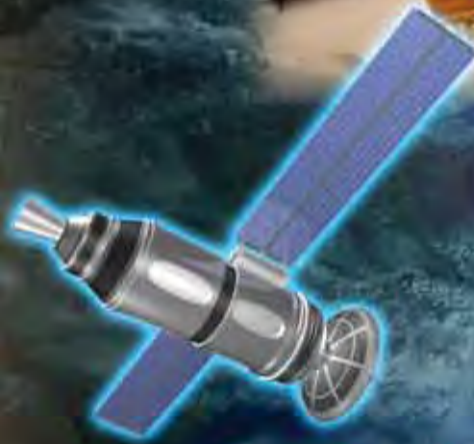


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Spring 2008 Directors Issue



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**SHOOT Presents Its Spring
Edition Directors Series**

Delve into the directorial psyche with profiles of leading helmers, from Frank Budgen to Noam Murro to Nicolai Fuglsig to Daniel Kleinman, among others. Plus, a rundown of lesser known names who are good bets to soon be industry mainstays in our rundown of up-and-coming directors whose work bears watching.

See page 15

**Deal Leaves TWC Feeling
Wanted Internationally**

The Santa Monica-headquartered production house enters into an alliance with Wanted Films, London, to form the TWC@Wanted banner in the U.K. Per the alliance, TWC gains U.K. and European representation for several of its directors and picks up Wanted helmers Selby and Beverley Fortnum for stateside projects.

See page 6

**Oscar-Winning Director
Minghella Remembered**

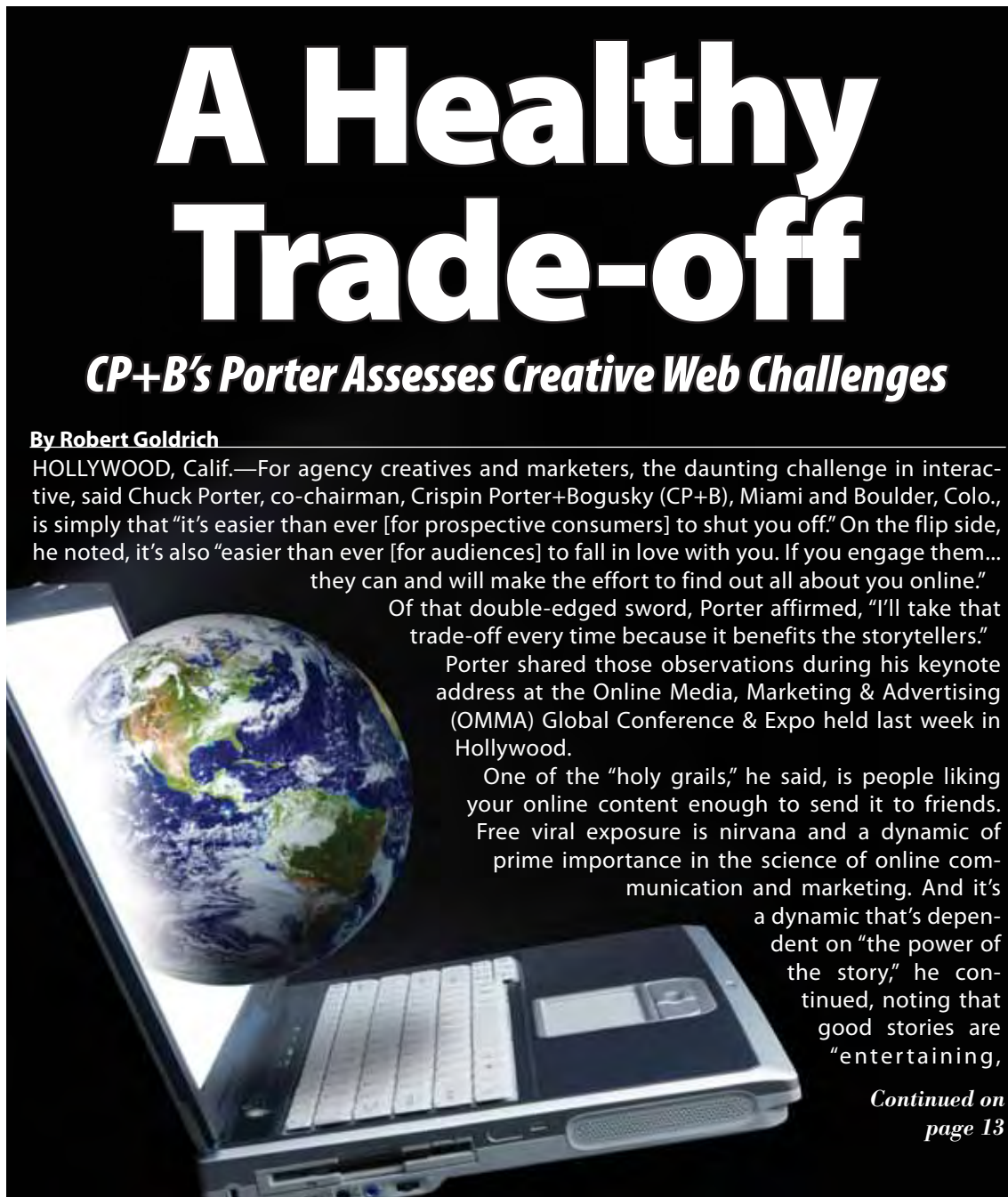
An accomplished feature filmmaker, Anthony Minghella, who passed away last week at the age of 54, was also a champion of short-format fare and occasionally directed select commercials. *SHOOT's* Robert Goldrich and Independent Media's Susanne Preissler remember the remarkable talent, goodness and decency of Minghella in spot.com.mentary this week.

See page 4

**Cinematographers
and Cameras Series:**

DPs discuss collaborations
with directors, and new tools.

See page 35



A Healthy Trade-off

CP+B's Porter Assesses Creative Web Challenges

By Robert Goldrich

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—For agency creatives and marketers, the daunting challenge in interactive, said Chuck Porter, co-chairman, Crispin Porter+Bogusky (CP+B), Miami and Boulder, Colo., is simply that "it's easier than ever [for prospective consumers] to shut you off." On the flip side, he noted, it's also "easier than ever [for audiences] to fall in love with you. If you engage them... they can and will make the effort to find out all about you online."

Of that double-edged sword, Porter affirmed, "I'll take that trade-off every time because it benefits the storytellers."

Porter shared those observations during his keynote address at the Online Media, Marketing & Advertising (OMMA) Global Conference & Expo held last week in Hollywood.

One of the "holy grails," he said, is people liking your online content enough to send it to friends. Free viral exposure is nirvana and a dynamic of prime importance in the science of online communication and marketing. And it's a dynamic that's dependent on "the power of the story," he continued, noting that good stories are "entertaining,

Continued on page 13

**AFCI Show
Numbers:
30 & 4,000**

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—The world is coming to Southern California next month—well at least 30-plus countries (including film commissions from throughout the United States) that will be represented among 300 exhibitors at the 23rd annual Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Trade Show, which runs from April 10-12 at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium.

The theme of the world coming stateside is most fitting given the devaluation of the dollar which has made shooting in the U.S. all the more enticing to foreign producers as currencies like the euro have substantially increased buying power in America. Conversely the exchange rate isn't as conducive as it once was for U.S. projects to look overseas.

Some 4,000 film industry professionals are expected to come to the Locations event which spans not only the exhibit hall chock-full of film commissions and location-related services from around the world but also seminar sessions and a series of professional development courses.

For the complete story on Locations, log onto www.shootonline.com or check out our March 28th electronic edition. Online registration for Locations is available at www.afci.org through April 9.

Online Maturation Is In The Eye & Age Of The Beholder**By Robert Goldrich**

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—When asked when online content would reach maturation as an industry, digital media veteran Jonathan Miller, founding partner of Velocity Interactive Group (with offices in Palo Alto, Calif., Los Angeles, New York, India and China), paused for a moment and observed that maturation is in the eye—and the age—of the beholder.

Miller related that his 14-year-old son lives on Facebook and YouTube and "has to have a reason to watch television." This, noted Miller, is fast becoming the norm for the younger demographic so in that sense online media maturation has arrived—though admittedly there's a long way to go for other age groups and in the industry business marketplace.

On the latter score, advertisers' bud-

get commitment to the web and other "new" outlets in general is a proverbial drop in the bucket compared to that for traditional mainstream media. Still, the notion of the next generation having already turned the traditional media equation on its ear is a development that advertisers and marketers should take to heart.

Miller, the former chairman/CEO of AOL, made his remarks during

the course of a panel discussion at the Online Media, Marketing & Advertising (OMMA) Conference & Expo last week in Hollywood.

While there were generally upbeat, bullish assessments of the online market and advertisers' as well as marketers' place in it, event speakers also voiced concerns about the state of the economy. In a separate session,

Continued on page 13

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By Robert Goldrich

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Remembrance

Our 2008 Directors Spring Edition is a time to celebrate directors but sadly this column celebrates the life of a noted filmmaker, Anthony Minghella, who unexpectedly passed away last week at the age of 54. While he is best known for his stellar feature work, such as *The English Patient*, which garnered nine Academy Awards—including the best picture and best director

Oscars—Minghella had occasion to direct commercials and was a strong advocate of short format fare.

I spoke to him only once, shortly after he wrapped his first spot in many years, Guinness' "Mustang" for Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO, London, produced by Independent Media, Santa Monica. But for me that one conversation in 2005 left a lasting impression of him as a thoughtful, intelligent, accomplished yet completely unassuming artist.

During our talk, he spoke of the rapport he had developed with Independent Media executive producer Susanne Preissler and that part of the attraction of directing a select commercial or two was the chance to work with her. Now in remembering Minghella, Preissler related, "He was a man of great talent who was elegant,

"He was a man of great talent who was elegant, kind, honest, thoughtful, giving, truthful to himself and others." --Susanne Preissler

kind, honest, thoughtful, giving and truthful with himself and others. He didn't need to do commercials but he valued them as an art form and respected the people in this industry. He wasn't looking to get anything out of this business. For him, it was always about 'what can I bring to the project.' I feel fortunate to have been his friend."

In my interview with him, Minghella offered both historical and contemporary perspectives on the

importance of short films. The former stemmed from his role as chairman of the British Film Institute, which helped to restore the Mitchell & Kenyon Collection consisting of some 500 one-minute films shot around the turn of the 20th century. The films had been stored in barrels and were discovered in the early 1990s in Black-

tute. Minghella noted that the shorts were fascinating not only in terms of documenting life in the early 1900s, but also for serving as "a breeding ground" for filmmakers, affording them the opportunity to learn and hone their skills.

He then brought the importance of that dynamic to the present, citing the

burn. Mitchell & Kenyon produced the films which were commissioned by traveling fairground operators for showing at local fairs across the U.K. Crews would lens people in everyday life and then tell them that they could see the films at an upcoming fair. Indeed people would turn out for the fair just to see themselves.

Minghella was excited that this work would be shown on the BBC in the form of a series co-produced by the BBC and the British Film Insti-

new forms starting to emerge in the advertising arena.

"You can have a 'Diesel dreams' DVD with 25 to 30 shorts about people in their [Diesel] jeans," he related. "It's a great way for young filmmakers to have their say, to create and express themselves through glamorous calling cards that at the same time can be exploited commercially. I like that alchemy, where talent can go out and play while contributing to the marketplace at large."

POV

By Brian Belefant

Marketing Communication's Fate In A Bowl



My daughter just learned how to share. She's one.

After a year of being entirely on the receiving end of things, a light bulb went on. It suddenly occurred to her that she has the power to give herself. And she enjoys it.

Now in the middle of eating, she'll hold out a Cheerio in her grubby, food-and-slobber-encrusted fingers to share with me or the dogs, smiling that beatific smile that says, "Look what I can do!"

My initial reaction was not as honest as the dogs'. I wanted to encourage her, so I pretended to take the food, chewing my ersatz morsel with melodramatic pleasure.

I could see the disappointment on my daughter's face. She knew what I was doing. It wasn't long before she started sharing with the dogs more and with me less. It's gotten to the point where my daughter will spend half of dinner time flinging food to the dogs—without tossing a single Cheerio my way.

I know my daughter is an absolute genius, but a quick survey of my neighbors reveals that other children do the same thing. They pick up on

stuff. They know when their parents are being insincere.

Which got me to thinking.

If we all had parents who pretended to take the soggy, mangled Cheerio, and we were all as astute as my one-year-old, we all learned early on that people don't appreciate generosity as much as dogs. Would this explain why so many of us will help a stray animal before we'll send the price of a cup of coffee a day to Africa for famine relief?

More relevant to our business, would this explain why consumers are often so suspicious of advertising?

Follow me on this.

I'm one. I try to give. My generosity is not appreciated. I come to believe that generosity in general is not appreciated. It's a small step to the conclusion that there's something inherently inappropriate about being generous.

Years later, I'm watching TV and on comes a commercial message that contains a "special offer."

"Hmm," I think. "If I act now, I can get a free gift. Seems vaguely inappropriate."

So now I'm at a crossroads. If my daughter ever offers me another half-eaten Cheerio, what do I do? Do I muster as much sincerity as I can,

eating the thing so I can prove to her how much I appreciate her generosity, thereby setting her on the path toward a rewarding life full of love and happiness, moderated only a little by the occasional disappointment she'll inevitably experience when the "special offer" she falls for in some commercial turns out not to be all that special?

Or do I break her little heart, setting her up to become a cynical consumer like myself, unwilling to believe that

the people putting out marketing communications could possibly be motivated by anything other than a greedy desire to fool her into buying something she doesn't need for more than she really ought to pay?

It's an easy decision. That Cheerio is kind of nasty.

Brian Belefant is a noted commercial director who's currently repped by @Large Films in Portland, Ore.

Flash Back

March 28, 2003 Young & Rubicam, New York, won Best of Show/Broadcast at the New York ADDY Awards, held on March 20 at New York's Sky Club, for its Computer Associates' spot "Amnesia," directed by LeMoine.Miller—Rick and Steve respectively—of bicoastal/international @radical.media....The state of Oregon has suspended funding for the Portland-based Oregon Film & Video Office for the remainder of the biennium (March 1 through June 30), according to Robin LaMonte, a principal analyst in the State's Legislative Fiscal Office, Salem, Ore....The directing duo known as Roenberg has signed with Santa-Monica-based boutique production house Motion Blur for exclusive spot representation in the U.S.

March 27, 1998 Procter & Gamble and MCI will air HD spots on March 31 during the first live, nonexperimental commercial HDTV broadcast of a sporting event in the U.S. The event is the Texas Rangers' opening day baseball game against the Chicago White Sox....Bang Music has opened a West Coast division while fortifying its flagship N.Y. office.

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PEOPLE & PROJECTS

Feeling Wanted: TWC Extends Its Reach Into Europe

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—Production house TWC, headquartered in Santa Monica, has entered into an association with Wanted Films, London, forming the U.K. banner TWC@Wanted. The deal was announced by TWC managing partner/executive producer Mark Thomas.

As part of the new arrangement, noted TWC director Suthon Petchsuwan (who's profiled in this week's Directors Series) will be repped by the company in both the U.S. and in the U.K. He was formerly handled in Europe by Stink, London. TWC ex-

in London with a roster of directors which includes Petchsuwan, Eric Saarinen, Trevor Cornish, David Jellison, Justin Klarenbeck and Bo Platt. Klarenbeck had been repped in Europe by Greatguns, London. For its part, TWC will represent Wanted directors Beverley Fortnum and the monomikered Selby in the U.S. market. Selby is best known for his car campaigns (BMW, Audi, Ford). Fortnum's reputation is in fashion and people.

The two production companies were introduced to each other via TWC's West Coast sales rep, Kel-

exec producer, who has extensive experience working with European directors] and myself have been looking at doing for a long time. We agreed it was a priority for our company, but finding the right fit was fundamental to going forward. Like TWC, Wanted has branded itself by knowing how to

develop and manage the careers of its directors, and focusing on doing great work," said Thomas.

Stapleton, who's worked in various capacities for such directors as Tony Kaye, Alex Proyas and David Fincher, concurred that the two companies are simpatico in terms of commitment

to directorial talent, values and work ethic.

TWC's stateside sales force consists of independent reps Mary Ford & Associates on the East Coast, Doug Stieber & Nichole Tinaglia in the Midwest, Dawn Ratcliffe in Detroit and Class on the West Coast.



Mark Thomas noted that a prime TWC goal was to gain a strong foothold in the U.K.

ecutive producer Jeff Snyder will act as the point person in the U.S. for the international venture while his counterpart at Wanted, executive producer Michelle Stapleton, will handle the U.K. for the TWC roster.

TWC will open TWC@Wanted

ley Class, who has had a long-term working relationship with Stapleton. Thomas said TWC was looking to gain a foothold in London to maximize the exposure of its directorial roster in Europe. "This is something that Jeff [Snyder], Steve Ross [TWC's other

SAN FRANCISCO—FilmCore has launched a Creative Services division at its studio in San Francisco. The editorial house is seeking to move beyond its niche in postproduction while providing ad agencies with an alternative solution for the production of new media advertising, including advertising for the web and mobile devices, viral campaigns and branded entertainment. Services offered by the new venture will run the gamut from concept development and brand strategy through design, animation and post. It will also offer help with new media strategy and distribution.

