop Euro RSCG Worldwide).

**Production Co.**

Partizan, bicoastal/international

Antoine Bardou-Jacquet, director

**Editorial**

Partizan

Antoine Bardou-Jacquet, editor

Buf Compagnie, Paris

Stephane Pereira, editor

**VISUAL EFFECTS**

Buf

**THE SPOT**

This animated spot, "End of Game," thrusts us into the middle of a video game with race cars dashing about on a track. The action is hot, heavy and fast paced—until the doorbell rings, causing the human teen player to put the game in "pause" mode and leave the room. But rather than stay frozen in time, the virtual drivers decide to take a break. They remove their helmets and head for the locker room, change into their street clothes and make their way out to the parking lot. A driver gets into his Peugeot 407SW and embarks on a peaceful, pleasur-



CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT

able drive. However, complete escape from the video game vibe isn't quite attainable. He stops the car to let a pedestrian cross the street. Turns out it's a robotic creature pushing a stroller carrying a robotic toddler. An end tag reads, "Playtime is over."

Spot broke in August.

*West Virginia*  
*commercials*  
*music videos*  
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*feature pictures*

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 Pamela Haynes, Director

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In addition to the latest news, regular columns & ScreenWork creative section, here's a look at **SHOOT's October 20th DIRECTORS Issue...**

#### Directors Profiles and Up & Coming Directors Feature

From emerging directors to lauded Award winners, this special issue offers insights into a wide range of helmers, their professional endeavors and aspirations. Profiles of leading commercial directors, and a rundown of new, up-and-coming directors who bear watching. This time we're including several Directors who have put their stamp on successful new media projects.

#### Cinematography & Cameras

Addressing trends in cinematography, and issues facing DPs SHOOT talks to Cinematographers about their craft and their take on the latest creative and technological advances in the field of cinematography.

#### Film Commissions/Hot Locations

A Cineposium preview and a look at locations that have proven alluring to the spot community.

### BONUS DISTRIBUTION:

Cineposium: Pasadena 10/26-30, Pasadena, CA

Hollywood Post Alliance (HPA) Awards: 11/1, Los Angeles, CA

#### Ad Deadlines:

Issue Date - October 20

Space Reservations - October 6

Ad Material Due - October 13

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## News



### HD Essentials

By Carolyn Giardina

## 3D And The NeedFor Speed

With interest in digital cinema growing, so too has curiosity surrounding 3D stereoscopic technology. Leading directors such as James Cameron have shown interest in filmmaking in the 3D realm, as well as in converting existing titles for 3D release. This topic was addressed during the recent IBC, as part of its Digital Cinema theme day, which touched upon production and business models, and concluded with a 3D screening of Sony's recent release *Monster House*.

Meanwhile, Jeff Edson--CEO of Miami-based Assimilate, which is the maker of the Scratch data post workflow system--reported that 3D TV monitors are currently "in alpha mode," so 3D could be a market for television as well as theatrical distribution. "It will become pervasive," Edson predicted, "but filmmakers and post houses need high-performance digital tools that keep them at the forefront of industry trends like 3D for viewing audiences, and they can no longer pay an arm and a leg to get them."

With this in mind, as part of the IBC exhibition, Los Angeles-based Cobalt Entertainment--a 3D, digital imaging, project management, technology development, film production, and image processing company--announced that it had constructed a production and post workflow for 3D stereoscopic motion pictures with Assimilate. The companies believe their workflow could greatly reduce the time spent in production and post.

Assimilate's Scratch system will be the heart of the post workflow, handling editing, conforming and color correction; Boxx Technologies offers the workstation technology.

Limitations of 3D production may include heavy equipment and long production schedules. Cobalt's digital 3ality Systems cameras are designed to be lightweight and to utilize advanced image processing to provide instantaneous dailies, and enable production schedules that match a standard 2D schedule. By using the dual-DVI outputs on the nVidia Quadro FX cards and the functionality of the Scratch CONstruct, the companies said that users in post could create a timeline with right-eye material on one layer and left-eye material on another. The two clips could be edited as a single instance and color grading, or other effects data, could be applied and copied. Assimilate reported that once editorial fine-tuning and color grading has been applied, the dual-stream stereo imagery could be outputted directly from Scratch to the screen for review. Further, Assimilate claimed that viewing of stereoscopic material could occur immediately without the need for additional post processing.

