

Three Commercials In Running For VES Award

Nominations for visual effects excellence go to Framestore for Rexona/Sure Deodorant's "Go Wild" from Lowe London, WETA Digital for Travelers' "Snowball" via Fallon Minneapolis and Method Studio for Sears' "Arboretum" out of Y&R, London. Framestore has won the honor three of the previous four years.

See page 4

Crossroads' Bruce Hurwit Assumes The Pilot's Helm

NBC buys the rights to develop *Split The Difference*, a prospective prime-time comedy series centered on the goings on at a fictional ad agency. The network pursued the property upon seeing a screening at the second annual New York Television Festival held in September where it won a jury award and a popular vote tally.

See page 4

Ron Lawner Enters SHOOT's Chat Room

Ending a legendary 25-year career at Arnold Worldwide, Ron Lawner has stepped down from his position as vice chairman, global chief creative officer. He reflects on the state of the advertising business, his long creative tenure, his future plans and a changing media landscape which translates into new, varied creative opportunities for agency artisans.

See page 10

Edit Houses Assess The AAAA's Annual Analysis

Post executives offer feedback on the study.

See page 19

The Next Move

AICP Looks To The Future As Content Biz Evolves; Committee Presentation To Board Sheds Light

By Robert Goldrich

LOS ANGELES—During its semiannual meeting last month in Los Angeles, the board of directors of the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) got a look-see at what's in store from AICP. next, a committee formed last year to provide insight, context and hopefully some answers as to how the production company community can capitalize on emerging content opportunities and develop new business models while dealing with new sets of related risks and potential liabilities.

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Spotmakers Poised For Sundance

By Nicole Rivard

PARK CITY, Utah—The Sundance Film Festival has always been good to Brett Morgen. His film *The Kids Stay In the Picture* that premiered at the 2002 festival received critical acclaim. And *On the Ropes*, which he debuted there in '99, went on to be nominated for an Academy Award. But this year the support is unprecedented—his documentary *Chicago 10* has been chosen as the opening night film for the event, which runs Jan. 18-28. He is one of several artisans involved in the ad biz whose work will be showcased throughout the festival.

"Being selected to open the Sundance Film Festival is probably the greatest honor any American independent filmmaker can achieve. After I received the invitation I couldn't sleep for days. The first few nights I was filled with excitement. By the third night, I was terrified," said Morgen, who helms spots via bicoastal Anonymous Content.

Not only is pretty much every filmmaker at the festival on hand for opening night—as well as most every major film critic—but Morgen is also expecting acquisitions executives from just about every company to be in attendance, which is fortuitous in that he is seeking distribution for his film. "I'm expecting the atmosphere to be electric."

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2007: A Year For Model-making And Breaking

A SHOOT Staff Report

LOS ANGELES—As reflected in this week's lead story about the AICP, next committee's efforts in the development of new business models to address an ever changing media landscape, 2007 will likely be a year marked by much more such model-making. As production companies look to diversify beyond their traditional work-for-hire model to holding

equity in intellectual property and/or garnering compensation via creative, licensing or other fees, so too will different industry sectors grapple with formulating new creative and business models.

These endeavors will be undertaken on an individual company basis as well as collectively and for that matter through collective bargaining. On the latter score, consider the two-

year extension of the commercials contract covering actors, which was formally approved in October. A key provision of that agreement was that the two sides—the advertising industry and the actors unions, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA)—hire a consultant to helm a pivotal joint study exploring alternative compensation models

for performers spanning traditional spots as well as nontraditional ad fare spanning a growing array of new media. The results of the pending study, to be conducted over the next nearly two years, will form the basis for renegotiating the next commercials contract in 2008.

Meanwhile, consensus has proven to be elusive on another manage-

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Commercial Dailies
Commercial Finishing

"When It Comes To Commercial Services Technicolor Hits The Spot"

Technicolor NY welcomes commercial post production veteran Luana Ayres as their new "Director of Operations"

TECHNICOLOR
110 Leroy Street, NY NY 10014 - 212-609-9400

By Robert Goldrich

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Heartstrings

While the means took a different form this time—an eBay auction—the end happily remained the same as the Association of Music Producers (AMP) raised money for Mr. Holland's Opus, a foundation that supports music education and its many benefits through the donation and repair of musical instruments, which go to under-served schools, community music programs and individual students nationwide.

I first ran across AMP's efforts to help Mr. Holland's Opus in April 2004 when I attended the then AMP Mixer Awards. That evening there were a couple of prime highlights besides the awards themselves: a silent charity auction which generated money for Mr. Holland's Opus; and a live performance by Drake Price, a talented jazz cellist who at the time was 18 years old.

Price represented the good work of

Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation. He applied to the foundation in '98 for a cello. He was at a place in his studies where he needed a better instrument to progress in his pursuit of music, but his family could not afford a cello for him. Price received a cello from the Opus Foundation and went on to win assorted scholarships and awards.

The positive effects of music education on children's emotional and intellectual growth have been proven in numerous case studies.

Again in '05, a portion of the proceeds generated by the AMP Awards was donated to Mr. Holland's Opus. And this year, sans the AMP competition, the tradition still continued, albeit online as AMP auctioned off an ebony Les Paul guitar bearing the signatures of superstar band Gnarl Barkley and television and radio personality Adam Carolla. The instrument sold for \$1,310 on eBay, with the money going to the Opus Foundation.

This was the second time the gui-

tar was auctioned. The first time was at AMP'd UP!, the opening night music bash of Advertising Week 2006 in Manhattan last fall.

"We auctioned off the guitar at the concert, and the highest bidder never showed up to claim it," said AMP president Tiffany Senft, president/executive producer at tonefarmer, a

picture *Mr. Holland's Opus*, the story about the profound effect a dedicated music teacher had on generations of students. The film's composer, Michael Kamen, founded Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation in '96 as part of his commitment to the future of music education. Kamen passed away in '03, but the legacy he left behind includes

not only his amazing body of work, but also the foundation.

The organization was started to address the fact that across the nation, school and community music programs have been discontinued or severely diminished due to budget cuts. The positive effects of music education on children's emotional and intellectual growth have been proven in numerous case studies.

For further info, log onto www.mhopus.com

POV



Show Me The Money

Editor's Note: Suzy Kellett is managing director of the Washington State Film Office. She has been part of the film commission community for some 25 years, and continues to be active in the Association of Film Commissioners International. Her first post was deputy director at the Illinois Film Office, where in 1982 she was promoted to director. In '96, she moved to the Washington State Film Office.

This month WashingtonFilmWorks, a new incentive program for Washington State, is launching its 20 percent rebate program. Qualified feature film, television and commercial projects can receive up to 20 percent of their in-state spending in a refund. If you buy, rent or hire it in Washington, it qualifies. Features need to spend a minimum of \$500,000; television \$300,000 and commercials \$250,000 per spot.

While the program is designed to encourage filming in Washington, Kellett in this column encourages those who film anywhere to report their economic data, which is of critical importance to the survival of film commissions.

In any given year film commissions around the United States assist thousands of commercials working on location. It is our pleasure to help these

commercials as they are very good business. And, for the free assistance—with locations, permitting, clearances, contacts, troubleshooting—all we ask in return is that producers tell us how many local people were hired and the amount of production spending left in our area.

I realize we are low on the totem pole of "To Do's" for a producer with an intensely busy schedule. But, helping us get those figures can be the difference between a film commission staying open or not. Film commissions use these statistics to justify their existence and track the economic impact of production. It is always our intention that individual project figures be kept confidential. The year's production figures are then totaled and submitted for internal budgeting purposes.

Unfortunately, film commissions spend more time justifying their existence at home than they do to their customers. Government by its very nature is an employment revolving door. Film commissioners spend a great deal of time educating and re-educating old and new officials on the value of their work. Regardless of these efforts, many state, city and county leaders see our work as corporate welfare. When confronted with

today's conflicting priorities such as homelessness, deteriorating city infrastructures, education, Homeland Security, healthcare, etc, many leaders wonder if government should be investing dollars in what appears to be the lucrative business of film, television and commercial production.

It is up to film commissioners to constantly make the argument of how many LOCAL jobs are created, the levels of LOCAL production spend-

ing, the LOCAL support services that get hired and the overall marketing value. Feature, television and commercial producers hold the key in helping us make these arguments when they share their production figures with us.

OK, yes, we might be annoying from time to time when we bug you about this, but we just want to make sure we are still around the next time that you call.

Flash Back

January 4, 2002 Director Richard D'Alessio has signed with **bicoastal @radical.media** for exclusive commercial representation worldwide with the exception of Canada and Japan....Director Michael Salomon has signed with **Coppo Films**, the bicoastal commercial production house headed by president/executive producer Michael Appel and managing director Joanne Ferraro....Al Califano, longtime executive producer at bicoastal OneSuch Films, has been elected AICP national chairman, succeeding Alex Blum....

January 10, 1997 Director Charlie Carlson has joined **Compulsive Pictures** in New York following a three-year affiliation with now-shuttered bicoastal shop BFCS....Seattle-based music/sound design house **Cinevox** opened an office in New York. Company co-founder/composer/creative director **BC Smith** and composer/sound designer **Zack Belica** remain Seattle residents, while co-founder/executive producer/general manager **Bill Ronan** is set to move to New York full time....Director **Steve Vaughan** has signed with bicoastal Industrial Artists for commercial representation....

SHOOTING SCRIPT

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PEOPLE & PROJECTS

Trio Of Spots To Vie For Visual Effects Society Awards Kudo

By Carolyn Giardina

LOS ANGELES—With the nomination of “Go Wild” for Rexona, Framestore-CFC, London and New York, collected its fifth straight nomination for a Visual Effects Society (VES) Award in the category of outstanding visual effects in a commercial. The annual awards competition is in its fifth year, and Framestore has won the category three of the four previous years.

This year, the nomination came on the strength of a spot for Lowe, London, which features a city filled with wild animals; Noam Murro directed

producer Abby Orchard.

Last year, Framestore won the spot category for the Cannes Grand Prix winner, Guinness’ “noitulovE,” from London-based agency AMV BBDO, directed by Daniel Kleinman of Kleinman Productions, London. (Kleinman has since become partnered in production house Rattling Stick, London.)

This year “Go Wild” will compete for the VES Award with two other spots, including Travelers Insurance’s “Snowball” for Fallon, Minneapolis, directed by Dante Ariola of bicoast-

sual effects supervisor Dan Lemmon, visual effects producer Eileen Moran, digital effects supervisor R. Christopher White and animation supervisor Paul Story.

Rounding out the commercial category is Sears Tools’ “Arboretum” directed by Rupert Sanders of MJZ

for Young & Rubicam, London. The visual effects were created at Santa Monica-based Method Studio. Nominated talent is lead 2D visual effects artist Cedric Nicolas, CG creative director Laurent Ledru and visual effects producer Rich Rama.

The fifth Annual VES Awards will

feature 21 categories that were chosen on Jan. 6 by a panel of more than 80 visual effects professionals, all VES members, who viewed hundreds of entry submissions at the screening facilities of FotoKem in Burbank.

On Jan. 13, the VES holds its an-
Continued on page 8



Rexona’s “Go Wild” is the latest Framestore commercial to receive a VES nomination.

via Biscuit Filmworks, Los Angeles, and Independent Films, London. The nominated Framestore artists are visual effects supervisor/Inferno artist Stephane Allender, CGI supervisor/technical director Andy Boyd, senior technical directors Dan Seddon and

al/international MJZ and featuring a man who trips on a hill and subsequently creates a snowball effect with everything and everyone in his path. This nomination went to the talent at Wellington, N.Z.-based WETA Digital. Nominees are WETA Digital vi-

AMPAS Set To Honor Feeney, Edlund

By Carolyn Giardina

BEVERLY HILLS—Visual effects software pioneer Ray Feeney has been voted the Gordon E. Sawyer Award by the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS). The award, an Oscar statuette, will be presented at the Scientific and Technical Awards Dinner on Feb. 10. On the same evening, visual effects veteran Richard Edlund will be awarded the John A. Bonner Medal of Commendation.

Feeney began his career at the now defunct Robert Abel & Associates, working on visual effects for commercials and features. In 1988 he received his first Scientific and Engineering

Award from the academy for his part in the development of one of the first motion control camera systems. A second Scientific and Engineering Award followed in ‘91 for his work on the Solitaire Image Recorder, and two more in ‘94 honoring his endeavors in developing film input scanners and the Cinefusion software implementation of the Ultimatte Blue Screen Compositing Technology.

In ‘01 the academy’s board of governors awarded Feeney the John A. Bonner Medal.

Feeney founded Hollywood-based RFX Inc. in ‘78 to provide leading-edge scientific and engineering advancements for the film industry,
Continued on page 8

many of which are now in widespread use to produce visual effects for feature films, television shows and commercials.

In ‘95 Feeney launched another company, Silicon Grail, to facilitate software development in the motion picture industry. Silicon Grail’s RAYZ software addressed the postproduction need for a digital compositing tool that could be used to efficiently create visual effects for feature films. In ‘02 Apple Computer acquired the technologies and continues to incorporate them into Apple products.

A co-chair of the Academy’s Science and Technology Council, Fe-

Comedy Pilot With Spotmaking Ties Gets Bought By NBC

Split the Difference Is First NY TV Fest Pilot Acquired By Broadcast Network

By Nicole Rivard

NEW YORK—On a Sunday night back in September, the pilot episode of *Split the Difference*, a half-hour comedy series set in a fictional New York-based TV ad agency, won the jury’s comedy category and the popular vote during the second annual New York Television Festival. Just two short days later, supervising producers Mary Egan Callahan, Joe Narciso and Bruce Hurwit got a phone call from Meryl Poster, producer at NBC Universal Television Studio, who told them the network was buying the rights to the pilot for development.