Producer Stephanie Bunting heads the new division which will feature

the talents of copywriter Matt Ashworth and art director/designer Luis Peña. Bunting, Ashworth and Peña met while working at San Francisco advertising agency Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners, but have been collaborating as independent contractors for the last few years. FilmCore editor Doug Walker will also be part of the creative team. FilmCore plans to bring on additional talent as the division gears up.

FilmCore executive producer Jon Ettinger, who remains in charge of the editorial side, said that agencies are seeking new models for the production of ads and partners who can help them build their clients' brands

across a variety of media platforms.

"We've brought together a very talented group who are equally adept at broadcast and new media, and capable of taking projects from start to finish," Ettinger observed. "We can get involved at the concept phase, carry it through all the various stages of production and post, and deliver fully integrated work with components for all distribution platforms."

Ettinger and Bunting said that for the time being plans call for the Creative Services division to remain a San Francisco-based venture, but it could eventually be applied to the FilmCore studios in Santa Monica and New York as well.

Bentley Drives Into Endless Noise On Remix For Chevy Spot

Spawns Partnership Between House and DJ/Music Supervisor

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—Endless Noise recently collaborated with DJ Jason Bentley to create the music behind the new Chevy spot entitled "Art" directed by Joseph Kosinski of bi-coastal Anonymous Content for Campbell-Ewald, Detroit. The track is a remix of the Silversun Pickups song "Lazy Eye."

"Art" is a high-tech trip down an assembly line operated by both man and robot. The robots weld and assemble with precision and finesse—not to mention install four tires faster than a NASCAR pit crew. The spot shifts gears when the viewer is taken on a thrilling ride through the Chevy Malibu engine. Finally, at the end of the assembly line, a team of Chevy workers puts final touches on, inspect, and polish the car. The spot ends with the tagline, "An American Revolution."

The client commissioned Bentley, a noted DJ, film music supervisor and host of radio shows on LA stations KROQ and KCRW, to handle music supervision for the :30. Bentley found



Chevy's "Art"

a remix he had done on a track, "Lazy Eye," by the Silversun Pickups, which complemented the idea of turning precision to art. The remix version provided the right energy, but needed to be refined to fit the picture.

"We have been speaking with Jason about working together for some time," related Jeff Elmassian, creative director of the Santa Monica-headquartered Endless Noise. "This was the perfect opportunity to do so. Endless Noise provided Jason with the production and creative support needed to flesh out the remix. When

working with an existing track, there is always a fine line between keeping the integrity of the original track and providing the picture with the energy and scoring that it needs."

The collaboration process was really natural, said Elmassian who served as arranger on the :30. He added that Bentley has been able to explore his abilities as a composer via the company, setting the stage for an ongoing relationship. Dayna Turcotte and Mary Catherine Finney were exec producer and producer, respectively, on "Art" for Endless Noise.

Looking Glass Captures Director Chad Einbinder

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—Looking Glass Films in Hollywood has signed director Chad Einbinder for exclusive U.S. spot representation. A former actor who appeared in front of the camera in more than 75 national commercials, Einbinder has made a smooth transition into spot helming. His first showreel featured comedy spots created via Group101Spots and earned him inclusion into SHOOT's annual New Directors Showcase last year.

"Chad's reel displays a deft eye for casting—he works wonderfully with talent, these are natural skills that he has been able to translate and hone from his acting career," said June Guterman, exec producer of Hollywood-based Looking Glass. "Virtually every spot represents a collaboration between Chad and a creative team. At the same time, he pushes the envelope just enough to give the work a little more edge than it might have achieved with a traditional director-agency-client relationship."

For example, his "Prison" spec commercial for California Avocados, created with Sean Vij of agency davidandgoliath, is an accurate, irreverent

spoof of *Midnight Express*.

Einbinder's reel also consists of specs for ESPN, XM Satellite Radio, and Date.com. In making the transition from acting to directing, Einbinder received encouragement and help from such notables as Court Crandall, creative partner at ad shop Ground Zero, who provided production support for the ESPN campaign.

Drawing a distinction between short-form and long-form comedy, Einbinder notes, "As an actor in commercials, you learn to compress moments, to be funny, fast. That training has helped me as a director. Whether it's TV or the web, spots are about the economy of the joke, and every note counts."

Einbinder recently completed a point-of-purchase Sprint project via Kansas City agency Two West. He rounds out a Looking Glass directorial roster comprised of David Mamet, Alek Keshishian, Alfonso Arau, Jean-Jacques Annaud, Steven Antin, Danny Boyle, Kerry Conran, Renny Harlin, Anjelica Huston, Marc/Andy, Francine McDougall, Marine Panosian, Jay Roach, Chris Rock, Mark Simmons, and Cliff Watts.



Chad Einbinder

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The Joneses Signs Dir. Allen Martinez

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—Bicoastal production company The Joneses has signed director Allen Martinez for exclusive U.S. spot representation. Martinez's recent work includes a Coca-Cola spot, "Apartment," out of TBWA Moscow, and an international Advanta commercial for McGarry Bowen, New York.

The piece for Coca-Cola is a good example of the unconventional manner in which he constructs stories. "Apartment" offers a cutaway view of an apartment building and seamlessly reveals in brief vignettes the dramas being acted out within each unit, all revolving around Coke.

Martinez has recently been busy shepherding his short film, *Intelligence*, around the film festival circuit. A political thriller starring Milo Ventimiglia (from NBC's *Heroes*), the film has won a string of awards, including a Gold Audience Award at Sundance Center. The film also copped Best Dramatic Short honors at the Silverlake Film Festival in Los Angeles and earned Best Film distinction at the Libertas Film Festival in Croatia.

Martinez, who has recently been considering several long-form film projects, described his experience in



Allen Martinez

narrative filmmaking as very rewarding and said that he expects it to benefit his work in advertising.

"All of that informs my work in commercials," he said. "Agencies appreciate a cinematic feel and directors who go for the brass ring and aspire to push the visuals to the next level."

Mel Gragido, executive producer of The Joneses, said that he is a longtime admirer of Martinez' work and was impressed with his versatility and polish as a filmmaker. For his part, Martinez said he thought The Joneses was a good fit for him because of its national reach and commitment to its directors' long-term career growth. "I've followed The Joneses over the years

and have always been impressed with their work and their roster," he said. "Mel has a very professional outlook and looked at my work with a fresh view and that is very important.

"I try to find a way to tell a story without being cliché or obvious," continued Martinez. "I like to come at it from a different and totally unexpected direction, because that's how you make it fresh."

Martinez launched his career with the now defunct commercial division of A Band Apart, Los Angeles, shortly after graduating from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. He also worked through Tate & Partners in Santa Monica for several years and, most recently, with Motel Films in Hollywood. Martinez is the recipient of several advertising awards, including an Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) Show honor in 1999 for a comedic spot, "Kaboom," promoting Ugly Duckling Car Sales. The :30 was recognized in the AICP Show's low budget category.

The Joneses is handled by independent representatives Maggie Klein on the East Coast, Doug Stieber & Company in the Midwest, and Howell Associates on the West Coast.

ARTISANS

Gabe Sokoloff Joins Wojahn Bros. Music

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—Wojahn Bros Music, the Santa Monica-based commercial music house known for its compositions for such clients as Fruit Of The Loom, Jack In The Box and Volkswagen, has signed composer Gabe Sokoloff. The move sets precedent at the house as Sokoloff becomes the first composer added to the Wojahn Bros. roster, which previously consisted solely of company principals and composers Scott and Roger Wojahn.

Sokoloff has already wrapped several assignments under the Wojahn Bros. Music banner, including a seven-song Internet and radio broadcast campaign for MSN out of McCann Erickson, San Francisco, and a Fidelity spot from Arnold. Boston.

According to both Sokoloff and Roger Wojahn, it was a relationship that started off with a simple e-mail inquiry. "I was looking online at different commercial music companies," recalled Sokoloff, a philosophy major and self-taught musician from Brown University in Providence, R.I. "I wanted to move to Los Angeles, but first I wanted to get a grasp on what kind of opportunities were there. I loved the Wojahn website and their music straight away. I e-mailed Roger. To my surprise he responded to me,

saying he liked the compositions I sent and to stay in touch."

Several months went by and Sokoloff moved, as planned, to Southern California. He worked briefly as an intern at HUM Music + Sound Design, Santa Monica, but stayed in touch with the Wojahn Brothers.



Gabe Sokoloff

"We weren't even really looking for a composer," said Roger Wojahn. "People send in their work all the time. In the past, we had never even considered anyone good enough to hire. It's always been just me and Scott. Gabe tracked us down and showed us that his song-writing skills were so good that we had to sign him. Once we started talking I knew that he was our boy. We hired him know-

ing that he will help to make us an even better company."

Wojahn noted that Sokoloff brought many hats into the Wojahn Bros. Music ring. "Gabe is a highly intelligent, educated composer. We don't have titles here at Wojahn Bros, but Gabe is a composer, an editor, an engineer and a music supervisor. And now he's our MIS expert too."

Regarding Sokoloff's first assignments for MSN and Fidelity, the Wojahn Bros were favorably impressed. "We asked him to develop the tracks for Fidelity and we supervised his work," noted Roger Wojahn. "Gabe's writing chops were a natural although his production experience was pretty much nonexistent. So Scott and I had to sort of lead him through the production of his first compositions to make sure that everything worked out just right. His song-writing skills were already excellent and his work for MSN turned out just fantastic."

There was also a bit of give and take between the Wojahns and Sokoloff. "As a group, we always offer constructive commentary to each other on how we might be able to improve the work. Sometimes that advice is heeded, other times not," Wojahn noted with a laugh.

Short Takes

In its 2008 Spanish-language TV campaign entitled "Leyendas" ("Legends"), the California Milk Processor Board (CMPB), has wrapped the spots "Elfo" ("Elf") and "Bruja" ("Witch") directed by Pucho Mentasti of Blue Productora, Buenos Aires, for agency Grupo Gallegos, Long Beach, Calif.

There are 30- and 60-second versions of "Elfo" and "Bruja." The latter is the first to debut and opens on a broom-riding witch chasing off frightened children and turning them into pigs. Legend has it that scaring the townspeople is a monthly ritual for the witch. But during this particular trip, she decides to drink a glass of milk that one of the residents left out on her spell table. Her demeanor then magically transforms, causing the witch to spread good deeds instead of evil among the townspeople. The ad ends with the tagline stressing one of milk's key health benefits: "The calcium in milk reduces PMS symptoms. Toma Leche [Drink Milk]."

The agency team included creative directors Favio Ucedo and Juan Oubina, associate creative director Saul Escobar, copywriters Fernando Fryd and Lulu Renal, and producer Carlos Barciela.



WORK OF GENIUS

Great Genius and Profound Stupidity, a 30-minute television documentary produced and directed by Benita Raphan, has been selected for a worldwide premiere in competition at the Tribeca Film Festival in April. Lin Polito of Jump, New York, edited the film. Robert Miller (now with stimmung, Santa Monica) composed the score, and Marshall Grupp, partner in Sound Lounge, New York, created the sound design and supervised all audio. The Sound Lounge mixed the film with sound re-recording mixer Paul Weiss. Visual effects were split among three noted N.Y.-based effects houses: Semerad, Manic and Coda. Hoon Chong created the title sequences while he was at Freestyle Collective, New York. The principal DP was David Morabito. DP Mark Schmidt from Sex and The City and Oz, lensed time lapse shots. The 3D was completed at Spontaneous, New York.

The film is slated to be broadcast worldwide on The Sundance Channel in 2009. Great Genius and Profound Stupidity is the fourth in a series of TV episodes and shorts that Raphan produced and directed entitled They Were The Future, which focuses on an elusive mix of genius with such subjects as R. Buckminster Fuller, Edwin Land and John Forbes Nash Jr.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

San Francisco ad agency Cutwater has brought Walter Smith on board as president. He succeeds Brad Harrington who has left the agency to pursue personal interests. An ad veteran with a career that spans three decades, Smith worked with Chiat/Day in both the San Francisco and Los Angeles offices in the 1980s. In the '90's he was with Hal Riney & Partners, San Francisco, before joining



Walter Smith

TBWA\Chiat\Day Los Angeles in the early 2000s. He has spent the past three years as the executive managing director of TBWA\G1-Europe in Paris..... Director Michael Chaves has joined the roster of Southern California shop Subliminal for exclusive U.S. spot representation. He comes over from Backyard, Venice, Calif.....New York-based editorial and VFX/motion design company Version2 has added art director/VFX designer Niklaus Schlumpf whose credits include work on HBO's The Sopranos for the Resurrection episode, spots for Cadillac, the Garnier campaign with Sarah Jessica Parker and the Lil Mama music video "Lip Gloss."

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VES, AFCI Signal The Rise Australia, New Zealand Gain International

A SHOOT Staff Report

Among the latest developments underscoring the ascent of Australia and New Zealand as production centers are the recognition the region has received from international organizations such as the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) and the Visual Effects Society (VES).

The last two VES Awards competitions have had significant Down Under representation. This year, for example, Fuel International, Sydney, was nominated for outstanding visual effects in a commercial on the strength of BMW's "Hydrogen" directed by Andrew van der Westhuyzen of Sydney-based Collider for GSD&M's Idea City in Austin, Texas.

The spot shows liquid coming together to form an automobile, the BMW Hydrogen 7. A voiceover explains that instead of producing carbon-dioxide, this vehicle emits water, at which point we see the car dissolve as it turns into H₂O. The voiceover relates, "A car that will leave its mark by not leaving a mark."

Simon Maddison, Fuel's visual effects supervisor on "Hydrogen," says, "The biggest challenge on the BMW ad creatively was definitely the look of the liquid car at the end of the spot. The liquid had to look real to a degree, which in some ways conflicted with the client's needs. They effectively saw this shot as a product shot. They wanted to see the headlights defined, the shape of the grill, as well as some of the interior, to name a few points. As the interior of the car would be visible through the surface water layers, we were required to simulate a lot of different sections during the car's collapse. These included the drive chain, the steering column, the seats (front and back), the engine, the headlights and the suspension. As it is rather difficult with current tools to simulate a body of water within another, we needed to generate these elements separately. And as we were dealing with refractions, they all needed to be rendered within the one scene.

But the bottom line, affirms Maddison, is that "although the work is technically challenging, we believed the final result should belie this and appear simple and elegant. The director wanted a stylized treatment to the CG water—the concept was not so much about the physics of liquids but about using the beauty of liquid motion to describe the BMW technology in a creative and artistic way."

The 25 seconds of CG animation, at HD resolution, was completed at Fuel in just three weeks.

The Fuel nom this year followed a



Robin James

pair of 2007 VES Award commercial wins for WETA Digital, the Wellington, N.Z.-based visual effects house widely known for its Oscar-winning effects on director Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and remake of *King Kong*.

WETA Digital won two VES trophies last year, including one for outstanding visual effects in a commercial on the basis of Travelers' "Snowball," a comedic spot depicting what happens when a man trips and falls on a steep San Francisco street, collecting people and objects along the way that create a giant ball of humanity and assorted matter. The spot, helmed by Dante Ariola of bicoastal/international MJZ via Fallon Minneapolis, was also recognized in the category for outstanding compositing in a broadcast program, commercial or music video. Honorees for the spot visual effects category were WETA's Dan Lemmon, Eileen Moran, R. Christopher White and Paul Story. The team of Laure Lacroix, Lyse Beck, Steve McGillen and Matt Holland were honored in the compositing category.

The VES wins came on the heels of Ariola winning the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award as best commercial director of '06. "Snowball" was one of the spots that earned Ariola the coveted DGA honor.

The same year "Snowball" won a pair of VES Awards, a nomination (outstanding animated character in an animated motion picture for the character Mumble) went to Sydney-based digital production studio Animal Logic for its first fully animated feature, *Happy Feet*.

Animal Logic also is active in commercials, among its latest ad endeavors being the visual effects for the Mobil 1 "Metamorphosis" TV campaign directed by Graeme Burfoot of Filmgraphics, Sydney, for McCann Erickson, New York.

Shot entirely in Hungary, the spot shows how Mobil 1 motor oil transforms the performance of older model cars into the latest model by rejuvenating the engine. A Lancer, a Camry and a Mercedes all undergo this fan-



Of Down Under *Prominence, Recognition*

tastic metamorphosis in the spot.

Animal Logic's work on the project started on location in Hungary, where the team took reference of actual 'older model' cars, which were later made into CG models. These models were then skinned over the live action plates of the 'new' cars.

The greatest challenge for Animal Logic on the project was creating a look for the transformation between the two. The new transformed car had to look as if it was shedding its old skin and the pieces had to have a weightless quality to them yet still look like pieces of car.

The final technique incorporates both cloth simulations and hand animation to peel away the pieces of each car. Every shot had its own customized simulation, with the pieces reacting in a cause-and-effect manner to the air currents, wind forces and other dynamics generated by the car's enhanced performance.

Additionally, the team of artists created a new CGI billboard for the spot's ending.