Reporting that there is a product development roadmap in place, Edson said, "Cobalt technology will be integrated into Scratch to optimize Scratch for stereoscopic films." He expected that this development would be ready in six to nine months and involve preview capabilities of the work in post, which is currently a challenge.

"Our business is making 3D easy for filmmakers so that they can expand their creativity and deliver a high-resolution film or digital product, and it only gets better from here," added Cobalt CEO Steve Schklair. "We are completing construction of a new 20,000 square foot studio in Burbank, which will make real-time 3D post and viewing simpler."

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SHOOT's senior editor, technology and postproduction Carolyn Giardina can be reached at [cgiardina@shootonline.com](mailto:cgiardina@shootonline.com).

# CG Actors? Get Real!

The ability to create photoreal CG humans has long been viewed as a sort of Holy Grail as a tool for storytelling. It all comes down to applications, which have included the ability to create digital stunt doubles—enabling digital characters to go where it would not be safe, practical or possible to send a leading character or a stunt double—as well as large numbers of digital extras. But in these cases, there was some distance between the characters and camera.

The experience and expertise of CG teams, along with technological improvements, have narrowed this distance as these characters have been brought closer to the camera and been called on for an increasingly wide number of applications. “There’s been a good amount of [creating CG actors] going on in the feature and commercial world,” says Paul Babb, executive producer of commercials at Los Angeles-based Rhythm & Hues Studios. “Is it totally photoreal? Not yet. Is it getting better? Yes.”

“More often than not, the industry is able to create a digital character that is able to convince the audience that it is real,” adds Tim Sarnoff, president of Culver City-based Sony Pictures Imageworks, although he acknowledges that the challenge remains considerable. “We are not consistent as an industry. That will be a hurdle that we have to overcome.”

But today, many agree that this area is reaching a turning point—shifting focus to the ability to have digital actors deliver convincing performances.

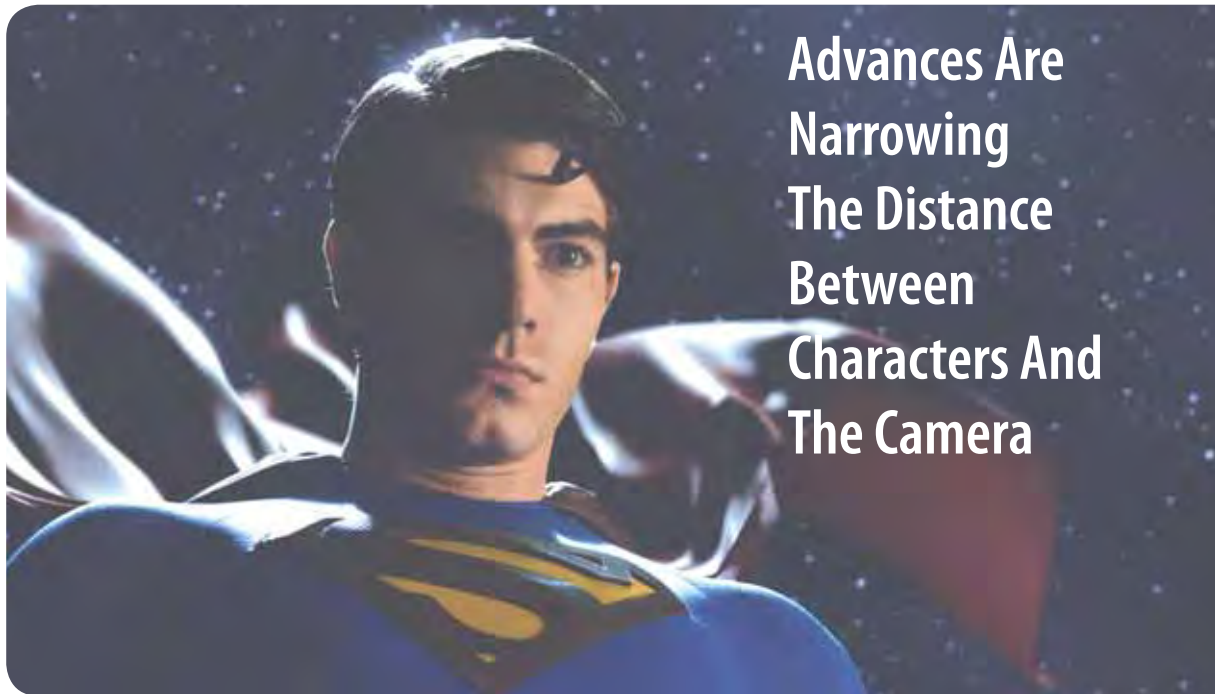
“There is a watershed coming,” says Ed Ulbrich, senior VP and executive producer of Venice-based Digital Domain’s commercial and music video unit. “We are at the point now where it’s not big effects movies anymore; we can do things with dialogue and actors and performance.”