“We were walking around Rockefeller Center going, ‘Ok, where is Ashton Kutcher because we thought we we’re being punk’d,’” said Narciso, who wrote the pilot and also appears in it.

It was produced by Alec Sash and directed by Hurwit, whose spotmaking home is Crossroads, New York.

Their main goal was just



Callahan, Hurwit and Narciso get the good news.

to get into the festival—they weren’t even aware of the access or level of notoriety it would generate from networks and major talent agencies like CAA and William Morris.

In the pilot, viewers get to see inside the Manhattan offices of the Nest Ad Agency where two competing creative teams clash as they attempt to pitch a client very disparate concepts for a home security system.

The trio wasn’t surprised that the show resonated with the festival audience because everyone has seen television commercials and has their own

opinions on what makes really good and really bad ads.

“I think in one way people wonder, ‘Why are they all so bad?’ And this show explains why some turn out to be a tragedy,” explained Hurwit.

At the same time, office stories are popular right now and this provides a setting that people haven’t seen before.

“It’s a great new setting to describe what everybody goes through no matter what your job is or where you work. And I love the nature of advertising. You have two sides of an agency forced together. You have the creative side and the account side and they usually have very different goals. So you have very different types of people forced to work together and you get great conflicts,” Hurwit said.

Hurwit should know. He started his career in New York City as an art director at ad agencies BBDO and Cliff Freeman and Partners before join-

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Hof Brings Spot/Doc/Film Experience To Red Car

By Carolyn Giardina

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—Editor Tracy Hof has joined Red Car. She will be working out of its Santa Monica office; the company also maintains bases in Chicago, Dallas, New York, San Francisco and Buenos Aires.

Hof arrives after nearly two years at FilmCore Editorial (Santa Monica, San Francisco and New York), where she cut commercials for clients including Mitsubishi, the Las Vegas Visitors Bureau, Honda Motorcycles and Taco Bell. Hof said she particularly enjoys visual style and comedy genres.

Earlier, she had been freelancing, earning spot credits for such clients as Gatorade, Toyota and the U.S. Army.

She first established herself in the advertising community at now defunct Straight Cut as an assistant before being promoted to editor in ‘98. There her editing credits included Cybercash’s “Lifestyle Choice,” directed by Jeff Gorman of JGF (now bicoastal Sandwich Films) for agency Katsin/Loeb, San Francisco, which won a Gold Lion at Cannes in ‘00.

Hof is also experienced in documentaries and independent films, and is currently working on a pilot for director Liz Lichman titled *My Insignificant Other*.

Hof said she was drawn to Red

Car by some of its new hires including Karen Smith, managing director in Santa Monica (who worked with Hof previously while a producer at agency Team One, El Segundo, Calif.); and Yvette Lubinsky, Red Car’s L.A.-based rep. “I also appreciated Red Car’s national presence with Dallas, Chicago, New York and San Francisco,” she related.

“I know her work ethics [from Team One],” Smith said of Hof. “She’s a hard worker and very talented. I enjoy her company. Her reel showed how well she was doing as an editor.”

Hof joins a roster of Red Car editors that includes Chris Gipson, Keith James, Alex Neuman, Patrick Hammond, Sean Berringer, Bob Carr, Cara Meiselman, George Friedman, Greg Sunmark, Phillip Marinari, Michael Bartoli, Rob Watzke, Susan Munro, Charlie Cusumano, Tim Cahill, Steve Greenstein, Deirdre Bell, Glenn Conte, Jerry Fried, John Maloney, Jonathan Edwards, Ed Einhorn and Steve Armstrong.

They are repped on the West Coast by the aforementioned Lubinsky; in Chicago by Mark Lichtenstein, Red Car Chicago’s managing director/head of sales; in New York by Angelina Powers; and in Dallas by Cathy Brittingham and Joanne Morris.

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Dir. Jayson Moyer Reaches Crossroads

By Robert Goldrich

LOS ANGELES—Bicoastal/international Crossroads Films has signed director Jayson Moyer, whose last spot roost was Alturas Redfish Films, Venice, Calif. His most recent endeavors were a Close Up spot out of JWT, Bangkok, and a Ford/NASCAR commercial via JWT Detroit. Moyer's prior affiliations included Area 51 Films, which has since closed, and bicoastal/international Believe Media.

At press time, Moyer had already secured a pair of projects under the Crossroads banner: a McDonald's job out of Hoffman Lewis, San Francisco, and a four-spot Chevy package for Campbell-Ewald, Detroit.

Moyer brings both commercial-making and music video directorial chops—as well as ad agency experience—to Crossroads. He started out in the industry as an intern in the creative department at Wieden+Kennedy, Tokyo. Moyer then became a student at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, Calif., where he directed two spec ads, New Balance's "Stability" and Preparation H's "30 Grit," which respectively took Gold and Bronze honors in the student category of the 2000 Clio Awards.



Jayson Moyer

In '02, Moyer was featured in Saatchi & Saatchi's New Director Showcase at the Cannes International Advertising Festival. Over the years, he has helmed assorted commercials for such clients as Sony, Molson, Procter & Gamble, ESPN, State Farm, Capital One, Motorola, Nintendo and the Sci-Fi Channel.

There have also been foreign commercials, including Polish market fare produced by Filmit, Warsaw, for Ikea and Vizir detergent from Leo Burnett, Warsaw, as well as Signal toothpaste for D'Arcy, Warsaw. Moyer's work in Poland has garnered two Gold Iron Eagles, generally regarded as that country's top advertising award.

Moyer also diversified into music videos, directing for such acts as Glassjaw and the Canadian band Hot Heat. For the latter, the most notable job was "Bandages" (co-directed with Cooper Johnson), which has been a long playing clip on MTV2 and helped to advance the group to star status internationally. The Glassjaw video was titled "Ape Dos Mil," an offbeat piece which, among other scenarios, features clowns making out.

At Crossroads, Moyer is repped by Tanya Cohen on the West Coast, Sharon Lew on the East Coast and Janice Harriman in the Midwest.

Crossroads Films maintains an office in London and has a co-production agreement in place with Avion Films, Toronto.

Several diverse companies reside under the Crossroads umbrella, including: Crossroads Television, a creative services agency that develops and produces promotional and marketing campaigns for broadcast, cable and syndication companies; Crossroads Feature Films; music video division Merge@Crossroads; bicoastal nonlinear editing house 89 Editorial and design firm Headlight Design+Visual Effects, New York.

ARTISANS

Spot Vet Tony Harding Opens T.H.E.M.

NEW YORK—Veteran executive producer Tony Harding has launched Tony Harding Entertainment Media (T.H.E.M.), a New York-based commercial production house with a directorial roster consisting of Elisson Burgos (a.k.a. Fred), Zoe Green, Jim Tozzi, Lawrence Jacomelli and Michael Uys.

Harding will continue to maintain Kandokid, a New York shop he opened in 2003 with partner/director Jeff Kennedy to facilitate a large branded content package for McDonald's. Many of the T.H.E.M. helmers are affiliated with Kandokid for long-form projects.

Harding continues as Kandokid's managing partner/exec producer; the company is currently in production on a series for VH1 tentatively titled *Man Band*.

With Kandokid active in long-form assignments, Harding felt the need to also maintain a firm focused on commercials, leading to his forming T.H.E.M. Harding has a commercial-making pedigree.

As executive producer for such New York shops as Conspiracy and Big Picture, he presided over work for Reebok and Burger King, among other clients. Harding additionally has experience in the production of

promos (for HBO, Showtime, NBC, ABC) and music videos (Mariah Carey, the RZA).

Directors

Burgos' industry roots are in agency creative soil; his last position was as senior VP/group creative director at



Tony Harding

Arnold Worldwide before he decided to make the transition to directing full time. Among his helming credits are spots for Merck and STIHL power tools, the latter being produced through Kandokid.

Green cut her teeth directing theatre at Cambridge University. She later wrote and directed the period short film *Daisy Go Home*. Currently

residing in Hollywood, Green is a writer on Marvel Studios' upcoming *Wolverine*, and directed the upcoming feature documentary *The Rough Ride*. She recently directed three spec commercials, shot by feature DP Bobby Bukowski.

Tozzi's spot helming credits span such accounts as Kellogg's Rice Krispie Treats, Mattel and Dannon. He is also well known as the puppet and animation designer for MTV2's series *Wonder Showzen*.

Jacomelli also has an extensive spot directing track record, with work for Orange, Ikea, Fila, Swatch, Carlsberg, Knorr and Toyota to his credit. He is repped by Great Guns in the U.K. and by JSA across the rest of Europe.

And Uys' experience encompasses commercials, promos and feature documentaries (*Riding the Rails*, which earned Peabody and Directors Guild of America Award distinction). He is currently working on *The Good Soldier*, a feature-length documentary that tells the stories of five American soldiers from different wars (World War II, Vietnam, Iraq) as they enlist, go into battle and change their minds about war. Earlier in his career Uys was partnered in New York house Optic Nerve through which he helmed spots.

Short Takes

JESSICA YU COMMITS TO QUITTING

Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Jessica Yu (*Breathing Lessons*), whose commercial production roost is Nonfiction Spots, Santa Monica, has directed a campaign for GlaxoSmith-Kline's Commit anti-smoking lozenges out of Arnold New York that entailed chronicling the lives of four real people—Lisa, Keith, Matt and Kim—as they try to quit tobacco with the help of Commit. The television spots about Lisa are just hitting the air now. Lisa is a new mother who has been smoking a pack of cigarettes daily for 15 years.



CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT

The footage is unscripted, recorded by a camera installed in her home coupled with material shot in her natural surroundings. There are a total of seven commercials centered on Lisa and covering about a three-month span. Each spot is set to run for one week at a time and audiences will be able to track Lisa's progress. At press time, Keith's episodic spots were about to hit the web. The Lisa commercials will also be on the site, commitlozenge.com, which additionally features interactive tools like the Commit Quit Tracker, an interactive graph that tracks a user's experiences and progress during the 12-week quit period. Site visitors can create their own trackers and see composite results of others. Footage is embedded at different points in the tracker so relevant webisodes play when the user rolls over a particular juncture in the timeline. All four of the quitters' stories will be part of a branded content documentary. The rationale for the campaign is rooted largely in research, which shows that some 97 percent of smokers who try to quit fail so they often don't know what a true success story looks like. The Commit reality campaign hopes to fill this void, showing the highs and lows experienced by those who are struggling to kick their addiction. The Arnold creative team included chief creative officer John Staffen, creative directors Andrew Cahill and Ken Ferris as well as producer Tim Speidel. Loretta Jeneski and Michael Degan executive produced for Nonfiction, with Iza Muchlinski serving as producer. The DP was Josh Salzman, and Mark Imgrund edited via Nonfiction....

CELEBHEADS

Former Deutsch creatives David Rosen and Cheryl Van Ooyen have written and directed *Celebheads*, a series that debuted last month on VH1 Mobile and at VH1.com. Each episode is a short-form parody that uses the first person camera technique to capture a celebrity's POV—the first being that of Paris Hilton. Upcoming installments will parody the daily lives of noted actors, artists and politicians. Rosen and Van Ooyen, who are now pursuing directorial careers, also executive produced the series, which was created and produced by Men of Science in conjunction with VH1....



Staci Le Van

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

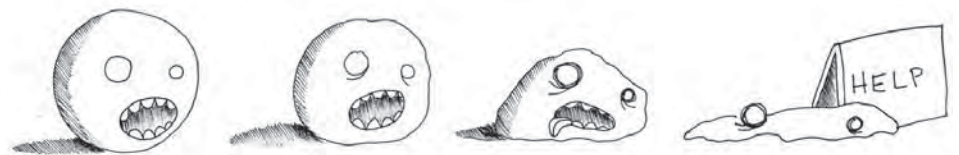
Editor Staci Le Van has joined the Austin, Texas office of [charlieuniformtango](http://charlieuniformtango.com). She shifts over from the editorial shop's Dallas facility where her work has included commercials for such clients as Cellular One, Curves, Goody's, Metro PCS, Comcast and the Discovery Channel. Prior to [charlieuniformtango](http://charlieuniformtango.com), Le Van cut for four years with The Whitehouse, Santa Monica....Rob Abeyta, Jr., who most recently was an art director at Nike, has come aboard advertising and design studio 72andSunny, El Segundo, Calif., in an art director capacity.

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.

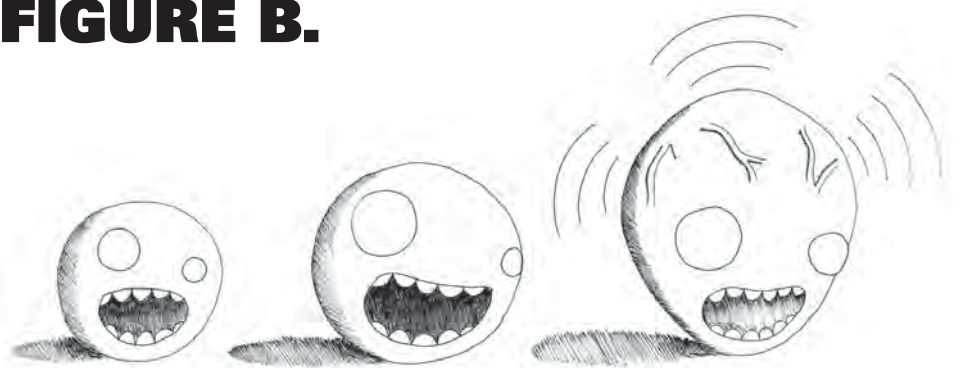
FIGURE A.