The Mobil 1 'Metamorphosis' 30-second commercial was launched on March 3, 2008 in the markets of Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

The Animal Logic team included supervisor/lead Flame artist Colin Renshaw, Flame artist Leoni Willis, CGI lead artist Jonathan Dearing, producers Amelia Babos and Melanie Wickham and coordinator/line producer Kate Stenhouse.

Animal Logic also maintains a production office in Los Angeles. And other Down Under firms have presences stateside, a prime example being production house Prodigy, which maintains offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and New York, the latter being under the aegis of executive producer Nic Barnes. And in the small world department, Prodigy recently added director/designer Dael Oates to its roster, an up-and-coming filmmaking talent who comes aboard

after an eight-year tenure with Animal Logic where he took a visual effects path to directing.

AFCI

The earlier alluded to AFCI recognition for the Down Under community is twofold. First Robin James, CEO of the Pacific Film & Television Commission in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, continues to serve as AFCI president. Last year he became the first non-U.S.-based president of the AFCI, a nonprofit educational association with a membership of more than 300 film commissions worldwide.

And Wellington, N.Z., has won the competition to host the AFCI Cineposium International Conference 2008, which will run from Nov. 19-23. Prior Cineposiums have been held in cities in Europe, Australia, Canada and the U.S. and have attracted participants from six continents.

The Cineposium site selection committee considered proposals from six prospective host countries. "We're delighted that our proposal convinced the international selection panel that Wellington was the most exciting place to host the 2008 Cineposium," says Film Wellington manager Jean Johnston. The Wellington, N.Z. film commissioner adds, "It's another indication that Wellington is highly regarded in the international screen production industry."

Film Wellington's bid to host Cineposium was accompanied by letters of support from such notables as Peter Jackson, Mayor Kerry Prendergast and Film New Zealand.

"We expect that the Cineposium will lead to more film business opportunities in New Zealand," says Film Wellington's Johnston. "Hosting the event will also be of great benefit to New Zealand's six other regional film offices, as well as the local media industry, and creates an opportunity to promote filming in New Zealand to an international audience."

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BMW's "Hydrogen"

Top Spot of the Week

Tom Kuntz Smacks A Piñata Around For TBWA\Chiat\Day and Skittles

By Christine Champagne

The freaky Skittles “Experience the Rainbow”-themed campaign out of TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York, has been around for years now, but it never gets tired. “I think that has a lot to do with the client. They’re really open to new ideas, and we try to beat the last one every time,” according to TBWA\Chiat\Day art director Craig Allen, who is currently working on the creative with copywriter Eric Kallman.

Given the nature of the campaign’s world, which melds reality with fantasy, there truly are endless possibilities in terms of concepts, Kallman added.

That said, the one taboo area—at least in the pair’s minds—was piñatas. Piñatas and candy—it’s just too much of a cliché, Kallman reasoned.

Well, that’s what Allen and Kallman once thought. But then the duo started to imagine the aftermath of a piñata being beaten, and they came up with the absurdly humorous concept of a man who is routinely battered because he looks so much like a piñata and what happens after one particular attack.

This is the scenario played out in the :45 “Piñata,” which aims to sell

Chocolate Skittles to candy-loving 12 to 17-year-olds.

The spot opens with a man who looks remarkably like a piñata hobbling into what is apparently a break room full of colleagues. Arm in a sling and hobbling on a crutch, he approaches another man.

“Is that what you were looking for? New chocolate-flavored Skittles?” the piñata man asks in a confrontational tone, tossing a bag of the candy on the table in front of the other guy.

The questioning continues: “Did you think you were going to hit me with that bat and little chocolate-y candies would come pouring out?” the piñata man demands of the man who obviously attacked him.

“Piñata” ends with his attacker shamed, and the battered man declaring to him and the bystanders, “I have to buy my Skittles downstairs like everyone else. I’m just like everyone else!”

Tom Kuntz of MJZ directed “Piñata.” The strange world of Skittles was familiar turf to him. He has directed a number of other Skittles commercials, including “Beard,” which depicts a job interview during which a

man’s long beard feeds him Skittles and even caresses the interviewer.

Good on paper

In the case of “Piñata,” Kuntz’ initial priority was figuring out how the piñata man would look and how that look would best be constructed. “That was the first thing we talked about with Tom, and up until the very shoot we were designing [the piñata man’s] look. We wanted to make sure that it read because the spot hinges on you knowing he is a piñata,” Allen said. “If you don’t, the whole spot fails.”

Ultimately, tests revealed that the effect was best achieved by simply attaching little bits of paper to a person’s face—this approach allowed for natural movement of the mouth and eyebrows, and therefore would enable the actor cast in the role to be expressive. A paper-covered suit, tie and jacket were also made.

After auditioning dozens of actors for the role of piñata man, Kuntz cast Sean Donnellan. While other actors took on wimpy or angry tones, Donnellan offered a unique take on the piñata man character. “He gave this old school, Ronald Reagan movie, *Outer Limits*, *Twilight Zone*, almost antiquated 1950s, overdramatic trained actor read,” Kuntz recalled.

It wasn’t an approach either Kuntz or the creative team had considered, but Kuntz immediately knew it was right for the role and pushed for Donnellan to be cast. The actor arrived for the one-day shoot before sunrise and spent hours in makeup.

“He was really into the character,” Allen said, noting that Donnellan chose not to eat lunch because he didn’t want to mess up his papered lips, although he did get some nourishment in the form of Jamba Juice carefully sucked through a straw.

“Piñata” was shot in one day by Kuntz and his crew, including DP Bryan Newman, on location in the break room of a technical school, and the director said he purposely gave the scene played out in the commercial “a stagey, kind of cheesy quality. I kept joking that this was an episode of *Night Court*.”

Counter punch

The script was shot as it was written, but Kuntz and the creative team were coming up with lines on the fly for the actors to try. “In every Skittles job I have ever done, the script is always perfect, and the only thing we almost always universally change is the final end line and joke,” Kuntz said.

That was indeed the case with this spot, which is faithful to the original script except for the aforementioned last line in which the piñata man pleads for everyone to see he is just like them, Kuntz shared. “I think the final line in the script was, ‘Enjoy your candy, Stephen,’ or something like that. But it dawned on me on the set to turn him into this Elephant Man kind of character where he is pleading to be accepted,” Kuntz said.

With all of the experimenting done on set, editor Gavin Cutler of New York’s Mackenzie Cutler had a lot of takes to choose from. “He left no stone unturned in finding the best performances possible,” Kallman praised.

“Piñata” was originally slated to air in :30 and :15 versions, but the agency and client decided to go ahead and do a :45, too. “The forty-five second [spot] allowed for emotions to build and awkward silences and moments to play out,” Kallman explained. “So we were happy to have the opportunity to do that version as well.”



Tom Kuntz



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

Absurdity takes a beating in this offbeat Skittles ad in which a man pays the price for looking like a piñata. It seems folks can't resist battering him in the hope that he will burst open, yielding a treasure trove of Chocolate Skittles. But our victim exacts some revenge, putting an attacker to shame.

TOP Spot OF THE WEEK

CLIENT
Skittles.

AGENCY
TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York.
Gerry Graf, executive creative director; Ian Reichenthal, Scott Vitrone, group creative directors; Craig Allen, art director; Eric Kallman, copywriter; Nathy Aviram, senior producer; Laura Rosenshine, assistant producer.

PRODUCTION COMPANY
MJZ, Los Angeles.
Tom Kuntz, director; Brian Newman, DP; David Zander, Jeff Scruton, executive producers; Scott Kaplan, producer. Shot on location in Los Angeles.

EDITORIAL
Mackenzie Cutler Editorial, New York.
Gavin Cutler, editor; Erik Laroi, assistant editor.

POST/VISUAL EFFECTS
Company 3, New York.
Tim Masick, colorist.
The Mill, New York.
Angus Kneale, Flame artist; Jo Arghiris, producer.

SOUND DESIGN
Mackenzie Cutler
Marc Healy, sound designer

AUDIO
Sound Lounge, New York.
Philip Loeb, mixer.

PERFORMER
Sean Donnellan.

CP+B's Chuck Porter Affirms Value Of Creative Talent

Continued from page 3

and "sometimes bigger than life"—they have to be, stressed Porter, in the brave new media world.

A Boulder approach

So for Porter, given that storytellers are essential, the key ingredient more than ever for an ad agency is "creative talent—getting it and keeping it."

That's why CP+B opened an office in Boulder, to offer its young creatives a lifestyle distinctly different from that of Miami. "How do you keep talent?" asked Porter who cited such factors as more money and a better dental plan. He then dismissed the latter, noting that hot young 23-year-old creatives all have good teeth and don't care about a dental plan.

Thus CP+B sought out a locale for a second office that was "the most opposite of Miami you could find." Boulder offers an outdoor lifestyle and other social aspects that have proven attractive to some creatives. Now they have a choice between Miami and Boulder, giving them extra

incentive to stay at CP+B.

Rage against machine

OMMA organizers asked Porter in his keynote remarks to address whether or not creatives can "tame the machine." In this case, the machine for online campaigns can mean

creative becoming subservient to the algorithms of ad-servers, keyword and copy optimization tools, click rates and ROI computations.

"Good stories don't come from machines," Porter said in identifying one of his basic tenets of advertising and marketing. He cited as an example

CP+B's recent "Whopper Freak-out" campaign for Burger King in which customers are up in arms when they are told that BK has stopped selling their favorite burger, the coveted Whopper. The strategy of "let's stop selling our most popular product" paradoxically turned out to be a

smashing success for BK. "No machine, no software tool would have approved" this creative strategy," said Porter, which underscores the integral part that inspired creative plays in effective marketing communication, generating off-the-chart positive results for clients.

New Technologies Becoming More Ad Friendly

Continued from page 3

for instance, Ross Levinsohn, general partner in and a colleague of Miller at Velocity Interactive Group, said, that he's "nervous" in light of the dollar being at its lowest point in some 50 years, the housing crunch, the credit crunch, and the likelihood that we're in a recession or at the very least headed for one.

"If I were a startup that had some money in the bank, I would be focused on how to string that out," he said. Noting that there are some great opportunities in new media, Levinsohn added that at the same

time they might be harder to realize in a stalled economy. He said that it will become increasingly more difficult for a startup to get the money it needs.

Content creation

Nonetheless, content creation plans continue to advance. Confab panelist Brent Weinstein, CEO of 60Frames Entertainment, Beverly Hills, related that his shop, which was formed last year (*SHOOT*, 7/20/07) is working closely with a significant number of brands and agencies to create original, brand-sponsored programming.

The 60Frames business model is to bring leading creative artisans (such as writers for *The Office* and *South Park*) into the equation and connect this branded talent—spanning writers, actors, directors and producers—with major brands themselves and their agencies in developing shows that can live across multiple platforms.

Like Weinstein, Larry Kramer, senior advisor at Boston-headquartered Polaris Venture Partners, believes in the advertiser-supported model for varied content. Kramer noted that early stages of technology—such as TiVO with its ad-zapping capability—

were seemingly adversarial to the advertising/marketing community. But now technologies are emerging that embrace advertising. He cited as an example VOD content platform Black Arrow, which offers a break in the content during which a slate of four short-take informative commercials is presented. The viewer can pick the one that interests him or her. But one of the commercials has to be viewed in order for the program to continue. "It's a less intrusive, more targeted approach," said Kramer, noting that more such ad-friendly measures and methods are coming to fruition.

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DIRECTORS



Welcome to *SHOOT*'s spring edition Directors Series, featuring directors who have helped to shape advertising in traditional as well as new forms. Their work underscores an ever changing media landscape. As reflected in our cover design, we've come a long way since phones were just for talking and a big screen was 25 inches.

Besides our look at established spotmakers, we also put the focus on promising new directorial talent who could very well turn out to be the next major trendsetters. And our accompanying Cinematographers and Cameras Series offers conversations with DPs who discuss their collaborations with directors, and share their observations on and experiences in digital cinematography.

On the new media front, director Brian Beletic of Smuggler provides insights into his all consuming HoneyShed project done in tandem with Droga5, New York, and Publicis Groupe; helmer Martin Krejci of Stink, London, reflects on his adidas web film, *Adi Dassler*, the centerpiece of a multi-platform campaign for agency 180 Amsterdam; and Chelsea Pictures' Lauren Greenfield, an accomplished still photographer, feature and short filmmaker, discusses her first major foray into the ad content arena, an emotionally touching U.S. Army short which chronicles the lives of soldiers' families and the sacrifices they make at home so that their loved ones can serve our country in Iraq. One version of the short is being used internally by the Army, another is playing on its website.

There's also a bit of DGA Award flavor on our spring menu. This year's DGA Award winner Nicolai Fuglsig of MJZ talks about what the Guild honor means to him. Past DGA winner Noam Murro of Biscuit Filmworks—whose nomination for the DGA Award in January marked his fifth in the last six years—comments on his feature filmmaking debut, *Smart People*, which premiered at Sundance, and how that long-form experience was informed by, and will help inform, his commercialmaking. And speaking of Sundance, Frank Budgen of Gorgeous Enterprises, London, and bi-coastal Anonymous Content, shares his recent experience at the Sundance Institute's Screenwriters Lab where he received feedback on his feature script, *Shockheaded Peter*. Budgen recently garnered his first career DGA Award nomination.

Then there's Baker Smith of harvest who combines a DGA Award pedigree (he won for best spot director of '02) with a new, interesting content form, in this case *Dust*, a short film which premiered at the recent opening of fine artist Ethan Murrow's show at the Obsolete Gallery in Venice, Calif.

So read and enjoy. And as always, we welcome your feedback.



—**Robert Goldrich**, Editor
rgoldrich@shootonline.com



Profiles

Brian Beletic
by Christine Champagne

Frank Budgen
by Robert Goldrich

Mathew Cullen
by Christine Champagne

Nicolai Fuglsig
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Brian Beletic

Coming out of the shed

By Christine Champagne

Brian Beletic recently wrapped a major Nike “Just Do It”-themed commercial for Wieden + Kennedy (W+K), Portland, Ore., featuring many of the company’s all-star roster of athletes, and while he has done Nike jobs before, this one was particularly rewarding because it marked the director’s return to spots after he spent nearly a year cloistered in a Hollywood studio working on—or, more accurately, eating, sleeping and breathing—HoneyShed.

As you have likely heard, HoneyShed is an online home shopping network for young adults billed as MTV meets QVC and hailed as the next big thing in branded entertainment in some quarters. Produced by New York’s Droga5, bicoastal Smuggler, which represents Beletic for commercials and music videos, and global Publicis Groupe, the HoneyShed.com that you currently see is a Beta version—after a few delays, the official version of the site is now slated to launch in May, according to Beletic.

Beletic serves as HoneyShed’s creative director, and in that role has overseen the brand’s development and the formation of HoneyShed’s production studio—a “living organism” is Beletic’s description of it—carved out of what was once a Hollywood prop warehouse. Beletic says it’s a sweet set-up with half-a-dozen stages, permanent set pieces and props, a wardrobe closet and an in-house post facility. The HoneyShed crew includes a full-time writing staff and assistant director.

In addition to functioning as creative director of HoneyShed, Beletic has also directed much of the HoneyShed fare, which consists of product segments and promos as you can see on the site. In fact, the director reports, he shot 370 product segments and over 100 promos in a five-month period.

The schedule has been grueling—Beletic says he didn’t have a day off for four or five months straight while working on the project. The time and energy invested has been worth it, he says, because HoneyShed has proven to be a fun and creatively fulfilling endeavor. “It’s been really exciting to go to the same place every day and create something new every day,” Beletic enthuses. “It reminds me of what MTV may have been like in its early days.”

While Beletic wasn’t at MTV in its embryonic days, the Dallas native did get a chance to soak up the atmosphere when he worked at the network in the late 1990s after he graduated from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Beletic was charged with the task of churning out promos at MTV, which was good training for his role not only as a spot and music video director—he initially signed with now-defunct Satellite in 1999 before joining the Smuggler roster—but as creative director at content-hungry HoneyShed.

Product segments are HoneyShed’s bread and butter and are funneled into channels like Beauty, Tech and Toys and Kicks & Lids. A sampling of product segments seen during a recent visit includes one in the Kicks & Lids channel that has a guy and a girl dressed in Day-Glo colors showing off guacamole green Creative Recreation Cesario Lo sneakers; Will.I.Am from Black Eyed Peas plays a Roland-VP550 keyboard and talks up its features in a segment on the Tech and Toys channel; and two girls dressed in safari gear put Anne Marie Borlind mascara on a gum-chomping dude in a Beauty segment, and after assuring the



HoneyShed promo

guy how amazing he looks, they highlight the fact that the mascara is all-natural and non-clumping.

Playful, light-hearted and sometimes goofy, the content on HoneyShed is a departure from the moving and epic fare Beletic is known for as a spot director. His reel includes assorted notable commercials, including Brand Jordan’s “Second Generation” out of W+K, New York, which finds young male and female athletes re-creating classic moments from basketball great Michael Jordan’s career (*SHOOT*’s Top Spot of the Week, 3/3/2006).

