



3 Sundance Musings

Editor Sloane Klewin of Union looks back on her recent documentary judging gig at the Sundance Film Festival.



14 VFX/Animation Series

VES Award recipients reflect on their winning projects' creative challenges; SHOOT's quarterly Top 10 Chart.



Midwest Focus: Anthem; Incentives

Detroit gains a Big Game boost;
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Red Carpet Ride: Previewing The Awards Shows

Academy Award, Film Independent Spirit Nominees Share Insights Into Their Films

By Robert Goldrich

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—"Oh my God," said Tom Hooper as he came on stage to accept the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Feature Film. He won the honor late last month for *The King's Speech* during the gala DGA ceremony held in the Grand Ballroom of the Hollywood and Highland Center.

Hooper was genuinely surprised to win since David Fincher was considered the early favorite at that time for *The Social Network*. "I'm overwhelmed," said Hooper. "This is the biggest honor of my life."

Well next weekend Hooper could have an honor to rival the DGA Award, again at Hollywood and Highland but at that venue's Kodak Theater, site of the Academy Awards. In the 63-year history of the DGA competition, only six times have DGA Award recipients not gone on to win the Best Director Oscar.

Indeed *The King's Speech* has been cast as the new favorite going into the Oscar proceedings, leading the nominations parade with 12 and coming off of recent Producers Guild of America Award and DGA wins as well as the Screen Actors Guild Award ensemble cast award. Seventy-five percent of the time, the movie with the most Academy Award nominations ends up winning the Best Picture Oscar.

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Detention In Store For SXSW Fest

By Robert Goldrich

AUSTIN, Tex.—Director Joseph Kahn, best known for his music videos and commercials, is slated to debut his feature film *Detention*—which he helmed and co-wrote—at this year's South By Southwest (SXSW) Film Conference and Festival which runs March 11-19 in Austin.

Repped by HSI Productions for spots and music clips, Kahn is one of several directors with commercial-making ties to have work selected for SXSW screening. Others include Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker Errol Morris who is handled by Moxie Pictures for spots, Peter D. Richardson whose ad roost is Food Chain Films, Portland, Ore., and Spencer Susser who is represented for commercials by Bob Industries.

Detention garners attention not just for the upcoming SXSW exposure but also its unlikely genesis. Kahn had done a feature titled *Torque*, a motorcycle action/crime drama starring Ice Cube, which was released in 2004. The experience, recalled Kahn, left much to be desired so he focused on his video and spot work. Over the years he was offered some feature scripts but none lit his creative fire.

Instead he and a friend during down time in-between projects wrote a movie, a process which took a couple of

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Wally Pfister Earns ASC Feature Award For *Inception*

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—Wally Pfister, ASC, Jonathan Freeman, ASC, and Stephen Windon, ACS, claimed top honors in the three competitive categories at the 25th annual American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Outstanding Achievement Awards celebration this past weekend (2/13) at the Hollywood & Highland Grand Ballroom.

Pfister won the ASC Award in the

feature film competition for director Christopher Nolan's *Inception*.

Freeman earned top accolades in the television episodic category for *Boardwalk Empire* (HBO).

And Windon was the recipient of the television movie/miniseries award for *The Pacific* (HBO).

This is Pfister's first ASC Awards win. He was previously nominated by

the ASC for *Batman Begins* (2006) and *The Dark Knight* (2009), also both directed by Nolan.

Pfister was unable to attend the ASC Awards ceremony but in an interview with SHOOT last year he discussed his special working relationship with director Nolan which encompasses varied films.

"It's been a great, ongoing edu-

cation working with a master like Chris Nolan for ten years, watching him get great performances out of actors—from Leonardo DiCaprio in *Inception* to Heath Ledger in *The Dark Knight*, Al Pacino in *Insomnia*, Michael Caine and Hugh Jackman in *The Prestige*," related Pfister. "Chris has been a major mentor and I learn

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By Robert Goldrich



Losing The Rose Bowl

Audience fragmentation and the erosion of major network viewership are an accepted part of the media landscape. Diminished viewership, though, can at times result from concentrated media ownership and/or greed (arguably a redundancy). And I wonder how the advertising/media community feels about that.

For example, akin to the ad slogan “This isn’t your father’s Oldsmobile,” the granddaddy of college football bowl games isn’t your grandfather’s, your father’s or for that matter yours anymore, if you don’t happen to have cable or satellite television.

As the “granddaddy” moniker reflects, the Rose Bowl has a storied tradition. But one tradition came to an abrupt end this New Year’s Day. I tuned into ABC to watch the Rose Bowl. But the game wasn’t there. So I flipped over to ESPN. But flipping isn’t so easy for seniors or shut-ins with fixed incomes who cannot afford cable

or satellite TV, or families who have cut back due to job loss or the sorry state of the economy. Those households could not watch the Rose Bowl at home.

Perhaps there’s research showing that shifting the Rose Bowl from free TV would impact an insignificant number of households. How many fans are there in an “insignificant”?

During the time of our granddads, ABC would have fought to retain the Rose Bowl. But now Disney owns ABC and ESPN so ABC happily relinquishes the game to a sister network; so much for unbridled media ownership (Comcast/NBC?) being somehow good for everyday people.

Still, though, ESPN, ABC and Disney are in the business of making money. We shouldn’t be surprised to see them exercise their right to do so.

What’s more surprising is the deafening silence in terms of media scrutiny. With 24/7 sports talk radio, web outlets, newspapers, TV—all supposedly “looking out” for us—there’s nary

a question or discussion regarding the Rose Bowl’s (or the BCS title game’s) move to ESPN.

To the conspiracy theorist, the lack of discussion might be due to that concentration of media ownership. I wouldn’t expect ESPN, ABC, NBC, Comcast or other media conglomerates to delve into the matter.

This silence goes beyond the Rose Bowl. Several years ago I met an elderly couple nursing soft drinks at a restaurant so they could watch the Angels play a postseason baseball road game against the Red Sox on TBS.

The same scenario holds true for NBA Western Conference Final playoffs. Lakers fans sans cable could not watch the games. The solution for hometown fans of the Lakers and Angels: a concurrent local telecast on free TV. Ah, but that would eat into what TBS would be willing to pay—which leads to the question how much money is enough MLB and the NBA? I’d at least like to see the question asked of MLB and NBA com-

missioners Bud Selig and David Stern, respectively. Ask Stern how he reconciles the “NBA Cares” slogan with the decision to cut off TV access to playoff games for inner city kids who love the Lakers. Or ask Selig how he reconciles his decision with MLB’s initiative to revive baseball in inner cities. It seems that such a revival would entail enabling inner city kids without cable to watch the excitement of playoff baseball.

Or ask the head of the Tournament of Roses to explain why some fans should no longer be able to watch the Rose Bowl at home. Maybe media coverage triggers a public response that forces the powers that be to do what’s right. Maybe it has no effect at all. But at the very least consider it a New Year’s resolution that journalists (and perhaps ad agencies and media buyers) start asking questions on behalf of their readership (or ignored demographics), no matter how insignificant some of those readers/TV viewers are in the eyes of network executives.

POV



Sundance is Like That

My first trip to Sundance was in 1995. I had caught the independent film bug after editing my first feature and wanted to watch movies, meet people, and see what that world was all about.

