

Director Bruce Dowad Finds A Tight Career Fit

DGA Award-winning commercial-maker frees himself of company ownership responsibilities to focus on directing. After deciding to shutter his longstanding Bruce Dowad Associates, he links with noted executive producer Jonathon Ker and comes aboard Santa Monica-headquartered production house tight.

See page 4

HPA Tech Retreat Tackles HD, Home Entertainment

At the annual Hollywood Post Alliance confab, a CBS executive reports on high-definition spots coming into prominence on the Super Bowl telecast. Industry conference also highlighted by lively panel discussion on technological advances and future industry prospects that provide insightful food for thought.

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Steven Poster Visits SHOOT's Chat Room

The noted DP and president of the International Cinematographers Guild reflects on his agenda and his aspirations for the organization going forward. He also offers his takes on the industry and on maintaining a lensing career that spans commercials and long-form content, including the recent theatrical motion picture *Southland Tales*.

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Prod'n. Cos. Mindful Of Long-form Content

Entrepreneurs discuss prospects for new business models.

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Getty Images photodisc green/fbk006



Blowing the Whistle

Ad Agency Creative Directors Assess This Year's Crop Of Super Bowl Commercials

A SHOOT Staff Report

While the Chicago Bears lost the Super Bowl, a bearish rather than a bullish assessment of this year's crop of Big Game commercials has won out as reflected in feedback from creative directors canvassed by SHOOT.

As it has over the years in this survey, SHOOT talked with creative directors whose agencies did not have any spots on the Super Bowl so as to get an unvarnished, apolitical perspective on this year's Big Game advertising. Here's a sampling of what they had to say:

Andy Azula, senior VP/creative director, The Martin Agency, Richmond, Va.

Nothing blew me away. It was a pretty mediocre year overall. I didn't find anything that took my breath away and made me think "I wish I had done that."

There was a lot of violence. People getting hit and hurt. Someone else's pain usually equals comedy, which is fine but it got the point where it was a bit much. I think that made the Coca-Cola Grand Theft Auto-like spot stand out. That anti-violence video game commercial for Coke—with all the other violent spots on the game surrounding it—really popped out nicely.

Some of the violent antics worked. I loved Budweiser's "Rock Paper Scissors." It was simple and funny. Throwing a rock at someone's head will crack me up every time. But as we went on to other spots, violence got to feel gratuitous. The Bud spot with people slapping

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Ariola Wins DGA Award

By Robert Goldrich

BEVERLY HILLS—Dante Ariola of bicoastal/international MJZ won the Directors Guild of America Award for best commercial director of 2006 during the 59th annual DGA Awards dinner and ceremony held on Saturday (2/3) at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza Hotel in Beverly Hills.

A four-time nominee (the first three coming for best spot director of '00, '02 and '04), Ariola broke into the winner's circle for the first time on the strength of three spots: Travelers' "Snowball" for Fallon Minneapolis; Johnnie Walker's "Human" from Bartle Bogle Hegarty, London; and Coca-Cola's "First Taste" for Wieden+Kennedy, Amsterdam.

Upon coming up on stage to the podium to accept the award, Ariola said, "A little scary. I don't have a speech. Being in this room is an honor. I'd like to thank the DGA and everyone at MJZ."

He then acknowledged several people, including MJZ principal David Zander, executive producer Jeff Scruton, rep Steven Monkash and Debbie Turner who runs MJZ's London office. Ariola also expressed appreciation for his producer Patricia Hill and offered a personal thanks to his mom.

Shortly afterwards SHOOT caught up with the director, who offered an

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Spotmakers Recognized At Sundance Festival

By Nicole Rivard

PARK CITY, Utah—Back in October of 2002, SHOOT recognized Jeff Blitz, whose spotmaking home is bicoastal Anonymous Content, as someone who had the potential to become a big name in the commercial production business. He also graced the pages of SHOOT's first New Director's Showcase in May '03 when he was directing with Mack Carter.

Since then his career has—should we say—skyrocketed?

Rocket Science, his feature film that recently premiered at Sundance, earned him the festival's Directing Award. *Rocket Science* is his first feature since he made his feature directorial debut in '03 with his Academy Award-nominated documentary *Spellbound*, which followed eight teenagers on their quest to win the

'99 National Spelling Bee.

Rocket Science, which Blitz also wrote, tells the story of 15-year-old Hal Hefner who has a stuttering problem. He falls in love with the star of his New Jersey high school's debate team and finds himself in the ultra-competitive world of debating.

"The award was an unexpected caper to a terrific festival experience for us," Blitz told SHOOT. "What I

am most pleased by is how funny the movie seemed to play for the audiences at Sundance. That's the real prize—to see audiences connect and react to the work. The directing award is just icing."

Blitz's ties to the ad world actually led him down the road to Sundance success. He explains that he met Jo Willems, the cinematographer for

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Net Gain

According to political pundits, the Democratic Presidential hopefuls are doing a better job of deploying the Internet than their Republican counterparts. However, what remains to be seen is how the advertising industry will use the web in hopes of influencing the 2008 election.

No matter what your political persuasion, the ad biz has a chance to redeem itself online. Or for those of you who view the glass as being half empty, our creative/strategic industry can merely extend the mudslinging, misleading tactics of TV and radio to the next generation of media—or is that the next degeneration of media?

Just look back to the midterm elections in which the Democrats won control of both Houses. Factcheck.org, a site run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University

of Pennsylvania, studied all the mid-term election campaign ads running in the top 101 U.S. media markets. Some 91 percent of Republican ads were deemed negative as were 81 percent of those paid for by Democrats. The Democratic committee spent \$18 million attacking Republicans as compared to \$3.1 million lauding its own

negative black eye for our industry. It undermines the many competitions we have that show the creativity and care that goes into great commercial-making, which at its best is undeniably an art form.

At the same time, it can be argued that in an era in which leadership by fear seems to be the norm, the ad biz

parting of divergent views that can lead to a greater good.

We've come a long way from FDR's famed declaration that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Today fear has become an ally for those who choose to lead by and benefit from it.

Let's not let advertising be an ally to the divisiveness from which people

Can we at least learn from [TV] and make new media campaigning not only more civil but more intelligent, informed and enlightening?

candidates—a nearly six-to-one negative-to-positive ratio. The Republican committee-backed advertising registered a negative-to-positive ratio of eight to one.

And according to factcheck.org, the negative advertising is largely an exercise in fabrication and distortion. Unfortunately character assassination has proven effective enough so that it remains a staple of political campaigning. Indeed advertising's role in misleading the public is a figu-

rely guilty of keeping its finger on the pulse of what has worked far too well over the past too many years. Or is that merely trying to rationalize and somehow make palatable our industry's role in making fear mongering more prevalent?

On the web, though, there is opportunity to go beyond the sound bite and the short spot format. Dare I say there's even the chance to explore issues, debate differences and at least have some discussion or im-

have profited at the expense of the public at large.

While TV seems to be a wasteland of negativity when it comes to political advertising, can we at least learn from that sad state of affairs and make new media campaigning not only more civil but more intelligent, informed and enlightening?

Otherwise the cry for new content and new ideas—which rings throughout our industry—will instead ring hollow.

POV



How Not To Become The Chosen One

We were recently bidding a broadcast project that, as with all projects these days, turned out to be a very competitive situation. We had a number of well-known directors from some of the larger companies all vying for a multi-spot package. But something occurred during the bidding process that finally said "this has to stop".

It was the day before we were to make our recommendation and present to the client. A person associated with one of the companies called and left a message not about why they were the right choice, but about how one of our other bidders was the wrong choice. The message went into some detail of the opponent's body of work, and how it wasn't as current as their director, etc. I think the phrase that was used was that the other director was "old news." And, surprisingly, their director had all current work on their reel.

If I had asked the opinion of a rep of another company or director then that would have been okay—but this was a completely unsolicited remark. At Doner we're in the exact same situation as all our suppliers when it comes to our business methodology—we pitch for business. Our pitches

may take more time and the efforts of more people but in the end, the process is almost identical. Yet in all of my 20-plus years here at Doner I don't know of a single instance when we tried to win an account by saying that one of the other agencies was for some reason unworthy. We don't do that. And never will. It seems to us that the reason we should be chosen should solely be based on our merits and presentation. Nothing else.

Sadly, this was not an isolated incident. It has happened at Doner many times before. Reps and even production company owners offer their negative opinions on their counterparts on a regular basis. One time a rep even called a creative director's secretary to try to foil another's chances. I doubt that the directors they represent even know they do it. And most would probably be shocked. Maybe because these offenders think this will help their cause, but it's really the other way around. They are doing themselves a disservice. Criticizing your opponent may work in political advertising but it doesn't work in an ad agency.

Sometimes during our own pitches we don't even know who else is in the running. Perhaps that should be the same protocol when we are bidding

a job. If we don't tell the reps who else we're bidding, then this problem wouldn't exist. But rather than be secretive, here's an alternative. Let's just put an end to it. Once and for all. Concentrate on why you or your director should become the chosen one. Stick to extolling your own virtues. Not the shortcomings of someone else.

We are all in the business of creating ads, and hopefully making consumers like our products because of

the benefits of our own products, yet some of us seem to ignore that.

It reflects so poorly on our whole industry when people have to resort to deflating other bidders.

The truth is, it speaks little of their company and their directors' capabilities, but it reveals a lot about their own integrity.

Sheldon Cohn is executive VP/director of broadcast at Doner Advertising in Southfield, Mich.

Flash Back

February 1, 2002 The Association of Film Commissioners International has assembled a staff management team, hiring **Bill Lindstrom** as CEO. **Lonie Stimac** as COO and **Sue Clark-Jones** as director of meetings and events....**Volkswagen's "Tree,"** directed by **Mike Mills** of the Directors Bureau, Hollywood, for **Arnold Worldwide, Boston**, won a Grand award for best commercial at the **New York Festivals**.... **Kieran Walsh** has assumed the newly created position of creative director at **Liquid Light**, the New York-based graphic design and visual effects studio...

February 7, 1997 The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences has set entry rules and deadlines for its first primetime Emmy Award recognizing commercialmaking as an art form....**Rick Beiber**, feature film and television producer, has joined bicoastal commercial production house **Harmony Pictures** as president/CEO....**Director Bill Mason** has signed with **Big Picture Films** for U.S.spot representation. The signing comes on the heels of **Marc Company's** promotion within the production house to the role of executive producer in New York...

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PEOPLE & PROJECTS

Director Bruce Dowad Shuttters Shop For Tight Relationship

By Robert Goldrich

SANTA MONICA—Director Bruce Dowad, who launched his Bruce Dowad Associates in 1989 and then relocated it from New York to Hollywood in '94, has decided to close that shop and join Santa Monica-based tight for exclusive U.S. spot representation. At press time, he was wrapping the last jobs under the Bruce Dowad Associates banner: AT&T for GSD&M, Austin, Tex., and Expedia out of Doner, Southfield, Mich. Next month Dowad is slated to embark on his first scheduled job at tight, Nabisco's Fig New-

said Dowad. "My decision to close it was purely a creative one. I wanted to free myself from the distractions, responsibilities and worries that go with ownership of a company. This is all about rejuvenating myself creatively and having my focus on the work first and foremost and on being able to take advantage of new opportunities that are emerging."

Bruce Dowad Associates enjoyed a great run. During his tenure there, Dowad established himself stateside after gaining prominence internationally and went on to win arguably the

Partners, San Francisco, Mercedes-Benz's "Don't Fence Me In" for Lowe & Partners/SMS, New York, and Coca-Cola's "World Dance" via Edge Creative, Santa Monica.

For the past couple of years, Dowad Associates was a one-director house. But the shop also earlier helped to de-

velop other directors such as Robert Logevall (now with bicoastal Anonymous Content, which he joined in '02) and Alain Gourrier (who came aboard Uncle, Santa Monica, a year ago, having previously been at Tate USA, Santa Monica).

Once he decided to begin a new

chapter in his career and move onto another roost, Dowad had to deliberate over his options for a new home. He began talks with longtime friend and colleague, tight partner/executive producer Jonathon Ker. "Before we ever met, I was well aware of Jona-

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A frame from Lexus' "Moments," one of many assorted notable spots directed by Dowad.

tons for FCB New York.

According to the director, Bruce Dowad Associates will shutter operations with its financial obligations fully met. "The business was good and we could have easily continued on with the company. It was profitable,"

industry's highest honor, the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award for best commercial director of the year. The DGA Award recognized him as the best director of '97 on the strength of three spots: Isuzu's "Giant" out of Goodby, Silverstein &

HPA Talks HD, Home Entertainment

By Carolyn Giardina

RANCHO MIRAGE, Calif.—Upwards of 90 percent of all commercials that aired during the Super Bowl were produced in HD, CBS' VP of Engineering and Advanced Technology Bob Siedel told SHOOT last week during the 2007 Hollywood Post Alliance (HPA) Technology Retreat, held last week at the Westin Mission Hills in Rancho Mirage, Calif. Here, an estimated 400 members of the post-production industry took a critical look at topics including the future of home entertainment and HD advertising.

Siedel shared news that not only is HD advertising up for the Super Bowl, but it is up for the average

week. He explained that a year ago, an estimated 10 to 20 spots per week were HD. This fall, however, he said the number of HD spots jumped to roughly 20 per night.

"I think advertisers felt there was critical mass," he suggested, noting that Consumer Electronics Association figures show that 46 million HD [television] units have been moved to date, with 19.6 million of that figure occurring in '06. "We're [CBS] saying there's a 30 to 35 percent penetration, our research shows.

"I also think a lot of advertisers themselves made the upgrade to HD [and saw the SD ads between the HD content]," he continued. "I think they

finally got it. Their commercials were not being portrayed in the best light."

Jim DeFilippis, senior VP and principal engineer, digital television technologies and standards at FOX Entertainment Group, also reported growth in HD advertising. But he also suggested the industry needs to reach a consensus on loudness. He pointed out, "You don't want viewers to reach for the remote—they may also switch the channel."

And, he said aspect ratio still needs to be addressed, as in today's world, programming may be viewed on a standard 4:3 screen or a 16:9 widescreen. He explained that program-

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PSAs Show It's Okay To Be A Backseat Driver—It Might Save A Life

Ad Council, North Castle Team Up To Prevent Youth Reckless Driving

By Nicole Rivard

STAMFORD, Conn.—Wouldn't it be nice if we all had a personal spokesperson—a hero of sorts—to rescue us when we are in a predicament and prevent something life threatening from happening? For instance, he or she could appear in our car and remind us of safe driving tips when we are putting ourselves at risk—speeding, text messaging, talking on the phone or listening to MP3 players.

The reality that there is no such person is at the heart of the new "UR The Spokesperson" campaign to prevent youth reckless driving created pro bono by Stamford, Conn.-based North Castle and the Ad Council. Other partners include Students Against Destructive Decisions, the American Automobile Association, the Wireless Foundation, a coalition of state Attorneys General and consumer protection agencies.