After a long immersion in the wacky world of HoneyShed, Beletic is looking forward to getting back into commercials as well as music videos. The director, whose credits include clips for Fatboy Slim, Cee Lo and Basement Jaxx, hasn’t helmed a music video since Lady Sovereign’s “Love Me or Hate Me” in ‘06.

But will he really have the time to direct spots and music videos in 2008, or is he tethered to the hive? “We’ve built HoneyShed so I don’t have to be there every day,” Beletic says. “We have a writing team, and a lot of our investment has been in people who have grown up with HoneyShed, and they can run the show. I’m always going to be involved in overseeing the brand and the entertainment in broad strokes, but we don’t want this to be the type of thing where I have to be there every day.

“I came out to L.A. to build the studio and build the brand, and that’s been built,” Beletic continues. “So it’s a natural time for me to be able to return to other things that I love.”

One has to ask if HoneyShed’s seemingly insatiable need for content might provide opportunities for other commercial directors. It’s a good question, Beletic remarks, before answering, “Commercial directors are paid well for their time, and this type of business can’t afford to pay commercial directors the way that they deserve to be paid. So I wouldn’t say it’s a new medium for commercial directors. Instead, I would say that it requires a unique type of personality to be attracted to this.”



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Frank Budgen

Reflections on DGA nomination, Sundance

By Robert Goldrich

For a director who quips that he has spent some 80 percent of his time over the past five years working on feature film projects that haven't happened yet, Frank Budgen has managed to accomplish quite a bit, particularly in the commercialmaking sector. For eight of the past nine years, he has placed in the upper echelon of most awarded directors per the annual Gunn Report. And to kick off 2008, he added another honor to his resumé, his first career nomination for a Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award as best commercial director of the year ('07).

Budgen earned the DGA nomination on the strength of two commercials: Sony Bravia Television's "Playdoh" out of Fallon, London; and Live Earth's "S.O.S., Save Our Selves" for Young & Rubicam, Chicago. The former was produced by Budgen's longstanding U.K. home, Gorgeous Enterprises in London. The latter was produced by Gorgeous and bicoastal Anonymous Content,

"It [Sony Bravia's 'Playdoh' spot] was logistically as tough a project as I've ever done."



Sony Bravia's "Playdoh"

which continues to handle the state-side market for Budgen and several of his Gorgeous directorial colleagues.

Gratified by the DGA recognition, Budgen himself didn't even realize his work was entered into the competition until he was informed of that fact by Gorgeous executive producer Paul Rothwell, who submitted the two Budgen-directed spots.

Noting that he directs less than a handful of commercials each year, Budgen—who recently took up residence in Los Angeles—imagines it wasn't too painstaking a process to figure out what spots to submit to DGA Award judges for consideration. Still, he reflected on what appealed to him about the two commercials to begin with.

"Every few years there's a client who does one big commercial a year and that work is eagerly anticipated from one year to the next," he observes. "In the past, it's been a Stella Artois or Guinness. But in recent years, it's been Sony [Bravia] from Fallon. I had passed on some of the previous Sony work, which perhaps wasn't too smart. But I very much liked this spot [in which assorted colorful Playdoh bunnies invade the streets of New York, eventually helping to form one giant bunny which breaks up into a cavalcade of colorful Playdoh TV sets strewn about the city]. It was a chance to combine live action and animation, which held an extra interest for me in that the feature I'm planning is also a mix of the two.

"It was logistically as tough a project as I've ever done," Budgen continues. "It was old fashioned stop frame animation, with my work for it done not with a cine camera but in stills. The sheer scale of the project was huge, flying in animators from England and Canada, and using ones we could get in America. Achieving consistency of lighting in the streets of New York was an ongoing challenge, with sunlight coming out from behind one building and disappearing

behind another."

As for the Live Earth promo, Budgen was drawn to the cause itself, of being able to help to raise awareness about global warming. "The original idea was famous talking heads—celebrities, scientists, athletes," he recalls. "It was a hit list of well-known names. But the hit list turned out to be more of a wish list that didn't materialize. In the end, though, that wound up working, I think, to our advantage, using ordinary people doing stuff and creating from their actions on stage a song from the Morse Code of S.O.S. [dot-dot-dot, dash-dash-dash, dot-dot-dot]."

Sundance

As for that alluded to perennial feature project in development, there are signs that progress is being made on Budgen's planned undertaking of *Shock-headed Peter*. He describes the film as "a cautionary tale for parents," spawned by the well known European rhymes about naughty children being punished in accordance with their crimes. These rhymes, authored by a German doctor who couldn't find any interesting books for his kids, became classics but are frowned upon today by some who regard the work as politically incorrect. The rhymes spawned a popular London musical, with Budgen continuing to work on the script which calls for deploying an artful mesh of live action and animation.

The sign of headway being made is the interest the project has started to elicit, most notably in the form of Budgen being invited to bring his script to the Sundance Institute's January Screenwriters Lab, headed by a who's who of independent writers, including artistic director Scott Frank, Paul Attanasio, Naomi Foner Gyllenhaal and Doug Wright.

Budgen's was one of 13 scripts selected from a field of some 3,000 applications for inclusion in the Sundance Lab, which was held from January 11-16 at the Sundance Resort in Park City, Utah.

"It was a great week where screenwriters talk to you about what you're working on," relates Budgen. "You don't write when you're there. You just benefit from different informed perspectives from established writers. The writing starts after you've left and that's what I'm doing now."

Noting that the Lab feedback he received was valuable, Budgen says he still has to find his own way. "I went through a stage after the Sundance Lab of trying to incorporate or listen to too many voices. Now I'm trying to find my own



Live Earth's "S.O.S.--Save Our Selves"

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Mathew Cullen

Meshing disciplines

By Christine Champagne

From a young age, Mathew Cullen, who was born and raised in Los Angeles, aspired to be a director. But he didn't necessarily see himself falling into a rigid category like live-action director or animation director. Rather, he wanted to do, well, everything, so he covered all the bases when he attended Los Angeles' Loyola Marymount University, studying design, animation and filmmaking.

It wasn't long after he graduated that a then 23-year-old Cullen teamed with executive producer Javier Jimenez to launch Venice, Calif.-based creative studio Motion Theory in 2000 because nothing like it existed at that time, according to Cullen.

"There was your live-action director, there was your editorial house, there was your graphics house, your animation house, your visual effects company, your sound designer, your music house—[the business] was so segmented," Cullen says.

"We believed that the idea of the unified experience was the way that the business was going because of how the idea and technique were merging," Cullen continues. "That intersection was what I was most interested in, and the only way to find that intersection, or the best way to find that place where you're able to combine idea and technique, to have that perfect alignment, that perfect intersection, was for us to build a studio from the ground up with that idea as its sole purpose."

Via his shop, Cullen has made a name for himself as a spot and music video director who brings concepts to life in an intensely imaginative way, employing live action, visual effects and animation.

In the music video arena, his most recent work includes Adele's "Chasing Pavements" clip, which depicts a surreal dance sequence at the scene of a car accident. Cullen is also known for the mind-bending "Girl" and "Dashboard" clips he has directed for Beck and Modest Mouse, respectively.

As for recent spot credits, Cullen and co-director Jesus de Francisco recently celebrated New York City in a fantastical commercial titled "The Ride" for New York agency Bartle Bogle Hegarty and its client the NYC & Company, the official marketing and tourism agency for the City of New York.

Cullen immediately recognized that the spot would be challenging to pull off—even impossible, he says—when the brief came in to Motion Theory.

"The idea of embodying the spirit

and history of New York City in just a mere sixty seconds—how do you do that?" he marvels even today, noting, "And it had to transcend language

because it was going to be playing all over the world."

Still, Cullen couldn't resist trying, and, ultimately, he and de Francisco

constructed an amazingly vibrant tribute to the Big Apple that mixes live-action and animation into a liv-

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Nicolai Fuglsig

Finally, a sense of satisfaction

By Robert Goldrich

Nicolai Fuglsig of bicoastal/international MJZ sets the bar high for himself. When he was profiled in our Directors Series in 2006, a year during which the Sony Bravia “Balls” spot he directed for Fallon, London, had picked up the last of some three dozen industry awards, Fuglsig felt he didn’t deserve to be written up in *SHOOT* in that he hadn’t yet progressed as much as he had hoped to in the American ad market.

Then this past January when he received his first Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nomination for best commercial director of the year, Fuglsig was most of all “surprised.” The director noted that he didn’t even select the spots that were submitted to the DGA for consideration by competition judges. “I wasn’t as busy in commercials [in ’07, the year the latest DGA Award was based on] due to the ongoing writing and development of my feature film. In fact I had no idea that my work was submitted [to the DGA] until [MJZ president] David Zander told me.”

Well Zander did some fine picking and choosing as the three spots he entered on behalf of the director—Guinness’ “Tipping Point” and Motorola’s “Journey,” both for Abbott Mead Vickers/BBDO, London, and JCPenney’s “It’s Magic” out of Saatchi & Saatchi, New York—earned Fuglsig the DGA Award as best commercial director of ’07, which in turn attained for the director that elusive feeling of satisfaction.

“I was surprised to get nominated and twice as surprised to actually win,” he relates. “But I have to admit that winning this high an honor feels great and is quite satisfying. The DGA Award is a filmmaker’s award, not an advertising award. It’s an award with no politics. It seeks pure craft, storytelling and filmmaking and is judged by filmmakers, many of whom I look up to. I feel energized, like I have a carrot in front of me that I want to strive even harder to get.”

Not being easily satisfied and continuing to set high standards for himself that he often feels he isn’t fully meeting may, though, be the very dynamic that helped Fuglsig attain an honor as coveted as the DGA Award.

“I tend to be a bit negative about myself, a bit pissed off with my own abilities,” he relates. “I have creative ants in my pants. I always think I can do better. Once I finish one job, my head is already into the next movie. I’m constantly looking for what’s next, something better and more challenging.”

Indeed the ad beat goes on for Fuglsig. Shortly after winning the DGA accolade, two high profile jobs he directed have debuted on air: Monster.com’s “Daybreak” for BBDO New York, a recent *SHOOT* Top Spot; and Coca-Cola’s “It’s Mine” from Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore., which premiered during the Super Bowl to rave reviews and also earned *SHOOT* “Top Spot” status.

In the latter, a Charlie Brown balloon at Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade comes out of nowhere to grab a Coca-Cola bottle balloon that Underdog and Stewie balloons were vying for in the stratosphere over Manhattan. In some respects, “It’s Mine” shares a common bond with one of Fuglsig’s DGA Award-winning commercials, JCPenney’s “It’s Magic.” Both represented a bit of a stretch for



Nicolai Fuglsig accepts the DGA Award from presenter, actress Ellen Page the director.

“‘It’s Mine’ was like ‘It’s Magic,’” Fuglsig observes, in that they are whimsical, something for which I’m not known for. I got my first chance to show my whimsical feminine side in the JCPenney spot. Up until then, I was known much more for work that’s a bit darker and more quirky.”

Asked to reflect on the other two spots which helped him win the DGA Award, Fuglsig first says that “Tipping Point,” a logistically complex tour de force that would make Rube Goldberg proud, entailed “intense preparation while there was very little time to shoot the piece. Most of my energy went into the prep to make sure that our shoot time was well spent. We also had to live up to Guinness’ strong tradition for great creative.”

Meanwhile Motorola’s “Journey” was just that. “It’s very cinematic, has extensive action and interesting performances,” notes the director. “On a smaller budget, we achieved quite a lot, all of it in camera. I enjoyed the work in that it was like doing eight different movie genres within a commercial—I was shooting a western, a bank robber movie, a romance and so on.”

“Journey” was particularly appealing because it represented varied genres. “I very much love to avoid being pigeonholed. You want to defy being categorized,” he affirms.

So what’s next? For the moment, a relatively brief respite from commercials.

“For the first time in seven years, I’m taking three months off.” But this isn’t vacation time. Instead, Fuglsig is collaborating with a writer to make progress on that alluded to feature. And while the director isn’t yet at liberty to publicly discuss the project in detail, it’s safe to say it isn’t a showcase of his lighthearted whimsical side.

“It’s a violent drama that takes place in America and Brazil,” says Fuglsig. “I think the short time away from commercials will help me come back even stronger and then go after that carrot I see in front of me ever since [winning] the DGA Award.”

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Lauren Greenfield

Finding meaning in advertising

By Millie Takaki

An acclaimed photographer and chronicler of youth culture, Lauren Greenfield has successfully diversified into short and long-form filmmaking. Her latest directorial inroads have been made in commercials via bicoastal/international production house Chelsea Pictures.

But her story is far more involved than making the transition from still shooting to spotmaking. Greenfield changed her views on advertising dramatically as reflected in her first major published work, *Fast Forward: Growing Up in the Shadow of Hollywood*, released some eight years ago, and her subsequent experience lensing a print campaign for Nike.

Fast Forward examined materialism's effect on youth. "My first book was critical of advertising and its impact on youth as well as gender," recalls Greenfield. "But then I did this Nike print ad shoot [for Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco] in which girls simply spoke about being themselves and not having to look like the perfect models they see on television.

While that Nike campaign was influential for young people, its importance didn't fully hit home for Greenfield until she went on two photo journalism assignments, one for *The New York Times* which called for her to examine what

it means to be 13 years old today. That work wound up being nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. The other assignment took Greenfield to Missouri in order to chronicle a week in the life of an American high school, resulting in a cover shot for *Time Magazine*.

In both cases, Greenfield had occasion to visit the rooms of teenage girls where on the walls, amidst posters of rock stars and the like, she saw her Nike print ads.

"I think then I fully realized the good that advertising can do... It's one thing to have your work well received in the professional community, but seeing that Nike work on those bedroom walls meant so much more in terms of meaningfully connecting with people."

Chelsea

Greenfield's work also meaningfully connected with Chelsea partners Allison Amon and Lisa Mehling.

Fans of Greenfield's early print work, Amon and Mehling went to the Sundance Film Festival in 2006 to see *Thin*, a feature which marked Greenfield's directorial debut and was based on her book of the same title which chronicled four women as they struggled to fight eating disorders. The film further heightened Amon's and Mehling's enthusiasm for Greenfield's prospects

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kids+money



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Daniel Kleinman

Special Delivery Stateside

By Robert Goldrich

Among director Daniel Kleinman's latest spots is HBO's "Stork" for BBDO New York in which we see a stork carrying a little bundle of joy, enduring inclement weather and even a confrontation with ravenous wolves during the course of a long, arduous journey. Indeed the stork offers more than just the gift of flight. He nurtures and protects the baby before finally delivering the infant safely at the doorstep of a home where loving parents await.

We then fast forward to that baby now all grown up as a young man working mindlessly in a dead-end office job. The same stork appears at the office window and sees what's become of his precious bundle, looks down in disappointment and flies off.

The man too is disappointed, embarrassed at his lot in life which hits home for him at the sight of the stork. He realizes that he can do better, at which point a Monster.com logo appears accompanied by the slogan, "Your calling is calling."

Kleinman helmed "Stork" via Rattling Stick, the London production house that he and director Ringan Ledwidge formed nearly two years ago. But if that very special delivery job came a month or two later, it might instead have been produced or at least co-produced by bicoastal Epoch Films. That's because Rattling Stick has since entered into an alliance with Epoch Films, gaining U.S. production support and representation (*SHOOT*, 2/22).

This marks the first time in some five years that Kleinman has had an actual production house roost stateside. His last such affiliation was with the now defunct Ritts/Hayden Films, a fruitful relationship that ended shortly after direc-

tor Herb Ritts' death in December 2002. Back then Kleinman was partnered in London-based Spectre.

"I just felt the time was right for Rattling Stick to have a relationship with a U.S. production house—not only for myself since I do a number of American jobs each year but also for Ringan Ledwidge as well as the younger, established directors we've expanded with at the company," says Kleinman.

During the interim between Ritts/Hayden and Epoch, Kleinman had independent representation in the U.S.—but he, Ledwidge and Rattling Stick president Johnnie Frankel decided they needed to elevate their company's profile stateside and thus gravitated toward Epoch, which is headed by founder/executive producer Mindy Goldberg and executive producer/partner Jerry Solomon.

This stronger commitment to the U.S. market seems like a natural progression to Kleinman who took the same organic path to forming Rattling Stick. "Over the years by default I kind

of ended up in places that had been taken over by or merged with somebody else," relates Kleinman, alluding in part to his roost after Spectre, the former London house Large, which for him became "too big, unwieldy and faceless." He yearned for a smaller boutique presence, leading him to start London-based Kleinman Productions and then when he desired some controlled growth to encompass other directors, he and Ledwidge teamed to launch Rattling Stick.

"Ringan and I wanted a directors' cooperative-type scenario and it's worked out well," observes Kleinman who feels the extra Epoch dimension will un-

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Monster's "Stork"

"I've pretty much kept my head down, worked hard and built my reputation that way rather than kind of suddenly becoming flavor of the month."



Martin Krejci

Lessons from the workshop

By Millie Takaki

The centerpiece of an ambitious adidas campaign out of 180 Amsterdam is clearly the three-minute stop motion animation web film *Adi Dassler*, from which has been culled both cinema and broadcast commercials. The work introduces us to adidas founder Adi Dassler, taking us back in time to his 1920s workshop where it all began. The 1:3 scale recreation of the workshop set itself took 30 people over a month to build and became the perfect interactive backdrop for the Adi Dassler "Originals" website where visitors can spend time with Dassler. Shoes, trophies and Dassler himself are meticulously crafted in miniature and then brought to life using stop frame animation.