I wound up seeing a lot of documentaries that year, and as I came out of a screening of Steve James’ brilliant *Hoop Dreams*, I thought for the first time that someday I’d like to cut a documentary film. I never imagined that 16 years later I would be on the documentary jury. But Sundance is like that.

In 2002, I attended the festival as the editor of “Real Women Have Curves.” The film won the Dramatic Audience Award and a Special Jury Prize for the two lead actresses in the film, Lupe Ontiveros and America Ferrara. America was a senior in high school making her debut at Sundance.

This year, I was thrilled to be reunited on the jury with America, now a grown woman with an exciting film and television career. Jason Reitman, who served on the U.S. Dramatic jury with America, also came into his own at Sundance. He described arriving with his first short in 1998 “as his father’s son and leaving a filmmaker.” He’s now an Oscar-nominated direc-

tor, but still very much a part of the Sundance family. Again, Sundance is like that.

I have been to Sundance six times now with five features and a short, but being on the jury was without doubt my best festival to date. I screened 22 documentaries with my amazing fellow jurors Jeffrey Blitz (*Spellbound*, *Rocket Science*), Laura Poitras (*My Country My Country*, *The Oath*), Jess Search (chief executive of the Channel 4 Britdoc Foundation) and *The Simpsons* creator Matt Groening (a huge documentary fan).

I saw wonderful films and we had long, fascinating discussions about each one. I learned from my fellow jurors as well as the filmmakers themselves, and I feel inspired as I embark on my next feature doc.

I have also been inspired by the filmmakers’ persistence. One of the things I love about Sundance is that it doesn’t really matter who you are. My film *Taxi to the Dark Side* was rejected by Sundance in 2007 when we submitted a rambling early cut, in spite of the fact that the director Alex Gibney had already been nominated for an Oscar for *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room*.

And this year, a director who almost didn’t submit his film because he was

sure he would be rejected, won the U.S. Documentary Directing Award. His name is Jon Foy and he cleaned houses in Philadelphia for four years while making his film *Resurrect Dead: The Mystery of the Toynbee Tiles*.

The film charmed and delighted the jury. It was fresh and unique and imaginative, and we were thrilled to give him the award.

When I spoke to Jon after the awards ceremony, he told me he still

has to clean houses. I hope his film sells and he gets funding for his next film so he doesn’t have to continue as a house cleaner.

But even if he does, he can count on forever being a part of the Sundance family, as I have over the years, with all the support that entails.

Because Sundance is like that.

Sloane Klevin is partner/editor at *bicoastal Union*.

Flash Back

February 16, 2001 **Anonymous Content has signed director Stephane Sednaoui, who comes over from Propaganda Films.... Exec producer Jim Evans, who was partnered in the former commercial/music video house Gas.Food & Lodging, has signed on to head the newly formed spot division at Extension Films, a satellite of Propaganda.....Director Jim Jenkins is coming aboard hungry man....Partizan has formally launched a music video division, hiring exec producer Janet Eisner to head it up....**

February 17, 2006 **Stuart Gross, an industry vet perhaps best known for being a co-founder of the longstanding, now defunct commercial production house Harmony Pictures, has teamed with former Monkee group member Micky Dolenz to form Independent Entertainment....Director Jim Hosking has come aboard Biscuit Filmworks for U.S. spot representation. He was formerly repped stateside by Partizan....For the third time in the competition’s four-year history, talent from Framstore-CFC has won the Visual Effects Society (VES) Award for outstanding VFX in a commercial....**

Directors Reflect On Their Nominated Films This Awards Season

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However, a case can also be made for *The Social Network* which was the early front runner based on its Golden Globes' success and being the choice of the National Board of Review and the Los Angeles Film Critics Association as the Best Picture of 2010. The National Board of Review also honored *The Social Network* director Fincher, screenwriter Aaron Sorkin and lead actor Jesse Eisenberg who portrayed Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. And Fincher won the BAFTA Award for direction while Sorkin recently took the Writers Guild Award for Best Adapted Screenplay.

Also meriting strong consideration are *True Grit* which earned 10 Oscar nominations, including for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Actor.

However the Coen Brothers did not earn a DGA Award nomination for *True Grit*, representing a notable discrepancy between the DGA and Oscar field of director nominees.

Four of the five best director nominees are otherwise the same in both industry competitions: Darren Aronofsky for *Black Swan*; Fincher for *The Social Network*; Hooper for *The King's Speech*; and David O. Russell for *The Fighter*.

While the remaining Oscar nomination for top helmer went to Joel and Ethan Coen for *True Grit*, the remaining DGA nomination by contrast went to Christopher Nolan for *Inception*. Nolan, however, did earn an Oscar nom (and the WGA Award) for Best Original Screenplay on the strength of *Inception*.

The other difference concerns gender as last year's Oscar and DGA Award winner for best director was Kathryn Bigelow for *The Hurt Locker*, making her the first woman to receive

each respective honor. With that glass ceiling broken, there was some speculation that a woman would again at least break into the nominees circle in the DGA and/or Academy Awards derby this year. That wasn't the case although there were noteworthy candidates, most notably Debra Granik for *Winter's Bone* and Lisa Cholodenko for *The Kids Are All Right*. Cholodenko shares an Oscar nomination with Stuart Blumberg for best original screenplay for *The Kids Are All Right*. And Granik and Anne Rosellini garnered an Oscar nomination for adapted screenplay for *Winter's Bone*.

The Kids Are All Right and *Winter's Bone* also are in the running for the best picture Oscar along with: *Black Swan*, *The Fighter*, *Inception*, *The King's Speech*, *127 Hours*, *The Social Network*, *Toy Story 3* and *True Grit*.

Toy Story 3 was also one of three movies nominated for the year's best animated feature, the other two being *How to Train Your Dragon* and *The Illusionist*.

Roundtable

The Directors Guild nominees shed light on their work and influences during a DGA panel discussion the day of the Guild's Awards ceremony. From this discussion—moderated by director Jeremy Kagan—*SHOOT* gleaned insights from filmmakers Aronofsky, Fincher, Hooper, Nolan and Russell. Interestingly, three of the five have commercialmaking affiliations: Fincher, a DGA Award winner for Best Commercial Director of 2003, continues to be handled by Anonymous Content; Aronofsky, who's repped by Alturas Films; and Hooper, who signed last year with Smuggler.

(Furthermore the Coen Brothers, who are nominated for the Best Direc-



Christopher Nolan accepts inaugural VES Visionary Award (tor Oscar, have spot representation via Company, and Cholodenko's commercialmaking roost is Partizan.)

During the DGA session, Nolan noted that the inherent challenge of *Inception* was conveying our world and three dream worlds. Key for the director was to capture "what it's really like to have a dream, to be in a dream, to treat a dream with a sense of reality...to [have dreams] feel real and never give them over to the straight forward surrealism by which dreams are often depicted."

Helping Nolan to realize that dream was production designer Guy Hendrix Dyas.

Inception is also a nominee for the Visual Effects Oscar. Boding well for its prospects on that front are the recent results of the Visual Effects Society (VES) Awards.

Inception won all four VES categories in which it was nominated: Outstanding Visual Effects in a Visual Effects-Driven Feature Motion Picture; Outstanding Created Environment (Paris Dreamscape) in a Live-Action Feature; Outstanding Models and Miniatures (Hospital Fortress Destruction) in a Feature; and Outstanding Compositing in a Feature. The lead VFX house on the film was Double

Negative Visual Effects, which maintains studios in London and Singapore. Models and miniatures for the film came out of New Deal Studios, Los Angeles.