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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AICP Ponders What's Next, Tackles Issues

Continued from page 1

Committee members made a presentation to the AICP board and while details aren't yet publicly available, AICP president/CEO Matt Miller said "amazing, relevant, tangible pieces" have been created. The AICP plans to meet with its production company members to discuss the findings and recommendations of AICP.next. Some of those recommendations may require funding to get a comprehensive initiative up and fully running, noted Miller. At press time, it was being determined if the upcoming meeting of production house executives—slated to take place this month—will be done via conference call, or face to face in a series of regional sessions or perhaps more of a national summit.

In broad strokes, the AICP committee has looked beyond the traditional work-for-hire situation on which commercial making is based.

"AICP.next has delved into many emerging areas and what is being asked of production companies from concept through content development to media placement," related Miller.

"This also translates into looking into other forms of compensation for production companies, areas like intellectual property ownership and creative fees.

"And the committee's work hasn't been done in a vacuum," he continued. "The committee has interviewed—and continues to talk—with interesting people from different walks of life and business, people like David Droga [creative chairman of bicoastal agency Drogafive], and [futurist, author (*Out Of Our Minds, Learning to Be Creative*) and educator] Sir

Ken Robinson about the future. We plan to post these conversations online for our members to access."

Miller commended the work of AICP.next, which is chaired by Massimo Martinotti, a member of the AICP board and executive committee. Spot director Martinotti is also president of AICP's Florida chapter and of Mia Film, a production house based in Miami with offices in Mexico, Argentina and Costa Rica, and associate offices in Europe.

Membership initiatives

The AICP has also recently implemented a couple of membership initiatives: one being the creation of a membership category for foreign production service companies; and the other taking the form of an outreach program to digital producers.

The former could help raise AICP production company member awareness of qualified international production service shops and resources in foreign countries, while the latter encompasses such disciplines as animation, visual effects and graphic design.

The AICP created a digital production council in November to help address business affairs and other issues of importance to this constituency.

For example, as earlier reported (*SHOOT*, 12/15/06), the AICP board—in revising its payment guidelines from longstanding 50-50 and 50-40-10 plans to a 75-25 arrangement—separately took into account the special circumstances which set visual effects/digital production jobs apart from more traditional live-action-based projects.

Relative to the revised payment guidelines, the board is "looking forward" to them being widely adopted, according to Miller, who said that feedback from agencies has been largely positive based on an understanding of the cash flow dilemma that is being faced by production companies.

The board also plans on continuing its external affairs push on the spot filming incentives front.

The AICP, for example, played a key role in bringing about a multi-pronged tax credit initiative expressly designed to encourage commercial production in New York State. That program took effect Jan. 1. Other pro-filming incentives have also been enacted or are on the verge of being adopted in other states and municipalities.

Also pending is the release of the fourth annual AICP membership survey, which was conducted and analyzed by independent firm Goodwin Simon Strategic Research, San Francisco and Los Angeles. The findings provide insight on the state of the business at large and AICP member attitudes about the industry.

In its other prime order of business during the board meeting, the AICP re-elected Frank Stiefel as its national chairman and Bob Fisher as vice chairman. Stiefel is executive VP/exec producer of bicoastal/international @radical.media while Fisher is executive producer/owner of bicoastal Celsius Films.

Sally Antonacchio, VP of bicoastal The Artists Company, continues to serve as AICP treasurer. And AICP legal counsel Robert L. Sacks of Kane Kessler, New York, remains the organization's secretary.

Feeney, Edlund To Receive AMPAS Honors

Continued from page 4

ney also serves on AMPAS' Scientific and Engineering Awards Committee and has chaired the Digital Imaging Technology Subcommittee.

In addition, Feeney is a founding member and director of the Visual Effects Society as well as a fellow of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers.

Meanwhile honoree Edlund won Oscars for his work on such classic films as *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Return of the Jedi*.

He also earned six additional Academy Award nominations and three Scientific and Engineering Awards. He is a visual effects Emmy Award winner for the television series *Battlestar Galactica*.

In '83 Edlund founded Boss Film Studios, which produced visual ef-

fects for features (*Ghostbusters*, *Die Hard*, *Ghost*) and spots.

An active member of the academy since '79, Edlund served on its board of governors from '95-'06, and chaired both AMPAS' Visual Effects

Branch Executive Committee and Scientific and Technical Awards Committee from '01-'06. Edlund continues to serve on the AMPAS' Science and Technology Council and Museum Committee.

VES Unveils Nominees In Spot Category

Continued from page 4

nual Show and Tell Event, which will afford an opportunity for VES nominees to present their nominated work. "The sophistication of the work increases constantly," says Jeff Okun, VES Awards Committee chair. "We're now at the point where even the industry professionals can't tell what's real and what's a visual effect. Our Show and Tell gives the artists a chance to show their colleagues and the public what the current state of the art is. I know I always learn some-

thing new at this event and that's what makes it vital to the concept of competing for awards."

Final voting for all categories will take place via an online view and vote between Jan. 22 and Feb. 6. Winners will be announced at the fifth Annual VES Awards gala on Feb. 11 in Hollywood. There, noted visual effects pioneer Dennis Muren will receive the coveted VES Lifetime Achievement Award. A complete list of all the nominees is available at www.vesawards.com.



HD Essentials

By Carolyn Giardina

Autodesk Presents Update, Shares Vision For The Future

Last month Autodesk Media & Entertainment (formerly Discreet) held a press conference at its Montreal headquarters to restate its position in the industry and to offer a look ahead at the company's business strategy. Autodesk Media & Entertainment VP Marc Petit cited revenue growth, with the Media & Entertainment unit reporting revenues of \$172.3 million in fiscal '06, compared with \$160 million in fiscal '05.

The company had an important year, famously starting with the acquisition of Alias, the maker of Maya and MotionBuilder.

Autodesk also initiated a notable strategy in its existing product line, which is among the most popular in the commercial post industry. In '06, Autodesk completed a transition from an SGI-based business model to a commodity based systems model. Essentially, products from its systems division that has operated on SGI hardware—including Flame, Inferno, Fire and Smoke—have been transitioned to the Linux platform.

Head of marketing Maurice Patel explained that this change enables customers to take advantage of new levels of price/performance on Linux. He reflected back and pointed out that once "it took a \$2 million hardware suite to color correct for standard definition TV. Today using a modern 64-bit machine with good graphics, a single workstation can do multiple HD color corrections in real time."

The company also offered updates on products in the systems group, such as Lustre. The Lustre update may be of particular interest for those in advertising production. As many may recall, the Discreet Lustre color grading system—based on the color grading technology acquired by Colorfront—was introduced and subsequently Incinerator was launched to offer a performance boost. In the U.S., Lustre had initially seen more interest from the feature community than in advertising. This past year, Lustre HD was introduced specifically for commercial work.

Last month in Montreal, product marketing manager Marcus Schioler admitted "realistically, Incinerator is the right product for commercials. [High-end advertising clients] want performance."

Lustre HD was "meant to be at a price point for a larger group of people," he explained. "The greatest adoption is happening with commercial companies in smaller markets [internationally outside of markets such as London and domestically outside of New York and Los Angeles]. They don't have the entrenched workflow.

"But price is not ultimately what is [top priority] in high-end commercials. They need performance," Schioler added, saying that while Lustre HD is fast particularly with new GPU technology, Lustre with Incinerator is still the fastest in the line. Schioler added that notable work at the moment is focused on the integration of Lustre with Smoke and Flame.

When looking at market drivers, Autodesk emphasized the games market, which the company reported is expected to become a \$46.5 billion industry by 2010 (source: Pricewaterhouse Coopers) due to the introduction of new consoles, which include HD support.

Chris Vienneau, product manager for Toxik and Combustion, added that a recent Piper Jaffrey report concluded that global HD production is still only around 35 percent. Vienneau predicted that the HD broadcasting of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing would prompt the "next big leap." (For customer reactions and analysis into some of the recent Autodesk restructuring, see this week's *Editing and Postproduction Special Report*.)

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

Hurwit-Helmed Pilot, *Split the Difference*, Might Take Flight On NBC

Continued from page 4

ing *Crossroads* in 1995. The show also sheds a humorous light on the not-so-glamorous side of casting commercials.

"There are very few businesses where you can have as much emotion and as much at stake over playing a fish monster," he said, referring to a scene from the pilot. "It's unbelievable the fights that would happen where people would literally want to kill each other over what the fish costume is going to look like or whether the fish costume is a good idea."

Speaking of ideas, *Split the Difference* sprung from a conversation between Callahan, a casting director at House Productions in New York, and Narciso, who's been an actor in New York for 15 years. They had become friendly from auditioning. Callahan said she was writing a sitcom focused on cast-

ing and a little bit about the commercial business. Narciso thought it was such a good concept he began jotting down his own ideas and it quickly turned into 24 pages of copy. They put the project off when Callahan got pregnant, but last March they shared it with Sash, who was producing a commercial Narciso was acting in and Hurwit was directing. Sash shared it with Hurwit who immediately wanted in on the project.

He refers to this project as the most rewarding of his career because of the collaborative effort among he, Callahan and Narciso and because it underscored the success of allowing for improvisation, something he has been incorporating into making spots.

"Even in my pitch with an agency I say let's use improv actors, give them points they have to make and let's see how

they do it. *Split the Difference* really reaffirmed the success of that. There's so much electricity coming from these actors that we put together. I think so much has been done to scripts by clients by the time they get to me that they are not what the creatives wanted in the first place. They usually want something more spontaneous and this is a way to get back to it."

He said he will still make time to do spots if NBC decides to shoot *Split the Difference* and add it to its program lineup next fall. Narciso explained they are tweaking the script for the network and should find out later this month if the show will go into production.

Hurwit also pointed out they will try to get real advertisers to buy into a season. They would be pitched as part of the show and their commercials would be part of the show. "It is the



The crew shoots a scene for the *Split the Difference* pilot.

whole blended content thing every one is trying to do. This will be great, because it won't hurt the story, it is the story," he said.

While the story is about the commercial world, everybody involved in the project is also from the spot community, making it gratifying to work on. "It

shows the talent that is in the commercial world and I think it shows the trend in the commercial world. We're in a confusing stage where no one knows what to do with Web and longer form spots. All of that drives you towards improvisational, thought out creative as opposed to hit the target and get out."

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Ron Lawner

Celebrated Creative Director Retires From Arnold Worldwide

By Carolyn Giardina

As 2006 came to a close, Ron Lawner, the visionary creative leader behind a decade long series of commercial hits for client Volkswagen and memorable work for Fidelity Investments, American Legacy ("Truth" campaign), Royal Caribbean, Jovan Musk and Kinney Shoes, completed a 25-year career with Arnold Worldwide. Lawner held the position of vice chairman, global chief creative officer, and was based in Boston.

Lawner began his career as a freelance copywriter in New York; after graduating from Adelphi University, he came to Boston and continued his writing career with a number of agencies to gain experience. Lawner joined Humphrey Browning MacDougall in '81, which went through a number of acquisition and name changes before it emerged as Lawner Reingold Britton & Partners in '90. This agency was

then acquired by Lawner's friend and agency partner Ed Eskandarian and become Arnold Worldwide.

A member of the *Wall Street Journal's* Creative Leaders Series, Lawner has led the agency to international acclaim and creative honors that include the '98 Cannes Grand Prix for a Volkswagen Beetle print campaign, as well as many awards including The Grand Effie, D&AD, Kelly Awards, One Show Pencils, Clios, London International Awards and ANDYs. Arnold Worldwide has been on the *Gunn Report's* top creative agencies list since its inception in '99. Lawner expects that his life outside of Arnold's Boston headquarters will involve more time in a consulting capacity and serving on a variety of boards. As a collector of contemporary art, he has been involved with the Institute of Contemporary Art and a Patron of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

He intends to pursue charitable endeavors and continue his participation in MassProduction, a local organization seeking to bring more commercial production to the Boston area.



SHOOT: What drove your decision to retire from Arnold?

Lawner: I've been part of the incredible success of this agency and my identity is closely tied to the agency. Now I'd like a little more flexibility in my schedule for more accomplishments outside of these walls. I'm still surprised and inquisitive about what goes on in the world of communications, but I'm also ready for the next adventure. I've been approached to direct independent films and that is something I'd consider as well. My life is quite full. I'm going to see what comes along. There's a whole world out there, all I've done is advertising.

I've left some very talented people I've known for a long time. I have faith in Arnold and I wish them the best.

SHOOT: How would you describe the state of the commercial advertising business?

Lawner: I'm seeing less of the craft. By that I mean less of the craft that was to try to make a spot as close to perfect as possible...I'm seeing more disposable work. It's in, it's out, and not meant to have a life past its media run.

SHOOT: What do you think has driven that change?

Lawner: I'm not sure. Corporate culture had changed a bit...there are more outlets for creative. I'm not

sure the attention is being placed on what I think is still the most powerful medium, the broadcast medium. The buzzwords today are nontraditional media, but I don't know why that should take away from the craft. Maybe it's a distraction.

Arnold was an integrated agency before it was cool to be integrated. Arnold was way ahead of our time on this. One thing that helped was we had one bottom line. So there were not competing disciplines. So we did



what was right for the brand. What is the best way to reach the customer? By not having pressure for each department to be a profit center, we could focus on what is right. That makes a big difference.

Alternative media are just more tools in the toolbox.

SHOOT: Mobile content delivery is in its infancy in the United States, but is receiving a lot of attention. And, mobile content is also advancing internationally. What are your thoughts on mobile opportunities?