This topic surfaced loudly this past summer at Siggraph, where San Francisco-based Mova’s Contour reality-capture system was one of the hits of the exhibition floor. Chief architect Steve Perlman—who heads Mova and its parent company Rearden—relates that as CG characters have evolved over the years, audiences have had empathy for them; however, some recent movies have featured CG characters that have been extremely close to photorealism but audiences could see that something wasn’t quite right, creating a dip in empathy.

This is the “Uncanny Valley,” what Perlman explains is a perceptual zone where a CG face approaches photorealism just enough to be eerie.

The Contour system, he says, is designed to capture data so precisely so as to overcome this occurrence. Instead of markers traditionally used in motion capture, Perlman explains that Contour uses an FDA-approved phosphorescent makeup mixed with a base and sponged onto the actor. Phosphorescent powder is used to mark the actor’s clothes in order to allow them to perform in costume and to capture the realistic movement of the clothing as well as the actors.

The actor is lit with customized Kino Flo flashing fluorescent lights, and two sets of HD-resolution cameras simultaneously capture the information. One set captures the information when the performance is lit; the other when it is dark, based on the glow of the makeup. The two sets of camera information—both visual and geometric—are combined to create a high-resolution 3D digital image.



Advances Are Narrowing The Distance Between Characters And The Camera

By Carolyn Giardina

Perlman says that the goal is to capture data that doesn’t require cleanup, creating more precise information while saving time and money. “We let the performers get into their roles, let the directors direct,” Perlman says. “We wanted it to be production friendly we wanted to get the technology out of the way.”

Perlman reports that Contour—due for availability at the end of the year—would be compatible with major 3D software systems, so that the appearance of a character could be altered, for instance, to show aging.

He tells *SHOOT* that certain projects have already started that will incorporate Contour, although he declined to name customers or projects, citing NDA agreements. But indicators point to Digital Domain for spots and director David Fincher of bicoastal Anonymous Content on a movie. Fincher is scheduled to direct a feature titled *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, which tells the story of a man aging in reverse.

And, Fincher says in a released statement from Mova: “Contour’s promise is enormous; the notion that the human face, in all its subtleties could be mapped in real time, and with such density of surface information opens up so many possibilities for both two- and three-dimensional image makers and storytellers. I can’t wait to get my hands on it.”

Meanwhile, Ulbrich reports that Digital Domain is looking at technologies such as Contour and Softimage’s FaceRobot, as well as developing its own tools. While he declined to specify the toolset, Ulbrich did tell *SHOOT* that next generation processes would be applied to the creation of photoreal CG humans for commercial work that Ulbrich expects will be finished by Digital Domain

Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Ent.

# VISUAL EFFECTS

in late fall.

He admits he is impressed by the Contour system. "This is a breakthrough," Ulbrich enthuses. "Performances can now be captured in 3D as they are performed, eliminating



**"There is a watershed coming. We are at a point now where it's not just big effects movies anymore; we can do things with dialogue and actors and performance."**

—Ed Ulbrich

much of the postproduction work required in the past. It isn't just capturing dots in space anymore; it's actual live action volumetric capture. This brings photoreal, CG, human performance within reach of a wide range of

feature film, video game and advertising applications. Coutour opens up a new world of creative possibilities for directors."

Another evolving technique to watch is San Francisco-based In-

animators are accustomed to using their own faces and body movement—as well as those studied on others—as references. He says that every person moves and behaves differently; and no animator will animate a character

tools in this area, as evidenced by the high profile launch of Softimage's Face Robot.

CG actors are being refined in other ways, such as by taking advantage of improvements in computing time and rendering technology. Ulbrich notes that the worlds of video gaming and advancements in motion picture production are blurring. "We are going to use real-time video game engines as production tools," he predicts. "In the next two to five years, we'll start to see this widespread. Real-time rendering is going to change everything. If you can move 8,000 polygons in real time without having to render, that increases productivity exponentially for the artists."