Mixed media elements abound in the piece, including archival footage of one of legendary sprinter Jesse Owens' Gold Medal runs in the 1936 Olympics, and the German soccer team's stunning upset over Hungary in the 1954 World Cup. Dassler designed running shoes for Owens and a special soled shoe which the German soccer players used to gain traction on a muddy field during the second half of their championship game.

Sans any experience in animation, Martin Krejci of Stink, London, became what on the surface seemed a curious directorial choice for *Adi Dassler*. But not for 180 executive producer Cedric Gairard who cited Krejci's collaborative nature—not only with the agency and The Animation Studio, Prague, but with other Stink directors—namely James Brown, Ben Dawkins and Henry-Alex Rubin—who worked on other shorts in the adidas campaign.

All the directors came together and met with 180 and other contributors. "They [the directors] saw their projects in relation to the whole, helping them

to do a better, more relevant job with the parts they were responsible for. This kind of sharing and collaboration with one another—and with us—helped to develop this campaign and make it possible...Having four directors in the same room enabled them to reach a collective understanding of their own work, the challenges and missions—and infused everyone with a feeling of teamwork. Stink became a partner with us in all of this."



adidas' *Adi Dassler*

Gairard noted that Krejci's role on the lead project helped to set a positive tone for everyone. The director embraced the challenge. "I'm not an animator at all," he related. "This was my first experience in animation. For me, the biggest challenge was to make a story through animation about someone who really existed. So we could not afford to lose the connection to reality and authenticity. This was supposed to be very much like a documentary. We shot everything with real actors, found all the props, and modelmakers built an incredible set that had to be mathematically correct in terms of sizes and perspectives. What we shot with the real actor was matched frame by frame for the

stop motion animation. It was painstaking work for the animation house but ultimately rewarding."

However, Krejci isn't clamoring for another stop frame animation job. "Now that I've had the experience, I think I'll move on. But it was a discipline I every much wanted to explore. That's my quest—to try to experience and do something new with each project."

Free spirit

That spirit has been part of Krejci's creative psyche from an early age. Born

Continued on page 28

"That's my quest [as a director]—to try to experience and do something new with each project."

Francis Lawrence

Slated for June return to spots

By Christine Champagne

While many commercial and music video directors spend their careers jumping ship, chasing new and better production company affiliations, Francis Lawrence has maintained a uniquely stable existence. In fact, he has been with Hollywood's DNA (David Naylor and Associates) for all of a more than 10-year career.

Lawrence, who grew up in the San Fernando Valley and studied filmmaking at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, remembers sending his reel, which consisted of music videos he had shot with a friend, to DNA and several other production companies when he was just starting out. "DNA was the only place that responded to me and not just responded to my work but responded to me. Nobody else called me back," Lawrence shares.

Lawrence signed with the production house, and it wasn't long before he made a big name for himself in the music video arena, with notable clips for Wyclef Jean ("Gone Till November") and Aerosmith ("I Don't Want to Miss a Thing"). Lawrence has since gone on to direct music videos for varied artists ranging from Jennifer Lopez to Justin Timberlake, and he has picked up numerous MTV Video Music Awards along the way in addition to the 2002 and 2005 Director of the Year honors from the Music Video Production Association (MVPA).

In the area of advertising, Lawrence has directed spots for high-profile clients such as the as Gap, Diet Coke, Mobil and Bud Light.

Meanwhile, it was just three years ago that the director made *Constantine*, his first feature film. Based on the *Hellblazer* comic book series, the film stars Keanu Reeves as a supernatural detective and Rachel Weisz as a policewoman investigating a murder case that entangles them in a world of demons and angels in Los Angeles. Lawrence followed up *Constantine* with 2007's *I Am Legend*, which has Will Smith playing a New York scientist and the last human on Earth after a virus wipes out all of mankind.

After wrapping shooting on *I Am Legend* last April, then going right into postproduction on the film and a whirlwind publicity tour to promote it, Lawrence had a hiatus from commercialmaking in 2007. While the director notes that he doesn't get any pressure from DNA to take on spot work when his focus needs to be elsewhere, he and the company are looking forward to his return to the ad arena. But there's still the matter

of a TV pilot project he's embarked on for NBC.

Titled *Kings*, Lawrence describes the pilot as "a David and Goliath sto-

ry" set in a country at war that is ruled by a monarchy. After a brave soldier faces off against a tank, he becomes a national hero and poses a threat to the

king, and so the drama unfolds.

Lawrence, who is currently shooting *Kings* in New York, will stay on
Continued on page 28



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Noam Murro

Learning from Smart People

By Robert Goldrich

It's already been an eventful year for director Noam Murro of Los Angeles-based Biscuit Filmworks. To kick off 2008, he was nominated for the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award as best commercial director of 2007 on the basis of Volkswagen Golf's "Night Drive" for DDB London, Orbit Gum's "Affair" from Energy BBDO, Chicago, and the National Basketball Association's "Remember" via Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco.

This marked Murro's fifth DGA Award nomination in the past six years. (He won the coveted DGA honor for his work in '04.)

On the heels of his latest DGA nom, Murro saw his feature directorial debut *Smart People* make its world premiere in late January at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. The romantic comedy was well received, garnering favorable reviews. In fact, several critics observed that describing *Smart People* as merely a romantic comedy doesn't do it justice. Some regard the film as not only a comedy but a poignant character study as people deal with personal loss, romance and fear of emotional growth. The cast includes Dennis Quaid, Sarah Jessica Parker and Ellen Page (who was cast before her triumph in *Juno*). The film is being distributed by Miramax and is slated for an April 11 release.

Well informed

So while the film is indeed smart, did Murro himself learn any life's lesson from *Smart People*? How does he feel the feature experience will inform his commercialmaking? (At press time Murro was in Europe directing a U.K. market spot project for an undisclosed client). How did his experience over the years in commercials inform his work on *Smart People*?

The answer to all the above is quite "simple," according to Murro. "You learn no matter what you do. I'm not trying to dodge being specific. But it's as basic as that. And it goes both ways—you bring to it and you bring from it, both for commercials and features. One informs the other.

"I do know," he continues, "that if I'm invited again to do a feature and hopefully I will be at some point, I will try to bring more people from my commercial experience into that project. The people who work with me on a daily basis on commercials are the best in the world."

For *Smart People*, Murro managed to bring in some of his spot community collaborators, including DP Toby Irwin and in pre-pro the director tapped into Biscuit executive producers Shawn Lacy and Gary Naccarato.

And while there are distinct differences in spot and feature filmmaking, ultimately the bottom line is the same, observes Murro, underscoring why his talented spot collaborators can successfully and rather seamlessly transition into the feature flow.

"Yes, commercials and features are different political animals," relates Murro. "And they are slightly different creative animals in that with a feature you have a much more evolving story and character development. But the true essence at the end of the day is that you are still dealing with the same ultimate issue—how do you get what you want in your head across to an audience on film?"



Orbit Gum's "The Affair"

"For me, when you shoot eighty to ninety days a year for a decade, you can't help but learn something about that," he smiles. And operating within budgetary constraints is also nothing new to Murro who had to apply some of that acumen to *Smart People*.

"It was a relatively low budget movie. We shot it in twenty-eight days. That can be challenging but at the same time working fast and smart is sometimes the best way."

As for the Sundance Fest, Murro says he had "a great time. I always wanted to go to Sundance but told myself I'm not going until I can go with a movie."

Murro is grateful to get the opportunity to direct *Smart People* and to finally go to Sundance. And he is most gratified to continue his commercialmaking.

"I feel even more recharged creatively getting back into commercials now," he relates. "I feel fortunate to have had such a great ride in filmmaking and I want very much to continue collaborating with creative people."

Part of that ride has been the DGA Award recognition over the years. When *SHOOT* connected with Murro right after he received his latest DGA nomination, he shared, "The fifth time [being nominated] still feels like the first. I'm as excited and honored as I was the very first time. It never gets old to get this kind of recognition from your peers. A big part of the DGA honor is being included with the other nominees whose work I love."

Murro was also conscious of what it takes to even get the chance to be nominated, acknowledging the agency artisans who not only provide rich creative but also trust him to help them realize their ideas. Without that trust, you cannot get the quality and range that merits DGA consideration, he observes.

And this fifth nomination was no exception in that the spots he entered into the competition showcase that range. "The idea is to put forth work that represents a variety of styles and tones—in this case [for his fifth DGA nomination] humor [Orbit's 'Affair'], heart [the NBA's 'Remember'] and visual [VW's 'Night Drive']," he says. "I feel very fortunate."

"The people who work with me on a daily basis on commercials are the best in the world."

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Suthon Petchsuwan

Steps up commitment to U.S. market

By Millie Takaki

This year's Super Bowl crop of advertising included a pair of Careerbuilder.com commercials directed by Suthon Petchsuwan of Santa Monica-based TWC for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore. The comedic spots advocated a proactive approach to bettering one's lot in life and though it seems far fetched to regard Petchsuwan—one of the world's most lauded commercial directors—as being in a career building mode himself, he in one distinct sense is in that position. And he's taking a proactive stance on that front, specifically in his quest to draw more worthwhile work from the American ad market.

For one, he has set up his own Bangkok-based shop, Mum Films, exiting long-time Thailand production company roost Matching Studio. "Mum" is my nickname," relates Petchsuwan, explaining that he went entrepreneurial so that he can be more free to make decisions as to what work to take on and where. Rather than answer to a larger studio like Matching, he only has to answer to himself in his own house and can more easily free up his schedule to accommodate jobs of interest from agencies in the U.S. and for that matter in Europe as well.

Petchsuwan's U.S. roost continues to be TWC, which he joined in 2005, making initial inroads into the stateside marketplace, first with a Snapple job for Cliff Freeman and Partners, New York, and most recently with the Big Game spots for Careerbuilder.com.

But there's been a change in the U.K. as Petchsuwan now has continuity on both sides of the Atlantic—with TWC@Wanted in London handling him for Brit agency work. The TWC@Wanted banner was formed when TWC entered into a relation-



ship with London's Wanted Films (see separate news story). Petchsuwan had previously been handled by Stink, London.

Top Gunn

Petchsuwan's industry stature is perhaps best reflected in his performance on the awards show circuit over the years. The Gunn Report, which annually chronicles the most awarded agencies, production companies and directors, has only seen two directors place in the top 25 a record high eight times during that report's nine-year existence: Frank Budgen of both Gorgeous Enterprises in London, and bicoastal Anonymous Content; and Petchsuwan.

Director Petchsuwan has also topped that annual Gunn derby. For example in '04 he was the most awarded director in the world. He earned that distinction on the basis of such comedic work as a Soken DVD Player campaign for Euro RSCG Flagship, Bangkok, and Unif Green Tea's "Worms," out of BBDO Bangkok.

Asked if he's had to adapt his sense of ad humor for the American marketplace, Petchsuwan—who started out as an agency creative in Bangkok—relates, "There is no Thai comedy, no China comedy, no U.S. comedy, no India comedy, no Apopo [New Zealander] comedy. In fact there is only funny or not funny."



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Baker Smith

From Dust to Golden Silence

By Robert Goldrich

On its seventh year anniversary a couple of weeks ago, harvest, the Santa Monica shop formed by director Baker Smith and executive producer Bonnie Goldfarb, debuted a Smith-helmed short film, *Dust*, which opened the currently running art exhibit of Ethan Murrow at the Obsolete Gallery in Venice, Calif.

There was no plan for the two events to coincide but they did, representing a happy and most fitting turn of events in that, says Smith, one of harvest's goals from its very inception was "to not be just another production company but to be open to try new things, to dive into uncharted waters."

Dust is true to that spirit as it brings to video installation life Murrow's graphite drawings which depict the arduous exploits of fictitious "dust miners." In this other world, dust has become a coveted commodity pursued by doomed explorers. They ravage the land for it, blowing holes in terra firma and using a tweezer to pick up precious dust and to place it into vials in exchange for money which they then fritter away. The absurdity of the situation is evident, with viewers left to their own interpretations.

Murrow's artistic signature is creating work based on imaginative fiction that reflects societal values—or in some cases, the lack thereof—and in the process sparks insights into both the good and bad in people. Smith became enamored

with Murrow's drawings and then got to know the artist, who is the grandson of the late, great pioneering broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow.

Smith and Ethan Murrow struck up a friendship and when the latter asked the former if he would collaborate with him on a video installation (a.k.a. a short film), Smith jumped at the opportunity. Also in the mix as collaborators were Goldfarb and Vita Weinstein Murrow.

While *Dust* is a new longer form means of expression for Smith, he notes that commercialmaking remains his prime focus. The director says at the same time, though, that he's diversifying his creative lot. For example, Smith was at press time about to embark on a project that will start virally and then evolve into a full campaign on TV for a client he wasn't yet at liberty to publicly identify.

The desire to push new creative boundaries not only spawned *Dust* but over the years has also translated into mainstream spotmaking success for Smith who's established himself as

a leading director. He has earned varied honors during his career, perhaps most notably the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award as best commercial director of 2002 based on a collection of memorable commercials displaying a wry sense of humor, including FOX Sports "Lightning" and "Wind," the promos "Black Bands" and "Visigoths" for Canal+, and BMW Mini Cooper's "Clown."

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Dust

"Being a director is sort of like being an anthropologist going out in the field...it's fun exploring new worlds."



These guys are.....

- A. Extras in a NASCAR TV show
- B. A touring country band with a large road crew
- C. Some of the road techs for the band
- D. The best boy, gaffers and grips on a TV commercial shoot

Answer:

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Mathew Cullen

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ing, breathing tour of the city's hot spots enjoyed by a family as they travel through the city by cab. In one of the commercial's most engaging sequences, Van Gogh's "Starry Night," which is in the collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), turns into Central Park at night. "That painting just stops you in your tracks. It's just so remarkable the way the brush strokes leap off the canvas," Cullen says, "and it's one of MoMA's quintessential pieces, and because the spot was very much about finding the connections between things in New York, we loved this idea of turning it into Central Park."

Cullen also recently embarked on another co-directed spot with de Francisco-Lexus' "Perfectly Aligned" for Team One out of El Segundo, Calif. This spot, which depicts various items ranging from trees to rocks being plucked out of their natural environments and combined to form a classic Pebble Beach composition, required a more singular approach in terms of style and technique. Whereas the aforementioned New York City spot had a more whimsical, free-flowing feel, "Perfectly Aligned" had to be completely photographic and believable, so Cullen and de Francisco captured all of the elements in-camera, relying on motion control.

Cullen was on his own when he directed the original—as well as three subsequent spots—in the HP "Hands"-themed campaign out of San Francisco's Goodby, Silverstein & Partners in 2006. Well, not really alone. The director is quick to stress that he collaborates with other artists ranging from visual effects supervisors to illustrators every day at Motion Theory. "As a director, you help lead a vision, you help lead the creation of something," he says, "but you have to rely on the help of others."

Cullen and his team at Motion Theory found a novel way to demonstrate how stars like Pharrell Williams use their HP notebooks, shooting the subjects from the neck down, then providing information via their voices and visually descriptive animation that flows from their hands.

The spots are inventive in their execution, but a great idea is at the heart of this campaign, Cullen stresses. "I say, 'Ideas first,' because without a great idea, you have nothing. Even if you have an incredible execution, it just dies," Cullen says. "No one remembers it, no one references it, and it doesn't reach that greater place, and it definitely doesn't inspire or live on."

The work that Cullen did on the HP "Hands" campaign will certainly live on. A quick search of YouTube.com reveals numerous take-offs of the spots. "I enjoyed the process of making those commercials, but what I loved more than anything was seeing the process of what happened afterward [with the knock-offs on YouTube]," Cullen says. "I think when something has an opportunity to

live forever like that, that's the ultimate compliment."

More recently, David Letterman parodied the aforementioned NYC & Company "The Ride" spot on CBS' Late Show with David Letterman, showing the seamier side of the Big Apple, and, again, Cullen was delighted.

Of course, these tributes and spoofs—while clever—don't quite measure up to Cullen's work in terms of creative and technical excellence. Cullen and his team are always experimenting to come up with new ways of achieving effects and oftentimes create proprietary software or develop new ways of shooting in-camera effects. In the case of "The Ride" spot, Motion Theory had to come up with software to emulate the brush strokes of Van Gogh's "Starry Night." To achieve the effect of a golf club being swung in slow motion in a Nike Golf spot promoting the brand's Sumo clubs titled "Innovation" out of Wieden + Kennedy, Portland, Ore., Motion Theory built a custom robotic arm that matched the swing and pivot points of a real golf club swing.

Not surprisingly, Cullen notes that oftentimes advertising agencies will come to him early on in the creative process, seeking a partner in the development of a commercial.

"If an agency comes to me, they want to have a new experience. They are looking for the thing that hasn't been seen before, so if I'm known as a director that's able to give them something that they didn't expect, and they haven't seen before, that's the greatest place you can be in," Cullen says, noting, "When I co-founded this company eight years ago, that was the exact thing I wanted."