Lawner: I honestly believe that it's just another tool in the toolbox. Where it's appropriate, it will be great. Where it is not, it won't. You have to decide what you're using mobile for. You have to be smart enough to be where they're looking.

SHOOT: What do you think agencies need to focus their attention on, as these changes occur in the advertising industry?

During Lawner's tenure at Arnold, among the standout work was the advertising for Volkswagen, which won a Cannes Grand Prix and other honors.

Lawner: Agencies need to listen to their clients. Literally see what clients are facing today and respond. I don't think there is a lot of hand holding. Decisions have to be made faster; content has to be made quickly. You need a strategy, execution...it's a fairly long process. It has to be faster, and that means changing the model a little. You have to be face to face with the client. You have to streamline service. You need designers [writers, etc.] sitting together to tackle a project. That's what we did at Arnold. It all boils down to speed. It's not just

speed, it's being smart so that you can move more quickly. There are production companies cranking out content. They are on the way to becoming the agencies of the future...Agencies need to get on the bandwagon.

SHOOT: What is your view on the state of creativity in the business?

Lawner: I don't think creativity is suffering... I think media is creative. Whether it's mobile or web that has

easy thing to do.

Creativity is subjective. I don't see our craft changing a lot.

SHOOT: Would you reflect on some of your most memorable work at Arnold, including your Volkswagen "Drivers Wanted" campaign?

Lawner: I had the luxury of building relationships with client trust, and creating great work.

I've had some great clients. Jovan Musk was one of my favorites. It combined color and black and white. I looked at it recently when going through my things at Arnold, and the stuff was 20 year ago and still stands up. It was modern, the casting, the music...and it was effective. I read that sales increased 25 percent. We asked, "What is Sexy?" A look? A glance?...it was a fresh idea, and it worked. That's the joy of advertising.

For Volkswagen [a decade of highly regarded advertising that include the '98 Cannes Grand Prix for the Volkswagen Beetle print campaign], we never worked on a car before. We had an interesting audience—educated, interested in life, they were drivers in the sense that they would explore a little... We created work that offered a club for people who didn't want to join a club, people who see things a little different.

We never changed that voice. "On the road of life there are passengers and drivers. Drivers wanted"—it invited you in.

Commercialmakers To Make Their Mark At Sundance Festival

Continued from page 1

Chicago 10 explores the build-up and aftermath of the week-long anti-war demonstrations staged during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, throughout which protesters clashed with the Chicago Police Department and the National Guard. Following the protests, eight of the most vocal activists were held accountable for the violence and brought to trial in '69. Morgen mixes original animation with archival footage to explore the buildup to and unraveling of the infamous conspiracy trial, pushing the boundaries of traditional documentary filmmaking.

"I set out to make a historical non-fiction film without interviews or narration. I wanted to present the events in the present, to bring the past into the present. Trying to construct a narrative out of pre-existing material was a challenge I wouldn't wish on anyone. There were times when I felt that it simply couldn't be done.

"I love the idea of pushing the genre, of challenging the audience to ask themselves what is nonfiction. This is probably the first animated historical non-fiction film, but I don't think it will be the last."

When Morgen started the film, he wanted to use traditional 2D animation to illuminate everything he didn't have footage for. He hired a company in England to do the job, but the result was "a representation of what was going on, not the experience of what was going on," explained Morgen, who decided to walk away from the deal and move on. A few weeks later he met with people from New York-based Curious Pictures and they showed him a motion capture demonstration. "I figured mocap would be way outside my budget range, but they made the numbers work. With motion capture, I was able to have total control over the character's movement and create a fluidity and emotional range that would have been unachievable in 2D on our limited budget."

He said he looks forward to employing motion capture in future commercial endeavors and continuing to explore new and different ways to approach nonfiction, adding that most of his commercial work is rooted in nonfiction.

Taking a stand

What attracted him to the political events of the 1960s was Colin Powell's presentation of the U.S. case for engagement in Iraq. "I expected there to be some form of protest in the streets. But it never came. I felt that I wanted



Brett Morgen

to make a film that would remind people about the need to take a stand. We live in an era where people seem to think that sending a 10-dollar contribution to a political party is a form of protest. Most Americans do not support this war, but you wouldn't know it if it weren't for the pollsters."

He decided early on that *Chicago 10*, five years in the making, should be infused with a youthful spirit since youth movements have often brought on social change in this country. While he admits it's arrogant for any filmmaker to think that he can create some sort of social change through film, he is hoping *Chicago 10* is able to reach a youth audience and mobilize them, regardless of whether they are Republicans or Democrats.

In addition to *Chicago 10*, Morgen

just completed an eight-part series for the Sundance Channel called *Nimrod Nation*, inspired by his ESPN "Nimrod" commercials. "I created the series and executive produced it with Kevin Proudfoot at Wieden + Kennedy. So for the past two years I've been slammed. However, now that everything is done, I am dedicating myself full-time to the commercial world and look forward to an active and exciting 2007."

Additional fare

Other Sundance features with spot-making ties include:

- *Protagonist*, from documentary filmmaker Jessica Yu, who directs commercials for bicoastal Nonfiction Spots, is a documentary exploring the organic relationship between human life and Euripidean dramatic structure by weaving together the stories of four men—a German terrorist, a bank robber, an "ex-gay" evangelist and a martial arts student.

- Director/screenwriter JJ Lask, who edits spots for P.S. 260 New York, brings *On the Road with Judas* to Sundance. Reality, fiction and the notions of storytelling intertwine in this narrative, scored by bicoastal Human, about a young thief and the woman he loves.

- *The Pool*, directed and co-written by Chris Smith of bicoastal Smuggler. 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.

- *Rocket Science*, directed and written by Jeffrey Blitz, whose spotmaking home is Anonymous Content. In this feature, a 15-year-old boy from New Jersey with a stuttering problem falls in love with the star of the debate team and finds himself suddenly immersed in the ultra-competitive world of debating.

- Director Davis Gordon Green's *Snow Angels*. Green's spotmaking roost is bicoastal Chelsea Pictures. This drama interweaves a teenager with his former baby-sitter, her estranged husband and their daughter.

- U.K. Director Nick Broomfield, repped for spots by Santa Monica-based Plum Productions, brings *Ghosts* to Sundance. Based on a true story, *Ghosts* is the tragic account of an illegal Chinese immigrant woman as she struggles relentlessly for a better life in the U.K.

- *Waitress*, from director/screenwriter Adrienne Shelly, who helms spots via Sugarbox Studios, New York. The film follows a pregnant southern woman trapped inside her



A scene from *Chicago 10*

miserable marriage and life by poverty and her inability to access her own personal strength. Then she meets the handsome new gynecologist in town. When a friend encourages her to write a letter to her unwanted baby, an unexpected love story develops that changes Jenna's life.

- *Son of Rambow*, directed by Garth Jennings of Anonymous Content. Set in the 1980s, 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 and crafter of bizarre home movies.

- *Adrift in Manhattan*, helmed by director Alfredo de Villa, who has Hispanic representation through La Banda Films, Los Angeles, and produced by Washington Square Films, New York, with a score by composer Michael Levine of Michael Levine Music, Topanga, Calif. Set in New York City, the feature weaves three intersecting tales about a grieving eye doctor forced to take a closer look at her life; an aging artist confronting the loss of his eyesight; and a young photographer battling his innermost demons.

- *Girl 27*, a documentary edited by Tessa Davis of bicoastal Cosmo Street. When underage dancer Patricia Douglas is raped at a wild MGM stag party in 1937, she makes headlines and legal history. This film follows author/screenwriter David Stenn as he investigates the Hollywood scandal.

Short Films

This year the festival selected 71 short films, representing 19 countries. The lineup includes:

- A dramatic piece, *High Falls*, directed by Andrew Zuckerman of bicoastal/international @radical media. During a weekend at a country home, a man and his pregnant wife each tell their secrets to their best friend—placing them both in an awkward position and their own relationship in jeopardy.

- An animated film, *One Rat Short*, written and directed by Alex Weil, executive creative director of of Charlex, New York, which produced the short. *One Rat Short* tells the tale of a subway rat who is led by the mesmerizing ballet of a discarded food wrapper into an adventure of love and loss on a dark Manhattan night. At last year's Siggraph confab, the film won the Electronic Theater's prestigious Best of Show honor as well as the Siggraph '06 Computer Animation Festival's People's Choice Award.

- And *A Nick in Time*, edited by Charlie Johnston of bicoastal Lost Planet, tells the story of an old school barber who recounts a story from his past to teach a lesson to a troubled young man.

For The Record

In the Top Spot of the Week (12/15/06), the main production house credit for Intel's "Creativity" was omitted. "Creativity" was actually contracted through DNA, Inc., Hollywood, Calif., which in turn subcontracted the project to Pagan, London. The job was director Vaughan Arnell's last at DNA; after it was wrapped, Arnell dissolved Pagan and then joined Blink, London, and U.S. shop Furlined.



Heather Graham grieves the loss of her child in *Adrift in Manhattan*.

Top Spot of the Week

Director Aleya Young Tackles Life's Big Questions With A Squirrel's Help

By Christine Champagne

Who has the easy answers to life's big questions? The E-Z Answer Squirrel, according to a humorous viral video for the United Church of Canada created by Toronto-based Smith Roberts and directed by Aleya Young of Untitled, Toronto.

The 72-second viral finds average people posing queries such as, "Is the soul eternal?" and "Does God hate me because I'm gay?"

The E-Z Answer Squirrel, a real, gray squirrel, then answers each question by pulling on acorns marked "Yes" and "No."

At the end of the spot, those who are interested in engaging in a deeper discussion

of life's big questions are directed to Wondercafe.ca, a website sponsored by the United Church.

The goal here is to introduce those in the 30 to 45-year-old range who may have lost faith in organized religion to the United Church, according to Smith Roberts' creative director/art director Malcolm Roberts, who conceptualized the viral with creative director/copywriter Brian Smith.

"We weren't talking to atheists obviously, but just people who don't see the church as relevant to them

anymore, people who feel that the church is judgmental and too dogmatic," Roberts explained.

Those fed up with organized religion don't constitute an easy target to reach, of course. After studying advertising for other religions, the agency found that a lot of the messages were repetitive. "How many times can you tell people you care for the homeless and the sick and the needy?" Roberts related.

Seeking to break through the clutter as well as disarm those with preconceived negative notions about organized religion, Smith Roberts chose to create a light, humorous viral. "It was a way past the barriers

and a way to show these people the church is not really what they thought it was," Roberts said.

Additionally, the agency whipped up Wondercafe.ca, the site on which the viral debuted. Containing videos and forums, Wondercafe.ca serves as a place for people who are curious about the United Church to explore it without having to actually set foot in a church.

Young was immediately sold on the non-preachy viral and threw herself into the project, going as far as to

concoct a rather complex backstory for the E-Z Answer Squirrel. According to Young, a man had actually hit the squirrel while backing out of his driveway. Consumed with guilt, the man took the squirrel in and nursed it back to health. In the process, he realized this squirrel had a gift for answering questions with "Yes" and "No" nuts and built a stage in his garage for the animal to indulge his passion. The man was so dedicated to the squirrel that he began to neglect his wife, causing her to say, "You love that squirrel more than you love me!"

Why develop such an involved narrative? "It just helped me tell the story," Young said laughing. "It helped me put it all into context and explain myself and where I was coming from to the agency."

The creative team at Smith Roberts appreciated Young's backstory as well as her ability to cast solid performers. Prior to becoming a director, Young had worked as a casting director. "That benefited us a lot because we were very limited in budget, so we didn't have a large talent pool to draw from, and she managed to bring in people I think really gave us the feel that we wanted," Roberts praised.

Real feel

"They were more real people," Young said, noting, "It was important for them to come across as real, so it almost worked to our benefit to have had non-professional actors who didn't overthink everything."

While the human actors do their jobs well, the real star of the spot is the squirrel. Trained squirrels aren't so easy to come by. Beyond about 10 weeks of age, they aren't gentle, so Untitled found an animal trainer, Jim Lovisek, who came upon a two-week old orphan squirrel and reared him to eight weeks.

Lovisek's tender loving care and training turned the squirrel dubbed E-Z into quite a fine thespian. "He did what we needed him to do in remarkably less time and less takes than we ever thought it would be," Roberts said. The video was shot in just one 12-hour day. Young and her crew, which included DP Simon Mestel, shot on 35mm film at locations in and around a downtown Toronto community center.

Rigged acorns

E-Z's scenes were filmed in just two hours in a room at the community center, where a stage was built for him. Nutella and peanut butter spread

on the backs of dangling acorns motivated the squirrel to reach for the "Yes" and "No" nuts.

Ross Birchall of Bijou, Toronto, cut the viral, and Bonspiel Music, Toronto, produced the groovy blaxploitation-style track that accompanies it. "We had written it into the script that the music had some feeling of *Shaft*, blaxploitation feel. We had no idea why," Roberts laughed, "but it felt right."

The viral struck a chord with the Canadian media. It was the subject of stories on the country's major television outlets, including the CBC network. And the viral will soon return to TV—albeit it in shorter form. According to Roberts, it is being cut down into a 30-second PSA through which E-Z will be soon be imparting his wisdom over the Canadian airwaves.

The United Church of Canada piece is the latest endeavor that has caused Young's stock to rise as a director. Back in October, she was one of a handful of directors singled out as up-and-coming helmers in the fall edition of *SHOOT*'s Directors Series. Young broke into the spot directorial ranks a little more than a year ago.