In "Act Now," one of two spots, an SUV swerves all over the road as the driver speeds. The situa-



Unfortunately there is no spokesperson like the one in this PSA to save the day.

tion becomes even more dangerous as he bends down to pick up his cell phone. A lively Jim Carrey-like spokesperson suddenly appears next to the passenger in the backseat and asks him how he would like to save himself from an ugly reckless driving death. "Don't answer yet. There's more. Act now by slowing down and we'll guarantee complete satisfaction," the spokesperson exclaims, to which everyone in the vehicle cheerfully shouts, "That's awesome." A voiceover says, "In the real world there is no spokesperson to prevent reckless driving." Then the spokesperson disappears as the camera zooms in on the backseat passenger

and the following words appear: "There's only you. Speak up. And the passenger does just that... we hear him shout "Slow down" as the spot comes to an end.

"We wanted to really amplify that notion of there is no spokesperson; there is no hero going to come in and save the day. Only you can do it.

"The spots hinge on creating this over-the-top spokesperson—someone they can kind of laugh at—and then we take him out. That void is really the body punch of the commercial. It shows it's up to them to make the next move," explains Steve Mark, partner, co-executive creative director at North Castle.

To emphasize the absurdity of having a reckless driving spokesperson, the spokesperson is not only overly energetic but he is also depicted in a more saturated color than the kids in the car.

"When he comes in, he is very saturated and very spokesperson-like so that he stands out.

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Mad River Forms Alliance With Frame By Frame

By Carolyn Giardina

ROME—Mad River Post—the editorial company that maintains offices in New York, Santa Monica, Detroit and San Francisco—has extended its international reach, entering into an alliance with Rome and Milan-based post house Frame by Frame, which specializes in broadcast design, motion graphics, promos and TV commercials.

Per the agreement, Frame by Frame will handle representation in Italy for Mad River's editorial roster. Meanwhile, Mad River will cut jobs at Frame by Frame as needed in Rome or Milan. As well, Mad River will offer Frame by Frame's motion graphics/design services to clients in the United States.

Prompting the deal was the existing working relationship between Frame by Frame and Mad River editor Marco Perez, who relocated from Rome to New York to join Mad River last year (SHOOT, 8/18/06). Perez often worked at Frame By Frame when in Italy and continued to maintain the relationship.

Cindy Kiley, Frame by Frame's head of business development as well as a Flame artist, said of the agreement, "The fantastic thing about that is its natural teamwork.

"It fell into place; we got an opportunity to work together on a job with Marco, and we are really in sync with our work philosophies. Working with Marco is fantastic. His coming back on the scene is exciting."

Mad River Post president Krystin Wagenberg echoed Kiley's sentiment, explaining, "Frame by Frame is the perfect post house for Mad River to team up with as our philosophies and personalities are so similar.

"The world is getting smaller and now Mad River has the ability to easily access and collaborate with the best creative talent in Rome and Milan," she added.

"The use of [Mad River's custom] video conferencing system [that operates via the Internet also] allows this to happen."

Frame by Frame offers editing, compositing, 2D and 3D services. While editing bays are available, the company doesn't maintain staff editors, as the editor is typically brought in with the productions in that market. Therefore, Kiley explained that there is no conflict of interest in the Mad River representation deal. Kiley also reported that an expansion will be taking place this year at Frame by Frame's facility in Milan.



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Adam Massey Signs With Untitled

LOS ANGELES—Untitled, the Los Angeles production house headed by owner/executive producer Jim Evans, has signed director Adam Massey for spots worldwide.

This marks the first U.S. commercial representation for Massey in several years; he had been handled in Canada by Circle Productions, Vancouver, B.C., and Toronto.

Much of his focus has been on directing the independent feature *A Lobster Tale*, written by noted agency creative Court Crandall of Ground Zero, Los Angeles. The film, produced by Massey's long-time colleague, Lincoln Stalmaster, most recently screened at the Austin Film Festival and currently has multiple offers for distribution.

Earlier in his career, Massey helmed spots via Reactor Films, Santa Monica, and prior to that now defunct Atlas Pictures. At the latter, he directed some Budweiser Super Bowl advertising fare, including the offbeat "Caveman" for the agency Open Minds, Laguna Beach, Calif. For the same client and agency in '99 Massey turned out "Lost Dog," which like the Big Game work showcased his sense of ad humor.



Adam Massey

"Lost Dog" opens on a man walking an annoying poodle. He spies a poster advertising a reward to anyone who can find the pictured lost dog—a spotted Dalmatian—with the reward being a Budweiser.

Spurred on by the free Bud, the man takes the poodle and decorates it with spots. He presents the canine to the owner of the missing dog, and before the confused owner can protest, the reward-seeker grabs the Bud from the man and exits the premises. In the :30's final shot, the man with the lost dog opens his door to reveal a crowd of people thirsty for the reward, each with a spotted hound in tow.

Student Breakthrough

Massey broke into the production house ranks with Atlas on the strength of a four-spot student reel he crafted while at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif. Two of those student spots gained recognition at the Clio Awards competition. Massey graduated from Art Center with a bachelor's degree of fine arts in film.

His coming aboard Untitled now thrusts him back into the spotmaking arena. Massey joins an Untitled directorial roster that consists of directors/DPs The Cronenweths, director/editor Glenn Martin and director/producer/creator Adam Reed. The shop's general manager is Larry Edwards with Geoff Campbell serving as head of production.

Massey has significantly more than 100 commercials to his directorial credit. He splits his time between Los Angeles and Toronto and has relationships with ad agencies and clients in Canada and Europe.

Among his international clientele are such brands as Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Molson's, Hallmark, General Motors, Sears, Labatt's and Southwest Airlines.

ARTISANS

Newest Cutters: Peter Tarter, Nadav Kurtz

CHICAGO—Editors Peter Tarter and Nadav Kurtz have joined the staff of Cutters. Tarter will be based at Cutters, Santa Monica; Kurtz at the company's Chicago shop. However they, like all Cutters' editors, are available to work at either office.

Tarter had been freelancing at Jigsaw, Santa Monica, last year after having been on staff there in 2005. Among his recent credits are Jeep's "Escape" and "Lemonade Stand" and Dodge's "Snowmobiles" for BBDO Detroit, Troy, Mich., as well as a client-direct spot for Thomasville, and AT&T's "World According to Kara" for Rogers Townsend, St. Louis. He has also been active cutting music videos (for such artists as Velvet Recorder, Eric Clapton and Breaking Benjamin) and short films (Matt Donaldson and Chuck Leal's *Bullfight*, which gained recognition at the '00 Music Video Production Association Awards).

Tarter's past affiliations included The Big House, Venice, Calif., Rye, Santa Monica, and Rock Paper Scissors, Los Angeles. He earlier served as an assistant editor at Spot Welders, Venice, where he broke into the business, and at Nomad Editorial, Santa Monica.

Meanwhile Kurtz's move to Cutters represents a homecoming as he had

served as an assistant editor at the Chicago facility in '00. He then became a staff editor at Outsider Editorial, Chicago, in '01. Kurtz's latest endeavors include Kellogg's Go-Tarts' "Grand Canyon" and "Shuttle" directed by Aaron Ruell of Area 51 Films, Los Angeles, for Leo Burnett USA, Chicago.



Peter Tarter

(Ruell has since joined Los Angeles-based Biscuit Filmworks). At press time, Kurtz's first scheduled ad assignments for Cutters were both for Draft-FCB, Chicago: John Deere directed by Leslie Dektor of Dektor Film, Los Angeles; and Dow directed by Iain Mackenzie of tight, Santa Monica.

Kurtz has garnered assorted awards during his career, including a best

sound design honor at the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) Show for Chicago Crystal Meth Task Force's "Crystal Breaks," a :30 he cut and did the sound design for via Outsider out of agency Lapiz, Chicago. Kurtz's Boeing commercial "Great Idea" earned a nomination in the Association of Independent Creative Editors Awards' Best of Chicago category last year. He also cut Malik Bader's *Street Thief*, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and is slated for release in March with distribution from A&E Indymovies. Kurtz also co-produced the feature, which won best of Chicago at the Chicago International Film Festival and landed on the *Village Voice's* Best in Show list for the Tribeca Fest.

The editor has also branched out into directing this past summer with an original stage play, *Hedy Lamarr*. He also helmed a dark short film, *Wrecker*, which has played on the festival circuit.

Tarter and Kurtz join a Cutters roster comprised of editors Chris Claeys, Kathryn Hempel, John Dingfield, Ruth Efrati Epstein, Christopher Gotschall, Nadia Hennrich, Carlos Lowenstein, Joel Marcus, Steve Stein and Fernando Villena. Cutters is headed by owner Tim McGuire.

Short Takes

DELI-STYLE BRAIN SURGERY

This graphic spot opens on a deli meat slicer, but instead of a corned beef or pastrami brisket being loaded onto the machine, we see a human brain locked into position. As choice cuts of gray matter are sliced off before our eyes, a voiceover provides context, noting that using meth causes brain damage. "Up to eight percent of the lobe used for memory, gone," relates the narrator. "Up to 10 percent of the part that controls your moods, emotions, your sex drive gone—maybe for good. Before you do meth, you better know how much of your brain you're willing



CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT

to give up—because afterwards, there's a chance you won't know much of anything." The starkly poignant ad for the Wyoming Department of Health is tagged with the website address MethKills-Wyoming.org. Driven by sound design from sound designer Brian Chapman and composers/sound designers John Nau and Andrew Feltenstein of Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif., the PSA, which is titled "Slicer," was directed by Ray Dillman of bicoastal/international MJZ for Sukle Advertising & Design, Denver. The agency team consisted of creative director Mike Sukle, copywriter Jim Glynn, art director Andy Dutlinger and producer Michon Schmidt. The DP was Julian Whatley. Editor was Tessa Davis of bicoastal Cosmo Street. Colorist was Shane Harris of Company 3, Santa Monica.

HOWLING HEARD IN NASHVILLE

Howling Music, a North Hollywood, Calif.-based producer of original music for advertising, has launched a full-service production office in Nashville. The company's aim is to broaden its access to emerging musical talent, both composers and performers, by tapping into Nashville's rich music scene that spans country and other genres. Howling Music principal David Grow said Nashville has always intrigued him as a source of musical talent that has been largely unexplored by the advertising industry. "Los Angeles has a large pool of musical talent, but it has been pretty thoroughly mined for ad work," he said. "Nashville, by contrast, is filled with amazing artists and players, a pool of talent roughly twice the size of L.A.'s, yet, they have been remarkably under-utilized for ad music and that creates a great opportunity for our clients." Howling Music, Nashville, features two recording studios. The company will maintain a small local staff while Grow and fellow staff composers Nick Brown, Jorgen Carlsson and Peter Slantsker will move between the company's Southern California headquarters and the new office as required by individual projects. Additionally, Howling plans to soon open a shop in Dublin, Ireland, in order to tap into European artists.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Adam Marton has joined the Filmworkers Club, Chicago, as executive producer/production. Marton is a 15-year veteran of the Chicago advertising and TV industry and served for the past decade as exec producer of The Film & Tape Works. In his new role, Marton



Adam Marton

will assist Filmworkers Club's existing ad agency clients in post-producing both traditional broadcast advertising projects and non-traditional media. He will also seek to develop new business....Suzanne Dunn has been named VP, interactive business development at Concrete Pictures. She is based in the Santa Monica office of the Philadelphia-headquartered creative agency/production house. Dunn formerly served as exec producer of DirecTV's Advanced Services & Content Group...

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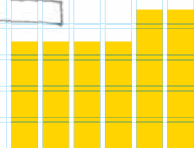
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Spotmakers Garner Sundance Kudos

Continued from page 1

Rocket Science, through commercial work. “Jo shot the spec spots that Mack Carter and I first directed together. That working relationship with Jo became the foundation of the whole movie. He was my partner in production, in creating the vision of the film, and it never would have happened had we not worked so much together in commercials,” Blitz said.

It might not have happened without the encouragement of Maud Nadler, a producer at HBO Films. After *Spellbound* came out, Nadler wanted to help Blitz make the transition to fiction film. In telling her about his life, Blitz mentioned that he got involved in high school debate to help him grapple with his stutter. “Maud instantly seized upon that as potential material for a story. With assurances that HBO Films wanted to make something adult and quirky, I set out to write the screenplay that eventually became *Rocket Science*,” recalled Blitz.

And the Sundance crowd is glad he did. While the jury recognized his gift for eliciting great performances, Blitz acknowledged the talent of his young cast as well. “Working with young actors is great. They’re so open, so willing to be guided. And they’re tireless about their work and excited by the whole process,” he said. “There’s something very rewarding about working with people who are so eager to dig deep for you.”

Blitz said he is ready to return to the spot arena and he will bring one lesson from working on *Rocket Science* back to his commercial work, “I learned again and again the value of making bold choices; they almost always helped to reinforce the specialness of the film. I’ve been off in space with *Rocket Science* for a long time but hope to return to the commercial world very soon.”

Visionary Chris Smith

Chris Smith of bicoastal Smuggler took home a Special Jury Prize for Singularity of Vision for *The Pool*, which he directed and co-wrote with Randy Russell. The film tells the story of a boy working in a hotel who becomes obsessed with a swimming pool at a home on the hills of Panjim Goa in India. His life gets turned upside down when he attempts to meet the mysterious family who arrives at the house.

Smith had spent some time in India about four years ago helping some friends shoot a film and was taken in by the landscape and the geography of Panjim Goa, where they were based. “The city had a big impact on me creatively, and I always thought it would be a great place to come back and film if it ever made sense—setting

or story wise,” he said.

Then about a year ago he read a story by Randy Russell called *The Pool*. “It was one of those things that just stood out and stayed with me as we were researching and looking at different projects. The story was actually set in Iowa—but the more I thought about it, it seemed like it could be adapted to the world I experienced in Panjim Goa.”

Smith discovered it was possible, but said that every aspect of the production was challenging. While he is a Sundance veteran—he won the Grand Jury Prize for best documentary for his film *American Movie* in 1999—this was one of his most difficult productions.

One of the biggest complications was the language issue. Smith explained that neither of the two kids in the lead roles spoke English so it was difficult to convey detailed direction quickly, and it could easily get translated in the wrong way. Even more challenging was the fact that the film was being shot in Hindi—which wasn’t the first language of either actor.

“So they were being directed in a language they didn’t understand and having to shoot complicated dialogue scenes in a language that wasn’t their first language. On top of this, the kids couldn’t read, so we couldn’t really prepare scenes in advance. We would get to a location, rehearse on the spot until they got it, then shoot,” Smith said.