Guyett also cited advancements in the realism of textures such as skin. "The way skin reacts to light has been a very difficult thing," he explains, adding that improvements include the development of subsurface scattering—recreating how light is absorbed in skin and bounces around in the skin.

Performance capture is also an important tool being used to create CG actors. Jon Damush, VP/general manager at motion capture technology manufacturer Vicon and its Los Angeles-based motion capture studio House of Moves, expects a growing number of productions—both features and spots—to use performance capture techniques. "[Motion capture] is a cost effective piece of the puzzle," he says. "We record mountains of data in a day that would take animators months to produce. We are not replacing, but

dustrial Light + Magic's proprietary iMoCap system, which essentially involves grabbing photographic references of an actor's performance with high resolution cameras from different perspectives, and then using proprietary software to translate the imagery into 3D data that may be used as a starting point to create the performance of a CG character.

This was used, for example, to capture actor Bill Nighy's performance in order to create a CG Davy Jones in this past summer's blockbuster *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*. Visual effects supervisor Roger Guyett explains that Davy Jones is also a good example of another application that will become increasingly more common: retargeting an actor's performance to any type of character. "If you can retarget something, then we can cast the actor, and take that performance and reinterpret it," he says.

Guyett reports that the iMoCap system doesn't require a traditional mo-

the same way.

"The technology has improved dramatically in the last couple of years," Sarnoff relates, adding that rendering is better, lighting is better and understanding of physics is better. "But I don't think any technology is the total answer... no technology, no matter how advanced, can make a character who can make me laugh, only the person behind the technology can do that." Imageworks has employed a variety of techniques to create CG humans—from the performance capture techniques used for the recent *Monster House* to keyframe animation and even some bluescreen work as deployed on *Superman Returns* to create a CG man of steel.

## Marlon & Hues

One application for CG humans is the ability to recreate a younger (or older) version of a known actor, or even bringing a deceased actor to the screen. A recent example is Rhythm & Hues—which also worked on *Super-*

**"There's been a good amount of [creating CG actors] going on in the feature and commercial world. Is it totally photoreal? Not yet. Is it getting better? Yes."**

—Paul Babb



tion capture set. By removing the controlled environment, he says camera operators could shoot the reference materials during actual takes—including with a Steadicam. The intent is to allow the director to concentrate on directing a performance, without placing constraints on the first unit photography. Guyett says the actor's performance data becomes a sort of digital reference, a high fidelity baseline for getting a rich performance. This reference is important because each individual animator may create a character somewhat differently. "If it's a team... the performance is influenced by multiple animators," he points out.

"Computer animators are actors too," agrees Sarnoff, pointing out that

*man Returns*—using its proprietary 3D and rendering software to create a CG Marlon Brando, who played Superman's father in the Superman movie from the '70s.

Babb explains that the process started with a recording of Brando's voice that was made during the original film, as well as some footage from that shoot. "We got as close as we could get to the dialogue [with his image] and then created a full wireframe model and married textures to his face and onto that [applied] facial animation."

Facial animation, adds Babb, still comes down to the skills of an animator. At last month's Siggraph, it was clear that software developers are trying to provide more sophisticated

supporting the massive amount of content they produce." Incidentally, Vicon recently announced a technology alliance with Mova, enabling the use of Vicon MX-series cameras with the Contour system.

It appears that most of the R&D in this area is being applied to features, although commercials are a part of the mix. And, as Babb points out, the technology developed for one ends up applied to other applications.

"The budgets are bigger," offers Damush as a reason that features seem to be leading the charge. "And the commercial industry is more risk averse to trying new technology because their timeline is so tight. I think the feature work is going to drive the next leap."

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# Digital Pipelines, Color Correction Developments Mark IBC

Continued from page 1

can't be deleted or lost," he asserted, noting that this metadata must include notes, information and all data pertaining to a production. He added that this sort of management system is the only way to insure that content can be recalled and repurposed.

Of interest to many attending companies in advertising production, the postproduction and telecine halls were absolutely jammed with color grading systems. A significant deal in this space was announced during the show: Ascent Media Creative Services' North American operations—which encompass such post houses as Company 3, Riot and Encore Hollywood—have decided to standardize on da Vinci color grading tools for all of its facilities.