Aleya Young



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

Toronto agency Smith Roberts decided to go nuts for client the United Church of Canada, employing a sage squirrel to reveal life's answers, to change perceptions about organized religion and to help draw new, young congregants into the church. The viral is being cut down to a broadcast :30 PSA.

TOP Spot OF THE WEEK

CLIENT
United Church of Canada

AGENCY
Smith Roberts, Toronto
Malcolm Roberts, creative director/
art director; Brian Smith, creative
director/copywriter; George Archer, producer.

PRODUCTION COMPANY
Untitled, Toronto

Aleya Young, director; Simon Mestel, DP; Tory Osler, executive producer; Rosalynn Hegan, producer. Shot on location in Toronto.

EDITORIAL
Bijou, Toronto.
Ross Birchall, editor;

POST/VISUAL EFFECTS
Technicolor Creative Services, Toronto.
Randy Perry, colorist; Darren Achim, online artist.

MUSIC/SOUND DESIGN/AUDIO
Bonspiel Music, Toronto.

The Best Work You May Never See

MARC USA Takes 'Plunge' For Pittsburgh Zoo

By Robert Goldrich

Just when you thought it was safe to get back in the water, it isn't—at least in this tongue-in-cheek :30 titled "A New Plunge" for the Pittsburgh Zoo out of agency MARC USA, Pittsburgh. The offbeat twist is that instead of a fin attached to a great white shark, the telltale danger sign is fur from a great white polar bear. That sighting sets off a panic that gets an otherwise brave, hearty crew to scurry out of the drink, fearing for their safety.

The spot features Pittsburgh's own Polar Bear Club about to take its annual Polar Bear Plunge in a freezing Allegheny River. You have to be a bit crazy to wear a relatively skimpy swimsuit and then jump into near frigid water. But this group isn't crazy enough to remain in the river upon seeing a huge polar bear swimming about. The scenario begins with and focuses on Jack, who's about to take his first plunge. (Jack is the only professional actor in the bunch.) He's surrounded by veteran Polar Bear Club members of all ages who are already getting wet in the freezing H2O. Jack talks to someone off camera. "You have my keys," Jack asks, as if looking for an excuse not to go into the river. Yet alas his keys are safe and there's no reason not to hit the drink.

Finally Jack somewhat reluctantly heads into the water. But at that point, he finds his excuse, spotting the polar bear. He screams out "Bear" repeatedly, pointing out into the distance, alerting his fellow club members. Panicked, they rush out of the river."

A supered message reads, "The real bears are back," accompanied by a logo for the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium.

The spot serves as the perfect attention-getting warning to Pittsburgh residents that polar bears are returning to the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium after an eight-year hiatus. The twin, two-year-old bears will be part of the Water's Edge exhibit, scheduled for completion in April, featuring a large viewing window and two underwater tunnels for an up-close experience with the animals in the exhibit, which will eventually also include sea otters and walrus.

Keeping track

Pittsburgh-based production house Animal deployed computer graphics to put wild bear footage into the live-action scene of Pittsburgh Polar Bear Club swimmers entering the water. Animal scouted a section of the downtown Pittsburgh river that would match up with the footage of the polar bear in its original watery habitat. "We worked closely with River Rescue, placing buoys in the river to determine tracking points to place the bear in the correct location," said Animal Director Michael Killen. "We rehearsed moves and points to be hit in the story, which had to be done in a single 26-second take, making sure the sunlight's direction matched the stock footage."

Animal compositor Jim Kreitzburg utilized Discreet Logic's Flame to remove the old water and composite the bear into the river water, taking care that the water looked realistic along the edges of the bear's body.

Pre-production work included Navy Seal divers scouting the underwater area for anything that might endanger the swimmers plus regular checks of the water current speed by the River Rescue team. To further ensure safety, River Rescue remained on location throughout the shoot, which had to be stopped several times when the Just Ducky tour boats passed by.

MARC USA senior art director Dena Mosti explained that to create the feel of a Polar Bear Clubber's home movie, the :30 was executed in one consecutive shot—albeit with many takes to get the desired effect. The DP was Stephen Hunter.

The visual trickery wasn't confined to meshing the stock bear footage into the Allegheny. Though the commercial just recently debuted (on Pittsburgh stations and the local outlets for Animal Planet, Discovery Channel and TLC), it was actually filmed in May 2006 as the temperature hovered around 90 degrees. Part of the chilling "challenge," said Killen, "was to create the look of a gray and cold January day."

Winter wonderland

To create the illusion of a wintry environment, handmade snow was used. Animal's sleight of hand also included the removal of telltale warm weather greenery, and the addition of falling snow, visible breath (employing 3D Studio Max) and fog.

The Marc USA creative team consisted of Mosti, creative director Ron Sullivan, senior writer Jason Fotter and producer Beth Fornaro.

credits

Client Pittsburgh Zoo/Pittsburgh Aquarium **Agency** MARC USA, Pittsburgh **Ron Sullivan, creative director; Dena Mosti, senior art director; Jason Fotter, senior writer; Beth Fornaro, producer.** **Production Company** Animal, Pittsburgh **Michael Killen, director; Nancy Richert, producer; Stephen Hunter, DP.** **Editorial** Animal J. Frink, editor **Post/Visual Effects** Animal **Jim Kreitzburg, Allan Stallard, effects artists** **Stock Footage** Fotosearch.com **Audio** Market Street Sound, Pittsburgh **Rob Deaner, sound designer/audio post mixer** **Principal Actor** Tom Kurland

A different kind of great white sighting.



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Feb. 9 '07 Issue
ADVERTISING AGENCY PRODUCERS
PRODUCTION COMPANIES
STOCK FOOTAGE & MUSIC LIBRARIES
Sundance Wrap Up
DGA Commercial Winner
Super Bowl Ad Critique
Ad Deadline: Feb. 2

3.
Feb. 23 '07 Issue
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iWork

NFL, Atmosphere BBDO Help Playoff Fans Jump Onto The Bandwagon

Interactive Website Matches Fans With Teams Still Alive In The Postseason

By Nicole Rivard

At the beginning of the football season I was determined to pay closer attention to the game and become a better fan. I wasn't sure which team to root for though because there are so many to choose from, and truth be told, I didn't know much about any of them.

But since I'm an equestrian and love horses, I decided I should cheer for the Indianapolis Colts. It just seemed logical to me.

It's that same kind of off-the-cuff logic that the NFL and interactive agency Atmosphere BBDO have tapped into with the creation of the website nfl.com/bandwagon. Although ratings are great during the playoffs and momentum is strong, there are a lot of fans out there following the playoffs and their favorite team is not necessarily alive anymore.

So the NFL wanted to launch an immersive online experience that will allow people to latch onto—in a fun way—a playoff team that matches their personality or interests.

"What we wanted to do was get people to watch the playoffs and have a team to root for even if their team was eliminated. That way they will have as much to root for as the fan whose team is still alive," explained Atmosphere's creative director Patrick Clarke, who also helped NFL launch NFLrush.com in 2006. The interactive website, geared to fans in the 6-13 age range, has become the gateway to all things young and fun in the NFL.

The way nfl.com/bandwagon works is bandwagon participants are first asked who their favorite team is. Then they are whisked away to a virtual locker room where they have to answer five questions, some completely unrelated to football. For instance, during one of my visits, I was asked, Letterman or Leno, night or morning person, bling or no bling, on the edge or play it safe. It's randomized so each time you visit you might get a different batch of questions and answers.

"That was important because we knew, and certainly from the data we've seen so far, a lot of people are going through again and again. You want it to be fresh and different, something they will pass along to their friends," said Peter O'Reilly, director of marketing for the NFL.

The site then calculates a participants' responses and assigns them a corresponding team and explains the logic behind the choice. For example, if you chose Letterman, it means you should root for a team that plays on the East Coast, if you are a night owl, you should support a team that plays late games. And if you like bling, you want a team with a Superbowl ring.

"What we think is so fun and why this appeals to mainstream fans is the questions aren't so football related," related Clarke. "The questions are kind of blind—there's a logic to them but you don't get the logic behind them until the end.

"When visitors are asked facial hair or no facial hair, they think, 'What does this have to do with why I would root for a team?' And then they're like, the team has a coach with a mustache."

Doing it the NFL way

The questions are posed and answered by Harry Kalas, the voice of the NFL. Kalas is well known for narrating the highlight segments of *Inside the NFL*, the weekly sports show that focuses on the National Football



The NFL's new website matches visitors with the playoff team that best matches their interests..

League starting the first week of NFL season until the week after the Super Bowl. Getting Kalas on board was key to the success of this endeavor, according to O'Reilly.

"All of the games we developed with Atmosphere for NFLRush taught us the importance of doing things only the NFL can do—things like the My Highlights Game where you can upload your face onto an NFL highlight and see yourself in an NFL game are the types of things that are so authentic NFL and that are fun...and could only be pulled off by us. And that's how we felt with this. It is the authentic and real voice of the NFL in Harry coupled with some pretty fun stuff."

All aboard the bandwagon

After visitors discover their bandwagon team, they find out when the game is for that team so they can tune in. They can also play again, check out the NFL shop or NFL Playoff News or share the bandwagon site with a friend. While the viral nature of the campaign is what drives it, it is also being promoted via banner ads and a spot.

With a few of these interactive initiatives under its belt, the NFL is happy with the results and is poised to continue to tackle the new medium.

"What we are starting to see is clearly the avid NFL fan that watches every game and is engaged by the NFL completely is into this and is passing it around," explained O'Reilly.

"There's lots of chatter and blogging going on. But it's also drawing the more mainstream fan into it, people who have a favorite team but may not be engaged 24/7 with the NFL because this type of experience also brings in pop culture... it's not only bound to football type of experiences. That is something we are pleased with.

"It will lead us to doing and developing more of these types of immersive experiences."

He pointed out that in the past, especially for something like the playoffs, the NFL's campaigns have been primarily centered around TV. "But we know fans are spending a lot of time online. So it's become about how we can create an anchor experience that we can then support offline through TV and print. With Atmosphere it's been great experimenting and having some real successes that we can build on for next season."

While nothing is set in stone, he said a lot of things are on the drawing board. They are looking at building interactive experiences during offseason time periods. He sees opportunities in the NFL draft, which has grown into a huge, heavily followed event, and even training camp perhaps. There is also talk about doing a kid-friendly version of the bandwagon for NFLRush.

"They're deciding in those elementary school years what team they should be rooting for. You can ask them similar questions and match a team to their personality and interests," said O'Reilly.

In the meantime, he said that the NFL is thrilled overall with its interactive initiatives so far.

"We've come a long way in the last year in terms of building out some really rich, interactive experiences."

credits

Client: NFL **Agency:** Atmosphere BBDO, New York **Andreas Com-buechen**, chief creative officer/CEO; **Patrick Clarke**, creative director; **John Heath**, associate creative director / copywriter; **Brett Simon**, associate creative director /design; **Donna Farmer**, director of production; **Jason Sindel**, producer; **Marc Macaluso**, tech lead; **Billy Kersnowski**, senior flash developer; **Kenny Lin**, flash developer; **Garrett Franklin**, account director; **Lauren Movshin**, account supervisor

Networking For The Future

A tale of two networks. It could be the best of times for creativity, and the worst of times for those agencies that fail to tap into all their in-house creative resources, including those outside the designated creative department.

The alluded to online networks entail collaboration between WongDoody, the independent ad agency with shops in Seattle and Culver City, Calif., and its interactive and technology development division, United^Future.

The creative genesis of one network—NoStankYou.com for client the Washington State Department of Health—has already been chronicled in *SHOOT* (10/27/06 iWork), with TV and radio spots helping to drive teen traffic to the site.

The other network, Saber Hacer (saberhacer.com; Spanish for Know-How Now), is currently in beta test with plans for a major rollout in three markets—including Los Angeles and Chicago—in about three months. The client is veteran TV news anchor Michele Ruiz, with the backing of an undisclosed firm.

SaberHacer.com is designed to serve the rapidly growing Latino community with relevant news and information. On the beta site, for example, there are news stories on the identity theft crisis as well as the check-cashing store industry. A significant number of Latinos in the United States who are wary of banks have become regular customers of check-cashing stores. The news story on the Saber Hacer network points out that a premium, often exorbitant, is being paid for the “convenience” of these outlets, which are used for not only check cashing but also wiring money to relatives outside the United States.

Currently there are about a dozen video news stories on the network site, which web surfers are already plugging into, with word of mouth bringing additional people to the network. Plans call for the news story inventory to increase to at least 50 when the formal three-market launch takes place. And the blueprint calls for the network to eventually be advertiser supported, with special brand sponsorship opportunities in the offing.

Client Ruiz—the president of Saber Hacer and a former 6 p.m. news anchor at KNBC-TV, the NBC station in L.A.—came to United^Future to help design and develop the broadband network, which users can access in English or Spanish.

“They [Ruiz and the investment firm] weren’t even thinking in terms of coming to an agency at first,” relates Scott Holmes, managing partner of United^Future. “Instead they sought out an interactive firm, which led them to us and in turn WongDoody.”

But the fortuitousness of the situation for WongDoody underscores the opportunities emerging from varied unexpected sources for agency creatives. “As we get closer to the official launch, we will help to shape the branding and identity of the network through a promotional campaign and ID package,” relates Michael Boychuk, creative director at WongDoody, Culver City. “We will be branding the network and driving traffic to it.”

The experience with Saber Hacer, continues Boychuk, is also driving the agency to think more expansively in terms of formulating networks when appropriate for other clients in tandem with United^Future.