Nolan, who also just won the VES' inaugural Visionary Award, additionally showed that his sensibilities encompass much more than what the eye can see. He related that his editor doesn't use temp music. (Lee Smith edited *Inception*.) Instead, quipped Nolan, for *Inception* he would "harass" composer Hans Zimmer for demos. Nolan observed, "Temp music makes things look better than they are. I don't like it." Nolan assessed that Zimmer's score for *The Thin Red Line* (directed by Terrence Malick) was perhaps the best he had ever heard, underscoring his creative trust in the composer. The director said that for *Inception* Zimmer scored the overall movie, not each scene.

That approach, affirmed Nolan, strengthened *Inception*, "connecting scenes and binding the film together, helping to guide the audience through the film."

Hooper noted that having worked earlier in his career with Helen Mirren, he saw and heard how deft she is in "word switches," subtle changes that shape a performance.

His two lead characters in *The King's Speech*—Colin Firth and Geoffrey Rush—are also deft in that regard. Music, said Hooper, has to adjust and recognize that deftness. For *The King's Speech*, the scoring of composer Alexandre Desplat does just that. "Alexandre loves actors and takes care of them," related Hooper.

At the same time, silence is integral to *The King's Speech*, observed Hooper. "The use of silence was the key. There's a lot of silence in the film."

The notion of less being more also helped to shape visual backdrops for the film, as reflected in the scenes focused on Colin Firth as a stammering King George VI.

"I almost exclusively put him against negative space when the camera was focused on him—big distressed walls where the wallpaper was almost falling apart. His face was floating in negative space, much like stammering can cast a person into isolation and a world of nothingness," said Hooper. "The frame overwhelms him; he's diminished by it."

By contrast, Rush—who portrayed Lionel Logue, the speech therapist treating the King—was "shot against the domesticity of bookshelves, a fireplace."

Aronofsky quipped that he was "jealous" about that falling apart wallpaper in *The King's Speech*. Aronofsky admitted that he very much "got into wallpaper" for *Black Swan* as he paid

attention to that and assorted other details as he "wanted the whole film to be a ballet, to choreograph every scene like a dance."

Aronofsky credited production designer Thérèse DePrez with bringing "ballet onto the wallpapers." Even the paintings seemed to speak to Natalie Portman's character "during the freakiest moments" of the story.

Earlier this month at the Art Directors Guild's 15th annual Excellence in 2010 Production Design Awards, the feature winners were: Eve Stewart in the Period Film category for *The King's Speech*; Dyas for Fantasy Film on the basis of *Inception*; and DePrez in Contemporary Film for *Black Swan*.

For the Oscar recognizing Achievement in Art Direction, *Black Swan* and DePrez were not nominated. *The King's Speech* and *Inception* were along with: *Alice in Wonderland* (production designer Robert Stromberg), *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1* (production designer Stuart Craig), and *True Grit* (production designer Jess Gonchor).

Relative to backdrops and locations, the proposition for *The Social Network* seemed "too easy" at the outset, said Fincher. "We'll go to Harvard and they'll say, 'yes.'"

However, Harvard ultimately didn't grant permission to film. "Who didn't talk to Harvard?" said Fincher but it was to no avail.

The director said that Harvard became akin to "the hottest girl in the room. She will probably say 'no' but you take your best swing anyway."

A Google Maps search for colonial architecture to rival that of Harvard yielded the discovery of "a stunning example": Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Hopkins became the principal backdrop for the film, with Fincher noting that the university "couldn't have been more helpful."

There and in the film's other backdrops, Fincher took a self-described tongue-in-cheek *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* approach, following the actors wherever they went.

"I shoot two cameras all the time, usually next to each other, to follow the instincts of people more talented [than the director]...I shoot a lot of takes—not to antagonize people but to have time for [inspired] accidents to take place."

For director Russell, the perfect backdrop for *The Fighter* was clearly Lowell, Massachusetts.

"The movie is about the intimacy of that community and everyone there. It's a working class town that's struggling," he said.

For Russell, it's a struggle to watch

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(L t r) Tom Hooper, David O'Russell, David Fincher, Darren Aronofsky and Christopher Nolan at DGA session in DGA Theater in Los Angeles.



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Pfister, Deakins Among ASC Honorees

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and absorb so much from each one of our collaborations.”

That education has served Pfister in good stead not only as a cinematographer but also as a director. Pfister directs commercials via Independent Media. His directorial credits include a Super Bowl spot last year for Vizio television sets starring Beyonce, and a moving performance-driven campaign for Montana Meth.

One of the Montana Meth spots earned distinction in SHOOT's "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery. The Vizio and Montana Meth jobs came out of Venables, Bell & Partners, San Francisco, and were produced by Independent Media.

Back on the feature film front, Pfister is also currently nominated for the Best Cinematography Oscar® on the strength of *Inception*. This is his fourth career Academy Award nomination in the category, the other three being for *Batman Begins*, *The Prestige*, and *The Dark Knight*.

The other nominees in the ASC feature film category were Matthew Libatique, ASC (*Black Swan*), Danny Cohen, BSC (*The King's Speech*), Jeff Cronenweth, ASC (*The Social Network*), and Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC (*True Grit*). All of the ASC feature nominees are also Oscar®-nominated this year.

While Deakins did not win this year's feature film category, he was honored during the evening for his career body of work, earning the ASC Lifetime Achievement Award, which was presented to him by director/writer Joel Coen. Deakins is a 10-time ASC Award nominee while earning nine Oscar® nominations.

Five of those films were written and directed by Joel and his brother Ethan Coen (*True Grit*; *No Country For Old Men*; *The Man Who Wasn't There*; *O Brother, Where Art Thou*; *Fargo*).

Deakins' other five ASC nominations were for *Kundun*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, *The Reader* (shared with Chris Menges, ASC, BSC), and *Revolutionary Road*. Deakins won ASC Awards



Wally Pfister, ASC

for *The Man Who Wasn't There* in 2002 and *The Shawshank Redemption* in 1995.

When he first heard that he was going to receive the ASC Lifetime Achievement Award, Deakins recalled having "mixed emotions."

The cinematographer related, "To be honest, I am flattered, but I also feel like I am only just getting started. I'm enjoying what I do more than I ever have and there seems to be so much more I want to do. I feel like I'm getting this award about halfway through my career. It is great to realize that my colleagues watch my work and get something out of it."

Michael Goi, the president of the ASC, observed, "The Lifetime Achievement Award is a reflection of the impact that a cinematographer has made on the art of filmmaking rather than the capping of a career. It is our way of acknowledging a true artist in his prime. Roger Deakins raises the artistic profile of our profession with every movie and he will continue to do so for many years."

TV categories

HBO fare topped both ASC Award TV categories.

Freeman earned the Outstanding Achievement Award in episodic television for the *Boardwalk Empire* episode "Home." This is the second ASC Award for Freeman, who previously won in 2005 for the television movie *Homeland Security*. He has also earned ASC nominations for *Prince Street* (1998), *Strange Justice* (2000) and *Taken* (2003).