This means that all Ascent facilities—representing approximately 30 seats—will use either da Vinci 2k Plus or software-based Resolve color grading technologies. These will be used for DI feature work, as well as commercials and series television. Initially, this will include the addition of five new Resolve systems, reported Ascent Media Creative Services president Bob Solomon.

Ascent had been working with da Vinci over the past couple of years, testing and providing feedback on the company's color grading developments. "Da Vinci is a wonderful partner in co-developing technology with a feature set that meets our needs," said Ascent Media Creative Services CTO Phil Mendelson.

There were a few key areas for Ascent; speed was one of them. "We need real-time playback," said Solomon. "We are used to client supervised sessions; our clients have expectations that [new digital/data-based technology] would offer the same as in a video-based world."

Mendelson also cited operational familiarity for the colorists, as they will likely use both da Vinci systems.

Meanwhile, Autodesk, FilmLight and Quantel all presented new versions of their flagship color correction tools that were aimed at spotmakers.

Quantel debuted Pablo HD, a new entry-level nonlinear color correction system with the features of its 2k and 4k Pablo systems. The company said that Pablo HD is designed to make high-resolution color correction a creative and profitable proposition for every form of mainstream postproduction. The full iQ, eQ and Pablo range also gained a new v3.6 software package, which includes features such

as a history archive, segment-based pan and scan, and batch network i/o.

Autodesk previewed Autodesk Lustre HD, a new version of its Lustre color grading system that offers real-time primary and secondary color correction capabilities and formatting of video deliverables using Graphics Processing Unit technology. "GPUs are proving to be a powerful and more flexible alternative to older technologies for real-time media processing," said Marc Petit, VP of Autodesk's Media & Entertainment Division. "They are extremely fast and easily programmable, and are being developed at a faster pace than CPUs."

And FilmLight exhibited Baselight HD, a grading package for SD/HD television and commercials. It also showed its 4k prowess with a demo of its higher end Baselight Eight color grading system, running 4k and incorporating its new Cinema4K option, which allows users to visualize 12-bit color grading on the screen. To demonstrate, FilmLight's IBC stand housed a Sony 4k digital cinema projector and theatrical screening environment.

In additional news, FilmLight announced a new certification program for grading theaters around the world that use FilmLight's Truelight color management system, which was developed to help print film match the display device. Frame Set and Match in Sydney, Ollin Studio in Mexico City and Men-from-Mars, London, are among the companies that have already been certified. FilmLight reported that it plans to publish a list of certified theaters on its Web site, including contact information, as a resource for potential customers.

In a move designed to improve commercial postproduction workflow, Thomson's Grass Valley and FilmLight agreed to enable FilmLight's BaseLight color grading system to directly control the film transport, primary and secondary color, focus, resize and rotate, sharpness filter and de grain on Grass Valley's video Spirit Datacine and Shadow systems. This means that colorists who use the Baselight color correction system would be able to replicate a traditional film-to-tape process, plus exploit the creative opportunities offered by software systems.

"A lot of colorists have intense [video] workflows; this allows them a hybrid workflow the best of both worlds," said FilmLight's Andrew

Johnston.

Grass Valley's Nick Smith added that this allows customers to invest in new DI workflows, but still have access to the traditional control. He reported that future support for the Spirit 2k and 4k would be driven by customer interest.

On the workflow front, Pandora debuted its YoYo collaborative nonlinear environment with open interconnectivity for color processing; the system offers resolution independent color processing with no need for proprietary storage. A pair of Macs running Pandora software forms the bridge between the color processing and a facility's storage area network (SAN). YoYo is designed to access industry-standard DPX files from the SAN and feed them to the color corrector in the needed form. HD 4:4:4 and HSDL output formats are currently supported, with PCI express scheduled to be added by year's end to allow resolutions up to 4k. YoYo can be added to existing color suites using the Pandora PiXi, as well as

new installations based on the new Revolution hardware.

The Mill in London has been beta testing the system, running it through the paces, for instance, on a series of recent Nokia and Carlsberg commercials directed by Chris Palmer of Gorgous, London.

The Mill's senior colorist and joint telecine director Seamus O'Kane reported, "This represents a major landmark en route to a truly collaborative data workflow for both commercial and long form episodic projects. As the YoYo and Revolution are both modular in approach, they [allow] The Mill to evolve a datacentric workflow while providing an ongoing creative environment for our clients. As such they are both more practical and beneficial within a real-world situation than the total change of others. It's a nice way of evolving a totally new way of working without making it scary for the clients."