Kudos for Chicago 10

SHOOT reported last month (1/12) that the movie that opened the festival, *Chicago 10*, had ties to spotmaking. Brett Morgen, who helms commercials via Anonymous Content, directed the film.

In *Chicago 10*, Morgen mixed original animation with archival footage to explore the build-up and aftermath of the weeklong anti-war demonstrations during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. The animated segments created a lot of buzz at Sundance.

“I think the stuff he put into it was

sufficiently unexpected and original that it had a sit-up-and-take-notice effect,” said Richard Winkler, executive producer at Curious Pictures, the New York studio that created the animation with Morgen.

He calls the method he used performance construction because it used a lot of motion capture but it used a lot of other elements as well. To bring the activists to life, the voices of actors like Nick Nolte and Hank Azaria were recorded and then actors who had physical similarities to the actual activists lip-synced the lines and roleplayed the events of the trial while motion capture technology recorded their performances.

“When we first started talking to Brett about this, we realized traditional animation was not going to work,” Winkler related. “Aesthetically it was never going to look edgy and interesting enough, it would always have a taint of cartoon, which would have undercut the whole message.

“For us it was very exciting. It opened up a new set of opportunities and a new set of stories that we think we could tell using a variation of this. It can easily be used for commercials.”

At press time there was a studio deal pending for *Chicago 10*.

In other news from Sundance, *Son of Rambow*, directed by Garth Jennings, who also helms spots via Anonymous Content, sold for just under \$8 million to Paramount Vantage. Set in the ‘80s, the film stars Will, who isn’t allowed to watch TV or go to the movies and expresses himself through drawing. Then he finds himself in the extraordinary world of Lee Carter, the school terror.

Waitress, directed by the late Adrienne Shelly and scored by Andrew Hollander of Sugarbox Studios, New York, sold for just under \$4 million to Fox Searchlight.

A distribution deal is pending for *Snow Angels*, produced by Crossroads Films Productions with Cami Taylor, Dan Lindau and Paul Miller serving as producers.



A scene from *Rocket Science*



HD Essentials

By Carolyn Giardina

Grass Valley Predicts “Dramatic” Industry Change

“It’s time for dramatic change in this industry,” proclaimed Jeff Rosica, Grass Valley’s senior VP of marketing and technology, during the Thomson-owned technology company’s 2007 Media Summit last week in Santa Monica. “The smart suppliers will need to use developments in technology.”

As one example, he cited storage. “In 2006, it became cheaper to store video content on a hard disk than on videotape...we can therefore adopt a ‘keep everything’ approach,” he said, emphasizing that digital and IT-based technologies are where the industry is heading, with increasingly lower entry costs.

Using new storage technologies, Rosica explained, “We are trying to eliminate the ingest step... make it plug and play. We think this depends on truly open, flexible systems.”

During his talk, Rosica also offered comment on the HD transition. “All of the elements are in place for a worldwide lift for HD, not just in the United States, but worldwide. [By the ‘08 Beijing Olympics] HD will be regarded as commonplace.”

Grass Valley is one of the largest exhibitors at the annual National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention. At the annual Media Summit, the company typically offers its perspective on the industry’s direction and previews some of its NAB product launches.

This started with a discussion of Grass Valley’s anticipated Infinity tapeless camera system, which was first announced at IBC ‘05, but has not yet shipped. Rosica said, “Are we later than we want to be? Yes, of course we are and we are not happy... we are going to take the time to add further improvements. We think there are advantages to taking our time to get it right.”

He reported that the company is adding a new “Xensium” high performance CMOS sensor. The native HD sensor has an array of 2.4 millions pixels, and according to Grass Valley it is designed to offer a wider dynamic range, require lower power consumption, and improve signal to noise performance when compared to current CCD and CMOS sensors.

As well, for the Infinity camera system it would include the wireless LCP400 local control panel, which is a software application installed on a PDA or smart phone that runs Windows Mobile 5 (or Windows Mobile 6 when available) and is designed to give operators access to metadata as well as camera functionality. Rosica said that the Infinity system is scheduled to enter beta during Q2 and ship at the end of that quarter.

As reported last week in HD Essentials, Grass Valley also announced a new member of the Spirit family, the Spirit HD. This is the next version of the popular Spirit Datacine, which was launched a decade ago and went on to become the most widely used telecine in commercial postproduction. In ‘04, Grass Valley launched the next-generation of the technology, the Spirit 4K film scanner, followed by the Spirit 2K. Both offered high-resolution data scanning capabilities.

According to Grass Valley, the new Spirit HD will share all the optical and mechanical components of the Spirit 2K and the Spirit 4K; this design would allow for upgrades. With a price point starting at \$698,000, Grass Valley estimates that this would offer savings of roughly 35 percent as compared with the basic version of the Spirit 2K/4K technology.

Also in the post sector, Rosica said NAB attendees could expect to see new applications in Grass Valley’s Bones postproduction system.

But on the camera side, Grass Valley chose not to comment when asked about the development of the Viper Plus, which was previously reported on in *SHOOT*.

SHOOT’s senior editor, technology and postproduction Carolyn Giardina can be reached at cgiardina@shootonline.com or at (323) 960-8035.

HPA Technology Retreat Topics: HD Spots, Home Entertainment

Continued from page 4

ming is produced for widescreen but while protecting for 4X3. “Unfortunately, we have taken a step back with advertisements,” he said, noting that ads are not always produced with this in mind.

“We need to work together with the advertising community and find common ground,” he told the HPA audience.

The HPA Retreat also included a half-day session on the future of home entertainment, designed to make the audience think about how complicated home entertainment is for the consumer and for the industry. The speakers outlined the components of complex home systems, including large and flat televisions, quality audio, connectivity to move content around the home, interactivity, time shifting capabilities, mobility and the ability to access what they want and when they want. The conclusion was that there are serious problems; the industry must make it easy for consumers to set up and access their entertainment, and to solve digital rights management to maintain a business model.

“This is a working ecosystem, and it is not done,” said Jerry Pierce, senior VP of technology at Universal Studios, who keynoted the session. “The entertainment driver remains the content. But I don’t think we’ve given consumers a path to get entertainment as easily as they used to. We are making it too complicated and I don’t see a solution.”

“A guiding principle should be to make quality entertainment that is convenient for the consumer, or the consumer will turn to one that does,” warned John Godfrey, VP of government and public affairs for Samsung Information Systems America.

Vincent Dureau, head of TV technology at Google, asserted that the home video workflow is “broken” because the devices are not easily connected and this interrupts the experience. He also questioned where consumers should store their photos, video and other data; in doing so, he pointed out that PCs, cell phones and the like can break, don’t talk to each other, and may move toward obsolescence.

“We need to move our center of gravity to the web,” he suggested. “The web is not going away anytime soon, and you can access your data anywhere. We predict that services and data trapped in individual devices will be migrated to the web.

Speakers and audience members identified other technologies such as disk storage to meet this goal. Godfrey suggested that open systems “need to

be easy to use to win. Apple is doing well [with its closed system].”

On television viewing and advertising in the new home entertainment model, Dureau related, “People are

watching less TV and they are skipping commercials, but billions of people are still watching TV. Audience fragmentation is good for advertising. Look at what targeted advertis-

ing did on the web; we believe the same could happen for television.”

At the retreat, Panasonic’s Jeff Cove predicted a spike in user-generated content, noting, “People will

become their own producers.”

Panelists also pointed out that with the wide range of options available, consumers have also become their own programmers.

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Super Bowl Spots Not So Super, According To Industry Feedback



Andy Azula

Continued from page 1
each other just got to be too much. I also thought FedEx tried to save a bland commercial with a guy getting killed at the end by a comet. FedEx did that last year with the caveman [getting stomped by the dinosaur] but this year the use of violence didn't make the spot funnier. I also thought the American Heart Association spot with the guy in the heart costume getting leveled was terrible.

The GM spot with the suicidal robot felt like a much more expensive version of Ikea's "Lamp" but not nearly as funny...I wanted to like Robert Goulet for Emerald Nuts. The story was a great setup but they didn't take it far enough. Maybe it wasn't campy enough.

In terms of what I liked, the Snickers commercial with the two guys kissing was pretty good [with alternate endings on the afterthekiss.com website asking viewers to vote for their favorite, the original plan being to run the winner during the Daytona 500. However the content was taken off the site due to complaints from GLAD and others]. The ad was a bit shocking but funny. To see men kissing is taking a risk. Probably the most controversial Super Bowl happening since Janet Jackson.

I also thought the Doritos spot created by the guy in North Carolina [user-generated content in which people's crazy, accident-prone behavior reflects qualities of Doritos chips] was decent. It was interesting because it wasn't terrible and it felt like the *American Idol* of the Super Bowl. It beat out a lot of other spots like Godaddy, GM and Schick.

What strikes me most the day after is how passionate people are about the Super Bowl commercials. There are blogs all over with people chiming in on the spots. Brands could clearly do a lot more.

Roger Baldacci,
exec VP/creative director, Arnold Boston

Overall the Super Bowl ads have sort of been in an NFC-like slump the last couple of years, a trend that seemed to continue this year. The more companies try to be grand, they end up bland. They're trying too hard to break out and come across. There were some standouts for me but in



Roger Baldacci

general people are trying too hard for the *USA Today* poll.

The standouts for me were sugar related, two for Coke and the Snickers spot. The Snickers' ad ran early in the first quarter—great placement but can tend to get forgotten as the game goes on. But this I didn't forget. It was simple and funny and great kudos to the client for even going there with that kind of humor. I laughed out loud as did my wife. It was a kind of *Trains, Planes and Automobiles* moment.

I loved the Coke videogame spot. Graphically it stood out in this computer/CG environment, playing off of Grand Theft Auto. The moment when the main character actually buys the Coke, the spot turns into a positive uplifting message. From a visceral standpoint, a messaging standpoint reaching a young game-oriented demographic, its humor and lightness, the spot worked on many levels. I'd like to watch it again and again.

The other Coke spot was the guy at the vending machine and then our being taken into the machine to show the loving care that goes into every Coke coming out of it. It's a visually stunning piece with the product as hero.

[Both Coke spots weren't originally created for the Big Game] which is interesting. Maybe without the extra pressure of trying to score on the Super Bowl, it's easier to focus on a great idea and to express it in the most visually compelling way.

I think Budweiser, a perennial Super Bowl winner, went down a bit this year. Again they have the top scoring spot in *USA Today*. Again it's classic Budweiser work—young adult male humor that's kind of what you expect from the playbook. It didn't break any new ground. I was less enamored by the Bud commercials overall this year.

GoDaddy was also from the same playbook. I wasn't too crazy about FedEx's moon spot and I'm one of those who's generally predisposed to like FedEx because their work is so good generally.

Overall there was all too typical Super Bowl advertising that has degenerated into cartoonish slapstick. You have a mass audience and you can't be too cerebral but I think people are going too far the other way with [low-



Cameron Day

est common denominator] humor. I understand why that's done because I had a Super Bowl spot a few years ago ["Shards of Glass" for the American Legacy Foundation] that was more of a thinking spot and scored from the middle to lower in the *USA Today* pack. Still I think there should be more room for better, more thoughtful comedy and work in general

I'm also tired of the talking animals. We had two gorillas talking [for Bud], two lions talking [for Taco Bell]. Let's put the talking animals brief to bed.

Cameron Day, *exec creative director, McGarrah/Jessee, Austin, Texas*

At the end of the Super Bowl I simply asked myself which brands I found myself liking better after having seen the commercials. Bud Light and Coca-Cola stood out for me. I wanted to drink a Bud Light or a Coke after the game. My favorite spot was for Coke [in which a senior citizen gets his first sip of Coke, prompting him to seek out other far-flung first experiences in life]. I felt here was something about drinking a Coke that could unleash all that.

Interestingly that spot wasn't made originally for the Super Bowl. Maybe that's why it worked. When people make Super Bowl commercials, they seem to put their stupid caps on and think about ways to spend more money than they need to and how much they can overproduce the work.

The Snickers commercial with the two guys meeting in the middle of a candy bar was very funny. But it didn't sell me the Snickers bar the way the Coke commercial made me want to have a Coke.

The Letterman/Oprah spot [for The Late Show] came out of nowhere. It gave me a genuine laugh. It's interesting that a program promo spot is right up there with the best Super Bowl spots this year.

I liked the Garmin spot a lot. There was a visual aesthetic to it that was unlike anything else that run during the game. I found myself being pulled into that story.

With everybody on the Super Bowl telling jokes, along came Sheryl Crow in a Revlon hair coloring spot. It was believable, didn't try to make me laugh and made me want to stay tuned [to see if her hair color survived



Michael Mark

a six-week concert tour]. There's a slightly voyeuristic appeal.

The campaign for taking care of your heart was very interesting in that a pharmaceutical company came up with a good way of talking to me about something I didn't want to talk about.

I was really rooting for the Chevrolet commercial based on songs written about Chevy over the years. I love American cars and Americana. There was a real power to that idea but the execution didn't work. It's the one that got away.

The Nationwide Insurance spot with Kevin Federline was a joke they told me a couple of years ago with MC Hammer and it was funnier then. I thought the spots that tied in African-American history felt like they were really pandering.

The idea of letting consumers do commercials is probably a better concept in the abstract than in reality. I hope they got all the PR value on the front end—both NFL and Doritos. Neither commercial was bad but neither one brought a real unique perspective to the table.

The worst campaign, the one I wish would go away and never come back, was Godaddy.com. Salesgenie.com also looked like it was done by a seventh grade class.

No advertiser really did what I think a Super Bowl commercial should do and be. I didn't walk away from the Super Bowl with one commercial in my head that really knocked my socks off. I have a high bar to clear, though, in that my dad [Guy Day] founded Chiat/Day and for me Apple's "1984" is the gold standard. There was no afterlife to the spots this year that compares to "1984."

Michael Mark, *creative director/CEO, NYCA, Encinitas, Calif.*

Historically we've had the dot-com Super Bowl. Then the quiet, subdued Bowl after 9/11. Then the gross Bowl with explosive farting from horses. Now this year's Super Bowl will be remembered from an advertising perspective as the S&M Bowl.

S&M because there was a tremendous amount of violence. Blockbuster bunnies pushing on a mouse, the Bud guys slapping each other left and right, another Bud guy throwing a



Mike Wolfsohn

rock at another's head in "Rock, Paper, Scissors," tortured workers for Careerbuilders.com.

And then you had the love message—from the crabs who love and worship Budweiser, Coke's videogame spot which is really saying "give a little love" and beautiful sentiments for Black History Month.

Between the love and violence dynamics, you have an S&M Bowl.

I wonder if it's because we're so conflicted in today's world. There's not a lot of good news out there with the war and everything else going on. It's a hard time and we're kind of beating ourselves up. The advertising reflects us slapping ourselves, throwing rocks at each other, torturing ourselves—but still loving the product. You even have an axe murderer hitchhiking but we love the fact he's toting Budweiser.