The other nominees in the TV episodic series/pilot category won by



Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC

Freeman were Eagle Egilsson, ASC, for "Shell Game"/*Dark Blue* (TNT); Christopher Manley, ASC, for "Blowing Smoke"/*Mad Men* (AMC); Kramer Morgenthau, ASC, for "Family Limitation"/*Boardwalk Empire* (HBO); David Stockton for the *Nikita* pilot (CW); Michael Wale, CSC, for "Shield"/*Smallville* (CW); and Glen Winter, CSC, for "Abandoned"/*Smallville*.

Meanwhile Windon won the ASC Award in the TV movie/miniseries category for the "Okinawa" installment of *The Pacific*.

This was Windon's first ASC nomination as well as his first win. Nominated along with Windon were David Gribble, ACS, for *Jesse Stone: No Remorse* (CBS) and Jon Joffin for "Episode 2"/*Alice* (Syfy).

Special awards

In addition to Deakins' Lifetime Achievement honor, the ASC gala ceremony was highlighted by other special awards.

Oscar®-winner Tom Hanks presented the Board of Governors Award to Julia Roberts in recognition of her body of work and contributions to the art of filmmaking.

Roberts earned an Academy Award® in 2001 for her powerful role in *Erin Brokovich*, and Oscar® nominations for her heartfelt character portrayals in *Steel Magnolias* and *Pretty Woman*. Her films have grossed more than \$2.5 billion worldwide.

Hanks and Roberts starred together in *Charlie Wilson's War* and will be reunited in the upcoming motion picture *Larry Crowne*.

The ASC International Award was presented to John Seale, ASC, ACS by filmmaker Michael Apted (who also directs spots via Independent Media). They collaborated on the Oscar®-nominated film *Gorillas in the Mist*.

Seale's credits include *The English Patient*, for which he won an Oscar®, as well as the feature films *Cold Mountain*, *Rain Man* and *Witness*. The International Award is bestowed annually upon a foreign cinematographer in recognition of extraordinary achievements in films produced for the global cinema.



Michael O'Shea, ASC



John Seale, ASC, ACS

Short Takes

LEXUS, TEAM ONE, PLAYTONE "TALK"

Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman's Playtone, along with Lexus' LStudio have launched web series *The Three Minute Talk Show*, which premiered last month on LStudio's Broadband Channel. The series, which debuts a new episode every Wednesday at www.lstudio.com, features everything that audiences have come to expect from a talk show all condensed into approximately three minutes. *Saturday Night Live* veteran and Emmy®-nominated comedian Barry Sobel hosts the show along with Emmy-nominated actor Fred Willard, who serves as co-host. The show's band is led by international music star Ben Lee.



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Guests confirmed to appear include Jon Cryer, Bryan Cranston, Johnny Knoxville, Stephen Moyer, Wilmer Valderrama, Ginnifer Goodwin, Cedric the Entertainer, Joe Jonas, and Mike O'Malley. Series creator Tom Hanks was the star guest on the first episode.

"*The Three Minute Talk Show* is exactly the type of content we strive to showcase on LStudio," said Dave Nordstrom, Lexus' VP of marketing. "Our goal has been to create an online destination with high-quality, thought-provoking material that consumers would want to return to again and again. Playtone's innovative and entertaining content is the perfect fit and represents the next big step in establishing LStudio as a premiere, branded entertainment site." Content for LStudio.com is produced and distributed by Intelligent Life Productions in collaboration with Team One Advertising for Lexus. Creative Artists Agency brokered the deal for *The Three Minute Talk Show* with Intelligent Life Productions.

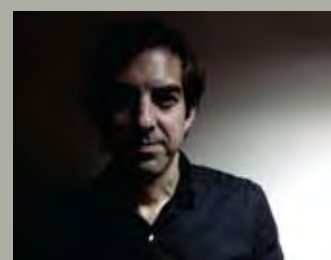
RUCKELS BUILD DREAM HOUSE

Postproduction vet Fred Ruckel, creative director at Stitch, New York, is now a TV series creator/producer as he and his wife Natasha have teamed on *Dream House*, a primetime series on the DIY Network based on their trials and tribulations in constructing a get-away home in the Catskill Mountains. The series chronicles the entire process from buying the land to applying the last coat of paint on the log cabin.

Dream House debuted last month and has been running weekly. In the first half-hour episode, the Ruckels had to deal with a nasty neighbor who puts them in a compromising position, a contractor that can't see the light through the trees, and a robbery.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS...

Independent San Francisco ad agency Venables Bell & Partners has promoted Erich Pfeifer from associate creative director to creative director. A six-year veteran of VB&P, Pfeifer has played a key role in the agency's growth from a 24-person shop to the 164-person agency it is today. While at the agency, he's led Audi, producing some of the most talked about automotive and Super Bowl advertising. He led Audi's "Green Police" Super Bowl spot which was not



Erich Pfeifer

only nominated for an Emmy last year, but also received almost three billion earned media impressions with coverage on *The Today Show*, CNBC and *The Early Show*.... Editorial house Beast has hired Mark Anderson as Smoke artist for its Chicago facility. He joins Beast after a two-year stint at Crash + Sues, Minneapolis, where he worked with a diverse list of clients such as Target, Best Buy, AAA, Subaru and FedEx. Prior to Crash + Sues, he spent 10 years at Avenue Chicago where his clients included Disney, Toyota, Crate & Barrel, Coca-Cola and McDonald's. Beast maintains facilities in Santa Monica, New York, Austin, Detroit, Chicago and San Francisco....

Continued on page 9

Michael Condon, SOC
VP Digital Division

Andree Martin
VP Technical Services

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Oscar, Spirit Award Nominees Share Backstories On Their Films

Continued from page 4
dailies so he doesn't.

"They make me hate the whole thing. I give the dailies to the editor [Pamela Martin] with specific notes about which takes I think were best."

The Fighter was shot over 33 days, three of which were dedicated to the boxing scenes.

The fights were shot from outside the ring, a dramatic departure from the norm. Six HBO cameras and two additional cameras were deployed. The end result elicited plaudits for realistic depictions of "the sweet science" known as boxing.

Also ringing true were the characters themselves. "I have a shot list but am open to discoveries. I like working on a schedule, three to four takes, six to seven tops," said Russell who paralleled the dynamics of a film to that of "a song, a rhythm. During the first couple of weeks, the actors get the melody, the rhythm. Once they have it, everybody relaxes and they feel okay. Melissa Leo improvised a lot of lines."

As for the direction he gave performers, Russell cited what he told Leo and Amy Adams. "Talk like a dude. I wanted women talking from their balls...I learned that from Dustin Hoffman years ago. The musicality of someone's voice is their character. Amy Adams showed a whole other side of herself."

Spirited competition

While the Oscars will be presented on Sunday, Feb. 27, the night before the Film Independent Spirit Awards will be bestowed. Leading the Spirit Awards nominations derby with seven—including Best Picture, director (Granik), screenplay, female lead, supporting female actress, supporting male actor and cinematography (Michael McDonough)—is the rural crime thriller *Winter's Bone*.

This came on the heels of the film earning best feature honors at the Gotham Independent Film Awards.

Earlier *Winter's Bone* won the grand jury prize for American dramas at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival.

Rounding out the field of Spirit Award-nominated directors are: Aronofsky for *Black Swan*; Cholodenko for *The Kids Are All Right* in which a same-sex couple's children bring their biological father into the family's life; Danny Boyle for *127 Hours*, the real-life story of a man's battle for survival which results in his severing his own arm; and John Cameron Mitchell for *Rabbit Hole*, which deals with a couple coping with the accidental death of their young son.