Meanwhile Codex Digital showcased its new digital recorder. Codex co-founder Paul Bamborough de-

scribed the system as "blurring the line between production and post. Codex was very much designed from the beginning as a complete workflow system, not just a recorder. Everything that can be gathered during shooting can be centralized on Codex, and then distributed invisibly and on-demand to whoever needs it. This gives filmmakers the opportunity to work in a faster, more efficient way—any camera, any format, anywhere."

Codex can be used on location or studio shoots, and in post machine rooms; it interfaces with most digital camera systems. It was designed with an array of industry-standard interfaces and a flexible I/O configuration in order to accommodate future developments in digital cinematography. Codex can be configured in a number of different ways, providing location digital media recording and shot-logging, or acting as a dedicated 2k screening system and production server on-set.

Watch for additional IBC news in next week's SHOOT edition.

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## Letter From An Editor

Continued from page 2

footage, pieces created almost entirely in the editing room. Many pieces I cut were straight montage from beginning to end. Six to eight minutes with almost as many edits as in 60 minutes of most features I've worked on. But best of all, *48 Hours* was generous enough to allow me to leave from time to time to cut low budget features for little or no money and then return to a steady salary at CBS. For that I will be forever grateful.

I worked at CBS off and on for five years until I was hired to cut *Sling Blade*. *Sling Blade* brought me to L.A.... In L.A., the entertainment industry is everywhere. More editing jobs but also many more people competing for them. For the next few years, I worked in low to medium budget films, getting into Sundance a few times and always hoping to get my films into theaters. This is a particularly difficult task in these days of blockbusters and studios opening films in over 3,000 theaters. I have had my share of films go straight to DVD. But I enjoyed working on independent films. The directors were almost always first timers, but they brought great passion and conviction to what they considered to be their shot. Then in 2000, after a film called *Stark Raving Mad*, the bottom dropped out completely. I could not find a job.

It was excruciating. By far the lowest point of my career....I started entertaining the idea of a career change. Then almost a year to the day of finishing my last film, I called *48 Hours* and asked if they needed help during Christmas. They did....I worked in N.Y. for three months. When I returned to L.A., my agent had an interview for me on a movie called *Employee of the Month*. Never in my career have I prepared for an interview more thoroughly....I marked the script with post-its on almost every page. When I walked into the meeting, I made sure

## Beyer, Lausch Team On Crossroads Satellite

Continued from page 4

Lion-winning German campaign against racism and violence, as well as Nissan's lauded Asian campaign, "We Will Rock You."

The director has also been active in other disciplines. He helmed his first short film, *Phantom*, in '98; it was screened at the Berlin Film Festival the following year. And Beyer's short film

to put the script in a place where the director and producer could see all of the post its sticking out from the sides of the script. During the interview, I worked into the conversation every joke from the script I could remember.... I was hired on the spot. I loved working on that film.

When we were almost finished cutting, the producer told me she had another project starting soon. "Would I be interested?" she asked. "Of course," I said. The name of the film was *Crash*. Right place, right time.

If there is something I have learned that I can pass on, it is that almost anything is possible if you stick with

it. This is a very competitive business and often it is difficult to thrive. You need a lot of luck, but you also have to hang around long enough to get lucky. I did not have any grand plan for my career. I just knew from the first minute I had the opportunity to edit that I had found work I could enjoy for a long time. I have enjoyed editing *Rockettes* and I have enjoyed editing *Don Cheadle*. Whoever I had in front of me, I tried to do the best I could. Sometimes it has been frustrating and sometimes it has been sublime. But it has always been fun. I am a very lucky guy and I hope everyone of you will be as fortunate as I have been.

## Snowbate Incentive Season Returns To Minnesota

Continued from page 4

to accommodate visiting as well as in-state producers, according to Winter. They were also authored to help encourage postproduction in the state, though it's still possible for a spot production to qualify for the reimbursement if only shooting in Minnesota—as long as the 60 percent of expenditures prerequisite for the overall project is fulfilled. (For example, if all the lensing is done in state at a cost of \$100,000 while post is completed out of state at \$50,000, then the 60 percent threshold would be met.)