And Saber Hacer brings WongDoody into the burgeoning Hispanic ad mar-



**Saber Hacer,
NoStankYou
Sites Reflect
New Creative
Opportunities**

By Robert Goldrich

ket, another potentially expansive dynamic for the agency.

WongDoody didn’t even need a conventional client to establish this foothold; instead the catalyst was the creation of a broadband network by the agency’s interactive sister shop.

NoStankYou

The integrated campaign for the aforementioned NoStankYou looks to reach youngsters based not on the dire life or death consequences of smoking but rather the nasty habit’s negative impacts on one’s physical appearance and social life, both of critical importance to most teenagers.

WongDoody and United^Future teamed to develop the network and its original content, including short-take messages and the “No Stank You NOW” video log, an online news/entertainment show hosted by local teens, for teens, on the social risks of tobacco. The vlog features interviews with peers, state officials, dentists and professional athletes, among others. The site also contains irreverent, interactive and portable content. Users are given code snippets for

Continued on page 16

Networking Helps To Uncover New Creative Outlets

Continued from page 15

avatars, comment images, emotions and more to post into blogs, MySpace and YouTube pages, personal websites and mp3 players. News pages offer rotating factoids about tobacco use.

"It's an online entertainment network," says Tracy Wong, chairman/executive creative director of WongDoody. "Teenagers are on the Internet. And in



"Being a small ad agency, we have always been a democracy when it comes to getting ideas from anyone and everyone here....[As a result,] we can explore and take advantage of new opportunities."

—Michael Boychuk

this case true engagement with the target has to come on the web, not from TV. The web is the only way we can get teenagers' time on their terms so that they can dive deep into information."

The number of unique visitors to the NoStankYou site is growing by approximately 20 percent each month since it launched on Sept. 25. New vlog episodes are posted on the online network every three weeks.

Collaboration

The creative rapport developing between WongDoody and United^Future is evident in the two online networks, and crucial to success in an evolving marketplace. "You have to come to view people in all departments of the agency as being creative," says Boychuk, who's been with WongDoody pretty much since its inception, becoming its third staffer in Seattle before moving down to the Los Angeles area in '98 to co-found the agency's Southern California office with managing partner Ben Wiener.

"Being a small advertising agency, we have always been a democracy when it comes to getting ideas from anyone and everyone here," continues Boychuk. "That has served us well, particularly when it comes to our interactive division... I think creatives generally—I know I do—have a fear of technology. But through United^Future and by regarding the interactive people as creative contributors and equals, we can explore and take advantage of new opportunities, like the online networks we've created."

Wong affirms that perhaps the greatest challenge for agencies today is to create a working creative relationship between traditional creatives and technologically based people.

"I talked to Nick Law [chief creative officer, North America, for New York-headquartered R/GA] at a creative conference and his main message was just that—the pressing need to build a bridge uniting these people within the agency.

One group has to teach the other and vice versa, making everybody more of a hybrid creative, a mix of creative and technical sensibilities that in the end benefit the client in the integrated marketplace."

Wong believes smaller entrepreneurial shops like his have a leg up when it comes to creating relevant integrated campaigns spanning varied media. "Generally the people having more success with the integration model are the smaller agencies," contends Wong. "The huge agencies with more than \$250 million in billings and that are part of big holding companies are struggling in this regard. They talk about integration but it's not happening.

"For us, I won't say it's been painless but it's been a lot easier," he continues. "We got into this years ago because of our clients' spending levels. Our clients say, 'We don't have enough money for TV or to put everything into TV, so what can we do? What is the best way to spend our money?' That's when integration kicks in because there's no one answer anymore...But when you're a large agency and paid by traditional media, it's heresy to go against that. As a result these big shops tend to have an integration team in one building, and the creative team in another. Their resources are siloed, which leads to a mentality in which the traditional creatives tell the interactive guys 'to do some banners around our ideas.' There's no truly meaningful creative dialogue."

Wong adds that in this scenario, creatives view the interactive division as something it was many years ago—"an IT department with nerds." But that isn't today's reality, he continues, citing creative interactive artisans such as the aforementioned Holmes.

Holmes, who co-founded United^Future two years ago after having played

"[An agency] can't fall into the trap of doing an online network just for the sake of doing one. It all depends on the target. [That is why] Nostankyou made perfect sense..."

—Tracy Wong



a key role in the development of Zentropy Partners, Los Angeles, McCann Erickson's interactive agency, concurs that creative collaborations involving the different agency departments are pivotal, as evidenced by the online network endeavors, which also include an ambitious site for client Alpine.

"This isn't the model where an NBC or ABC creates an online network in order to drive traffic to the linear broadcast network," relates Holmes who notes that the web networks being created by United^Future and WongDoody are the end destinations that help to attract, entertain and inform target audiences.

At the same time, cautions Wong, "You can't fall into the trap of doing an online network just for the sake of doing one. It all depends on the target. NoStankYou made perfect sense because teenagers live on the Internet and if you do things right, you have the potential of having a longer discussion with them there. But an agency is making a big mistake if its rationale is, 'Let's be on the web and have a channel thingy. We'll do some crazy promotion on the network or throw some games on the web to show we're contemporary.'"

Future Speak

Creative Directors Sound Off On What's In Store For '07

Editor's Note: As this Agency Creative Directors Series section's lead story reflects, new communication opportunities are emerging for creatives. In that spirit, SHOOT sought out observations from creative directors as to what they envision for the new year. Here's a sampling of their feedback (with more to come next week):



Bruce Bildsten, creative director/partner, Brew, Minneapolis

I believe '07 will see the acceleration of the industry transformation we witnessed in '06 and '05. As a 21-year Fallon vet who recently started my own "new breed" agency, I may be biased, but I think you'll continue to see bold work and surprising account shifts to upstart, forward-thinking shops as clients look for truly fresh approaches. We'll see interactive (and perhaps even media agencies) begin taking more of the overall creative lead on major brands. However, by no means do I think large established ad agencies are going to go away. Those who are well along the road to transformation—like BBDO and JWT—will prosper and be joined by one or two other sleeping giants. The losers will be the agencies that cynically believe it's still "all about ads." In this brave new world, the most valuable commodity will be creatives, directors, and production companies who truly embrace and deeply understand the interactive world those who bring a wider range of creative thinking to the table from day one.



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

I expect to see a rapid evolution in the meaning of grassroots marketing as more brands stop trying to invent advertising icons like the Verizon guy and start tapping into the expansive network of YouTube stars who bring with them an existing fan base and inimitable authenticity. I don't subscribe to theories about the death of the :30 spot. And I abhor any reference to "viral video" as a medium. (Hoping something will be passed along by consumers isn't much of a media plan.) Nor am I implying that user generated content will replace the professionally produced TV spot; after all, online clutter makes competing for eyeballs on TV seem easy. But as our agency has already seen, the vast online video repositories will be the place a lot of us begin the casting process.



José Molla, founder/chief creative officer, la comunidad, Miami

The collective imagination will be expressed more than ever. There's a very interesting democratization of content going on. Everyone of us is constantly being exposed to all kinds of messages generated by everyday people and a lot of it is very good. The speed of communication is changing radically. People are always looking for new stimuli and the information loses its relevance quickly. It's getting harder and harder to surprise people and that will have a great impact on what we do."

“For commercial work, with multiple formats and HD, you pretty much need to have a Flame.”

— Kirk Balden, A52 Flame Artist

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To see the “Fit” spot and get the rest of the story visit www.Autodesk.com/A52



Industry Artisans Offer Observations, Predictions Re: 2007



Larry Bridges

Continued from page 1
ment/labor front, which could have a ripple effect on the advertising community. There is already some concern over the fact that early negotiations between the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) on a new film and TV contract have been nixed. The current pact expires on Oct. 31.

If an agreement isn't reached in a timely fashion, the repercussions on primetime program schedules could cause advertisers to look further away from broadcast television, accelerating their plans to explore other media options.

And of course those other options carry varied new content opportunities spanning such platforms as the web, Video on Demand, digital video recorders, cell phones, PDAs and the like, again underscoring the need for new business and creative models for production houses and the ad biz at large. And even if a WGA contract is finalized sooner than expected, new major outlets are on the immediate horizon anyway, a prime example being Anheuser-Busch's scheduled Feb. 5 launch of online entertainment network Bud.TV. And then there's the user-generated content dynamic. SHOOT canvassed industry folk for their takes on what's in store for '07. Here's a sampling of their feedback (with additional creative perspectives in this week's Ad Agency Creative Directors Series section):

Larry Bridges, CEO, Red Car (Santa Monica, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Dallas, Buenos Aires)

In 2006 it became clear everyone had a reel. By everyone I mean our audience, consumers. Search YouTube...

Prediction #1: The term "director" will be replaced with the term "media architect." Would you let a YouTube director design your house or office?

Prediction #2: Hi-Def will become the new Standard-Def. The first 11 months of 2007 will be spent discussing how to fit 4x3 into 16x9. Graphics will generally grow larger to fit both formats and will cover most of the



Allen Daviau

screen area available. It will be a wind-fall for companies who do graphics. It won't be until 2008 that agencies and media architects discover Hi-Def's visual potential: textures, deep focus, the arresting framing that you see in foreign films like Antonioni's *Il Deserto rosso* (1964).

Antonioni was one of those early adopters who insisted that film and Hi-Def were the same. No one listened. For goodness sake, we have Hi-Def 3D ultra sound now in hospitals, but are babies any cuter? I don't think so. Come on Bruce D., we need you more than ever.

Prediction #3. YouTube, and for that matter, all websites, will be replaced by private MMOGs, like "Second Life." Everyone, I mean our audience, that is "consumers," will fly around new Supermarketing Internet in 3D, or (Web 2.0 however you wish to call it), shopping, gossiping, doing research, working, collaborating, stalked by targeted messages, all the while wearing video sandwich boards displaying crisp video screens, (yes), with their reels a playin'. In 2007 careers and free time will merge, which will finally focus us on our real work, in the real world, where we are all media architects, like our audience. Who wants to take a crack at our new kitchen in Chicago?

Teddy Lynn, senior VP/director branded entertainment, Arnold Worldwide, Boston

2006 was a year when Arnold, like many agencies, made changes and we expect them to continue into 2007. We saw clients wanting to make a bigger impact for less money. What that means to us is that non-traditional media channels coupled with big ideas spanning those channels are more important now than ever. Great work on TV, print and radio remain essential, but so now is work that integrates traditional advertising with live events, promotions and entertainment whether online or on film and television. Our clients want to explore this landscape and we are looking forward to helping them navigate it.



Lance O'Connor

Lance O'Connor, executive producer/partner, Aero Film, Santa Monica

Right now the name of the game is convergence. Aero Film has been very active in helping agencies get a handle on all the new faces of advertising. The very footprint of advertising is changing and we're already a part of it. No longer do we just have 30 and 60 second spots to produce. It's about interactive, it's about cinema, it's in-store video, it's devices in your car and on your phone. We're doing it now. Theater ticket sales are up 10 percent this year, so we're currently working with agencies and their clients to capitalize on that opportunity. (Aero is going to make an announcement regarding our cinema efforts in a few weeks).

We've continued to grow and prosper the past three years because of this proactive approach.

As a production company, we're becoming more of a soup-to-nuts organization, while working with agencies and their new clients to bring them into the future. We're doing production, post and even assisting agencies with some of the creative on a measurable amount of work. This help from us on the production side will free up agencies to concentrate their efforts and grow their businesses by moving into digital consulting.

Production isn't going anywhere, but it's already changed. It isn't just about shooting the spot and stepping aside. Agencies need more help with clients than ever. Our work as a production company has never been more diversified and that's always an interesting and exciting place to be.

Allen Daviau, ASC, cinematographer

I believe more commercials will air in high definition format in 2007. That shouldn't come as a surprise, since the demographics of households that own HD sets are primary targets for many advertisers. I made a presentation to AICP about this topic five or six years ago. I'm a little surprised that it has taken a while for this trend to gain traction. One notable exception is trailers for movies.

Many of them are already being
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Jonathan Keeton

posted and are airing in HD in addition to playing on cinema screens.

In fact, HD Net on cable has a 10 minute program called Nothing But Trailers. There is an historical precedent. There was the same resistance to producing commercials in color when the transition from black and white TV sets got underway. The perception was that it cost more to produce and air spots in color, so advertisers were waiting for more sets to be installed. Once that transition began, it happened almost overnight. People are also starting to notice that some very good television programs produced in Super 16 film format are airing in HD. I'm not ready to predict this is going to become a trend in commercials production, but it is something to watch. Super 16 production could trim some costs and offer more mobility without compromising picture quality."

Jonathan Keeton, president, Radium, San Francisco and Los Angeles

2007 promises to increase the pace of change in the industry. Ideas and talent are still king however and will remain so. We as a studio need to be technologically agnostic, while at the same time demonstrating mastery over a broad range of techniques and methodologies. The paradox will be that, in being better at a variety of techniques we can be fairer to the unique, specific needs of any given project. Ironically as more and more really gifted "specialty" shops pop up, the "real" trend, considering all of the different media outlets now available to advertisers, will be in multifaceted, diverse studios applying a range of possible solutions to projects in order to achieve the simplest and most appropriate execution of a director's or creative's own unique vision.

And, of course, caffeine remains important.

Olcun Tan, head of R&D, Gradient Effects, Venice, Calif.

In 2007, re-purposing game physics engines such as Ageia, Bullet or ODE will be increasingly important for vfx production purposes.

Understanding and modifying



Mitch Dorf

these technologies for use across platforms and towards photorealistic output will be crucial to advance the quality of digital effects work.

Simulation instead of animation is rapidly becoming the key to convincing "invisible" visual effects animation for feature films and commercials.