For Snickers, the guys kiss and then have to prove that they're men. For Doritos we have a guy checking out a girl, looking at her sweetly and all of a sudden he's in a car accident, with a crunch reflecting the crunchiness of Doritos. There's a yin-yang going on here, almost kind of looking for a balance. Again, in today's times, maybe we're all trying to find a balance and the advertising is a reflection of that.

My best of show would be the Blockbuster spot. It told me something I didn't know before—that Blockbuster is better than Netflix because you can go online but you can also return movies to the nearby brick-and-mortar stores. It was done with animation and delivered a relevant product message for a client and category that I previously thought were irrelevant for me. The animals talking is an old formula but it worked, the spot was cute and funny and relevant to the movie industry, which is what Blockbuster is all about.

It was nice to see Coca-Cola back in the Bowl with "The Coke Side of Life," but it wasn't telling me anything new...just like HP wasn't with "Making the PC personal again." Blockbuster told me something brand new, which is amazing in that the spot was made several years ago. (It aired five years ago in Canada, and just once due to animal rights activist objections to the CG mouse being "abused.")

Continued on page 25

DGA Names Dante Ariola Best Spot Director of 2006

Continued from page 1

additional thanks to the ad agency teams he worked with on the entered spots, noting that the DGA Award is recognition for them as well. "I'm happy for those creative people because their good work is being honored," said Ariola. "They were a pleasure to work with, good people, several whom I consider my friends. It shows that the process doesn't have to be a nightmare, there doesn't have to be a hellish battle to get good product and good results."

Ariola is also grateful that the DGA opened up the awards competition to foreign entries in 2003. Two of his entered commercials were for agencies from outside the United States. Noting that this is a global business, he said it's great that the DGA recognized that.

As for the experience of going up on stage before his peers, Ariola related, "It was surreal. I've been here three other times without my name being called but I still had a great time hanging out with all the directors I

respect. I was never disappointed to not win. I'm not competitive when it comes to this kind of stuff. To hear my name felt surreal—and it felt good. It was an amazing experience."

Ariola topped a field of nominees that also consisted of: Bryan Buckley of bicoastal/international Hungry Man; David Gray of Hungry Man; Tom Kuntz of MJZ; and Joe Pytka of Venice, Calif.-based PYTKA.

This marked the fourth time in five years that MJZ has had more than one nominee for the coveted DGA honor—and the second consecutive year that an MJZ helmer earned best commercial director distinction. Last year for best commercial director of '05, four of MJZ's directors were nominated (Craig Gillespie who won the award, Spike Jonze, Rocky Morton and Rupert Sanders). For the '04 honor, MJZ had two nominees—Ariola and Fredrik Bond. And for best helmer of '02, Ariola and Gillespie garnered nominations.

The DGA Awards are in their



Dante Ariola

59th year. The DGA opened the annual competition to commercial directors in 1980.

Feature attraction

For the second straight year, the DGA Awards' feature film category was of particular interest to the spot-making community in that the husband-and-wife directing team of Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris—whose commercial production home is

Bob Industries, Santa Monica—received their first career nomination for the theatrical motion picture *Little Miss Sunshine*.

Last year, Hungry Man director Bennett Miller was nominated in the category for his acclaimed feature directorial debut *Capote*.

While Dayton and Faris didn't win the DGA Award—which was bestowed upon Martin Scorsese for *The Departed*—they were deeply honored by the nomination.

Presenting them with the nomination medallion was actor Steve Carell, one of the cast members in *Little Miss Sunshine*.

Carell humorously recalled his first meeting with Dayton and Faris. "We spoke at length about *Little Miss Sunshine*," he said. "It became clear that they were caring, generous and kind individuals and I knew they would never succeed in Hollywood. But I needed a job."

He also praised the film's theme of family. "The film's humanity is a re-

flection of their own," Carell said.

Dayton and Faris then came on stage, and talked about the movie while referencing their commercial-making background.

Dayton began, "On our press tour, we were often asked why, having come from music videos and commercials, did our movie look so plain?"


Faris continued. "We knew the job was to balance this very fragile tone." And Dayton added, "balancing the characters"

Faris concluded that they aimed to "achieve a certain kind of simplicity"—which clearly was the right approach. The comedy has received critical success, winning top honors at the Producers Guild Awards, and is nominated for four Academy Awards including best picture.


Before leaving the stage, the pair expressed their appreciation to a list of collaborators as well as everyone at Bob Industries.

—additional reporting by Carolyn Giardina


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The President Of The International Cinematographers Guild Discusses His Agenda For The Organization



By Carolyn Giardina

Last summer, the national executive board of the International Cinematographers Guild (ICG), IATSE Local 600, elected commercial, television and feature DP Steven Poster, ASC as its new president.

He was elected to fill the remaining term of Gary Dunham's presidency, following Dunham's removal from office; Poster's term runs through May '07.

Poster has been a member of IATSE since 1969. He has been a VP of the ICG and a member of the executive board of the International Documentary Association. He served as president of the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) from '02-'03, and currently serves as a vice chair of the ASC Technology Committee.

Poster was born and raised in Chicago. He studied photography at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena,

Calif., and subsequently earned his degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology. Following graduation, a commercial film production company in Chicago hired him as an assistant cameraman, and he was soon promoted to cameraman. He shot industrial and educational films, TV commercials and documentaries during that formative period.

Poster then began shooting second unit for Vilmos Zsigmond, ASC, on several films (*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *The River*) and for Jordan Cronenweth, ASC (*Blade Runner*).

Poster moved to California in the mid-'70s and primarily shot television commercials. In '79 he landed his first feature film, a horror movie called *Blood Beach*.

He continues to shoot commercials on a regular basis. As well, his recent work includes: *Mrs. Harris*, starring Annette Bening and Ben Kingsley, for which Poster was nominated for an Emmy last year in the cinematography category; and director Richard Kelly's *Southland Tales*, which was in competition last year at Cannes.

SHOOT: What are your primary goals as president of the ICG?

Poster: My first and primary goal with the ICG was to bring us back together as a family, as brothers and sisters, and as a union.

It's no secret that there has been some turmoil over the last few years. The support that we've been given by members across the country has been tremendous. My goal has been to do things for the members and we have already accomplished quite a bit. We had our first nationwide craft meeting with the camera operators—a video-conference from L.A. to all our regional offices. It was a two-and-a-half-hour meeting to discuss those issues that affect the camera operator directly. People who participated thought it was a great success. We will continue with this to have an assistants meeting, cinematographers meeting and meetings for all the other crafts that we represent.

We also had a mega digital weekend training session where we brought more than 80 members to Atlanta from as far away as Minnesota, South Carolina, Texas, Florida and Louisiana to train on the [Arri] D-20, [Dalsa] Origin, [Grass Valley] Viper, [Panavision] Genesis, and the [Sony] F900. It was a weekend where significant training took place; as well members had a chance to meet each other for the first time from across the central and southeastern regions of the country. We will extend this event at least

two more times this year; one for the Northeast and one for the Southwest. Many other plans for training and get togethers are in the works. As an organization, we must give back to our members. This goal has been lost in the last few years.

The second goal of my presidency has been to repair our relationship with the other locals within the IATSE and raise our status in the community. Based on the response we've gotten, this has also been successful.



This is through meetings, social events and through visiting many sets across the country.

I plan to run for another term as president this spring to continue the work that I've begun.

SHOOT: What are some of the current issues affecting ICG membership?

Poster: One of the most important issues that we need to deal with for our members is new and hybrid technologies and new visual delivery systems. The technology world is

changing at breakneck speeds. As a union we have to identify what work will be available for our members in the immediate and in the distant future. When a producer says we need somebody to do X, Y or Z, we want our members trained and ready to accomplish those tasks.

[Another issue is that] in the past few years there has been a small but vocal group trying to convince labor and government organizations to fund what is known as a 301A Trade

Action against Canadian subsidies to try and stem runaway production. Our board of directors recognized that this was not the best way to deal with the runaway problem. We had voted it down before, but it kept coming back. So I called a meeting [in November] to have both sides represented by experts, which had never happened before. Michael Punke, formerly advisor to the U.S. trade representative; and Alan M. Dunne, a trade attorney who wished to represent us if we agreed to spend the money to file this action, had a lively debate for more than

hour. Both positions were fairly represented. And the end result was that our board decided once again to not support these trade sanctions. We believe that runaway production of any kind is always a serious problem.

We are working with other organizations to find positive ways to bring work back to America.

SHOOT: Would you reflect on the current state of commercial cinematography and its challenges?

ICG president Poster continues to cross over as a DP with a mix of spots, promos and the feature film Southland Tales directed by Richard Kelly.

Poster: Once again, we see a changing landscape in the world of commercial photography. I've seen some of the best cinematography ever done in commercials recently.

As well, I've seen some of the least exciting presentations of images. There is a great disparity between the high end and the low end. And oddly enough, this does not reflect necessarily on the budgets of the commercials.

It's becoming increasingly difficult for cinematographers over the years to become involved in the post-

production of their commercial work. One of the exciting developments that's just around the corner has to do with color and image management directed all the way through the process from image creation to final delivery.

This will allow us as cinematographers to have our original content seen and understood by agencies and clients even if we are not available in person.

This will be a great leap forward in the art and craft of commercial cinematography. We are nearing the goal that I've been talking about of end-to-end device independent color management.

This will be an important development across the entire visual landscape, whether you are shooting commercials, television or feature films.

SHOOT: Can you discuss some of your recent work?

Poster: The recent work that we hope to see on the screen this spring is director Richard Kelly's (*Donnie Darko*) second movie called *Southland Tales*.

This film is a unique and exciting movie that I think will be as important *Donnie Darko* was.

I've also over the last year moved back to some of my favorite work in commercials and promos.

I grew up doing this work. And I'm happy to be back at it.

Agency Producers At Saatchi “Ramp” Up For The Super Bowl

Stevens, Bendetti Team With Director Douglas To Wrap An Ambitious, Logistically Challenging Spot Package

By Robert Goldrich

Talk about raising the stakes in the already pressure-packed Super Bowl ad derby. That’s what Saatchi & Saatchi LA, Torrance, Calif., did with its two Toyota Tundra Truck spots on the Big Game, bringing to life bigger-than-life concepts fraught with complex logistical, physical and safety challenges.

“You don’t ever like to say ‘no.’ It’s not part of an agency producer’s vocabulary. So when the scripts were pitched internally, we said, ‘Yeah, we can do that,’” recalls Saatchi & Saatchi LA producer Richard Bendetti.

The “we” Bendetti refers to are himself and Damian Stevens, executive VP, director of integrated production/multimedia for Saatchi LA.

The concepts are adrenaline-generating visual tour de forces shot in camera. In “Ramp,” we are told that zero to 60 mph is one thing; 40 to 70 is quite another—and 70 to zero is yet another story—as we see a Tundra accelerate along what looks like an airport runway strip/ramp in the middle of nowhere.

The speed is needed so that the Tundra can get past a pair of huge closing steel doors in the distance. The pedal to the metal acceleration clears the twin door obstacle—with an inch to spare on either side of the truck, rear view mirrors included—but that’s only half the journey. In a moment the truck has to come to a stop on a dime as the 900-foot ramp ends, hanging out over a gigantic precipice.

Just as daunting and heart stopping is Tundra’s “See Saw.” Imagine 455 linear feet of seesaw, with the center of the fulcrum some six stories high. A truck towing a 10,000 pound load drives up one side of the seesaw, gets to the top, accelerates and drives down, brakes and comes to a halt at the other very end of the seesaw.

Noted stunt driver Chuck Picerni Jr. was behind the Tundra steering wheel on both spots. His perspective on the seesaw sojourn, relates Stevens, includes going up the ramp and seeing nothing but sky, then viewing mountain tops (the spot was shot outside Lone Pine, Calif., with the Mount Whitney range visible), then flat land and finally making visual contact with the other side of the seesaw.

“The truck is not tethered at all and there’s a six-inch lip on the ramp surface,” says Bendetti. “The capabilities of the truck and its driver are what’s keeping it on the seesaw and able to perform so remarkably.” Spotters on location—including the famed stunt driver Chuck Picerni Sr.—communicated via radio to Picerni Jr. to tell him



Damian Stevens

what his marks were because the driver could not see the other end of the seesaw for a good portion of the run.

Add to that an Ultimate Arm Crane on a Mercedes ML (housing two to three people), which both separately followed and then led the Tundra over the seesaw on different runs, capturing footage from those vantage points.

Extensive testing was done. To give some mathematical context, the maximum highway grade as a matter of public record is 4.6 degrees, which is an eight percent grade while the steepest boat ramp grade is nine degrees which equals 16 percent. By comparison, the grade for the seesaw in this Tundra spot was 16 degrees, which translates to a 28 percent grade.

After a test run, Picerni Jr.—whose stunt filmography includes *The Fast and Furious*, *Lethal Weapon 2* and BMW’s web film *Star* [part of “The Hire” series]—admitted that it made him a bit nervous, recalls Stevens. “A guy like that who would jump a car off a ramp almost routinely felt nervous. That said a lot—first that we needed to take every safety precaution possible and from a conceptual standpoint that we had something that dramatically showed the true mettle of the Tundra.”

Grand scale

Stevens says simply, “It’s the largest seesaw that any vehicle has ever driven over or encountered.”

How large? Driving to location you could see the seesaw from four miles away. People were getting off the 395 highway and taking pictures. F18 jets were flying over—some very low and slowly. “The military guys out of [nearby] Edwards Air Force Base were probably wondering what they were looking at,” smiles Stevens.

Rigorous testing was also done on “Ramp,” with runs to see exactly how many feet it took for the Tundra to go from 70 mph to zero. To get the necessary expansive space to make these runs, a drag strip in Riverside, Calif., was rented.

Test runs were also done in the parking lot at Dodger Stadium. And

the testing garnered certification from Automotive Marketing Consultants, Inc. (AMCI).

To build the ramp and the seesaw, a construction company that contracts with the military to build bridges over expansive spans was sought out and secured.

Andrew Douglas

Andrew Douglas of bicoastal Anonymous Content directed and shot this ambitious three-spot package, the third spot being “Scale,” which is scheduled to debut at a later date. It was Douglas’ team that came up with the specialty construction company that regularly contracts with the military.

“The initial company that they contacted specialized in building gigantic roller coasters,” says Stevens.

However, the numbers came in too high—even for a package with a healthy budget. Douglas’ production designer Bruce McCloskey then found an alternative, a company in Alabama used by the U.S. Army Corps of engineers to replace washed out bridges.

“We went with Andrew as the director because he just took the idea and owned it from the start,” explains Bendetti.