New York Tourism's "The Ride"

Lauren Greenfield

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in commercialmaking. A couple months after the '06 Sundance Fest, Chelsea signed Greenfield for exclusive representation as a spot director.

Chelsea's commitment has yielded recent tangible results. Greenfield directed a U.S. Army short chronicling the lives of soldier's families and the sacrifices they make at home so that their loved ones can serve our country in Iraq. One version of the short, approximately three-and-a-half minutes in length, is being used internally by the Army, another is playing on the Army website. The ambitious project, for McCann Erickson, New York, marked Greenfield's first major foray into the ad content arena. She found value in the job, which tapped into her documentary, journalism and people portrait sensibilities.

This gig came just prior to Greenfield returning to Sundance in '08, this time with *kids+money*, a 32-minute short that sprung from a 12-minute online video she did for *The New York Times*. *Kids+money* was but one of eight documentary shorts accepted into the '08 Sundance Fest. The film centers on teenagers in Los Angeles discussing money—getting it, spending it and some learning to live without it.

From the outset, Greenfield worked with some noted commercial industry collaborators—spanning both the 12 and 32-minute versions—such as DP David Rush Morrison and editor Adam Parker (of edit house Chrome).

"My thinking more seriously about commercials and being with Chelsea had an impact on how *kids+money* turned out at Sundance," relates Greenfield. "The film [produced by Chelsea] is a little more visually styled photographically, the story is very efficiently told."

Just prior to Sundance, a deal was finalized for HBO to air [the 32-minute] *kids+money* later this year.

First TV spot

Greenfield has that and another project on-air debut to look forward to this year. At press time she had wrapped her first full-fledged TV commercial, an ad for menopausal drug Estroven out of Young & Rubicam, New York.

The assignment dovetailed with Greenfield's long running personal project, a book on how aging is changing. She has for some time been photographing men and women who have significant age differences and are romantic couples. Y&R gravitated to Greenfield at first for a print ad promoting Estroven pairing an older woman and a younger man. Greenfield sent the advertising agency several photographs that she thought would be in the spirit of the campaign. Y&R immediately gravitated to one of the photos and wound up embracing it for the print.

The photo also helped to inspire the TV—and inspired Y&R to look to Greenfield to direct the commercial. Greenfield paired with DP Tami Reiker for the spot shoot and again the director found meaning in the work.

"I feel fortunate that my advertising projects thus far have been not only storytelling pieces but stories that are significant for me," says Greenfield. "The challenge for me is finding meaningful content and I'm discovering that this can be done in advertising."

As for Reiker, Greenfield says, "I loved working with Tami. She has an amazing eye and helped me do justice to the storyline of a vital 50-year-old woman being with a much younger man."

Also gratifying was being able to do both the print and TV ends of the campaign. "To have one vision reflected consistently across the print and television represented a wonderful opportunity for me," relates Greenfield. "That's the first time I've had that experience and I hope I have many more."

Daniel Kleinman

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cover additional opportunities for the Rattling Stick roster.

Global reach

Kleinman's filmmaking opportunities span the globe. While the lion's share of his work comes from the U.K. agency market, he's also managed to draw work from the U.S. and recently his first South American agency job, a Lux Soap commercial for Buenos Aires agency Santo, which entailed him collaborating extensively with visual effects house Framestore-CFC, London.

"Lux is the first spot I've ever directed where I haven't shot anything at all," relates Kleinman. "It was all created in a computer—and a fascinating experience for me as a direc-

tor to do justice to a story basically through the use of neon signs."

Other recent endeavors for Kleinman include a Nissan spot for TBWA/London in which city buildings come to life and play with—and then bash around—a car. "It's a pretty mad concept that resulted in work I like quite a bit," assesses the director who also just wrapped a P.G. Tips tea commercial out of Mother, London, which is fraught with offbeat U.K. humor.

In many respects this recent spate of activity is a microcosm of the wide range of work—comedy, visual effects, dialogue, narrative—that has marked Kleinman's career for many years. He has managed to avoid the pigeon holing that has plagued so many directors.

"I focus on the idea and if the idea is good, I'll do the job," he says. "I've been very fortunate that ad agency creative people have entrusted me with a lot of good ideas so I've been able to take on a great variety of work. I've pretty much kept my head down, worked hard and built my reputation that way rather than kind of suddenly becoming flavor of the month."

Kleinman's directorial career spans 25 years, during which his work has garnered assorted awards, among the notable being the Cannes Grand Prix in 2006 for Guinness "noitulovE" out of AMV BBDO, London, and recent multiple kudos for Smirnoff's "Sea" via JWT, London, not to mention past kudos for such classic fare as the poignant

"Ventriloquist" for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Artful helmer

His formal education coming in the visual arts, Kleinman graduated from Hornsea College of Art, London, and began working as a commercial artist. In the early 1980s he found work as a storyboard artist and music video script writer at London studio Limelight and by '83 he made his directorial debut with a clip for Heaven 17 entitled "Wheels of Industry."

Kleinman went on to direct numerous music videos and then diversified successfully into commercials. "Music videos represented a great way to learn and experiment and

definitely helped me immeasurably in my development as a filmmaker," he says.

Now, though, music videos are a distant memory in terms of his filmmaking exploits. "I kind of fell out of love with the music, becoming disappointed with the quality of some of the songs that came to me."

For him the substitute for videos came when he began directing the opening title sequences for the James Bond films, starting with *Golden Eye* and still going strong, spanning such movies as *The World Is Not Enough*, *Tomorrow Never Dies* and most recently *Casino Royale*. "I've been directing the Bond titles for the past 10 years or so and they are just like music videos—except without the bands."

Martin Krejci

Continued from page 22

in Prague, he intuitively knew at age 11 that he wanted somehow to become a filmmaker. "I felt lucky that I knew what I wanted to do, though I didn't know exactly why," he said. "I bought a Super 8 camera and made my own little films."

After completing his university studies in filmmaking, Krejci landed serendipitously in the ad world, directing some modest Czech market spots. He came up through Dawson Productions in Prague, directing what he described as "little films and commercials." In 2004 Krejci got an Asian market commercial assignment for Ikea. The piece of tongue-

in-cheek storytelling caught the attention of the industry at large, and specifically Stink managing director Daniel Bergmann.

Krejci explained that his decision to join Stink was easy, recalling that he felt simpatico with Bergmann and was confident that the shop would be supportive of him creatively. That initial impression, he said, has proven to be accurate as he's been with Stink for nearly three years and counting, building a reel which is now beginning to catch the eye of the American marketplace. (Krejci is repped state-side by bicoastal Smuggler which has a deal with Stink to handle its roster in the U.S.)

That reel showcases a range that

extends from some of his earliest work at Stink—the poignant, disturbing "Fight Club" for Amnesty International—to a visually arresting in-womb piece for Ford, a charming web film for Stella Artois which launched last November, and of course *Adi Dassler*.

"Fight Club" was well received and help put Krejci on the commercialmaking map in Europe. The spot thrusts us into what looks like a warehouse-sized boxing ring in which a male fighter is being brutally pummeled by his opponent. Hit repeatedly, the boxer struggles to stay upright but inevitably falls. But the landing place is not inevitable. Instead of falling to the canvas, he ap-

pears to land on a living room floor. Laid out, the boxer turns out to be a woman in regular clothes, her face bloodied and bruised. She looks up to see her husband standing over her. A message appears on screen that simply reads, "You can do something about it." The spot is tagged with the Amnesty International logo as part of its campaign to stop violence against women, and is accompanied by a website address.

The Ford piece takes us from egg fertilization to the formation of life in the womb—actually different wombs as we see a baby human, elephant, dolphin and bear each taking shape. An on-screen message reads, "For the next generation," which gives way to

Ford Flexifuel, the next generation of fuel which has up to 75 percent less CO2 emissions.

And the Stella Artois film *La Bouteille* follows a beleaguered bar keeper's journey through a village at night to get a bottle of the coveted brew for a female customer.

While the work is dramatically varied, there's a common bond. "It really doesn't matter what the style is or what technology you use—live-action or stop frame animation," said Krejci. "I am drawn to projects that have the potential for storytelling. You use the tools to express feelings and emotions, and to tell a story. I seek out the challenge to do justice to the narrative."

Francis Lawrence

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as a producer if the pilot gets picked up and will likely direct some of the series episodes.

On the feature film front, Lawrence reports that he has a film called *Snow and the Seven*, which offers a retelling of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, in development and would be interested in directing a sequel to *I Am Legend* if there is one.

Asked when he will be available to direct spots again, the director says he plans to dive back into the commercial world when his schedule frees up in June.

When it comes to spots, Lawrence loves to work with collaborative agencies and swears that he would do anything with frequent collaborator Trey Laird, president and executive cre-

ative director of New York's Laird + Partners. The two have joined forces to work on various campaigns for Gap over the years, starting with the spots fronted by Sarah Jessica Parker and Lenny Kravitz a few years back and continuing through 2006 when Lawrence directed Gap Favorites and Gap Holiday ads.

Explaining why he enjoys working with Laird, Lawrence cites the fact that Laird will call him several times over weeks or even months before a job is to be shot to get his input and exchange ideas. "It isn't the normal process of get boards, take a shot in the dark, have a conference call, be up against five people, and then jump in," Lawrence says. "It is a much more creative process."

The commercials Lawrence has

done for Gap tend to be vibrant and fresh. His other spot work, notably the Diet Coke "Loft" spot he directed in 2006, shows a knack for developing worlds infused with magical realism. "I like the idea of magical realism in all kinds of things. The TV pilot I'm doing is like that, and the movies I do are a little like that, and with [Diet Coke] I liked the idea of this guy getting ready for this perfect night out," Lawrence says.

As we see in "Loft," which was created by Foote, Cone & Belding, New York, a dashing young guy takes a sip of Diet Coke and proceeds to gracefully dance and practically float around his apartment to the beat of BodyRockers' "I Like the Way (You Move)" with bubbles surrounding him as he preps for what is clearly going to

be a great night out on the town.

The charming fellow truly lights up the screen in "Loft," and it is this ability to make people pop on film

that explains in part why the director has also been so successful in the music video world. But beyond making stars look good in their clips, the



I Am Legend

director has the ability—when an artist is willing to go there—to create rather complex, emotional scenarios. For example, he has Timberlake making obvious and painful allusions to his failed romance with Britney Spears in the visually arresting and emotionally heart-tugging “Cry Me A River.”

Going forward, Lawrence would like to direct more music videos if his schedule allows and if he can link up with artists like Timberlake that enjoy making music videos and truly throw themselves into the process.

Looking back on his career path, Lawrence notes that he is glad he got much of his training as a filmmaker in music videos simply because he was

afforded so much creative control.

Lawrence credits his experience in commercials with continuing his education, teaching him how to effectively work with a client and an advertising agency and better share his vision, which, in turn, set the stage for him to sell himself to Hollywood and become a feature filmmaker.

“I spent probably nine months trying to get *Constantine*,” he points out, “and a lot of it was meeting with people and convincing them of the vision I had for the movie and putting presentations together, and that’s all stuff I learned about from having done music videos and commercials for years.”

Baker Smith

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Silent treatment

Dust contains some of the sensibilities of the classic silent films, a genre which Smith became an unabashed fan of during his childhood. As a youngster, he would watch old silent films by the masters unspool at a local pizza parlor in Bloomington, IL. And he recently took silence to a new level with a groundbreaking Pepsi spot—sans sound—which premiered during this year’s Super Bowl pre-game show.

Part of PepsiCo’s EnAble initiative to encourage diversity, the Pepsi spot “Bob’s House” shows two deaf guys in a car, the driver drinking a Pepsi. They are going through a residential neighborhood at night, trying to find the house where their buddy Bob lives. Via sign language, one asks the other which house is Bob’s. In their signing exchange, both assumed the other knew the exact location of Bob’s house. All the signing is subtitled as is the noise, in this case the honking of the car horn (subtitled “Honk”), as the driver resorted to this disruptive means to find Bob. The incessant honking wakes up the neighborhood as house after house turns on its lights—except for one, which is Bob’s in that he too is deaf and cannot hear the blaring horn. By the process of elimination, Bob’s house is found and the two guys pay their friend a visit. Bob answers the light-activated “doorbell” and then looks back sheepishly at a peeved neighbor who was awakened by the car horn.

“Bob’s House” marked Pepsi’s first venture into broadcasting to a hearing impaired audience. Beyond its Super Bowl pre-game life, the commercial has also drawn nearly one million hits on YouTube.

Smith directed the spot’s real people talent via a sign language interpreter. “It took some getting used to,” relates Smith. “I like to be very

close to actors physically when shooting dialogue, whispering things in a spontaneous manner. But when you have to communicate through an interpreter, seconds are lost and it’s a different dynamic. Still, it was an absolutely wonderful educational experience for me. It’s my understanding that this storyline is kind of a classic joke in the deaf community. It’s kind of akin to those proverbial ‘this guy walks into a bar’ jokes that are widely known and enjoyed.”

French fare

Continuing his recent spate of atypical fare, Smith just wrapped a two-minute Internet film from which has been culled broadcast spots for client Bouygues Telecom, France’s third largest telecommunications company, out of DDB Paris. The work takes us into Mathieu’s phone book, with all the people listed, easily in the hundreds, congregating in an other worldly place shot on location in Burgos, Spain, about three hours north of Barcelona at the foot of the Pyrenees Mountains. Among the people gathered en masse are his girlfriend at work and the same girlfriend at home, a woman who’s his answering machine, and assorted others. There’s even a guy who appears by sharp contrast in utter isolation looking for anyone nearby. Turns out he’s in the Z’s and finally has found another person who’s last name ends in Z.

“I’ve had a recent run working in other languages—first sign language and then in this French spot shooting in another country, learning about other people and their customs,” says Smith. “I’ve enjoyed the experience in that being a director is sort of like being an anthropologist going out in the field.” He then hesitates as he re-thinks what he just said, noting that “anthropologist” is probably too grandiose a comparison. “Whatever, it’s fun exploring new worlds.”



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SHOOT is conducting a worldwide search to discover the best up-and-coming directors who, based on their initial work, show promise to soon make major positive contributions to advertising and/or entertainment in its traditional and emerging forms. This global search is conducted by SHOOT's editorial staff with input from advertising agency creative directors & heads of production, as well as production company heads and established directors. The search is being conducted between January 25th and April 18th 2008.

After the best work is chosen SHOOT will compile the 2008 SHOOT New Directors Showcase Reel and interview the directors for a special feature that will appear in SHOOT's May 23rd issue, pdf version, HTML e.dition, and on SHOOTonline.com, bringing worldwide attention to the work and the directors. In addition, the work will be screened for an audience of key advertising agency and production industry decision-makers at SHOOT's 2008 New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA Theatre in New York City on May 28. Coverage of that event will appear in SHOOT in June and the showcase reel will be posted on SHOOT's website.



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Category 3

Other:
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Directors can submit work that was completed in the last 16 months. (January 2007-April 2008) (excerpts from shorts, and excerpts from long-form film or other entertainment fare should be NO MORE than 5 minutes in length) *Must be directing commercials less than two years (three if work has been regional only) & must be available to direct commercials.*

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Spring Has Sprung

SHOOT's batch of up-and-coming directors this time around includes an advertising agency copywriter who's still a copywriter; an accomplished concept artist and visual effects supervisor who's found a new Station in his professional life; a noted actor, short and feature filmmaker now seated in the spot director's chair at HSI; a recent graduate from London's Royal Academy of Art who caught the eye of Little Minx's talent discovery guru Rhea Scott; and a duo known as Grapefruit consisting of childhood friends whose career paths intersected at a filmmaking crossroads.

Here's our spring collection of promising directors to watch:

James Lima

On the surface, it would seem a reach to regard James Lima as a new director seeking to establish himself in that his DGA card was signed by luminaries Steven Spielberg, James Cameron and Joe Pytka. But indeed Lima is making his first formal foray into the spot directorial ranks, having recently come aboard the roster of Station, a house (with offices on both coasts and in London) recently launched by managing partner Stephen Orent, who cofounded the venerable Hungry Man.

Lima is an accomplished visual effects supervisor and conceptual artist. He got his first break in visual effects supervising on Spielberg's NBC series *Seaquest DSV*, the first TV series to use computer graphics exclusively for its visual effects. Lima later served as production designer, visual effects supervisor and 2nd unit director on Spielberg's NBC series *The Other*, and then as co-producer and effects supervisor on Spielberg's Emmy-winning miniseries *Taken*.

For Cameron (who served as executive producer/writer), Lima designed and supervised the visual effects on the feature *Strange Days*. And Lima is a visual consultant and special designer on director Cameron's much anticipated 3D feature *Avatar*.

As for Pytka, Lima has worked with the legendary director on numerous commercials starting in the early 1990s. This is when Lima made his first industry mark as a concept artist, collaborating with agency creatives to show their concepts through art, which served as a launching off point for exploring a project's visual possibilities. Lima later served as effects supervisor on the Pytka-directed live-action/animation feature *Space Jam*.