Mitch Dorf, mixer, POP Sound, Santa Monica

High Definition is definitely here and will continue to evolve with time. Some of the formats that exist today could possibly be weeded out. HD-CAM-SR is becoming increasingly popular and appears to be the front-runner—at least for the short term—because it handles compression better than other formats and offers greater flexibility by providing more audio channels.

Data transfer will continue to be used increasingly as a production medium and, perhaps, as a delivery medium as well. We already receive a lot of media via the Internet, whether it's QuickTimes, OMF files or data files. People have really embraced this way of working. Although it may not happen this year, we might soon be delivering TV spots as data files and eliminating tape altogether.

It's already become routine to deliver radio spots in data formats. In the future, we may receive data files that are higher resolution and less compressed and we will simply do our layback to them.

People today often don't arrive at the studio with a tape any longer. Soon, maybe they don't have to leave with one either.

Editor's Note: Look for further observations and/or prognostications about what's in store for this new year in next week's electronic edition (e.edition) of SHOOT. Among the additional artisans offering feedback will be Nathan Hunt, VP/group creative director at Deutsch New York; Loni Peristere, creative director, Zoic Studios, Los Angeles, Siggy Ferstl, colorist at Riot, Santa Monica and John Myers, executive producer/partner at Ring of Fire in West Hollywood, Calif.

AAAAAnalysis

The American Association of Advertising Agencies' (AAAA) recently released its annual Television Production Cost Survey (*SHOOT*, 12/1/06), which covers calendar year 2005 as reported by 21 participating ad agencies and branch offices (including most of the country's top 20 shops). While production usually generates the loudest scrutiny, this year editorial and post were among the areas that showed the greatest changes, when compared with the survey results for '04.

Editing and post costs—which had been on the rise—leveled out in '05. The average cost to edit and complete an original :30 in '05 was \$51,000—which is two percent less than in '04. But the '04 average had gone up six percent over '03. Video finishing costs were four percent less in '05 as compared to '04.

This represented a notable shift as finishing costs went up 25 percent in '04 as compared to '03. Creative/labor fees on a :30 showed a seven percent decrease while an editor's markup declined by six percent from '04 to '05, coming in at \$3,100.

Looking at the survey as a whole, it should be noted that the AAAA report shows a total pool of 1,444 national commercials—that's 135 fewer spots, or nearly nine percent less, than in '04 based on returns from 20 agencies.

In fact, the tally of national commercials being produced, as reported by the AAAA, has been pretty much steadily declining since '01. In '01, for example, there were 1,741 national TV spots, which went down to 1,725 in '02, and 1,521 in '03. The general consensus suggested that the reason for this trend is that agencies have been shifting more of their TV investments into alternative media.

The Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) has long questioned the validity of the survey. This year, *SHOOT* asked editorial and post professionals for their thoughts on the survey results. Here's what was said:



Bob Cagliero

Bob Cagliero,
executive
producer,
bicoastal 89
Editorial; presi-
dent, AICE NY
Chapter

The survey seems to be accurate on a number of levels from

our experience as a bicoastal editorial company that also maintains a design and visual effects division. I think all of us can sense the number of traditional, national television commercials declining over the years throughout the industry. While such decline may have placed some strain upon the production and postproduction communities, the increase in "non-traditional" media has presented work to offset the decline. The challenge here, however, is non-traditional media has created non-traditional budgets.

A couple of years ago, agencies had to sell their clients on web films, virals, podcasts and the like. Some clients grudgingly experimented with the idea, while others enthusiastically embraced it. The risk factor [in the advertiser's mind] initially put pressure from all involved to create these pieces with little or no budgets attached to them in effort to sell them to a client. In attempt to partner with their clients, production companies and editorial houses initially "took it on the chin" at times to produce this content. Now, many advertisers have found how effective alternative media is and attach such pieces to the list of deliverables of a traditional TV commercial production. Some projects are generated as purely alternative media from the onset.

Continued on page 21

Editorial and Post Execs Respond to Survey Results

By Carolyn Giardina



Getty Images 200323785-001

Post Reaction To Autodesk Restructuring

By Carolyn Giardina

Last month Montreal-headquartered Autodesk Media & Entertainment (formerly Discreet)—the makers of the popular Flame, Inferno, Fire and Smoke editing and compositing systems—restructured its operations to prepare for the next chapter in the company's history. Key was that these moves marked the company's completed transition of its systems products (i.e. Flame and other aforementioned systems) from an SGI-platform product line to a commodity (Linux) based systems model.

As part of this restructuring, the company also initiated the layoffs of roughly 30 staffers in its systems unit. Some of those affected were faces and names that commercial customers knew and frequently worked with, including Product Specialist Martin Helie, Head of R&D Pierre Bouchard and Director of Project Management Bill Roberts.

Autodesk Media & Entertainment VP Marc Petit explained that these moves are a continuation of the company's direction. "The migration to the PC is having an impact on our business model and also on our financials," he said.

"We had to make a bunch of changes in operations in the back end. There is a layer of complexity that has disappeared with the PC. That's one of the driving forces. Another is we changed our structure eliminating a layer of management." (See this week's HD Essentials for more details on Autodesk).

Wait and see

The restructuring has prompted quite a lot of discussion in the community of post and visual effects houses that largely rely on Discreet's system products.

Most interviewed by *SHOOT* said

that they were going to take a wait and see approach.

The shift to Linux was generally praised as a smart and necessary move as commodity hardware is becoming more powerful and more affordable, and as a result many in the post business were shifting from SGI platforms—which ran the aforementioned Autodesk products. But postings on the Flame user group reflect the fact that these Linux-based versions are still quite young and not without bugs.

Still, these systems have been leaders in the commercial post industry for many years and have a loyal user



Mark Szumski

base. "There is nothing else out there to replace it," says Mark Szumski, visual effects supervisor/senior visual effects artist at New York-based Click 3X. "You can't do client sessions work on After Effects. People like the interactivity of Flame. There is still a large gap between desktop and Flame systems."

"They've been a big and solid company for a long time. In terms of interactivity for clients, Flame is second to none," agrees Vico Sharibini, visual effects supervisor and artist at New York-based RhinoFX. "However the business is changing we're doing different projects from film to games. We are looking into different products and technologies."

Sharibini reserved judgment on

Discreet's direction, explaining, "It depends on what information they will expose in the near future. It will suggest their vision for the future. They've got really good products; they need to catch up with some technology the market has adopted."

Expressing Concern

Still, some did go on the record admitting concern. One was New York-based *Stitch* creative director and *Inferno* artist Fred Ruckel, a longtime Discreet customer, beta tester and vocal supporter of the tools. "This year, with all the changes, I think they are going to fall apart," he says, hoping his comments could help prompt constructive dialogue. "This is a company with all these customers to sustain, and probably 80 percent are still on SGI, so at this time next year, everyone will have a defunct machine. What do you do as a company?"

"I'm worried because I don't know where it is going to go," he relates. "[Discreet's current products are] on Linux, but [there are bugs]. People on SGI are stuck and have to upgrade, and we know a software-only version of Flame is coming. Right now they run on dual core Linux, but quad core is on the way. So is it wise to upgrade now? What if I make an investment today? Where is money best spent?"

"And, with new technology you get problems," he continues. "SGI versions have the least amount of bugs, they work. With the firing of the systems team, one can only ask, 'What is going to happen next?'"

Kirk Balden, Flame and Smoke artist at L.A.-based A52, says, "There are executives...and development people that will be missed, who have been with the product almost since the beginning. Those are the people who knew the backbone of the software and we were able to talk to one on



Kirk Balden

one. That's the worrisome part."

Sharibini adds, "In a way, we need to reestablish this relationship because the core of the people who developed the product are gone."

Some see similarities with Avid's undisputed leadership status in non-linear editing before Apple came in and offered what many see as a viable alternative.

Some see Apple as a potential threat in compositing as well, as the company has already announced that it is developing a next generation compositing system to replace Shake. "The question is how seriously Apple is going to get into this market," observes Szumski.

"That will be a big factor in '07, if Apple gets into Discreet's territory with a strong compositing system."

"Adobe is going to be Autodesk's Apple," Ruckel predicts. "The creative studio that they released last year [had strong versions of] After Effects and Premiere. This with a video card is a powerful machine."

"A lot of companies have their eye on this market," Sharibini says. "Flame is the only game in town, but it is a question of time at this point and a question of what kind of strategy Autodesk takes as a company. The high end and the consumer market will start getting closer and closer and the players in the market at the moment [may be] different from the players that will be there next year. I will be interested to see who the other players will be."

High Growth Market

Broadband video advertising has grown dramatically in the past year and is becoming a focal point for digital content providers, advertisers, and ad agencies as internet technology reveals its digital video delivery potential to both communicate and market. Currently, U.S. online video advertising is expected to total \$385 million, up 71 percent from a year ago, according to market research firm eMarketer. That's more than twice the growth rate of overall U.S. online advertising spending. According to JupiterResearch, online video advertising could hit \$1 billion within three years.

In response, *SHOOTonline.com*, a leading online resource for commercial, interactive, and branded content production and the editors of *SHOOT* magazine now bring you **iSPOT**, the first digital newspaper devoted to covering the latest news and developments in the burgeoning broadband video advertising marketplace.

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Edit/Postproduction House Executives Offer Feedback On AAAA Survey

Continued from page 19

The challenge is that this alternative or non-traditional media is still content that needs to be produced and postproduced with the tools and talent that its traditional partners require. However, while beginning to grow a bit, the budgets for the alternative pieces lag behind considerably compared to their traditional counterparts. That could certainly be a key ingredient in the reduction of production and postproduction costs in '05 on top of the general belt tightening we all feel.

Agencies have less ways to make money than they did five to 10 years ago. Clients dictate budgets that are at times unrealistic. These are realities our communities have been dealing with for the past few years at least. What I believe this will continue to do is make the producers more creative, smarter and cost-effective. Editorial houses are becoming more and more self-sufficient. They have design, graphics, online conform, Flame/FX, and sound design/mixing capabilities they did not have in the past. This has enabled such houses to be more flexible and profitable than they could be in dealing with outside vendors as mark-ups continually decrease. Budget challenged jobs can be produced more effectively and be profitable in an environment where mark-up is jeopardized daily. On another level, it has produced a platform for the junior editor to have more opportunities to grow as some clients will let them "take a shot" at a cut on the jobs with little money.

While the 4As survey results are not surprising, I do think they reflect the continued budgetary challenges that are a byproduct of an industry still in the midst of redefining itself.

Bob Solomon, president, Ascent Media Creative Services, Santa Monica

The AAAA study is stale given that the reporting period covers 2005. However the objective evidence shown in the AAAA study regarding macro trends confirms my gut instincts about declines in traditional broadcast production. That feeling is supported both by other independent evidence—Film LA reports that the number of commercial shoot days through the third quarter of 2006 was down 7.5 percent compared with the same period in 2005—and by anecdotal evidence. We are seeing the number of TV spots that are being produced for individual campaigns have declined compared with prior industry norms. Conversely we see an increase in finishing for non-broadcast alternative venues, primarily theatrical.



Bob Solomon

Relatively few clients are leveraging original production assets by employing them in multiple campaigns, optimized for different distribution platforms—that is finishing broadcast, broadband, wireless and theatrical from the same source material.

Pressure on production budgets is a reality particularly on post which seems to often get whatever is left over after covering production costs. This is particularly true with visual effects contracts where there is still an ample supply of visual effects facilities willing to do projects at unsustainable margins.

It is difficult to compare total costs for post for the period '04 to '05 due to the increase in HD finishing, where comparable work incurs greater costs. To accurately measure year-over-year gross cost, you have to consider the finishing requirements of the sample projects in '04 versus '05.

Tom Duff, president, Optimus, Chicago and Santa Monica; president, AICE Chicago Chapter

On one hand, we are all happy to see stability of pricing. On the surface, a two percent decrease can have that feel good effect, but it also is indicative of a potentially scary trend. Tightening budgets out of the agencies certainly are the biggest factor in the reduction of costs.

The landscape is more competitive than ever, so we are being forced to



Tom Duff

take hits on our profit margins to stay alive. However, this hasn't changed the demands of our clients; in fact, the demands are greater, they want more for less.

Basically, we are investing more capital than ever to keep up with the diverse demands of multiple formats, data flow and forms of video content.

It's work we love, but we aren't recovering the costs as we did in the past. Toss in the proliferation of agency in-house post facilities that literally suck away the needed capacity (volume) from the independent editorial community, and our industry could be facing a big downsizing. We are already seeing houses go out of business at an alarming rate. We care so much about our client's creative product and will never compromise it. It's just getting tougher to maintain the equipment and staff necessary to do that.

Steve McCoy, president, FilmCore, Santa Monica, San Francisco, New York

Assuming that the AAAA survey is correct in stating that the number of commercials produced each year



Steve McCoy

is trending downwards, that decline could be offset by a rise in production of advertising for other media. Advertising for the web and other emerging channels is clearly on the rise and while a lot of it is repurposed broadcast content, it may include more original content in the future. Regarding the survey's conclusion that the cost of producing commercials has declined slightly, that result is unlikely to hold due to the increase in HD work.

Stephanie Apt, president, Final Cut, bicoastal/international

Editing and post costs for TV spots are decreasing because clients are moving their budgets into new formats and alternative media. This has become the norm now for many advertisers. Just look at the number of spots breaking on the Internet or on mobile phones. We've experienced an increase in multiple-format campaigns over the past year, many of which include interactive and viral components. Our editors are being asked to not only cut content for the traditional TV spot, but also the web versions. There are more and more channels of communication, but smaller budgets and creative fees. And there is a proliferation of editorial companies in the industry—with many that have been based in one location now expanding their reach into other

cities and markets contributing to a more competitive environment.