“Andrew invested in the idea, got engineers on board and created scale models of the ramp and the seesaw. He came to us with a pitch which showed extensive thought, research and effort. He also was the only director who said we could do it practically. Others were thinking of practical combined with visual effects. We preferred to do it pretty much all in-camera to show the Tundra’s capabilities and Andrew believed in and was committed to that approach.”

Stevens adds, “We had worked with Andrew before and had a high level of



Richard Bendetti

comfort and trust in him. And to show you how meticulous his team’s work was, the seesaw in the commercial is spot on with the model they came to us with three months ago. The same can be said for the ramp.”

The Saatchi team included executive creative director Harvey Marco, creative director Erich Funke, Ste-

vens and Bendetti. Ray Johnson was the copywriter and Gavin Milner the art director on “Ramp” and “Scale.” Erek Vinluan was art director and Craig Lederman the copywriter on “See Saw.”

Robert Duffy of Spotwelders, Venice, Calif., edited all three spots, with effects work from Method, Santa Monica.

“These spots are so unusual with extensive testing, precision and construction,” says Bendetti. “And the work is harrowing in some respects. We took many safety precautions yet everything was done real on a tight schedule—not to mention the pressure of the Super Bowl.”

Stevens affirms, “It shows that if you put your heads together, you can come up with a solution.”



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

Toyota Tundra’s “Ramp”

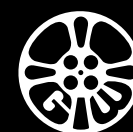


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Tundra’s “See Saw”



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Top Spot of the Week

Director Henry Lu Revs Up Engine for ESPN/NASCAR, Wieden + Kennedy

By Christine Champagne

Director Henry Lu, who is represented by bicoastal Moxie Pictures, didn't have any trouble finding talent willing to appear in a multi-spot campaign he recently shot in and around Dallas promoting ESPN's broadcast of NASCAR races. In fact, when potential performers learned that he would be shooting some of the scenes on the infield during the Dickie's 500 race at the Texas Motor Speedway, they were clamoring to get hired. "They were like, 'You don't have to pay me!'" Lu recalled with a laugh.

With a cast of rather enthusiastic actors, Lu and DP Scott Henrickson spent six days shooting four commercials, including the :30 "The Sound of Speed," SHOOT's Top Spot of the Week. The campaign was created by Wieden + Kennedy, New York; incidentally, Lu was once a producer at W+K, Portland, Ore.

Relying on a series of vignettes and sound design, "The Sound of Speed" depicts children appreciating the sound of speed. While one little boy uses a clothespin to attach a playing card to the spokes of his bike tire so he can hear the whirr as he pedals along, other kids get amped up play-

ing a video game featuring loud racecars. Older kids zoom about outside in go-carts. Elsewhere, a child sits in the back seat of a car, lulled into a tranquil state by the sound of the car and the passing traffic.

The spot winds up on the infield at a NASCAR race where a boy cruises around on his bike, hopping off and rushing up to the chain link fence

that separates the infield from the track just in time to see and hear the cars roar by. The look on his face is one of awe. The commercial ends with the tagline, "It's the life." According to W+K Art Director Stuart Jennings, the commercial is designed

"to speak to our primal, instinctive attraction to speed in general."

Why focus on kids? "It's visually easier to communicate with kids—they show fascination a lot better than adults do," Jennings mused.

Jennings thought up the vignettes featured in the commercial with his W+K copywriter colleague Greg Kalleres. Executive creative directors Kevin Proudfoot and Todd Waterbury and creative directors Derek Barnes and Paul Renner also worked on the project.



Henry Lu

Autobiographical

On the shoot, Lu said he couldn't help but tease Jennings. "It was basically his childhood we were filming," the director said. "He had go-carts. He had a dirt bike. He had an old car."

Well, even if it was somewhat autobiographical, "The Sound of Speed" successfully taps into a more universal interest in and curiosity about speed.

While the concept was solid, the challenge for Lu was to create moments that felt real, as though they were found, and one of the keys to making that happen was finding the right talent. "The way I cast, I don't get people to act out things. I usually just have a conversation with them," Lu said. "It's more, 'Hey, what did you do on the weekend?'"

When it comes to getting the right performances from kids, "A lot of it is about the environment you keep on set. You really have to make them feel comfortable," Lu shared.

Whiz kid

The most compelling performance in "The Sound of Speed" comes when the kid who is riding his bike around the infield during a race dashes to the fence to see the cars whiz by. The boy in the role had watched NASCAR races on TV but had never been to one. "That boy's expression in that you would never be able to fake," Lu said, noting, "The sound is just amazing. I can't tell you how loud it is."

The deafening sound wasn't exactly conducive to communicating. "I would be sitting there yelling to the boy from a foot away, and he couldn't hear me. Then I would have to yell right beside his ear, and then he could hear me. Even when the cars were not in front of us, you could not hear yourself think," Lu related.

Away from the roar of the cars, Crandall Miller of The Whitehouse, New York, set about editing the spot, putting the vignettes together to create a narrative arc. "Crandall did a really good job in getting the flow," Lu praised, adding, "They get my vibe [at The Whitehouse]. I've worked a lot with Whitehouse, and Crandall's a friend of mine, so they understand how real I want things to be—I just kind of get really bothered by commercials that are overproduced and too slick."

Miller also handled the sound design, using both audio from the shoot as well as other effects to help amplify that sound when necessary.

Looking back on the job, Lu noted that he had the pleasure of not only

shooting some great spots but also getting to immerse himself in the whole NASCAR scene. Before shooting the campaign, he studied up on the sport and got to attend a race in Atlanta. "It's actually fascinating, and that's what made it a really unique opportunity," the Toronto native reflected. "Whenever you can get yourself into and watch a culture first-hand like that, it's interesting. You get to meet a subculture that is so different from what you're used to every day."

TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK

CLIENT
ESPN

AGENCY

Wieden + Kennedy, New York
Kevin Proudfoot and Todd Waterbury, executive creative directors; Derek Barnes and Paul Renner, creative directors; Greg Kalleres, copywriter; Stuart Jennings, art director; Gary King, head of production; Temma Shoaf, producer.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Moxie Pictures, bicoastal
Henry Lu, director; Scott Henrickson, DP; Robert Fernandez, executive producer; Karol Marrs, head of production; Tony Cantale, producer. Shot on location in and around Dallas.

EDITORIAL

The Whitehouse, New York.
Crandall Miller, editor; Kim O'Donnell, assistant editor; Corina Dennison and Lara Pilla, executive producers; Melanie Klein, producer.

POST

Company 3, New York
Tim Masick, colorist; Sean Dunkley, colorist assistant; Megan Wroclawski, producer.
RIOT Manhattan, New York
Jay Tilin, online editor; D. Todd Davidovich, executive producer; Angela Lupo, senior producer.

SOUND DESIGN

The Whitehouse.
Crandall Miller, sound designer.

AUDIO POST

audioEngine, New York
Tom Goldblatt, mixer; Gloria Pitagorsky, producer.

GRAPHICS

Brand New School, New York
Jonathan Notaro, director; Ludovic Schomo and Sarah Ancalmo, designer/art director; Jennifer Sofia and Danny Rosenbloom, executive producers; Kevin Hanny, producer.



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

To promote NASCAR coverage on ESPN, agency Wieden + Kennedy, New York, taps into our fascination with speed—as seen through the eyes and heard through the ears of children. Director Henry Lu captures awe-inspired kids as they experience the fast track as first-hand observers and listeners.

The Best Work You May Never See

Dir. Rothwell Pools Talent For Synchronized Spot

By Robert Goldrich

Ah, the joys of summer, which in Australia are already being experienced by the sun-worshipping populace. Fittingly, this Aussie spot titled "Rituals" takes us through the poolside behavior and antics that are an indelible part of the season—so much so that seemingly everyone is performing them in synchronized fashion.

We start with many people descending upon a public pool. In unison they snap open their towels and set them down to sit upon. Folks apply sunscreen to the back of the swimsuit-clad guy or gal sitting in front of them.

A line of people stand at the edge of the pool and at the same time dip a toe into the water. Then we're in store for some synchronized cannonball dives into the drink.

After the big splashes, more rituals unfold before our eyes including gals simultaneously adjusting the backs of their swimsuit bottoms to remedy any wedgies in the making. Next people hit and cup their ears as if to jostle out the other side the water nestled in their ear canals. We then see several people seemingly in unison shooing away errant bugs from their faces.

Finally, we get a glimpse of someone—an attractive shapely blond lass walking by in a two-piece bikini—doing her own individual thing. But even that serves merely as a catalyst for more group action en masse. Guys predictably sit up at attention upon seeing the lovely woman—at which point their wives slap their spouses on side their heads, providing a rude awakening to reality, knocking those fleeting sensual fantasies out of their minds.

We then witness everyone picking up a Drumstick ice cream treat and eating it from the top—all except for one guy who's starting at the bottom of the cone. Peer pressure takes hold as all eyes are upon this nonconformist who sheepishly backs off. A supered message on screen reads, "A summer classic since '63," referring to the unbeatable taste of Nestle's Drumsticks.

Titled "Rituals," this :60 was directed by Hamish Rothwell via Goodoil Films, Sydney, for Publicis Mojo, Sydney and Melbourne. (Rothwell is represented stateside by TWC, Santa Monica.)

"What I loved about the idea," said Rothwell, "was the opportunity to capture the funny things that happen over summer at the pools here in Australia—and to be able to tie that into the product at the end. Ice cream is indeed part of the summer ritual here."

Helpful in doing justice to the concept was Rothwell's experience working with several of the Publicis Mojo creatives on a humorous World Cup campaign last year for Nike. The director noted that he and the agency team struck up an initial rapport and trust which served them in good stead on their return engagement for Drumsticks.

Busby Berkeley

Rothwell found inspiration from several sources, including the Mass Games in North Korea and the Busby Berkeley-directed and choreographed musi-

cals of the 1930s, '40s and early '50s. Those Berkeley extravaganzas feature what's widely regarded as examples of classic cinema choreography with hundreds of performers hoofing in unison, at times forming larger than life design patterns.

The alluded to Mass Games feature thousands of people performing tasks in sync. "There's a great English documentary about girls rehearsing for these games and that had an influence on us," said Rothwell. "But the Mass Games with so many people can play out as robotic and a bit alienating.

"Balancing that for me," continued Rothwell, "is the feel of the Berkeley films with people of different body shapes, with a human element of each movement not being so precise, certainly not robotic. We needed that humanity so that people could relate to and enjoy the humor. The visuals and the comedy cannot be at odds with one another—that's why the humanity is so important."

And like the Berkeley films, the music element is key in "Rituals," with the synchronized behavior unfolding to the playful summer tune "Love You" by the 1960s' group Free Design.

American ad aspirations

Rothwell recently came aboard the TWC roster. An accomplished spot director Down Under, he waited until he felt his reel was developed enough to translate well in the American ad arena and to draw the attention of U.S. agency creatives. His body of work encompasses a wide range of comedy, broadened even further by "Rituals."

credits

Client Nestle's Drumsticks Agency Publicis Mojo, Melbourne and Sydney Darren Spiller, executive creative director; Justin Ruben, copywriter; David Klein, art director; Sally Davis, producer. **Production Company** Goodoil Films, Sydney Hamish Rothwell, director; Matt Long, executive producer; Sam Long, producer; Nigel Bluck, DP. **Editorial** Guillotine, Sydney Stewart Reeves, editor **Post/Visual Effects** Fin Design, Sydney Richard Lambert, Flame artist The Lab, Sydney Ben Eagleton, colorist **Audio** Gusto Music, Melbourne

Publicis Mojo Explores Summer "Rituals"



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iWork

M&M's and BBDO New York Are Encouraging Consumers To Let Loose

New Campaign Shows Customers How To Embrace Their 'Inner M' And Have Fun

By Nicole Rivard

Whether you add them to a recipe or use them as a festive, colorful decoration on a tray of cookies, M&M's are known to add life to a party—they really know how to have a good time. But can you say the same for yourself?

In a new campaign for M&M's, BBDO New York suggests people can have more fun in their lives if they simply find their "inner M."

Referring to past campaigns like "Chocolate is Better in Color" Susan Credle, executive creative director at BBDO New York, said that creatively they always had fun with the brand, but never *owned* fun. "This campaign is a shift to be more overtly into the emotional territory of what we want our brand to be," Credle said. "Again I don't think we haven't been this all along, but we've never really taken that step to declare it."

And she believes there is no time like the present. "Everybody is so busy and so hectic...nobody knows how to have fun anymore. So we decided, 'Why don't we be the champions and tell people it's okay to have fun, to get in touch with that piece of yourself that is fun?' We need to do this for the brand and the world needs the brand to do it."

To help people get in touch with their playful side, BBDO tapped The Barbarian Group, Boston, to build an interactive Web site where people can make their very own "inner M" character—in other words, create caricatures of themselves as M&M's. Visitors to BecomeAnMM.com will find the Character Creator, which leverages cutting-edge technology to deliver a user-friendly experience. The Character Creator provides access to a wide variety of M&M's candy shapes, colors, hair, facial features and accessories, creating endless possibilities for combinations, ensuring users will be able to really personalize their "inner M" likeness.

Easy access

With all of those creative options, it is remarkably fast and easy to use. "It was not easy to get there though," said Barbarian Group partner/COO Rick Webb with a laugh. Among the challenges: file size optimization, making sure the design of the site made the most sense to users and adapting to a different production process.

"We do a lot of 3D work and build a lot of 3D into Flash, but we're used to building a scene or a character. Here we authored more than 500 little individual components," he explained. We had to work in a totally different way than normal. Time estimates were way off, and the production process was totally different."

Not only is there a huge selection of body parts and accessories on the site, they are available in tons of colors. The team, which used Maya for the 3D modeling, had to create a method to make it possible to apply different colors to a 3D item—a hat for example—as opposed to having individual red, blue or pink hats that have to be downloaded all at once. "Originally we thought we were going to be able to do it with colors individually before we figured out the way to apply the color in Flash, so we had to revise the process," Webb explained. "The



After visitors become an M&M, they can pose for a photo in the world of Planet M&M.

process was not really made for millions of small discreet parts, so that was kind of a learning experience. But it worked out well. It was a fun challenge for everyone."

Upon exiting the Character Creator, visitors enter the world of Planet M&M's, where they can play online games or enter a gallery and add their "Inner M" to photos and short movies, which can be shared electronically with family and friends, as well as enter "E-depot" for free downloads such as screensavers and e-cards. Over time, the goal is to create a virtual store that will offer visitors the chance to personalize items such as mugs.

"We really compared what we wanted to do with Planet M&M to Disneyland. We bought the land and now we have to start building the rides and keep at it—it's not a finite site. It's built to be able to expand and grow and evolve," said Credle.

TV and print ads are driving people to the site. "I think we had a million hits after a week and the average time spent is 10 minutes. We weren't like, 'let's see if people would discover this virally.' We tell people it's here.