Up for Best Picture are *Winter's Bone*; *The Kids Are All Right*; *Black Swan*; *127 Hours*; and Ben Stiller's dark romance *Greenberg*.

The King's Speech (U.K.) is also



Aaron Schneider

nominated for a Film Independent Spirit Award, in the foreign feature film category, along with *Kisses* (Ireland) directed by Lance Daly; *Made-moiselle Chambon* (France) directed by Stéphane Brizé; *Of Gods and Men* (Morocco) directed by Xavier Beauvois; and *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (Thailand) directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul.

Low-budget films such as those honored at the Spirit Awards have gained more and more weight at the Oscars, filling a void left at Hollywood studios increasingly concentrated on mainstream blockbusters.

Recent Spirit Awards winners such as *Precious: Based On The Novel "Push"* By Sapphire, *The Wrestler* and *Juno* have been major Oscar contenders.

The spirit of the Spirit Awards also includes recognition of promising up-and-coming talent.

Among the nominated films for Best First Feature is *Get Low*, directed by Aaron Schneider, and produced by David Gundlach and Dean Zanuck. The drama mystery, with a dash of comedy, is set in the 1930s in a rural town. The cast includes Robert Duvall, Bill Murray (nominated for a Best Supporting Actor Spirit Award), Sissy Spacek, Lucas Black and Bill Cobbs.

Duvall plays a backwoods recluse, Felix Bush, whom the local people fear. Bush rides into town with a wad full of cash to buy "a living funeral" in which anyone who has ever heard a story about him is

invited to come to tell it.

It turns out Bush, though, has a deep dark secret he needs to tell. Murray plays Frank Quinn, a fast-talking, bit of a slickster funeral home owner who looks to score a big payday from Bush's eccentricities.

Schneider told *SHOOT* he finds the Spirit Award nomination gratifying, especially since the road to such recognition was longer than anticipated. He related that it took him and his producer colleagues five years to get the film made.

"Making it all the way to the Spirit Awards kind of counterbalances the long time it took to get the proper financing in order to properly get this project off the ground."

Schneider made his first industry mark as a cinematographer, initially in commercials and music videos, spanning such clients as Nike, Mercedes-Benz and L'Oreal, and performers including Whitney Houston, Gwen Stefani and Michael Jackson.

The DP then diversified into TV, most notably with executive producer Steven Bochco's legal drama *Murder One*. Schneider garnered an Emmy nomination for his work on that series as well as a pair of ASC Awards, respectively, for his cinematography during seasons one and two.

His lensing exploits branched out into features with *Kiss The Girls* and *Simon Birch*, as well as second unit on James Cameron's *Titanic*.

Then Schneider decided to spread his wings further, looking to steer his career from cinematography to directing. "I wanted to make my own films so I took my life savings and threw it all into a short film to not only show other people what I could do but to discover for myself whether I was a director or not."

That short film indeed provided an answer: Based on an adaptation of William Faulkner's short story, *Two Soldiers*—which Schneider wrote and directed—won the Oscar for Best Live-Action Short Film.

The short became a calling card, a tool for Schneider to land an agent to represent him as a director, to gain access to studio executives, producers and scripts. He made the rounds and related, "When the dust settled, the project that just naturally felt right to me was *Get Low*."

Producer Zanuck and *Get Low* found Schneider through *Two Soldiers* and wound up pursuing him.

"Dean enjoyed the short but more than that there were the obvious connections," noted Schneider. "The short showed I could do a period piece on a budget and Dean had just struck out to work on his own so we both had something to prove."

Little did they know that it would take five years to attain that proof—which has since been reaffirmed with not only Spirit recognition but also selections to last year's Sundance, South by Southwest and Tribeca film festivals. *Get Low* is a Sony Pictures Classics release.

Schneider's collaborators on *Get Low* included Emmy Award-winning cinematographer David Boyd, ASC (*Deadwood*), Academy Award-nominated production designer Geoffrey Kirkiland (*The Right Stuff*, *Children of Men*) and twice Oscar-nominated costume designer Julie Weiss (*Frida*, *Twelve Monkeys*).

Also nominated for Best First Feature Spirit Award honors are: *Everything Strange and New* (director Frazer Bradshaw, producers A.D. Liano and Laura Techera Francia); *Night Catches Us* (director Tanya Hamilton, producers Sean Costello, Jason Orans, and Ronald Simons); *The Last Exorcism* (director Daniel Stamm, producers Marc Abraham, Tom Bliss, Eric Newman, and Eli Roth); and *Tiny Furniture* (director Lena Dunham, producers Kyle Martin, and Alicia Van Couvering). Dunham also earned a nomination for the Best First Screenplay Spirit Award.

Another up-and-coming talent, Casey Neistat, has seen *Daddy Longlegs*, a movie he and Tom Scott produced, earn a nomination for the Spirit's coveted John Cassavetes Award, given to the best theatrical feature film made for under \$500,000.

Neistat might be a familiar name to *SHOOT* readers, having been included in *SHOOT*'s 2010 New Directors Showcase at the DGA Theatre in New York. Neistat is represented as a director for commercials and branded content by HSI Productions.

Directed by Josh and Benny Safdie, *Daddy Longlegs* is an ode to parenthood, telling the story of a father—both charismatic and flawed—who gets to be with his two young sons for a couple of weeks each year.

Ronald Bronstein portrays the dad and is a nominee for a Spirit Award as Best Male Lead.

Along with *Daddy Longlegs*, the other John Cassavetes Award nominees are *Lbs* (director/writer/producer Matthew Bonifacio, writer/producer Carmine Famiglietti), *Lovers of Hate* (writer/director Bryan Pyser, producer Megan Gilbride), *Obselidia* (writer/director Diane Bell, producers Chris Byrne and Matthew Medlin), and *The Exploding Girl* (writer/director Bradley Rust Gray, producers Karin Chien, Ben Howe, So Yong Kim).

Bell is also up for the Best First Screenplay Spirit Award on the basis of *Obselidia*.



On the set of *Get Low*: Aaron Schneider (l), Bill Murray

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Vitrone, Reichenthal Named Exec Creative Directors at W+K N.Y.

NEW YORK—Creative partners Scott Vitrone and Ian Reichenthal are set to join Wieden+Kennedy's New York leadership team as executive creative directors. They will work alongside managing director Neal Arthur. The move marks a return home for Vitrone and Reichenthal who began their first tour of duty at W+K back in 1999, collaborating as a duo for the first time and working on Nike. They now fill the void at W+K N.Y. created by the recent departure of executive creative directors Kevin Proudfoot and Jerome Austria, with Proudfoot landing at Google Creative lab as a co-executive



Scott Vitrone (l), Ian Reichenthal

creative director.

Vitrone commented, "When we accepted the job, Dan [Wieden, agency co-founder and global executive creative director] said, 'Welcome home.' And that's exactly how we feel, too. To come back to W+K, 11 years after

meeting there and first working together, is really special for us."

W+K global executive interactive creative director Iain Tait said that the search continues for "an interactive creative director to be a part of the evolved creative leadership of the New

York office."