Among the expenditures in Minnesota eligible for the 15 percent reimbursement incentive are: airfares, car rental fees and lodging expenses; Minnesota crew and acting talent; set construction and operations expenses; wardrobe and accessories; craft services and crew meals; studio/soundstage rental/location fees; photography, lighting, sound and related equipment rental; tape and film stock;

production office and related equipment rental; transportation (production vehicles, etc.); and editing and post.

Jim Geib, president/executive producer of production house Twist in Minneapolis, has applied for the Snowbate incentive on a recent commercial made in Minnesota. He said the reimbursement program serves to make his shop "hugely competitive" for filming business, adding to the cost-effectiveness of spot lensing and post in the state.

Geib is a member of the Minnesota Film and Television Board, which along with the Shoot In Minnesota organization and the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) helped to bring about the passage of the expanded Snowbate initiative. AICP Minnesota chapter president Kirk Hokanson, owner/president of Voodoo Films, Minneapolis, credited Shoot In Minnesota, a nonprofit group of freelance talent, with bringing industry people together to support the measure and with hiring two lobbyists to convey its importance to legislators. Hokanson serves on an advisory committee to Shoot In Minnesota.

National AICP executive VP Steve Caplan wrote a letter in support of the initiative early on in the process. "We're very pleased that the state recognizes the importance of commercials to the economy," said Caplan of the Snowbate program's enactment. "It's a major step forward to see this program extended to commercials and music videos."

*99* is currently being edited and is slated for release in '07. He is also in negotiation for a European comedy feature, *A Year In the Merde*, based on a best selling book by author Stephen Clark.

The new satellite is being repped by the Crossroads domestic sales force consisting of Tanya Cohen on the West Coast, Janice Harryman in the Midwest and Sharon Lew on the East Coast.

## street talk

Feature filmmaker **Steven Shainberg**--whose credits include the Sundance Special Jury Prize-winning *Secretary* starring **Maggie Gyllenhaal** and **James Spader**--has secured spot representation in North America, signing with **Saville Productions**, the Beverly Hills-based house headed by executive producer **Rupert Maconick**. Shainberg is no stranger to commercials, having helmed spots for such clients as **Chanel**, the **Florida Lottery** and **Miller beer**. Shainberg's latest movie, *Fur*, is based on the life of noted photographer **Diane Arbus** who committed suicide in 1971. The film, which stars **Nicole Kidman** and **Robert**

**Downey Jr.**, is slated for release in November....**Hamish Rothwell**, a comedy director from Australia, has joined Santa Monica-based **TWC** for U.S. spot representation....**Nick Law** has been promoted to chief creative officer, North America, for agency **R/GA**, New York. He assumes a position formerly held by chairman/CEO **Bob Greenberg** who retains his creative duties as chief creative officer....**Director Johanna Andersson** has joined production company **FilmTecknarna**, Stockholm, for exclusive representation in commercials. Her first assignment at the shop was **Minute Maid's "Orange Sky"** for **Doner**, Southfield, Mich. She is currently wrapping a second **Minute Maid** spot, "**Fruit City**"....**Knucklehead**, London, has secured the directing duo of **Zak and Dan**, formerly of **Stink**, London, for worldwide representation in commercials....**Two-time Oscar winning director Barbara Kopple** has wrapped her documentary feature *Dixie Chicks: Shut Up and Sing* and is again available for commercials via **bicoastal Nonfiction Spots**.....

## report

**Rob Mueller**, formerly of **David Wagner & Associates**, Chicago, and **Chris Karabas**, who had maintained **Team Karabas**, Chicago, have partnered to form Chicago-based independent firm **The House of Representatives**, which will handle Midwest representation for a roster that includes **RSA**, **Machine Head** and **Media Logic**....**Trevor**

**King** has been named director of sales for New York-based digital production studio **Click 3X**. He previously served as a rep and head of sales at New York editorial house **Bluerock**....**New York-based music/sound design house tonefarmer** has signed independent rep firm **Monaghan+Halpine**, Chicago, to handle the Midwest....**Cinematographer John Lynch** has joined **The Skouras Agency**, Santa Monica, for exclusive representation.....

## bulletin board

>Sept. 22/Hollywood: **Hollywood Post Alliance (HPA) Awards submission deadline.** (Sept/29 materials deadline). [www.hpaonline.com](http://www.hpaonline.com) for submission form. 213-614-0860 for information

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