"I see a lot of stuff on the Internet that is interesting but I don't know how people get there beyond the people who are always on the Internet. I love the idea of viral and discovery but I think people are too busy and want to be told what they're supposed to do and where they're supposed to go. We tried to make it easy for everybody," Credle said.

She points out that this endeavor did not begin as an online initiative, just a cool idea. She warns if you focus too much on the delivery medium you can do a disservice to the idea. "I think you have to come up with what you want to say and then you go, 'Okay, we have an incredible amount of tools to say it with, where do we say it?'"

credits
Client: M&M's Agency:
 BBDO New York David Lubars/Bill Bruce, chief executive officers; Susan Credle, exec. creative director; Lauren Connolly, Tim Bayne, creative directors; Bryan Wilson, art director; Rick Abbott, copywriter; Josh Eisenman, director interactive marketing
Interactive
 The Barbarian Group, Boston



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Coming of Age

While *SHOOT* has chronicled major production houses' diversification into new content opportunities—from @radical.media's hiring of Bob Friedman and the formation of entertainment conception, creation and distribution company Radical Thinking, to Believe Media bringing agency vet Mark Sitley aboard to partner in content firm Beyond Belief last year—a new coming-of-age beat can be heard in the movement to extend the spot shop business model to encompass much more.

Indeed the Association of Independent Commercial Producers is in the process of sharing with the production house community what AICP president/CEO Matt Miller calls “amazing, relevant, tangible pieces” developed by AICP.next, a committee formed last year to provide insight, context and answers as to how houses can capitalize on emerging content opportunities while dealing with new sets of related risks and potential liabilities. This dialogue will look beyond the traditional work-for-hire scenario to encompass other forms of compensation for production companies, including intellectual property ownership and creative fees.

In the spirit of breaking new ground, *SHOOT* wanted to look past the Top 20 Companies pabulum that's in vogue and offer some examples of smaller at times overlooked shops that have more than gotten their feet wet in new content waters, as well as divisions that have come out of the considerable shadows cast by their production house parents to gain traction in the marketplace.

Rebranding

On the latter score, consider V3, formed two years ago as an offshoot of Anonymous Content to develop new interesting, up-and-coming directorial talent and facilitate emerging media projects. At times, Anonymous' established spot directors would also get a taste of new media projects via V3.

But now V3 has evolved into something greater as it is being rebranded as Anonymous Content Emerging Media. The division's executive producer Sylvia Kahn Versace explains, “The rebranding signals the maturing of the business. As budgets for new content become more substantial—and as these projects help to define future paths for the advertising/marketing business—the stakes get higher and it makes sense to bring all of the Anonymous Content resources to bear in this developing area.”

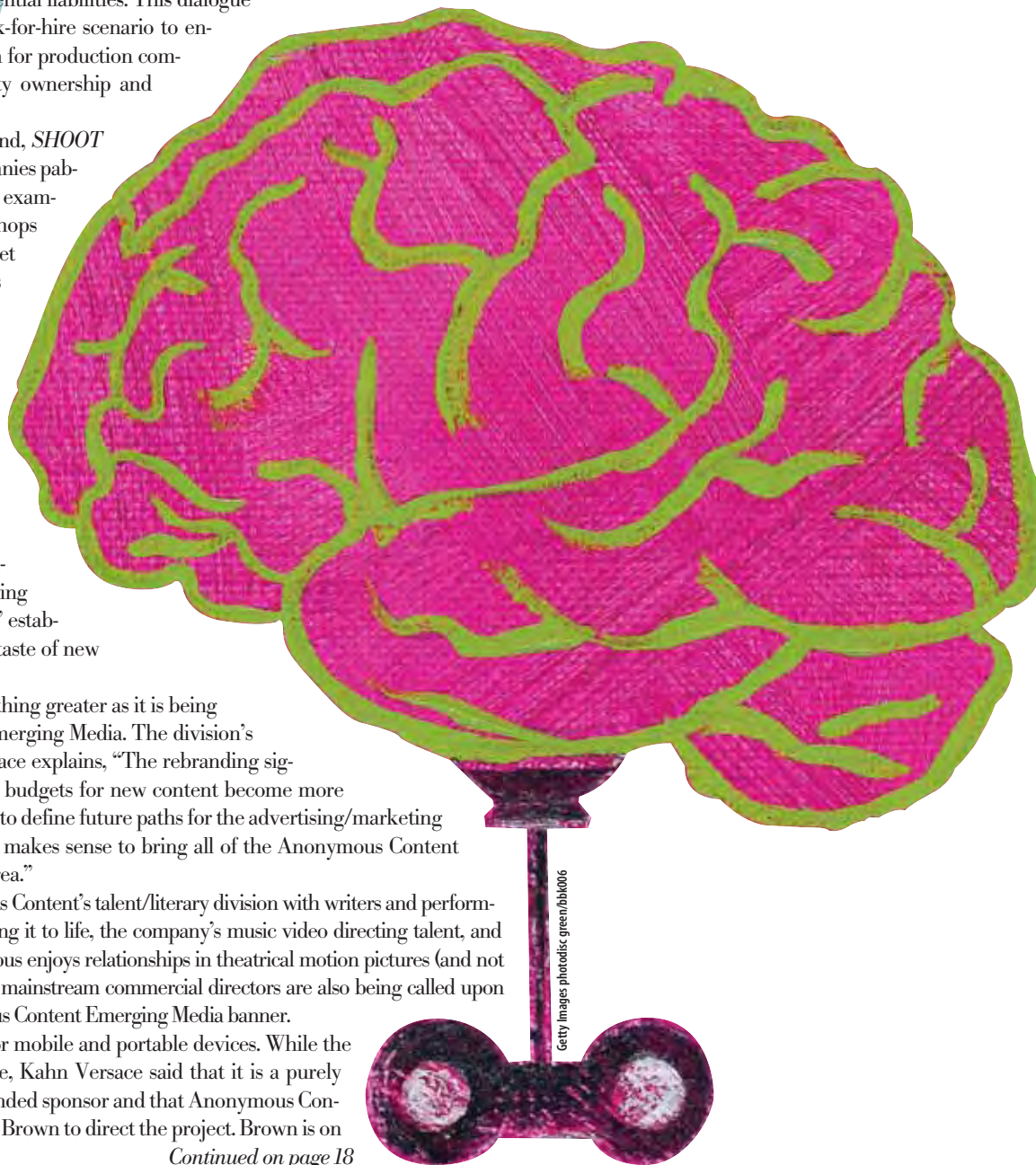
Those resources include: Anonymous Content's talent/literary division with writers and performers helping to develop content and bring it to life, the company's music video directing talent, and even filmmakers with whom Anonymous enjoys relationships in theatrical motion pictures (and not necessarily commercials). Anonymous' mainstream commercial directors are also being called upon for select projects under the Anonymous Content Emerging Media banner.

Currently in the works is a series for mobile and portable devices. While the project was under wraps at press time, Kahn Versace said that it is a purely entertainment driven piece sans a branded sponsor and that Anonymous Content Emerging Media tapped into Phil Brown to direct the project. Brown is on

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**Production
Companies
Diversify Into
Content Beyond
The :30**

By Robert Goldrich



Production Houses Embrace Long-Form Opportunities

Continued from page 17

the roster of Anonymous Content's music video division.

Last year, filmmaker Antoine Fuqua directed via Anonymous, V3 and Milan-based Movie Magic International a web film, *The Call*, for Pirelli Tires out of Leo Burnett, Milan. The film starred John Malkovich and Naomi Campbell.

Particularly gratifying for Kahn Versace is seeing some of her original V3



"In a sense they are all a proving ground for longer form programming. If an audience develops for any of these shows, they could blossom into longer shows, perhaps even more traditional format [half-hour, 60 minute] programs."—Blair Stribley

directors make new significant inroads. For example, Tom Gatsoulis, a V3 helmer who now maintains a new-media relationship with Anonymous Content Emerging Media, has interactive mini-movies under his belt for Verizon via McCann Erickson, New York, and Sprint from Organic, San Francisco. And Shyam Madiraju, who made *SHOOT's* New Directors Showcase last year while at V3, has since moved over to Anonymous Content's spot directorial roster. At V3, he directed a branding short for Volkswagen back when it was an Arnold, Boston, account. Titled *Therapy*, the piece was so well received that it went from web to broadcast.

"We've learned a great deal about developing content for digital distribution, how to make the most of budgets and are allowed to tell more compelling stories and be involved in a more collaborative way more often than with traditional commercials," relates Kahn Versace. "It's much more than execution and that has helped fuel us creatively and led us to step up our commitment as we transition from V3 to Anonymous Content Emerging Media."

SEED

SEED, a sister shop to longstanding Venice, Calif.-headquartered Backyard Productions, has blossomed into a significant player in the entertainment content space as underscored by the three

"As these projects help to define future paths for the advertising/marketing business...it makes sense to bring all of the Anonymous resources to bear in this developing arena."—Sylvia Kahn Versace



series it has created and developed for the much anticipated online entertainment network Bud.TV, which launched Monday (2/5). Helping to drive traffic to Bud.TV were Budweiser commercials/promos that aired during the mega-audience Super Bowl the day before.

The trio of SEED shows consists of two reality series—*Truly Famous* and *What Girls Want*—as well as the comedy *Replaced By A Chimp*. SEED partner/creative director and Backyard director John Immesoete created and developed the concepts for all three shows. Anheuser-Busch naturally gravitated to Immesoete due to its comfort level with him, dating back to his days as a group creative director at DDB Chicago where he had a creative hand in assorted notable campaigns for Budweiser and other A-B brands.

SEED worked directly with Anheuser-Busch on the new series, with Backyard producing four episodes for each (with the reality TV show episodes being between five and six minutes apiece, and episodes of *Replaced By A Chimp* ranging between one-and-a-half to two minutes). SEED and Backyard brought reality TV show veteran Rick Telles into *Truly Famous* and *What Girls Want*. Telles served as producer on those two series, collaborating on the directing of the episodes with creative director/writer/director Immesoete.

Truly Famous centers on a fake celebrity who keeps an entourage of hangers-on and goes to various places to see how much they can get for free based on the made-up celeb status. Seed and Backyard partner/executive producer Blair Stribley describes the show as *Entourage* meets *Punk'd*.

What Girls Want is a straight girls for straight guys variation on the *Queer Eye for The Straight Guy* premise. The Bud.TV show features single guys trying to connect with the fairer sex at a bar. After seeing their approach, straight girl experts makeover the males and advise them on how to improve their spiel to the ladies. The guys then return to the bar to see how they fare after expert counsel and a new salon-created look.

Meanwhile *Replaced By A Chimp* explores how well a chimp would do in certain professions, including as an artist and a dentist. Immesoete directed all of the episodes in this series.

"The Bud.TV shows are not mini-commercials," notes Stribley. "There are no real product references. At most, the product is incidental."

Stribley says simply, "The spirit of the projects is to create original programming for the client's constituency to enjoy."

Backyard's diversification beyond its bread-and-butter commercialmaking business also extends to broadcast television with *The Courier*, a seven-minute action film. The short is being split up into seven interstitials, roughly a minute apiece, that CBS will air in primetime. Directed by Ericson Core (the feature film *Invincible*) who is on Backyard's spot roster, *The Courier* was shot in Prague. It's not yet known how the seven interstitials will be scheduled on CBS; options include the installments airing during the course of a primetime week or perhaps one a week over a seven-week period. Plans call for a sponsor to be attached to *The Courier*.

"It's sequel entertainment with an inherent advantage," Stribley says of *The Courier*. "This way a brand can buy a minute's worth of airtime but if the content is entertaining and has characters the audience can relate to, people won't TiVo through it. You can take a brand to a new level and help to build an audience."

The Courier and the aforementioned trio of Bud.TV shows share a relevant dynamic, continues Stribley. "In a sense, they are all a proving ground for longer form programming. If an audience develops for any of these shows, they could blossom into longer shows, perhaps even more traditional format [half-hour, 60 minute] programs."

There's also potential for new horizons on the business front as content creators/producers—particularly those behind shows in which characters become popular—could move from the work-for-hire scenario to a compensation model based on holding equity in an entertainment property.

Green Dot

Rick Fishbein, executive producer of commercial production house boutique Green Dot Films, has a pair of perspectives on the changing landscape—one being entrepreneurial as a production company principal, the other in his role as a

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Shops Delve Into New Media, Explore Business Models

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governor of the Commercials Branch of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (ATAS).

He was scheduled to attend an ATAS emerging media task force meeting this week to discuss how the Emmy competition can best recognize deserving content that doesn't necessarily play on broadcast tele-

task force dialogue along with others, including those in ATAS' Interactive Peer Group. "The Academy discussion underscores that the times are changing for all of us," he says.

From his Green Dot P.O.V. Fishbein relates that "Thirty to 40 percent of the projects we're bidding on now are not broadcast :30 spots. And the new opportunities present-

The alluded to Shout and Nissan projects were directed by Green Dot's Richard Sears. The former, a short titled *Rescue Mission*, tells the story about hunters shooting stains at wild roaming pairs of white pants. A female animal rights activist protects the pants creatures with Shout's new stain wipe. As for the multimedia Nissan campaign, it centers on protagonist Marc Horowitz who embarks on seven days of living in his Sentra. The two-minute introductory piece generated hundreds of thousands of hits on YouTube, according to Rob Schwartz, executive creative director of TBWA Chiat\Day, Los Angeles.

new Eos car has been woven into several episodes. "This isn't product placement. The car becomes a character in the show," says Uncle partner/exec producer Bryan Farhy. *Head Case* will have a presence on the VW website, the series and the car will have a place on the STARZ site, and other tie-ins are in the offing in this deal struck directly between Uncle and VW.

The plan is for the series to blossom into a half-hour format in season two, and to plug several of Uncle's spot directors into helming duties on a number of episodes. All of the shows in season one have been directed by Farrand and will have set time slots in the network schedule, with reruns playing in rotation. "STARZ is committed to developing a slate of original content and our approach with them is to grow the show into a half-hour as we grow the audience during the first season," says Uncle partner/executive VP Bauer who had a hand in a recent Sundance Film Festival coup as Fox Searchlight bought worldwide rights to the late actress/writer/direc-



"Thirty to 40 percent of the projects we're bidding on now are not broadcast :30 spots....The new opportunities presenting themselves are exciting for commercial production houses."—Rich Fishbein

vision. "What if episodes of a great series air only on the Internet?" asks Fishbein. "Can that work be submitted for Emmy consideration? There's a lot of thought that has to go into guidelines for determining excellence of content in a world of changing media." Fishbein plans to engage in the

ing themselves are exciting for commercial production houses today. Whereas 24 months ago, many of us were apprehensive about 'new media,' now we're encouraged by what they bring....including the possibility of new models of compensation beyond work for hire."