Lima's work as a conceptual artist has made its impact on such films as *Days of Thunder*, *True Romance*, *Starship Troopers*, *The Mummy* and *Spider-Man* (for which he designed the Green Goblin character).

Of Cameron, Spielberg and Pytka, Lima relates, "I've learned so much from all three of them. James showed me how so much begins and emanates from

design. Spielberg taught me it's always story first and don't be afraid to be bold. And Pytka has an incredibly deep understanding of human behavior and human nature. He's a big guy whom many people don't realize is quite a sensitive observer of people. That's how he gets incredible performances from people on film in microseconds."

Among Lima's more recent endeavors was serving as visual effects supervisor for the pilot of the hit series *House*, produced and directed by Bryan Singer. And Lima supervised effects for two new series debuting this season—*Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* for Fox and *True Blood* for HBO. For the former, Lima designed the new Terminator character.

But now Lima's prime focus is directing commercials. "Just doing visual effects doesn't hold the complete capacity of my attention. I'm fascinated with storytelling and the chance to put my point of view on work—to be able to direct as part of a creative, collaborative team. What I love about commercials is you can experiment and collaborate, the speed in which creativity and work are done is exciting as compared to a feature on which you work anywhere from a year and a half to two years. With features, you're uncovering the next cool set, the next cool action sequence. But with commercials, you're uncovering new ways to tell stories."

Last year while working on *The Sarah Connor Chronicles* at Zoic Studios, Santa Monica, Lima got the chance through Zoic to direct a Consol Energy spot out of agency Blattner Brunner (with offices in Pittsburgh, Atlanta and Washington, D.C.). For the commercial, Lima manipulated stock photography, added effects, sparks, rotoscoped imagery and cut outs, shot real coal miners on green screen and meshed them into stock photos.

He's followed up that creatively ambitious spot—which visually takes us deep below the earth's surface—with an original animated short, *Trembled Blossoms*, that he directed for Prada. The short, which brings the essence of Mrs. Miuccia Prada herself to life, showing creativity blossom before our eyes, debuted at Fashion Week in New York last month. It will play at Prada's Epicenter facilities in New York, Beverly Hills and Tokyo.

Station envisions Lima's directorial sensibilities making a positive creative imprint on mainstream spotmaking and new content forms, bringing a mix of artistry and technology to the party.

"His expertise will open up doors with agencies, giving them an opportunity to really push the limits in digital production," says Station partner/executive producer Michael DiGirolamo. "James can reach into his toolbox for innovative technology like the Viper cam and photogrammetry, and lay out ideas in

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New directors from varied walks of life blossom this season

By Robert Goldrich and Millie Takaki



Tomorrow's Trendsetters: Directors To Watch

Continued from page 31

pre-vis to control the environment of the shoot, while at the same time keeping production costs down."

Lima's artistic stamp has also graced other forms beyond TV, movies and spots. He designed, for example, theme park rides for Disney's Imagineering and the decadent King Xmhu nightclub in Sapporo, Japan.

Will Hartman

For an artisan whose full-time gig is serving as a copywriter at Ogilvy &



"I'm fortunate to be at Ogilvy, working for a creative director who believes in his staff people diversifying...and exercising their create muscles in other pursuits like directing." —Will Hartman

Mather, Culver City, Calif., Will Hartman has been getting significant recognition as a director, a role he takes on during his spare time. Earlier this month Hartman's short film, *The Art of karaoke*, made its world premiere at the South by Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival in Austin, Texas.

The genesis for that seven-minute documentary came when Hartman and editor Grant MacDowell of Optimus, Santa Monica, decided to have a beer one night after work at a karaoke club in the Culver City/Westwood area. "It was a place full of young, drunk college kids and out of the blue a little old man walked up to the stage and blew the audience away with a perfect pitch, three-octave range performance of the Frank Sinatra song 'My Way,'" recalled Hartman. "The crowd loved it. I looked at Grant and said, 'Dude, that's a movie right there.' If I film this guy, would you edit it? Grant said, 'Absolutely.'"

Hartman approached the senior citizen—the 82-year-old Art Himmel— and found him to be charming, a World War II vet, a cancer survivor and happily married for 59 years. They agreed to meet him the following weekend, except Hartman was going to bring along a crew this time. The crew members included MacDowell, DP Warren Hansen and producer Jonathan Carpio (who was then a production assistant at 72andSunny and is now a production coordinator at davidandgoliath).

The team lensed Himmel and his wife at their home and followed him to the karaoke bar where they filmed most of the night with two cameras, capturing the senior's performance and interviewing members of the audience. Editing was later done at Optimus.

Hartman paid out of pocket for the production, calling in some favors along the way to keep the budget lean. "It was something I felt compelled to do," he said. "There's something beautiful about somebody that age singing his heart out. The tagline for the film is simply, 'You're never too old to be as young as you feel.' And this guy was living, singing proof of that. He shows there's a way to get older with grace and humor."

Hartman has enjoyed a fun filmmaking ride as of late. In addition to *The Art of karaoke*, he recently won MySpace's Storyteller Challenge, becoming one of six finalists who got the chance to pitch a TV series pilot to the Fox network. His was the winning pitch and he sold the show to Fox, winning a \$40,000 prize.



The Art of karaoke

He described the show, titled *Tough Love*, as a supernatural comedy that's a cross somewhere between *Pushing Daisies* and *Quantum Leap*.

The six finalists were chosen by judges from MySpace, Fox and the Producers Guild of America.

Hartman said that *Tough Love* and *The Art of karaoke* bode well for what he can now bring to Ogilvy, which is actively involved in developing longer-form storytelling content on behalf of its clients, complementing the more traditional broadcast spot fare the agency continues to create.

"I'm fortunate to be at Ogilvy, working for a creative director, Dan Bur-

rier, who believes in his staff people diversifying, being versatile and exercising their creative muscles in other pursuits like directing," says Hartman. "As long as I take care of my responsibilities as a writer, he is supportive of me and others exploring other creative areas, in my case directing. It's part of the new hybrid that's happening at different shops, having creatives who can do other things, like direct, to perhaps take on new media opportunities down the road that have challenged budgets."

Hartman's directorial endeavors also extend to commercials. For example, he directed "Coyotes Checking" for Desert Schools Federal Credit Union out of Phoenix agency MMA Advertising. That humorous spot recently gained inclusion into SHOOT's "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery (12/14/07).

Kevin Connolly

A noted actor in television (as Eric Murphy in the HBO series *Entourage*) and features (i.e., *The Notebook*, *Antwone Fisher*, *The Check Up*), Kevin Connolly has exhibited strong directorial chops as evidenced by his critically acclaimed movie *Gardener of Eden*, which debuted at last year's Tribeca Film Festival. Now he has entered the commercialmaking fray by signing with bicoastal/international HSI Productions for worldwide representation as a spot helmer.

At press time, Connolly was in the midst of his first directing gig under the HSI banner: a series of web films for American Eagle Outfitters.

Connolly gravitated to HSI based in part on his experience years ago as a child actor who performed in some 75 spots. "HSI was a leading production house then and continues to be today," related Connolly. "I've known Stavros [HSI founder Merjos] socially and thought of him and his company when it came to my starting to direct commercials. We started a dialogue and just came together naturally."

Particularly exciting to Connolly about the ad industry is how it's expanding into new forms like the web content in which he's currently involved. "It's part of the new wave of how people are advertising. There are no real models yet; people are just starting to get a sense of how things are shaping up in this area."

As a director, Connolly is no stranger to shorter length fare. He directed the

"She's [Rhea Scott] a real champion of talent. She's so supportive and genuinely excited about my visual style. And Little Minx overall simply felt like a perfect fit for me" —David Mullett



2003 short *Whatever We Do*, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Amanda Peet, which went on to be screened at the Sundance Film Festival. Earlier Connolly helmed six episodes of the sitcom *Unhappily Ever After*, on which he performed as a regular cast member from 1995 to '99.

Connolly observed that his career has in a sense come full circle as he looks to direct spots via HSI. "I started out and grew up in commercials as an actor [earning a Clio nomination along the way], and was able to work my way up over the years. Now I'm coming back to commercials and am looking to work hard and grow creatively as a director. Great commercials are an art form, new forms of content are also emerging and I want to be a part of all that."

David Mullett

Director David Mullett recently signed with Little Minx, the Los Angeles house (and sister shop to RSA) under the aegis of executive producer Rhea Scott who's known for seeking out and discovering new talent. Recently earning an MA at London's Royal College of Art (where Ridley Scott studied), Mullett shortly after his graduation independently directed several music videos, including Babyshambles' "French Dog Blues," co-written by Pete Doherty and Kate Moss. Mullett deployed a multimedia mix of disciplines, most notably stop frame animation, for the clip. The character animation cut-out of performer Doherty helps propel "French Dog Blues" which was originally intended to be a web-only viral but has since been A-listed worldwide on MTV with heavy play in the U.S. and U.K.

The other alluded to Mullett-helmed clips are in the live-action realm for up-and-coming groups Envy & Other Sins and Lucky Souls, as well as a video for established band The Concretes. Landing the latter gig was particularly gratifying for Mullett in light of The Concretes' video legacy which has seen past clips directed by the likes of Johan Renck and Daniel Levi.

Mullett took a self-described circuitous path to directing. A Chicago native, he studied art history at Northwestern where he focused on modern art and sur-

UP-AND-COMING DIRECTORS

realism. This led to an interest in film and the decision to pursue a directorial career but Mullett planned to embark on that pursuit sans film school and/or moving to Los Angeles.

"I felt I needed to learn the technical side of things, visual effects, editing, the cutting edge tools and how to use them," he relates. So he immersed himself in effects and editing software, landing a gig as an assistant graphics (Smoke) editor at Charlex in New York. There he also got the chance to work in Flame, Maya and in collaboration with other artists and graphic designers.

"It was a wonderful education," recalls Mullett, who then went on to build upon his formal education by moving to London to study at the Royal College of Art.

Living in the U.K. for the past three years, Mullett aspired to start working more in the U.S. He made a trip stateside to shop his developing reel around to commercial production houses, catching the eye of executive producer Rhea Scott. "She's a real champion of talent," says Mullett of Scott. "She's so supportive and genuinely excited about my visual style.

And Little Minx overall simply felt like a perfect fit for me. In fact one of my great teachers at the Royal College of Art was Johnnie Hardstaff who is one of Little Minx's directors."

As a director, Mullett hopes to not only diversify into the U.S. market but also commercials via Little Minx. He has concurrently found a music video roost in RSA shop Black Dog Films in both the U.S. and U.K. At press time, he had already begun writing various video treatments for prospective directorial projects at Black Dog.

Grapefruit

Joe Kanellitsas, formerly senior director of network branding for VHI, and Chris Kendregan, who served in a consultant capacity to Sun Microsystems in the media and entertainment sector, have been on the same wavelength and complemented one another since they were childhood friends. In recent years, their career paths crossed on the filmmaking front as on the side—while maintaining their day jobs—they collaborated on select projects, creating and directing varied fare.

Finally in late 2006, they decided



Chris Kendregan

to focus on their directorial aspirations and came together as the helming duo Grapefruit (which stands for Great, Relevant, Artists, People, Effects, Fun, Restless, Undaunted, Inventive, Together). Their current reel includes several VHI promos, as well as spec spots for Nivea and Snickers. And since formally assuming the Grapefruit moniker, they teamed on a promo package for cable network Fuse's Fangoria Awards which earned a coveted BDA Gold Medal last year.

Now Grapefruit has taken the next step, committing to its first commercial production company home, joining Santa Monica-headquartered Reactor Films.

Industry veteran Michael Romersa, owner/exec producer at Reactor,



Joe Kanellitsas

was impressed with "the freshness of Grapefruit's work, their different point of view, irreverent comedy, the ability to elicit good acting performances, their enthusiasm and high energy level."

Kendregan's work on Wall Street helping to build and brand businesses followed by his duties for Sun Microsystems spanning new content distribution channels enables him to bring a business and producing expertise to Grapefruit. Factor in his writing on different projects for Kanellitsas during the latter's MTV and VHI tenure and that business acumen is coupled with creative wherewithal.

Meanwhile Kanellitsas worked his way up the ladder from MTV creative department entry level production

assistant to eventually promotion/graphics producer for both MTV and VHI where he spent much of his time in editing suites learning shot composition and movement. "I could not help but to learn the principles of filmmaking," says Kanellitsas. I knew that I would have to direct. It was just completely unavoidable."

He went on to become senior director of network branding for VHI where he conceived and directed image campaigns, network IDs and such notable events as the VHI Fashion Awards and Rock Across America.

"Two of our prime strengths are our passion for the work and the fact that we are stronger as a team than as individual directors," assesses Kanellitsas, describing a Gestalt dynamic in which the whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

"We're sounding boards for each other," relates Kendregan, "and we're honest with each other, sometimes brutally honest, dating back to being friends so early on in our lives. When we work on creative together, it's truly collaborative, there's no ego problem and we're geared to come up with solutions quickly."

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Through The Viewfinder

One DP values his first ever collaboration with director Rupert Sanders, while another values his ongoing work with director Jake Scott. A third has been heavily involved in HD shoots. And a fourth—who's primarily a director—talks about his experience with the Red One camera. Add in some observations about the upcoming National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention in Las Vegas and that's the mix this time around for our Cinematography & Cameras Series.

Salvatore Totino

Having wrapped photography on director Ron Howard's *Frost/Nixon* and at press time about to embark on Howard's *Angels And Demons*, cinematographer Salvatore Totino, ASC, in-between those two feature gigs shot an offbeat, tongue-in-cheek Columbia Sportswear campaign directed by Jake Scott of bicoastal/international RSA Films for agency Borders Perrin Norlander in Portland, Ore.

The 10-spot campaign unfolds in episodic style, opening with a :30 in which Columbia chairperson Gert Boyle dumps off her son, company president Tim Boyle, in the Mojave Desert. Nine :15s then follow Tim as he wanders through the desert trying to find his way back to civilization. The campaign continues the premise of Gert subjecting Tim to extreme weather conditions to product test Columbia apparel, in this case its new line of Omni-Shade warm weather sun-protective sportswear.

While there's a survival reality genre-like tinge to the series, Tim—decked out in Omni-Shade garb—hardly seems in any real danger despite encountering a vulture, furious sandstorms, a lizard or two, mirages and the oppressive heat and sun. In fact, the adventure plays out like a good-humored comic strip with Tim taking a casual pace through the desert.

Camera movement, relates director Scott, was guided completely by Tim's kind of leisurely tempo. There was no music, just the sound of the desert as he wanders about.

Scott embraced this simple, minimalist approach. "The concept reminded me a bit of newspaper comic strips—a story in four pictures with our looking at a character's takes and musings when encountering a situation," observes the director.

Totino, who's repped by The Skouras Agency, Santa Monica, says of Scott, "He's not just a director, he's a total artist who sees things in a different way. I first met Jake when he started directing in 1991 or '92. He was working with [cinematographer] Harris Savides and I was Harris' assistant. From the very beginning, Jake has been fresh, inventive and creative. I've been shooting for him on and off for about twelve years. It's simply fantastic to be around him. He fuels inspiration. He has definitely inspired me creatively on every job we've done, from the very first I shot for him, which was for [technology company] Agilent."

That spot project was shot in Australia and depicted an American spaceship from the 1950s landing in modern society. "Jake wanted to achieve all the effects in camera and found this great matte painter in Australia," recalls Totino. "This was my first time ever photographing a matte painting. It was a wonderful creative experience."

So too were collaborations with Scott on other varied projects, including an anti-smoking public service spot (which showed a youngster's tongue being pierced) targeting the teen demographic, and music videos for such artists as Radiohead, U2 and Soundgarden. The latter had an intentionally washed out quality to it visually and was used by Scott as a point

of reference somewhat akin to what he wanted for the Columbia Sportswear desert shoot.

Totino, though, didn't duplicate the means used for Soundgarden's "Burden In My Hand." Instead, the DP shot even more contrasting negative stock, overexposed it slightly and pulled the film to wash out colors and flatten out the image. "That way we attained a similar feeling to what we did earlier with

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DPs Discuss
Directors, Digital
Cinematography,
NAB Convention

By Robert Goldrich and
Millie Takaki



Reflections On Collaborating With Directors

Continued from page 35

Soundgarden but without the grain and grittiness of that video. Again, Jake gives you the freedom to explore and experiment.”

And those creative collaborations extend beyond the shoot. “Jake has a place in the desert nearby where we shot the Columbia Sportswear campaign,” relates Totino. “We are both ‘mini-chefs’ so we planned cooking a couple of big elaborate dinners. What started out as our cooking for six to eight people turned out to be a meal for twenty-five people. We’d shoot all day, come back to Jake’s house and cook dinner. Cooking is a whole other creative realm. But it’s like everything you do—you draw on every aspect of life to feed the creativity that’s in you. You can be inspired by a meal you cooked, a book you read, a film you saw, a wine you drank, the expression on a person’s face.