Arthur Tremeau, executive producer, Northern Lights, New York

[Analysis of the survey] all depends on how you look at spot production. Maybe the average cost has dropped off, but it may actually factor in greater efficiency in the process. Agencies are aware of limited budgets and their clients are more accommodating

when it comes to instant feedback. Posting spots for approval also helps. So if the question is, "Has the average cost per spot decreased?"—then, the answer is a resounding yes. Has it affected the bottom line? No, because we get more work done in a shorter period of time.

Editor's Note: For more on the overall AAAA study, see SHOOT's 12/1/06 issue for a rundown of the annual survey's findings as well as a sidebar on reaction from the AICP.

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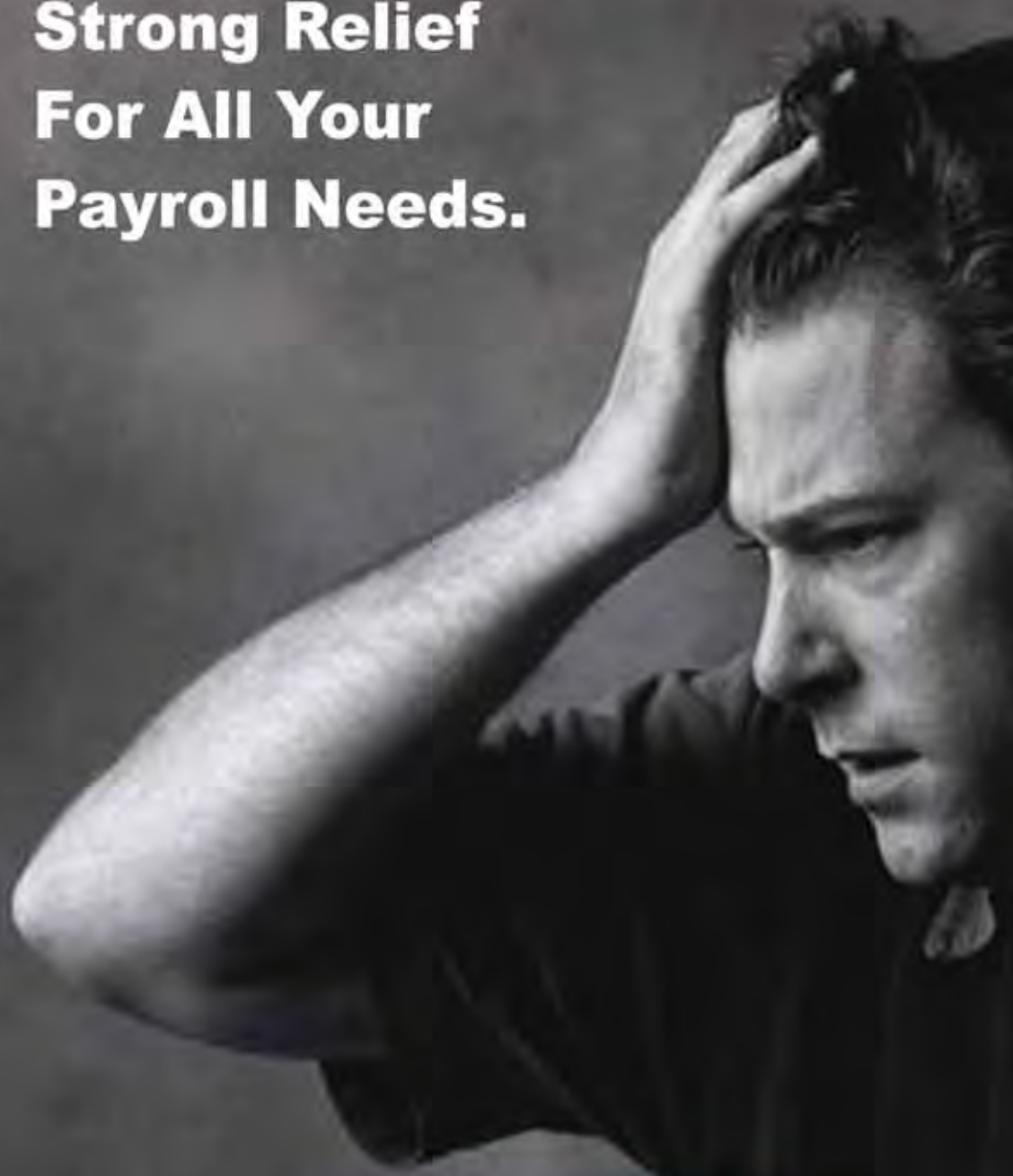
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News

street talk

Reactor Films, Santa Monica, has reached an agreement with feature filmmaker Stephen Sommers (*The Mummy*, *The Mummy Returns*, *Van Helsing*) to direct spots. Sommers has already wrapped Reactor-produced ad fare for Office Depot out of The Kaplan Thaler Group, New York. He is also slated to direct a feature film based on Edwin Balmer's classic *When Worlds Collide* for Dreamworks and Paramount Pictures....Chris Sallquist has returned to Seattle-headquartered Digital Kitchen as its client experience director. He comes over from MRM, Los Angeles.

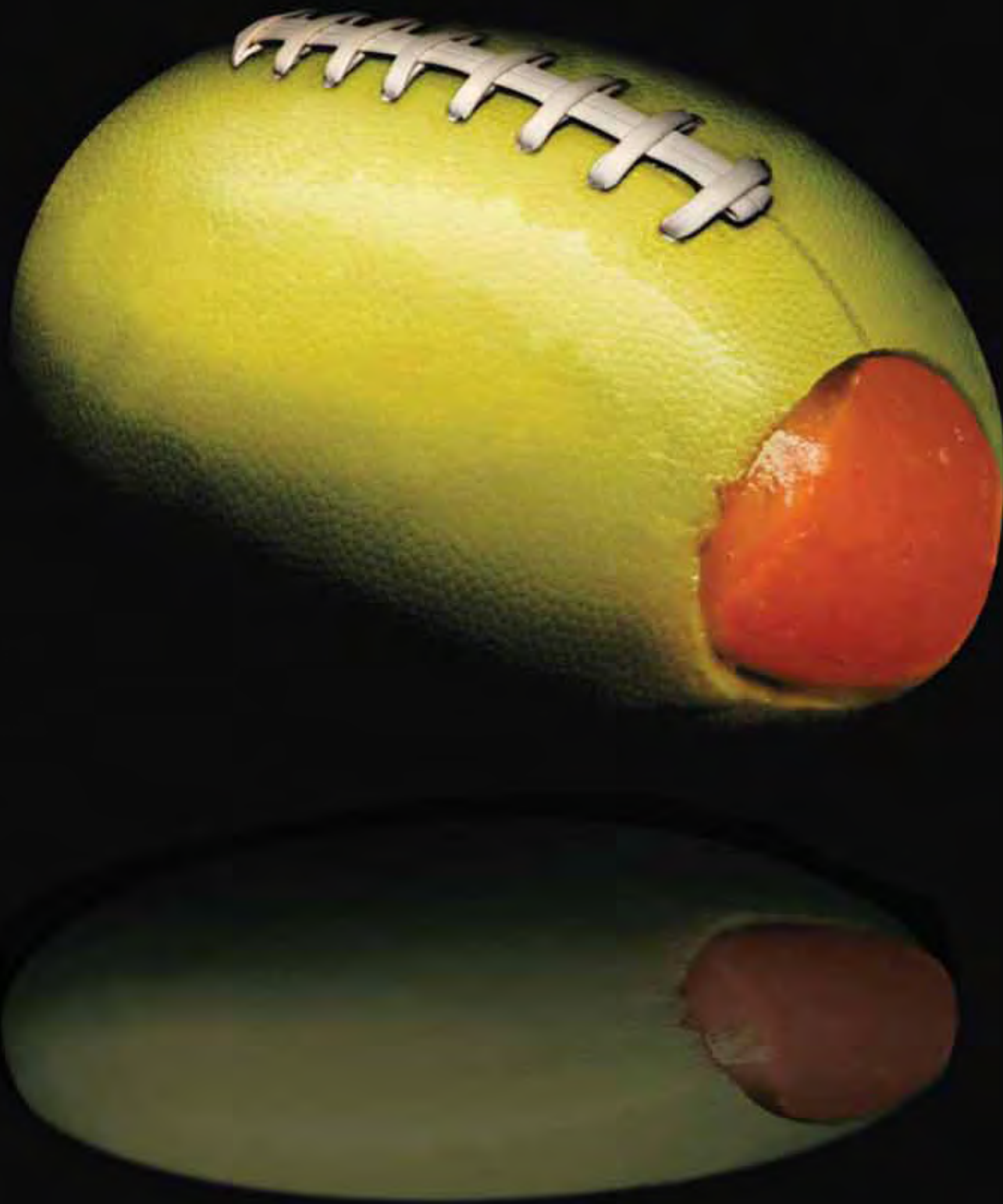
During his first tour of duty at Digital Kitchen, Sallquist served as an experience planner in the brand theatre/branded entertainment arena....Sound designer/composer Juan Sosa has come aboard Creative Bubble, New York. He is looking to reach out to the Hispanic advertising market and propel music production for the editorial/visual effects/design/music/sound/interactive/production company, which maintains New York-based sister shops Burst, Foam and Creative Broadband....Longstanding Dallas-headquartered post house charlieuniformtango has wrapped its first television commercial entailing turnkey services from directing to casting, props, line producing and postproduction. The spot for children's party salon Sweet and Sassy out of Dallas agency Launch was directed by Jeremy Bartel who recently joined charlieuniformtango. The 22-year-old Bartel had previously been working in the Tulsa area as a freelance film director...

report

Original Film, Beverly Hills, has secured Chicago-based independent rep Maureen Butler to handle the Midwest.... Lisa Rose has been named director of PR and marketing at San Francisco-based animation studio WILDBRAIN.... DP Alex Barber is now being repped worldwide (excluding the U.K.) by Dattner Disputo and Associates, Los Angeles. Barber's credits include the Academy Award-nominated short film *Cashback* and music videos for Madonna, Beck, GoldFrapp and George Michaels, among several other artists....DPs Roberto Schaefer and Eric Trageser are now available through Innovative Artists, Santa Monica, for commercials, music videos and feature films after completing principal photography on respective theatrical motion pictures. Schaefer recently wrapped *The Kite Runner* with director Marc Forster while Trageser finished *Already Dead* for director Joe Otting....

bulletin board

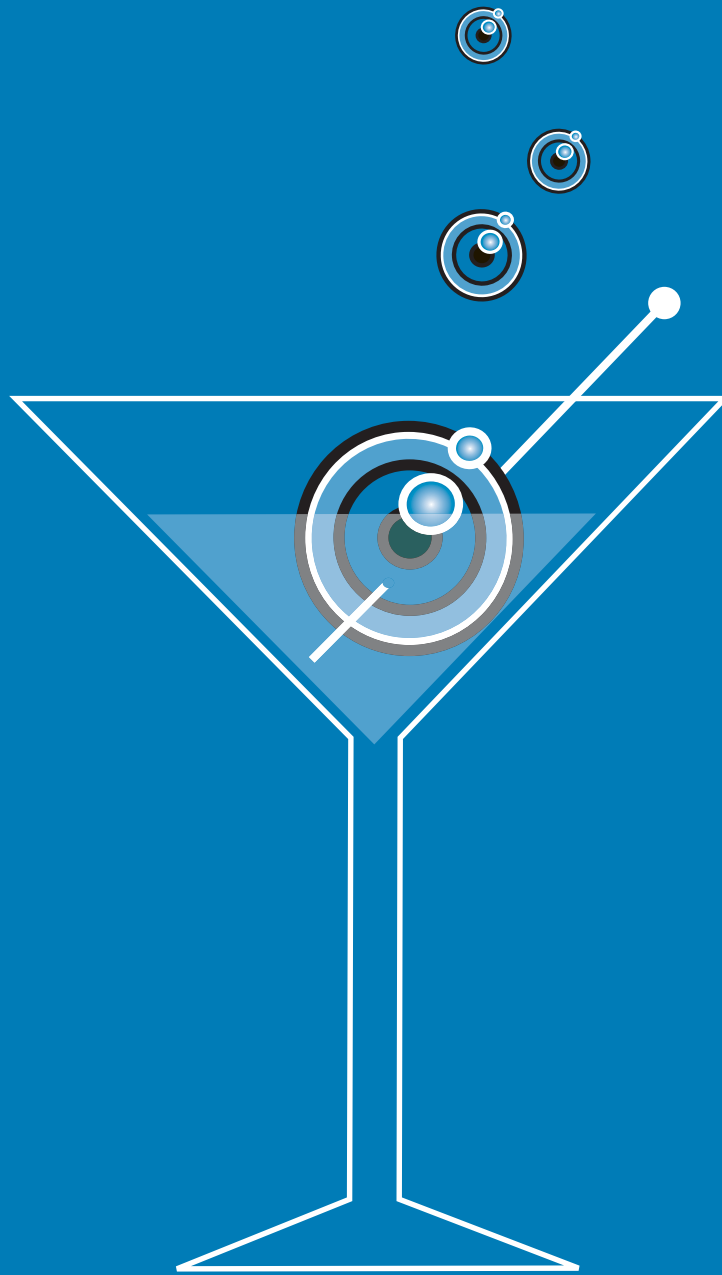
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>January 31-Feb. 2/Palm Springs, CA: HPA Technology Retreat. www.hpaonline.com
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