Among the recent new content ground traversed by Green Dot are: Nissan's "Seven Days In A Sentra" campaign spanning seven TV spots, a web film and footage displayed in an interactive van venue for TBWA Chiat\Day, Los Angeles; a humorous Shout Wipes online mini-movie for Draft FCB, New York; and a Video On Demand piece for GE's Imagination Theater (*SHOOT*, 12/15/06), the charming, slightly offbeat two-minute-and-40-second animation film *Samurai* for BBDO New York.

Samurai was developed and directed by Green Dot's Three Legged Legs collective (Casey Hunt, Greg Gunn, Reza Rasoli). "The directors were asked to come up with something that embodied imagination, nothing specific about GE itself," says Fishbein. "It's work that allows our talent to be fully creative, with GE benefiting from being attached to that creativity and imagination [reinforcing the client's ongoing 'Imagination At Work' campaign]."

Uncle

Santa Monica-based Uncle has diversified with the recent launch of a music video division under the aegis of exec producer Scott Kalvert as well as the formation of a transatlantic spot partnership with London-based Streetlight Films (*SHOOT*, 12/15/06). But perhaps the most interesting diversification for Uncle, which continues to maintain com-

mercialmaking as its core business, is its long-form fare, including a 3D ride film for the Coca-Cola Company, and an original episodic series for the STARZ cable network.



GE's VOD short *Samurai* produced by Green Dot Films

The latter is *Head Case*, in which Uncle owns a 50 percent stake. Slated to debut on STARZ in April, *Head Case* stars comedian Alexandra Wentworth (who is exec producer of the series) as an unorthodox therapist whose patients are celebrities. Working with the head of Uncle's TV/film division Robert Bauer and company cofounder, director Jason Farrand, Wentworth developed the series, which in its first season has 13 original episodes, each ranging from 10 to 15 minutes in length. Among the celeb patients in season one are Jason Priestley, Andy Dick, Shelby Lynne, Ione Skye, Jonathan Silverman, Tom Sizemore, Fred Willard, Traci Lords, Ralph Macchio, Jane Kaczmarek, Liz Phair, Jennifer Finnigan and Sean Hayes.

Also look for some cross promotional action with Volkswagen as its

tor Adrienne Shelly's *Waitress*. Bauer was one of the executive producers on that film. "We're looking to create assets as well as opportunities for our creative and directing talent at the company," adds Farrand. One such opportunity is the alluded to 3D ride film, *The Search For The Secret Formula*, which is set for a spring debut at a special new theater venue at Coca-Cola's headquarters in Atlanta. The multi-million dollar, nine-minute 3D film entailed extensive international shooting and has been in the making at Uncle for two years. Larry Gebhardt brought the project over to Uncle and directed it along with CG/visual effects veteran Terry Windell. Farrand wrote the script.

"The Coke project positions us for other opportunities in the 3D film space," says Bauer who notes that Uncle's long-form pedigree also includes a pilot and specials for the E! Network, content for TiVo, work with VH-1 and a six-part series for The Discovery Channel.



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Stock Footage's New Image

Stock footage companies have a reputation for saving the day. Recently FootageBank HD, Venice, Calif. was called upon by effects house Rhythm & Hues Studios, Los Angeles, and Waylon, St. Louis, to provide HD footage of penguins to composite into a desert setting for a Budweiser spot slated to launch in a few weeks. Because of the digital cropping and layering that would be needed, it was imperative that the footage be in HD. And needless to say, it would have been difficult for the agency to travel to the Antarctic to shoot the footage itself. After previewing hours of HD penguin footage, a total of 10 shots were used, some repeatedly.

And BBDO NY turned to Munich-headquartered Framepool when the agency needed footage of an ostrich closing in on the camera for a Mountain Dew spot involving two kids poking fun at Chuck Norris. The agency needed the footage ASAP—the commercial was airing in two days. Framepool fulfilled the agency's request and had the master to them within a half hour, helping the client to meet its deadline.

But these days, instead of being unsung heroes, stock footage companies are positioning themselves as creative partners to help advertising professionals leverage the potential of traditional as well as new media formats, which demand quick turnaround and cost efficiency. To bet-

ter serve the evolving needs of the new media content provider, not only are the creative juices flowing at footage shops, they're stepping up their quality, offering more narrative material to work with, developing new pricing models and paying close attention to safeguarding their clients' use of content.

"The traditional 30 or 60-second commercial is still intact, but there are so many other ways to communicate and we are servicing all of those. It's lit a fire under everyone in terms of quality first and foremost," says Skip D'Amico, director, motion, at Seattle-headquartered Corbis.

"Stock conjures up images of dusty boxes and if I could do anything it would be to eliminate that once and for all. In most creatives, stock footage conjures up the wrong image. It has nothing to do with the current content."

He says his big thrust for this year is to provide more of a context in the company's offerings. "So when you view a Corbis reel there is more of a narrative thread, more context, versus a series of generic clips that give you some insight into the depth of the catalog. I know that creatives respond to stories. If there is more of a narrative, it pulls you in—there is something to sink your teeth in."

Likewise, to give production professionals greater ability to tell a story, Denver, Colo.-based Thought Equity Motion has made some changes to its website to provide better access and use of content in a more intuitive manner that encourages creative innovation. The new "Shot Reels" feature allows production professionals to view multiple camera angles and shot types for a single scene. The ability to access more than just one clip means that production professionals have access to each shot associated with a production.

The company has also added a feature that enables professional filmmakers, independent directors and production enthusiasts to upload motion content to the Thought Equity Motion site and receive payment based on the content's use and popularity. If a producer has footage that meets a need in Thought Equity Motion's library, the company will represent that content.

The company is also providing the filmmakers with access to its extensive li-

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**Shops Are
Becoming
Creative Partners
Thanks
To New Media**

By Nicole Rivard



Footage Providers Step Up Their Content And Services

Continued on page 21

library of watermarked footage-free of charge—to encourage the creative process and development of new content and new media productions. Thought Equity Motion will pay royalties to producers whose content is licensed by Thought Equity Motion customers.

“Thought Equity Motion is excited to empower editors, producers and filmmakers to access and utilize the more than \$1.5 billion in produc-

tion value available for licensing at thoughtequity.com,” says CEO Kevin Schaff. “By offering footage for the development of content and the means to feature and distribute that content, we are completing the circle of commerce and opening a new revenue stream for the creative community.”

Having programmatic content as opposed to “staged” has made for a “cool idea generator” and drawn very strong interest from the marketplace, accord-

ing to Kristi Manning, director, West Coast sales, BBC Motion Gallery, which has offices worldwide.

The company licenses footage from programming such as news and current affairs (e.g. *Panorama*, *The Money Program*), natural history (e.g. *Natural World*, *Wildlife on One*, *Trials of Life*) and award-winning documentaries (e.g. *Horizon*, *Human Body*).

“Clips from programs for example have a more narrative feel and completely different perspective. The situations are more staged in content shot for stock. So in addition to the types of categories you would normally expect from a stock footage house, we also have this enormous library of content that is practically custom-made for mobile and the web,” Manning says.

Recently AKQA, San Francisco, licensed CBS news footage from BBC for an online campaign for Microsoft’s XBOX, and COLLE + McVoy, Minneapolis licensed footage of a moose for a Minnesota State Lottery viral web video.

Manning feels it is equally important



Kristi Manning

to have a staff that is passionate about footage and cares deeply about the content. “You need to be as passionate about the creativity as your customer, as well as imaginative enough to help them fulfill their vision,” she says.

More for less

Manning says another reason BBC is experiencing growth comes down to dollars and cents. “As advertisers need to spread their marketing and promotional dollars across a broadening spectrum of channels, they are looking for economical production choic-



Paula Lumbard

es, and with the amazing selection of great licensable footage available today, that is often a smart way to save some money without compromising the creative. The company offers flexible pricing ranging from RM to RF for smaller budget web commercials and broadband/mobile campaigns.”

Paula Lumbard, president of FootageBank, HD, is also creating price ranges to accommodate alternative media. “When it’s in the broadband world as opposed to broadcast, that deserves its own pricing structure reflecting that

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FootageBank provided similar footage for a Budweiser spot slated to launch in a few weeks.



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Lines Blur Between Stock and Custom Footage

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it has a vast availability, but potentially has limited access. You just don't know. We are creating pricing structures to accommodate that—which are less money to be more user-friendly and to acknowledge that there are all these new forms of using media that require looking at how you charge for it.”

She says she regularly supplies footage to Golden Era Productions of Los Angeles, a division of the Church of Scientology International that was



Kevin Schaff

formed to produce religious training and dissemination films. “They have a closed circuit broadband network, a model we will begin to see more and more,” she says, making reference to the BudTV.com network. “These new “networks” may initially have a smaller viewership in numbers thereby requiring a new pricing model on our end. Here we are able to give our clients new rates that are lower than traditional broadcast rates and fit the smaller in network budgets.”



Skip D'Amico

issue, Thought Equity has started to put its entire staff through extensive training so they are more than content experts in terms of accessibility—they are also providing the right information so licensors can make the best business decisions.

Last year, Corbis did all the music and footage clearances for Hallmark's “Say it With Music Card” TV and online campaign out of Leo Burnett, Chicago and they are working on a new spot for the client as well.

Corbis cleared 15 celebrities for them so the team and editors would have a lot of choices. In the end, Corbis supplied them with the footage that they needed of Ray Charles, Louis Armstrong, Willie Nelson and the Beach Boys, and they handled the clearance of the personality rights of the celebrities as well as the overlying song. “That was very much the agency using us as a one-stop shop. They are able to create and produce and move forward while we do the background for them,” says Gina Ragusa, director, rights and music clearances.

Curtis Bowden, VP, rights services and motion, points out that the footage they find is not always part of Corbis' motion library. It may be footage from someplace else. “The idea is that the client doesn't have to call one, two, three or four sources. They call one and we'll do the whole thing for them,” Ragusa says.

D'Amico adds that the one thing stock footage houses don't want to be is a threat to someone's creative interests. “We are just there to support it when we can. Everyone is under extreme pressure to deliver more for less. It's our obligation to have those solutions available...We're pursuing a more creatively driven road to upgrade the quality of material that's available across the board so there's no longer that differentiation between custom-made material and so-called stock. It maybe was relevant five years ago, but the line is getting more and more blurred everyday,” D'Amico says.

Note Worthy

The Latest From Music Libraries

Are you offering agencies any new services to meet their music needs and what recent spots used music from your library?

Killer Tracks, Beverly Hills

According to VP of Production, Kat Green, there is a hot trend for pop and indie-rock style songs in commercials right now (like The Teddybears, Coldplay, Dirty Vegas and Jet). “Recently we contracted music producers who work on VW, Hummer, BMW, Target and Old Navy spots to create a catalog of Hot-Vocal-Hook tracks,” she says. “We are fortunate to be able to consult with the BMG Publishing staff to ensure that our songs are on the forefront of pop trends as well as utilizing great talent such as Tony Mangurian (producer of Luscious Jackson) and Dan Lavery (bass player of Tonic).”

Recent Work: A series of holiday spots for Hallmark with traditional Christmas songs in a big band swing style. Because of the relationships we have with our composers, we are able to record a full big band orchestra and save the client quite a bit of money.

615 Music, Nashville, Tenn.

The company has a new product (launching in the next couple of weeks) called “Scoring Stage Music” that is a high-end live orchestra production music library targeted at the film/TV/gaming and advertising market, according to President Randy Wachtler. The library features a 65-piece live orchestra and is in the film score style. Action adventure—heroic and dark, romance/heartwarming, horror/suspense/mystery are some of the styles.

Recent Work: Custom music and mixed music plus VO for final layback for a Purina Pro Plan spot.

Groove Addicts, Los Angeles

Groove Addicts has an online search engine that helps clients find the music they need for a production. Or they can call one of their two music supervisors and they will help them locate the right track with personal assistance, going as far as to put numerous music ideas to picture and post it on our ftp site, usually within a couple hours of a client's call for help. While GA still delivers on CD, the current trend with clients is hard drive delivery. The market is so competitive right now that premium client service is needed to respond and anticipate their needs, says a company spokesperson.

Recent work: GA just finished a Mountain Dew Super Bowl spot for BBDO and in the last six months has provided music for national commercials for T-Mobile, Nestle, Sprint, U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, Cingular Wireless, Domino's, Tommy Bahama, DirecTV and Allstate.

Non-Stop Music, Salt Lake City, Utah

NSM has more than 38,000 original music cues and tracks. For the harassed music producer working on spots on a tight deadline we have a tool called CUEgle, an industry unique and Internet based search engine that allows you to search, audition and download all of the 38,000 tracks and cues with the use of keywords. Within minutes you can be listening to music that suits your spot and your ideas, says a company spokesperson. It's simple to use and once you've decided on your tracks, you can download it directly onto your workstation.

Recent Work: Spots for AAA, Capital One and Super Target.

Megatrax Production Music, North Hollywood, Calif.

“The MusicSource search engine, available both online and included with our libraries on hard drive, was developed to give clients fast, easy access to all our tracks for auditioning and downloading,” says Wendy Brueder, marketing manager. “And, if needed, we have staff available to personally assist with music searches. Finally, if we don't have it already, we can create it. We have turnkey capacity to Custom Score tracks quickly at a competitive price.

Recent work: Dodge's “Dot,” Prego's “What the Neighbors Don't Know,” Apple Jacks/Xbox's “Four Boxes,” Burger King's “Sneak King,”

FootageBank HD also recently provided several shots that were digitally composited into a multi-screen Sony Electronics spot out of Cente Service Corp., Los Angeles. The spot appeared on national television in Japan, on the Sony website and in Sony dealerships.

Lumbard notes that the advertising community as a whole is continuing to grow more accepting of high definition. “This is our fifth year and when we started, the advertising world was using HD the least,” she says.

Artbeats' CEO Phil Bates' prediction for 2007 is that footage providers will see an increased demand in HD. The Myrtle Creek, Ore.-based royalty free stock footage provider, which specializes in fire and aerial content, introduced 40 new collections last year and all but one were HD.

Indicative of the uptrend in HD is Lumbard's opening of an office in New York to better serve the advertising industry. She is renting office space at PostWorks, New York, which is a full-service postproduction facility. She hired Karen Santiago to manage that office because of her experience at two other stock footage companies and her roots in the rights and clearances business.

“The nice thing there is she really understands clearance issues. As new media has arrived, rights and clearance become more of an issue because we are communicating images around the world where one may not have done that before,” she says.

To address the intellectual property



Footage from the Hallmark “Say it With Music” campaign

Creative Directors Critique This Year's Super Bowl Commercials

Continued from page 10

In the consumer-generated world, I liked the NFL spot directed by Joe Pytko. He brought that concept to life so magnificently. I don't think anyone rivals Pytko for telling an emotional story on film.