Vitrone and Reichenthal come back to W+K from Young & Rubicam, New York, where they have led the office's creative resurgence as co-chief creative officers since 2008. Prior to that, they were group creative direc-

tors at TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York, working on the Mars' brands, including Skittles, Combos and Snickers.

W+K N.Y. works with a growing roster of clients including ESPN, Delta Air Lines, Nike, Jordan Brand, and ABC Television Networks.

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- CineSync remote review and note capture
- Encoded 24 ft. Technojib camera crane
- Pre-rigged, motorized lighting grid with iPad dimmer control
- 2 editing bays with Avid and Final Cut Pro
- 6 station artist suite with Maya 3-D, Motionbuilder, Nuke Compositing and more
- Conference room with stage feed and teleconferencing
- Physical and content security procedures
- Aspera encrypted, secure, high speed file content delivery worldwide



ASC Awards Bestowed

Continued from page 6

The Career Achievement in Television Award was presented to Emmy®-winner Michael O'Shea, ASC (*CSI: Miami*), by John C. Flinn III, ASC.

And the ASC Presidents Award was given to renowned photographer Douglas Kirkland by Ellen Kuras, ASC. (Kuras has also diversified into commercial directing via Park Pictures.) The Presidents Award is presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to the art form.

The ASC is a nonprofit association dedicated to advancing the art of filmmaking. Since its charter in 1919, the ASC has been committed to educating aspiring filmmakers and others about the art and craft of cinematography.



Jonathan Freeman, ASC



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Top Spot of the Week

Director/DP Lance Acord, Deutsch LA Harness "The Force" For Volkswagen

By Christine Champagne

While the Green Bay Packers won Super Bowl XLV, Deutsch LA and director/DP Lance Acord of bicoastal Park Pictures scored arguably the best spot of the game with Volkswagen's "The Force." The :30 finds a young boy dressed in a Darth Vader costume trying with all his might to use the force—that special power we all know from the *Star Wars* films—to manipulate inanimate objects. According to a Nielsen survey, "The Force" was the best-liked spot of Super Bowl XLV.

Deutsch EVP/group creative director/copywriter Eric Springer credits senior copywriter David Povill and art director Craig Melchiano with presenting the concept that eventually became "The Force." "Everybody immediately gravitated toward it," Springer recalled, noting that the aim was to promote remote start—which will be a feature of the Volkswagen Passat when it goes on sale in September—in a fun, memorable way. (We'll see a series of commercials promoting the car's other features over the coming months.)

Deutsch had to get permission from George Lucas' Lucasfilm Ltd. to use Darth Vader in the commercial, of

course, and not only did Lucasfilm say yes, the company also asked if the agency wanted to use music from the film as well, according to Springer.

Being able to use Darth Vader's theme "The Imperial March" was a real gift, but it also made the edit more complex for editor Jim Haygood of Santa Monica's Union, who cut "The Force" into a 1:01 version for pre-Super Bowl Internet distribution and a :30 for the game itself.

"The music was scored so long ago—in the mid '70s—we didn't have any splits, so we had to keep re-cutting the spot to the music as we lost frames," Springer explained. (Jeff Elmassian of Santa Monica Endless Noise arranged the music for "The Force," and he did the sound design.)

Acord, who still remembers the car ride home from seeing *Star Wars* when he was a kid, shot "The Force" in and around a house in the Los Angeles area. He purposely found a home with shiny black floors and bare white walls, a look harkening back to spaceship interiors from the *Star Wars* saga.

The director/DP also cast some inanimate objects that would plausibly represent characters from *Star Wars*

in a child's imagination—the washer and dryer are stand-ins for the Imperial Stormtroopers, while the exercise machine resembles those walkers with the long mechanical legs.

Director's misdirect

"One idea I felt strongly about and the agency loved was in the first shot or two establishing a misdirect for the audience in terms of the scale of the kid and the world you were in," Acord shared. As you'll recall from the initial moments of the spot, we see Darth Vader shot from behind and from a low angle as he strides down a hallway accompanied by "The Imperial March." It's a few seconds into the spot before you realize it is a little boy dressed up as Darth Vader, striding about a house.

By now, you likely know Max Page is behind the mask. The six-year-old actor, whose credits include *The Young and the Restless*, went on a post-Super Bowl interview spree, appearing on shows ranging from *Today* to *Access Hollywood*.

Page, who actually looks like a young Mark Hamill, won the role over dozens of boys and girls who tried out, but there were two little Darth Vaders on location "because we didn't know if one of them was going to overheat or not want to do it or not be able to act it out," Springer said, "and unfortunately for the other little Darth, he never got a chance because Max just stepped up and owned it."

FYI: Springer said he was unaware that Page had a pacemaker (his mother Jennifer has revealed in interviews that her son was born with a heart defect) and only found out when his mom casually mentioned during the shoot that he had an appointment at Children's Hospital in Los Angeles. "You would never know," Springer said of Page's condition.

Force fed

During the two-day shoot, Acord fed his young talent, outfitted in an off-the-shelf Darth Vader helmet from Target, suggestions on how to exert the force.

"It was fun with Max. He's an amazing little kid," Acord praised. "He really has the ability to concentrate and stay with it much longer than a kid his age normally would."

As you can see in a bloopers and outtakes video released on YouTube, Acord had a little fun with his pint-size Darth Vader during the shoot.

"We rigged the doll on the bed with fishing line and a fishing pole, and

Max didn't realize it, and we lifted it up and off the bed while he was applying the force to it," Acord said. "It was very, very funny. Max really got into that."

One of the best moments in the commercial—little Darth Vader's surprised and startled reaction to the car starting after he applied the force—wasn't planned.

"The original expectation was that the car would start, and he would react in a somewhat heroic way, posturing himself like he'd finally done it," Lance said, "and the response and the reaction [on set when we shot the cart-starting sequence] was one of surprise, alarm and disbelief. 'Oh my God! What have I done? It actually worked!' We turned a more interesting corner at that moment."



Lance Acord



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

With an assist from his dad who presses the VW Passat remote start-up button from afar, a young boy in Darth Vader garb—unaware of his father's involvement—puts the "Force" to good work in this charming Super Bowl commercial directed and shot by Lance Acord of Park Pictures for Deutsch LA.

TOP Spot OF THE WEEK

CLIENT
Volkswagen.

AGENCY
Deutsch LA.

Eric Springer, EVP/group creative director/copywriter; Michael Kadin, EVP/group creative director/art director; David Povill, senior copywriter; Ryan McLaughlin, senior art director; Craig Melchiano, art director; Vic Palumbo, EVP/director of integrated production; Victoria Guenier, SVP/director of broadcast production; Jim Haight, producer; Brooke Yaussi, associate producer.

PRODUCTION COMPANY
Park Pictures, bicoastal.

Lance Acord, director/DP; Mary Ann Marino, executive producer. Shot on location in Los Angeles.

EDITORIAL
Union, Santa Monica.

Jim Haygood, editor; Dylan Firshein, assistant editor; Michael Raimondi, executive producer.

POST
Company 3, Santa Monica.

Stefan Sonnenfeld, colorist; Megan Dahlan, producer.

MUSIC/SOUND DESIGN
Endless Noise, Santa Monica.

Mary Catherine Finney, music producer; Jeff Elmassian, arranger/sound designer.

AUDIO
Lime Studios, Santa Monica.

Mark Meyhaus, mixer.

PERFORMERS
Max Page.