As *SHOOT* went to press, Totino was about to take on a commercial shoot for RSA director Carl Erik Rinsch and then the aforementioned *Angels and Demons*, the sequel to director Ron Howard’s *The Da Vinci Code*, which Totino also lensed. Howard too is a valued collaborator as Totino shot the director’s suspenseful western *The Missing* as well as the boxing tour de force *Cinderella Man*. Totino made his feature cinematography debut on director Oliver Stone’s



“From the very beginning, Jake [Scott] has been fresh, innovative and creative. I’ve been shooting for him on and off for about twelve years. He fuels inspiration. He has definitely inspired me creatively on every job...”—Salvatore Totino

Any Given Sunday.

Just prior to *The Da Vinci Code*, Totino tested Panavision’s Genesis digital camera. “Overall the digital technology is extremely interesting,” he assesses. “Our future is heading in a new direction. We’re at a pivotal point in film history and I like to think of it as when sound was first introduced and people weren’t sure what to make of it and how it was going to work. Eventually it became part of the mainstream.

“I’m a little reluctant at the moment to shoot in HD,” notes Totino, “because the equipment is very bulky, you need an umbilical cord if you go with a Steadicam, and it’s just too heavy to work the way I like to work, which is to be able to run and gun sometimes.”

On a personal note, Totino would like to see *Frost/Nixon*, based on David Frost’s famed interview of Richard Nixon (and the play of the same name), hit the theaters around September. (A firm release date has not been set though the film is expected to debut sometime this year.) Totino’s September wish is based on his feeling that the film, which is very much about the abuse of power, might take on added meaning, resonating more with audiences just a month or two prior to the national presidential election.

Greig Fraser

In the Hollywood vernacular, it’s good when a film has “legs,” meaning that it has sustained a healthy box office for an extended span of time. In the spot world, “Legs” is a Monster.com spot directed by Rupert Sanders of bicoastal/international MJZ and shot by DP Greig Fraser for BBDO New York. And in this case, it’s a commercial that also figures to have an extended life not only on air but for awards show circuit consideration as it charmingly tells a tale of a man who gets out of bed and gets ready for work. He walks through a quaint, picturesque village and then the camera reveals him to have massive legs that dwarf the rest of his body even though he himself is a big man who towers over all others. We see him pass villagers from all walks of life, some engaged in mundane tasks, others in more significant endeavors such as a young couple who just got married and are celebrating. Our large-legged protagonist briefly joins the joyous celebration before continuing on his way.

He then arrives at what looks like an isolated shed in the middle of a field. He enters the makeshift structure, which we discover houses a rickety elevator which he takes down to the depths of the earth. As the elevator descends rapidly, he holds his ears in discomfort due to the jarring drop in altitude. The elevator door opens, placing him in what looks like a mineshaft. He walks through the shaft catacombs and finally arrives at his destination—an elaborate, larger than life gyrosphere contraption that centers on another man who’s seated upon a

bicycle and peddling away feverishly. He too has massive legs and is glad to see the relief shift coming to take over his duties.

For a moment he stops peddling so that his replacement can take over. When the peddling comes to a halt, so too does the power throughout the village. The abrupt nature of this transition jostles about a man taking a bath as water jumps out of the tub, knocks another gent off his bike as he was riding through a field, and causes the bride, groom and rest of the wedding party to topple just as a camera is taking a picture of them.

Our original large-legged chap then begins peddling and in the process returns the village to normalcy.

Clearly this spot called out to Fraser, the most compelling calling being the chance to work for the first time with director Sanders. “I had been an admirer of his [Sanders’] work for a long time,” says Fraser. “We seemed to hit it off right away, both readily understanding the direction that this spot was going. Whilst Rupert has a firm idea of what he would like to see, he is very open to ideas and different opinions. On this, though, it seemed that rarely was there a difference of opinion about anything. His casting was fantastic, so that in itself makes my job so much easier. Having a fantastic face to point a camera at opens up so many opportunities for brilliant moments. One idea, though, that Rupert had, which didn’t quite seem to work, was putting me on stilts, so I could be at eye height of the actor. A great idea in theory, which would have worked, except for the fact that I am so uncoordinated that I can barely open a soft drink can without cutting myself. So putting me three feet higher, with an expensive camera in my hand did not quite work. We managed to get those shots in other ways though.”

For Fraser, who’s represented via United Talent Agency (UTA), Beverly Hills, the biggest challenge in shooting “Legs” was the actual shooting of the legs. He credits the contributions of postproduction supervisor Cedric Nicholas Troyan who had, prior to the shoot, tested the technique that he was going to use to make the giant legs. “With any post-produced shoot, certain allowances like blue screen, and hand-held also needed to be bought into the mix. It was very important to all of us that the spot had a sense of freedom and movement—two words which do not fit well into the postproduction mix. Cedric was great at allowing us that freedom without compromising the end product. I’m sure a couple of the handheld shots may have cost him many extra hours in the post suite, but I thank him profusely for letting us do this.”

Fraser adds, “The gyrosphere was fantastic. John Beard, the production designer, had built this thing which any city in the world would have been proud to have as a public installation. Moving rings, and cogs and chains to power the whole thing. It was built so beautifully, and with the finest detail, that practically any angle on the thing looked amazing. The biggest challenge for this though, was finding a stage that was big enough to house it. It almost reached the ceiling

“His [Monster’s ‘Legs’ director Rupert Sanders’] casting was fantastic, so that in itself makes my job so much easier. Having a fantastic face to point a camera at opens up so many opportunities for brilliant moments.” —Greig Fraser



of the studio, so lighting from above was difficult. Ideally I would have had at least 20 or 30 feet clearance at the top, so I could create a soft ambience. Partly because of this, we decided that lighting the gyro from the practicals in shot might look good. It also served to help make the footage in the center of the earth feel as organic as the footage from up above.

“We discussed using Kino tubes for this practical lighting, but they seemed to be too sci-fi for this spot. The ‘Legs’ world is slightly dirty, and not in the slightest futuristic. Instead we ended up using regular household globes, to illuminate the stage of the gyro, with some film lights to fill in some shadows.”

Fraser lensed “Legs” with the Arri 235 film camera, which he described as “my current favorite camera. It’s absolutely brilliant, as it’s the size of a medium video camera, light enough to use as a video viewfinder, and does everything that we needed it to. We could keep it loose, and easy to rig for tracking shots. These companies that are making smaller, lighter, simpler film cameras are totally getting the balance right. A camera doesn’t need to be huge and unwieldy to produce good pictures. I love the fact that with the 235, and its onboard battery system, that I can pick the camera up and walk around with the director to find the frame.”

As for his take on digital cinematography, Fraser relates, “I have shot with a few digital cameras. It seems at the moment that the work flow side of things

is not fully understood by production companies and post houses. Either that or the camera's themselves are so new that they are exorbitantly expensive to shoot with on a per day basis. Personally, I believe that we are all headed down a digital road, but as yet, there has not been a clear winner when it comes to quality, resolution, and price. For me, a digital camera needs to have at least the resolution of 35mm, the ease of use of 35mm, and the latitude of 35mm. So far, this has not happened. It will and I will bet my house on it, but so far, the quickest, easiest, most effective way to make images is on film.

"Panavision has been leading the way by introducing digital to a film market," Fraser continues. "Their Genesis cameras are nothing short of fantastic. They are not film, but they are the closest thing a film shooter can get to working on a digital camera. Red appears to be doing amazing things, although their core market has been video shooters. (apart from the Steven Soderberghs and the Peter Jacksons) What I've seen lacking in Red is latitude. They have brilliant resolution, great design, and great marketing, but the resolution for film shooters is not quite right. For video guys, the Red is a gift from heaven—their chance to play with film style lenses and resolution....The Aaton digital back system though, is something I think is brilliant. Like most things that Aaton does, being able to replace a film mag, for a digital mag, is a fantastic idea.

Indeed Red and Aaton made an impression on Fraser last year when he attended the NAB convention for the first time. (At press time, it didn't appear that his schedule would enable him to attend NAB next month). In '07, Fraser says he was "especially eager to see two cameras being 'released' at the [NAB] show. Red was one, and their marketing surely didn't disappoint anybody, and the second was the new Aaton cameras. They seem to have made some huge improvements on their 35mm camera, and they had a prototype at the show. Unfortunately I think they were largely overlooked due to less marketing on their behalf."

At press time, Fraser was in London shooting a film for director Jane Campion (*The Piano, In The Cut*). Last year he shot second unit on the Baz Luhrmann feature *Australia*. Among Fraser's other recent credits are spots for Nokia, X-box and Nike.

He has arrived at this mix of work from his roots in still photography, a discipline which served him well as a cinematographer. "Stills really paved the technical grounding that I needed to expose film properly and to understand the language of images. We are inundated with thousands of images

everyday and to be able to decipher and edit images in our brain is something that everybody does constantly. Trying to create images that break through this constant barrage is something I am finding to be incredibly challenging and rewarding."

Kevin Emmons

A veteran cinematographer whose primary focus over the past 20 years has been commercials, Kevin Emmons estimates that he's lensed 1,500-plus spots in his career spanning the full gamut from comedy to dialogue, regional to national, food, celebs, spokesperson and toys. While most of those years have seen him lens on film—which he continues to do with great regularity—Emmons, who is repped by Encino, Calif.-based TDN Artists/The Directors Network, has also branched out into digital cinematography in a big way. For example, among his recent exploits are HD commercial shoots on location for such clients as Disneyland, Procter & Gamble, Fisher Price, Clairol, Nickelodeon and Starz Encore

Emmons has shot with most of the digital cameras, including what he refers to as the HD workhorses, the Sony 900 series and Panasonic's Varicam, as well as the Genesis and the Arri D20. He notes that the Genesis isn't as readily available to the spot community in that Panavision has designated most of them to the feature and TV worlds. Emmons has yet to use the Red One but at press time he was in the running for a national campaign which, if he gets the gig, would entail him shooting with the Red.

In broad strokes, he sees regional clients embracing HD shooting while many bigger national accounts have been a bit hesitant to jump into the fray. For the latter, it's hard to say exactly why, says Emmons. "It seems that large agencies with big accounts like being able to take film and then to go through the transfer process and skew the look to what they want. They go to digibeta and go through the workflow process of editing in that format. That's a driving force behind bigger budget projects being more inclined to use film. I believe you get a larger dynamic range from film when you are going to do a transfer and can shape things in post.

"Having said all that, regional market advertising has a growing commitment [to HD shooting]," continues Emmons. "When I do promo spots for Starz Encore, Comcast, Discovery, Adelphia, they go HD for some prime reasons—a lot of them have HD channels and large in-house editorial facilities, and they know they have to address the fact that HD is inevitable, that the transition to high-definition television is February 2009. And there's the budget factor in that there

are savings to be realized by not incurring film-related costs like processing. With the HD workflow, you shoot electronically and go right into the edit/postproduction system."

As for the upcoming NAB convention, Emmons would like to see one "major hiccup" area addressed. "Most cinematographers," he observes, "are excited about full-frame sensor HD cameras. The reasons DPs want these cameras is that they mimic the depth of field of 35mm. The problem is that these full frame sensor cameras need huge amounts of hard drive space. They have solid state drives. The biggest challenge we have to face is the workflow, getting massive image files into the edit system. In the next six to twelve months, addressing this situation is really key.

"The point is that if agencies can feel good about having a comfortable handle on this workflow," says Emmons, "you'll see more willingness to move into HD cinematography. There's also a need for education and training. You have DPs in the field who don't know how to cycle through the HD camera menus to get the looks they want. We're in a big transitional phase that's most challenging for DPs in commercials. Feature filmmakers like Soderbergh and Fincher have already been experimenting with and are adept in HD."

Red experience

Stewart Hendler is first and foremost a director on the spot roster of Über Content, Hollywood. He was included in *SHOOT*'s inaugural New Directors Showcase in 2003. And earlier this month, his Zune "Music Is Life" spec spot made *SHOOT*'s The Best Work You Never See gallery. Hendler conceived, directed, shot and edited the piece. He shot it with the Red One, which he is leasing for a six-month period.

"I've followed Red from the very beginning and like many was skeptical of its claims from the outset," says Hendler. "I scrutinized whatever footage I could get my hands on and thought it looked viable enough to compete in the high-end production world. Now we've gone from everybody having their reservations about the Red technology for a year to now people falling all over themselves to get a hold of the camera."

Of his Red lensing experience on "Music Is Life," Hendler assesses, "I was blown away by the performance and quality. I'm a die-hard 35mm film guy. I never thought I'd be uttering those words about Red. The optics are the same as 35mm in terms of lens mounts and sensor size. It has a depth of field that we're used to in film. The resolution is stunning. It's going to be interesting to see where this will go in the next couple of years."

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News

street talk

Director Joel Peissig has signed with bicoastal design/production studio Imaginary Forces (IF) to helm commercials. Peissig had most recently been working as an independent director in the U.S. and overseas. His past affiliations include RSA, Notorious and Squeak Pictures.... Ramsey Dean has come aboard Spank! Music & Sound Design, Chicago, as head of music supervision....Creative design and digital production studio The Syndicate, Santa Monica, has hired CG supervisor Adam Watkins for its commercial and feature film projects. Watkins, who joins The Syndicate from Digital Backlot, has among his credits *John Adams*, *There Will Be Blood*, *The Golden Compass*,

Evan Almighty and *3:10 To Yuma*...On the heels of its launch of a CG operation, San Francisco-based Spy Post has opened an editorial services division that will feature the talents of editors Edward Feldman and Nathan Petty who come over from Umlaut, San Francisco...New York-based design and production studio Click 3X has added five staffers: producers Jared Yeater, Emily Gleicher and Carson Hood, junior designer/illustrator Gabriel Tick and junior motion graphics designer Erica Gorochow....Martin/Williams Advertising, Minneapolis, has hired Lori Yeager Davis as senior VP/director of strategic engagement. She formerly served as VP of Space 150, an interactive agency in Minneapolis. Prior to that she was with Campbell-Mithun Advertising, Minneapolis, as an associate planning director and then as senior VP/managing director for the agency's youth marketing practice....Bicoastal Brand New School has added CG supervisor Vadim Turchin...Designer/ animator Kelli Miller has joined New York-based creative studio Thornberg & Forester...

rep report

Yessian Music and Dragon Licks, bicoastal, have signed independent representation firm Miss Smith to handle sales on the East Coast. Miss Smith is headed by Sasha Stern and Jamie Scalera, along with Aly Solot....Chicago-based Spank! Music & Sound Design has added account director Nicole Burke who will be primarily responsible for marketing and sales...Randee Bowman has been named East Coast sales rep for New York-based visual effects and production studio Click 3X. She formerly served as head of sales at Sound Lounge....New York-based audio post studio Sound Lounge has added Mike Lobikis as its East Coast sales rep/head of sales for Radio and Casting. He comes over from independent representation firm PGM Artists....Cinematographer Darko Suvak is now represented for feature films and commercials by the trio of Wayne Fitterman, Pete Franciosa and Robert Arakelian at United Talent Agency (UTA), Beverly Hills....Cinematographer Mauro Fiore has wrapped the James Cameron feature *Avatar* and is again available to shoot commercials via International Creative Management (ICM), Los Angeles....

bulletin board

- >April 1/New York, NY: ARF David Ogilvy Awards. www.thearf.org
- >April 10-12/Santa Monica, CA: AFCI Locations Trade Show. www.afci.org
- >April 11-17/Las Vegas, NV: NAB. www.nab.org
- >April 18: SHOOT 6th Annual New Directors Search "Entry Deadline". www.shootonline.com/go/search
- >May 21/New York, NY: AICE Awards. www.aice.org
- >May 28/New York, NY: SHOOT 6th Annual New Directors Showcase Event. details available soon
- >June 3/New York, NY: AICP Show. www.aicp.com

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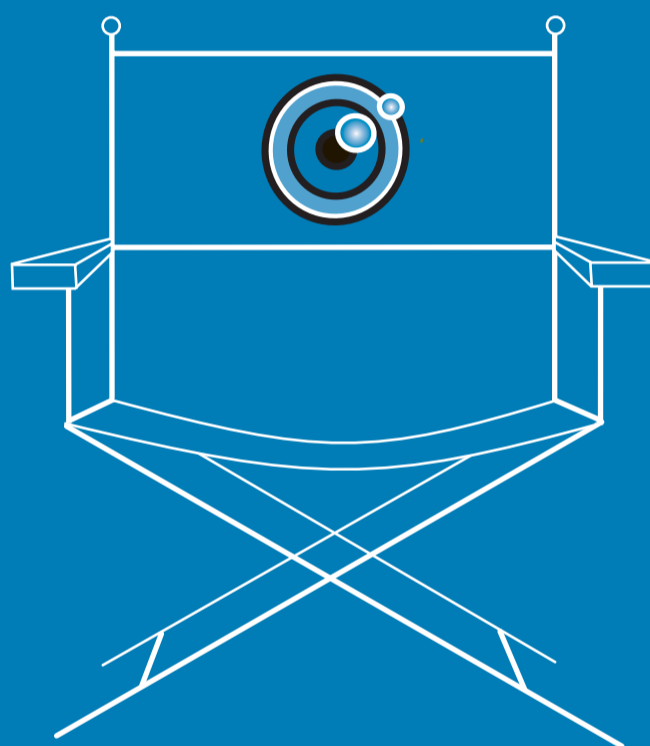


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