Mike Wolfsohn, VP/creative director, *Ignited Minds*, Marina del Rey, Calif.

There were three prevalent themes, one being consumer-generated concepts, which in general was a failure. What was offered up in consumer-generated content was not up to the standards and expectations of a Super Bowl audience. The work was

pretty lackluster...Also it's kind of like one of my philosophies in running a creative department—in a lot of different shops, they put three, four or five teams on an assignment. That guarantees that one team will be happy and the others will be disappointed at the outcome. Similarly while the intention of consumer-generated content was to get tens of thousands of consumers interacting with the brand leading up to the Super Bowl, all those people who contributed to ideas for Doritos or Chevrolet or the NFL were probably disappointed with what was ultimately chosen. And now those people are probably less likely to be consumers

of the brand than if they never participated in a commercial contest.

Another theme involved Coke and Frito-Lay trying to appropriate Black History Month and the fact that there were two African-American coaches in the Super Bowl. That struck me as being somewhat inappropriate when people try to take poignant opportunities to make a connection to their brand when there isn't one. I felt the same about Dove last year in the Super Bowl. If Dove really cared so much about how young girls see themselves, I would have preferred to see the client take the money it spent on the Super Bowl and give it to

a related charity. Coke and Frito-Lay could have taken the \$2.6 million they spent to buy the Super Bowl time and put it towards sponsorships or scholarships that would more effectively connect them to Black History Month and help the cause.

And the third theme that's hard for me to believe is talking animals. I had assumed that novelty had worn off but I guess that was wishful thinking. Taco Bell, Bud Light and Blockbuster all marched in with talking animal concepts.

Most shocking to me was the General Motors spot [with the assembly line robot dreaming it had been fired from GM]. It just blew my mind that anything having to do with employment at General Motors, particularly in a negative connotation, could get

through so many approval processes and make it on air. Do we really want to use the biggest advertising stage of the year to depict a bad employment experience at GM? That was the biggest debacle of the game.

What I liked best was not done originally for the Super Bowl—the Coke CG spot that looked like a videogame takeoff on Grand Theft Auto, and Coke's vending machine spot. You watch the videogame commercial, which I first saw as a cinema ad, and come away with a smile on your face, your foot tapping, singing a song, and being put in a Coke state of mind. It felt like a Super Bowl commercial and did what you expect from a great classic American brand. Those two spots brought Coke back to the Super Bowl in fine fashion.

Tight Signs Director Bruce Dowad

Continued from page 4

thon's position [years ago] in the London ad community, which is the most creatively challenging and competitive of markets," said Dowad, who—like Ker—has lived and worked both in the United States and U.K. "We've become very good friends since those days, with a mutual respect and confidence in one another, and I think we share a global perspective."

Dowad said of Ker, "A director needs to be marketed and sold aggressively by someone who understands the global market, has a high taste level and a track record of helping directors advance. Jonathon fit all of those prerequisites for me."

Ker's experience spans the agency and production house sides of the business. He was head of TV at Bartle Bogle Hegarty, London, before launching the then U.S. operation of

U.K. headquartered Limelight in '87. He then moved on to now defunct Palomar, which he cofounded in '92. At both Limelight and Palomar, Ker gained a reputation for helping to shape and build assorted directorial careers.

While Ker will focus on the U.S. ad market for Dowad, the executive producer hopes to explore other opportunities as well, including garnering Dowad international work and new media fare. On the latter score, tight enjoys a relationship with sister shop The Viral Factory's U.S. operation, which down the road could translate into Dowad diversifying into other content avenues.

Dowad, who began his career in his native Canada, made his first major directorial mark on both sides of the Atlantic via the former Jennie & Co, which had bases in London and state-

side. He left Jennie to launch Bruce Dowad Associates. Thus far Dowad has directed more than 500 commercials for clients such as American Airlines, American Express, Budweiser, Evian, Ford, GM, HBO, Kodak, Labatts, Lexus, M&M/Mars, Nissan, Pepsi and Visa. Besides the DGA Award, Dowad and his work have been recognized at such competitions as the Cannes International Advertising Festival, the AICP Show, the Clio's, Andy Awards, New York International Advertising Awards, Canada's Bessie Awards and the London International Awards (which bestowed upon him two best direction honors).

Dowad joins a tight roster consisting of directors Iain Mackenzie, Josh & Xander and The Brothers Strause. Ker is partnered in tight with executive producers Don Block and Rich Carter.

Ads Tackle Teen Reckless Driving

Continued from page 4

Then you realize towards the end when he is gone that you are back to the other color palette and back to reality, all the while feeling like you are right there in the car," said Jack Blandford, partner and director of broadcast production at North Castle.

He chose director Whitey Bel-Air III of philfilms in Venice, Calif., because he has a very immediate style to his work, "We chose to shoot 24p, which is HD video, to give it that immediacy because it was all about putting the viewer into the car with the kids," explained Blandford, adding that he hopes viewers, like the kids in the commercial, will feel the urgency of that moment when they are riding along and

they need to speak up—otherwise the situation goes bad really quickly.

The Ad Council called upon North Castle because it was alarmed by statistics showing car crashes are the number one killer of teens in the United States. Research also shows that teen drivers are involved in more than five times as many fatal crashes as adults.

Joe DePreta, partner, managing director of North Castle, and his team found that teens don't process fear the same way adults do. They feel they are invincible. But they would never want to harm a friend. That's why the team decided to speak to the passenger, not the driver and empower them to say

something. "It is not easy at that age to speak up. You don't want to be the uncool one. You don't want to be the one to tell everyone to not have a good time. We wanted to make sure they got the point that they can do it and it's okay to do it," said Steve Garbett, partner, co-executive creative director at North Castle.

The campaign also consists of www.urthespokesperson.com, where kids can speak peer to peer about their personal experiences with reckless driving so they can feel the gravity of these situations and realize they aren't invincible. "The reward of working on this campaign is the people that are walking around two years from now who may not have otherwise," said Mark.

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News

street talk

At press time, The Mill, with facilities in London, New York and a newly opened shop in Santa Monica, announced that it is to be acquired by The Carlyle Group, a global private equity firm, and The Mill's management for an undisclosed sum. Led by CEO Robin Shenfield, the Mill's management team will own a substantial portion of the business after the transaction. The deal concludes The Mill's relationship with private equity group 3i, which backed a management buyout of the business in February 2001. The Mill was founded in London in '90 by Shenfield and Pat Joseph; both have committed to remain with the business. Additionally, advertising industry vet Michael Baulk has agreed to join The Mill as chairman of the board; he formerly served as chairman/CEO of Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO....David Rolfe is staying put as production director of content at DDB Chicago. At one point he was apparently headed to JWT New York, but ultimately he decided to remain at DDB....Paranoid U.S. has added director Olivier Gondry to its roster. The Los Angeles-based shop will represent Gondry in the U.S. and Canada....Director Ramaa Mosley has joined Trio Films, Los Angeles. She comes over from Uber Content, Hollywood....Digital technology strategist Dan McGraw—formerly director of strategic development and technology for The Whitehouse, an international editorial house—has formed Seven Dials Media, a Chicago consultancy firm that will help ad agencies, production houses and corporate clients with digital asset management, workflow and media distribution....

rep report

Tom Mooney has launched his own New York-based reping shop, Mooney Marketing, which opens with a roster for East Coast representation that includes director David Cornell of Form, Los Angeles, and New York effects/animation/design house Spontaneous. Additionally, Mooney is working with Crushing Music, New York, on a venture that will present promising indie bands to agencies....Andrea Marcucci of Agent 99, New York, has taken on East Coast rep duties for Instant Karma Films, Santa Monica....New York-based firm White Hart Lane will rep Incubator Films, Santa Monica, on the East Coast....Cinematographer Eric Schmidt has wrapped principal photography on Yann Samuell's *My Sassy Girl* and is available for spots and music videos via The Skouras Agency, Santa Monica....A clarification of a 1/26 item--newly formed firm Miss Smith is reping its clients not only on the East Coast but also for business out of Crispin, Porter+Bogusky, Boulder, Colo....

bulletin board

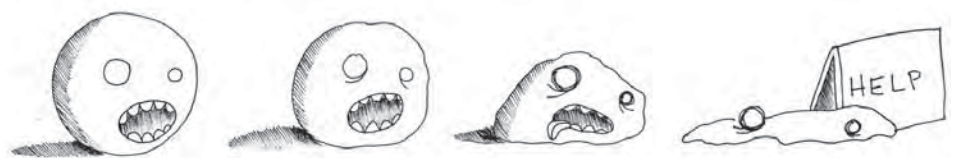
- >February 11/Los Angeles, CA: VES (Visual Effects Society) Awards. www.vesawards.com
- >February 22-24/San Diego, CA: Online Marketing Summit. www.onlinemarketingsummit.com
- >February 27/Las Vegas, NV: Building a Successful Interactive Advertising Business (for agency execs/mgrs). www.laredogroup.com
- >March 5-9/San Jose, CA: Game Developers Conference. www.gdconf.com
- >March 12-14/Miami, FL: Innovations in Hispanic Marketing. www.trademeetings.com
- >March 19-20/Hollywood: OMMA (Online Media, Marketing & Advertising) Conference. www.omma-expo.com

99% OF ADVERTISING EGOS ARE MALNOURISHED

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The rejection and criticism plaguing this industry have reached a new high. Writers, art directors, directors, editors and composers are increasingly vulnerable to self-doubt and insecurity. Working countless hours on ideas that get shot down in less than one (Fig. A). For 16 years, the Association of Independent Commercial Producers and The Museum of Modern Art in New York have tried to put an end to this problem, sending 400 trained experts from around the globe to evaluate talent and nourish egos through an annual award show. An award show, that has not only been successful in immortalizing work in MoMA's permanent collection, but also in assuring the corresponding ego a lifetime supply of ass-kissing from juniors (Fig. B). You, too, can satisfy your ego's appetite. Just log on to the website, submit your spot and find yourself one step closer to a feast of flattery.

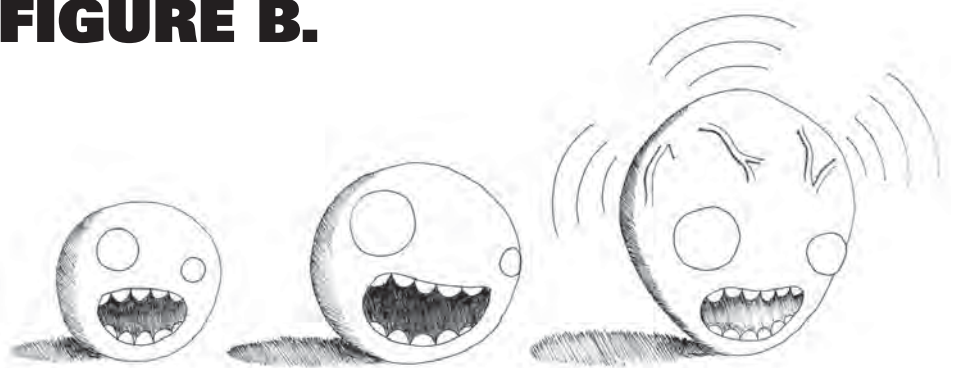
FIGURE A.



Ego Normalus Ego Deflatus Ego Hackus Ego Extinctus

(Fig. A) Mediocrity is an ugly part of this business. Gone unnoticed, it can severely debilitate egos and send those that recognize it, spiraling downward into a pile of self-pity. To avoid a collapse in confidence, we suggest multiple submissions to the 2007 AICP Show.

FIGURE B.



Ego Inflatus Ego Colossus Ego Boguskus

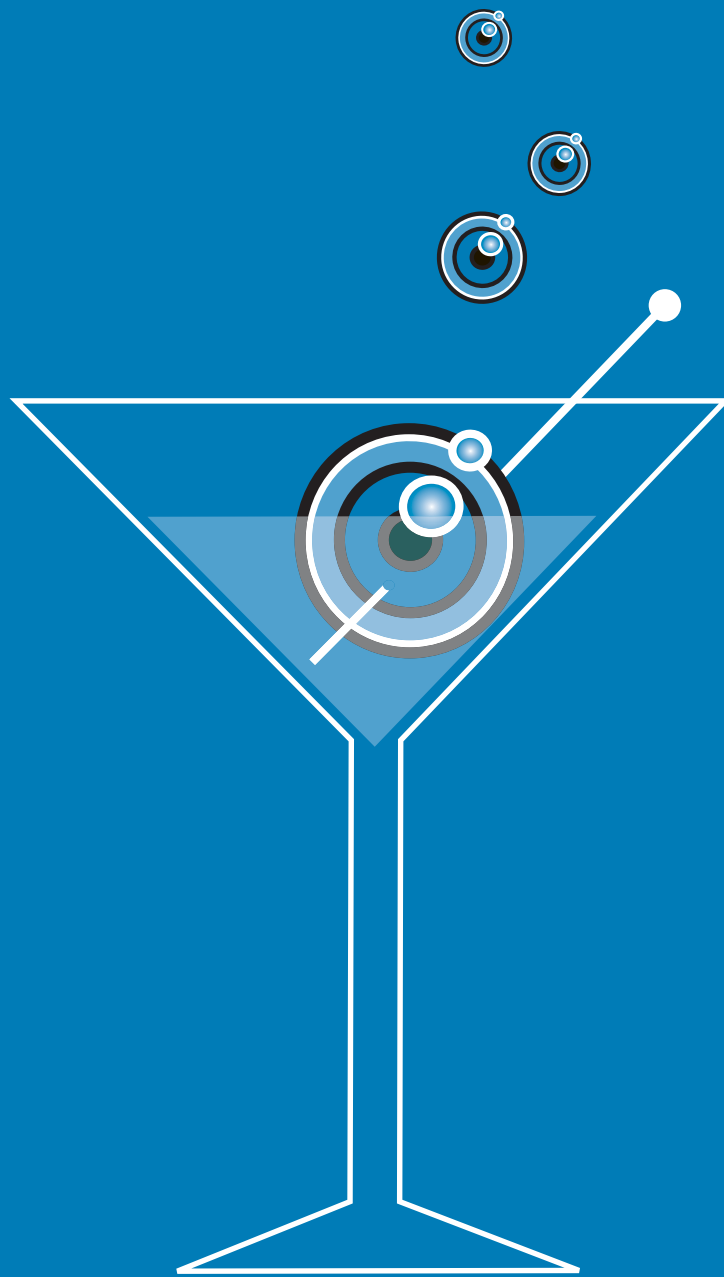
(Fig. B) Overegos not-so-anonymous. Every creative entity has one. That guy or gal with a swagger in their step and an extra zero in their paycheck. They have an air of greatness, and yes, it is coming from their head. Join their ranks. Enter the 2007 AICP Show.



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