The Best Work You May Never See

David: A Statue Of No Limitations

By Robert Goldrich

Michelangelo's classic Statue of David transforms from chiseled physique to an out-of-shape form reminiscent of the "before" picture in a weight loss ad. The chubby David even grows an unkempt beard and holds a fork for some heavy indulging in pasta and meatballs.

There's method to this artistic madness, though, when put in the context of the call for entries campaign for the 20th annual AICP Show & Next Awards. The Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) is introducing a series of case study videos which examine historically how great works of art were used as solutions to branding issues. The initial videos in the campaign are already accessible via YouTube and on the dedicated site www.isyouradvertisingart.com.

Italy: 1497 AD

The second video release--billed as "Case Study #61: The Vitruvian Man"--takes us on an AV graphics tour to Italy that dates back to the late 15th century. A female voiceover relates that more than 100 years after the devastating impact of the Black Plague, Italy had a problem. We are thrust into 1497 AD in the City of Florence, at which point we see a continuous number readout counting deaths as compared to births. While the latter remains at zero, deaths mount dramatically. This disproportionate number of lives lost as compared to new ones entering the world tells us the plight of Italy's population.

The challenge was clear: "Save Italia"--namely find a way to reverse a declining population. But why the decline? A smiling Mona Lisa knows as she points to a 99 percent figure, reflecting that nearly all women at that time felt that the male population's overall attractiveness had dropped significantly.

Indeed men were paying less attention to personal care and more to pasta and meatballs as we see the Statue of David take on considerable poundage. His torso becomes more so before our eyes--as does facial hair. And then that earlier alluded to fork appears as does a table weighted down by food.

The voiceover continues, noting that with the national libido falling quickly--as we see the Tower of Pisa lean decidedly downward--the future of Italy hung in the balance. The solution: Bring back the Italian stallion by making "personal fitness top of mind" via the Vitruvian Man print campaign.

The Vitruvian Man is a famous drawing by Leonardo da Vinci. It is accompanied by notes based on the work of the famed architect, Vitruvius. The drawing depicts a male figure in two superimposed positions with his arms and legs apart and simultaneously situated in a circle and square. The drawing is based on the correlations of ideal human proportions with geometry described by Vitruvius.

The messaging of the print campaign, says the voiceover in tongue-in-cheek fashion, includes the "forgotten notion of agility, muscles visible without having to flex, and the introduction of male maintenance ("manscaping" in reference to well-groomed private parts). All the while the image of Vitruvian Man is adjusted accordingly.

The Vitruvian print ad yielded profoundly posi-

tive results in Italy of yesteryear: personal exercise among males tripled, average body fat fell 31 percent and there was an 1,100 percent spike in sexual relations, leading to "frequencies of fornication not seen in over four centuries."

As babies fill the frame, we see the Vitruvian Man has become the most recognized health and fitness campaign in history, outdistancing such pictured video releases as Billy Blanks' Tae Bo and Jane Fonda's Workout. An end tag relates the AICP Show campaign query: "All art is advertising. Is your advertising art?"

VCU Brandcenter

The slogan plays on the fact that all work honored by the AICP Show & Next Awards becomes part of the archives of the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art in N.Y. Thus it's only appropriate that devout students of the advertising art form created the new call for entries campaign.

So as it has since 2005, AICP enlisted the creative prowess of students from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Brandcenter who devised and produced the "All Art Is Advertising" campaign, including all the films.

The core VCU ensemble consisted of art director/video producer Brianna Lohr, copywriters/video producers Claire Wyckoff and Lane Karczewski, interactive art director Stephen Hadinger, strategist/project manager Kyla Wagman, strategist Gautam Ramdurai, and video editor David Satterfield.

credits

Client AICP Show & Next Awards **Creative/Production** Virginia Commonwealth University Brandcenter, Richmond, Va. **Brianna Lohr, art director/video producer; Claire Wyckoff, Lane Karczewski, copywriters/video producers; Stephen Hadinger, interactive art director; Gautam Ramdurai, strategist; Kyla Wagman, strategist/project manager; David Satterfield, video editor. Music/Sound Design** COPILOT Strategic Music + Sound, New York **Ravi Krishnaswami, Jason Menkes, partners. Audio Post/Voiceover Recording** Color, New York **Kevin Halpin, mixer; Jeff Rosner, exec producer; Davide Berardi, technical producer. Web Developer** Istros Media Corporation, New York **Voiceover Artist** Rachel Feldman

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In addition to the latest NEWS, Best NEW WORK & SHOOT COLUMNS, here's what's coming up in print...

<p>MARCH 25 ISSUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "DIRECTORS" Extravaganza > Leading Commercial Director Profiles > Leading Film Director Profiles > Up-And-Coming Directors > Cinematographers & Cameras Music & Sound + Top Ten Tracks Chart Southeast Production NAB Preview <p>Space Deadline: March 15 Ad Material Due: March 18</p>	<p>APRIL 15 ISSUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising & Entertainment Production Recent Awards & Festivals: profiles of DP & Editor Honorees Post, Visual Effects & Animation SHOOT Top 10 VFX & Animation Chart Cannes Film Festival Preview Texas & The Southwest Production & Post <p>Space Deadline: April 4 Ad Material Due: April 8</p>	<p>MAY 6 ISSUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHOOT New Directors Showcase "director profiles" Producers on Adv & Entertainment Issues Cinematographers & Cameras AICE Awards Preview <p>Space Deadline: April 25 Ad Material Due: April 29</p> <p>Bonus Distribution: SHOOT Event, 5/10, NYC; AICE Awards 5/15, NYC; AFCI Locations/Produced by Conf, 6/3-5, Los Angeles</p>
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SHOOT

Trailers, Main Titles, Video Exhibits, Shorts

Robert Rodriguez Directs Kobe Bryant, Bruce Willis In Nike's *The Black Mamba*; Trailers Debut

CLIENT
Nike

AGENCY
Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

Alberto Ponte, Ryan O'Rourke, creative directors; Sheena Bradey, Brandon Pierce, copywriters; Mike Warzin, art director; Erin Goodsell, producer; Mark Fitzloff, Susan Hoffman, executive creative directors; Ben Grylewicz, executive producer.

PRODUCTION
@radical.media, bicoastal/international
Robert Rodriguez, director; Frank Scherma, Donna Portaro, executive producers; Mala Vasan, line producer; Mauro Fiore, DP.

EDITORIAL
Rock Paper Scissors, Los Angeles
Angus Wall, editor; Esther Gonzalez, post producer; C.L. Weaver, Cassie Hulen, post executive producers.

VISUAL EFFECTS
Hybride, Quebec, Canada
Rodney Brune (from Robert Rodriguez's *Troublemaker* Stu-

dios), VFX supervisor; Kurt Volk (from *Troublemaker*), titles/graphics; Pierre Blaine, Mathieu Dupuis, Nadine Homier, Flame; Daniel Leduc, VFX producer.

POST/FINISHING
a52, Santa Monica, Calif.
Paul Yacono, Flame artist; Hameed Shaukat, Jamie McBriety, visual effects producers.

The Mill LA
Gareth Parr, Phil Crowe, Flame; Enca Kaul, VFX producer.
Music/Sound Design
Robert Rodriguez, composer/sound designer/producer.

MIX
Troublemaker Studios, Austin, Texas
Bradford Engleking, mixer; Robert Rodriguez, producer.

THE WORK
This pair of trailers/TV spots, "Meet The Mamba" and "Mamba vs. Boss," herald the upcoming debut of the short film *The Black Mamba*, also directed by Robert Rodriguez. Promoting Kobe Bryant's new Nike shoe, the Kobe VI, the short will be released during



NBA All-Star Weekend. The trailers relate that a do-or-die game is in the offing pitting Bryant against enemies looking to win both the game and his shoes. Also starring are Bruce Willis, Danny Trejo and Kanye West. Bryant's nickname is "The Black Mamba" who like that snake possesses a quick, lethal strike. The trailers drive traffic to nikebasketball.com where visitors can RSVP to see the short.

Sarofsky Corp. is *SHAMELESS* for Showtime; Company Creates Main Titles For New Original Series

CLIENT
Showtime & John Wells Productions
Andrew Stearn, president, TV for Showtime
Chris Selak, senior VP, TV

PRODUCTION
Sarofsky Corp., Chicago and Los Angeles
Erin Sarofsky, creative director/director; Lindsay Daniels, co-director and concept design; Louise Krakower, executive producer; Rachel Steele, head of production; Adam Santelli, DP; Naomi Slodki, production designer; Matt Crnich, visual effects director; Lee Gardner, editor; Gene Park, Nik Braatz, designers; Halley Bonoma, assistant producer.

PERFORMERS
William H. Macy, Emmy Rossum, Justin Chatwin, Ethan Cut-

kosky, Shanola Hampton, Steve Howey, Emma Kenney, Cameron Monaghan, Jeremy White, Laura Slade Wiggins, Blake & Brennan Johnson.

MUSIC
"The Luck You Got"—The High Strung
THE WORK

Sarofsky Corp.'s main title sequence for the new Showtime Original Series *SHAMELESS* is an irreverent, illuminating portrait of the Gallagher family where private moments are exposed in the most unexpected place: the bathroom. In *SHAMELESS*, Frank Gallagher is the proud single dad of six smart, spirited kids, who without him would be perhaps, better off. William H. Macy and Emmy Rossum star in this engaging and twisted series.

Erin Sarofsky, who directed the *SHAMELESS* main title, worked

with series creatives and cast to produce an authentic intro to the show. The action was scripted as an intricate dance of illicit and personal behavior, which the charismatic cast brought to life.

"It was rewarding to work with everyone at John Wells Productions and Showtime, as well as the amazing cast from *SHAMELESS*," related Sarofsky. "Our concept focused squarely on the actions and personalities within the family. While on set, we wanted to capture everything from our complex choreography to the quirky and serendipitous tendencies innate to the characters."

Shooting on the RED ONE, Sarofsky composed the scene at a lower perspective, which mostly obscures the actors' faces and turns the viewer into a voyeur. "The Luck You Got," by rock band The High Strung, is the pitch perfect track with crunching guitars and lyrics that evoke scrappy survival in the face of adversity.



One Fine Day At The National Museum Of American Jewish History In Philadelphia

CLIENT
National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia, PA

PRODUCTION
David Grubin Productions, New York
Director: David Grubin, director.

DESIGN/POST
One Fine Day, New York
Nathalie de la Gorce, creative director; Tom Bayer, EP.

MUSIC
Joseph Lanner, composer.

THE WORK
The recently opened National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia features assorted attractions, including two powerful video sequences designed by One Fine Day, the design/

VFX studio led by creative directors Nathalie de La Gorce and Chris Haak, and executive producer Tom Bayer. Emmy Award-winning filmmaker David Grubin of David Grubin Productions, New York, directed both videos which were titled *Purim* and *Revolution*.

The intricately designed two-plus-minute pro-bono piece called *Purim* is part of the exhibit looking at the American Jewish experience around the late 1800s. "The video illustrates a moment in time in the history of American Jews when they had finally assimilated and prospered in America and could afford extravagant parties in luxurious settings, only to see it change because of a resurgence of anti-Semitism," de La Gorce said. "We depicted that shift visually by contrasting these silhouetted ballroom dancing couples with backgrounds made of racially charged newspaper articles and illustrations published during those years."

Shot by Grubin on a soundstage with professionally choreographed ballroom dancers, *Purim* is seen solely from the POV of someone looking into a ballroom from a distance. Subtle lighting adds a sense of mystery, with the dancers appearing only as nondescript silhouettes moving gracefully to an original score by composer Joseph Lanner.

Designed to convey both a sense of grandeur of the time and ominous changes on the horizon, Grubin's live action footage—was composited with footage of actual artifacts from the museum such as fine crystal candelabras and chandeliers, and print content such as ads, illustrations and newspaper articles.

One Fine Day also contributed creatively to the more editorially focused video titled *Revolution—heralding* an exhibit that focuses on the American Revolution.

Vicon House of Moves Goes Short For NHL and GME, Introduces 30 Superheroes

CLIENT
National Hockey League® (NHL)

PRODUCTION
Vicon House of Moves, Los Angeles
Brian Rausch, VP of prodn.; Peter Krygowski, director; Alberto Menache, VFX supervisor; Todd Arnsen, EP; David Chartier, creative dir.; Amy Calcote, post manager; DJ Hauck, technical supervisor; Mark Edwards, VFX producer; Steven Calcote, Joe Botana, video editors; Colleen Crosby, Heather McCann, Reshan Sabaratnam, assoc. producers; Katie Gravette, line producer; Troy Reynolds, stage manager; Rachel Swavely, capture operator; Nikola Dupkanic, video lead; Nick Brett, stunt coordinator; Craig Jensen, Dan Plum, stunt riggers; Kendal Miller, live-action DP; Teresa Porter, post coordinator;

Dustin Foster, pipeline coordinator; Eric LaShelle, lead animator; James Lipscomb, Ian Lang, Ryan Torrey, Mahyar Sadri, Eddie Kim, Craig Hwang, Matt Onheiber, Jennifer Anaya, Chad Schoonover, Whitney Rivers, Charles Searight. Jose Chaidez, animators; Tristan Maduro, sr. motion graphic animator/compositor; Brian Hayes, Tony Meister, motion graphics animators; Scott Franks, graphic designer; Bryce Lander, VFX artist; Adam Liepens, unreal TD/lead environment artist; Travis Eastep, lead environment artist; Cameron Petty, Tony Vogel, Garrett Robles, Reagan McCoy, Sarah Taylor, environment artists; York Schueller, supervising character TD; Corey Messer, lead character TD; Chad Provencer, pipeline/unreal TD; Loren Bordas, unreal artist; Cameron Fulton, pipeline TD; Paige Young, Destiny Bradley, character TDs; Josh Hutchins,

lead mo capture tracker/character TD; Wesley Welcomer, Alejandra Quintas, Colby Chase, editors.

THE WORK
Vicon House of Moves (HOM), a motion capture/animation company, was contracted by GME, a joint venture of the NHL and SLG Entertainment led by Stan Lee of POW! Entertainment, to develop a short, *Can They Save Us*, to help launch The Guardian Project. The Guardians, 30 animated superheroes created to reflect NHL team attributes, were introduced via a social media campaign. The campaign's culmination came during the NHL All-Star Game on Jan. 30 in the form of an animated short created by HOM that played in the stadium, on TV and has been posted online. The film introduces the new superheroes as they battle villain Deven Dark.



Movie Academy Honors 10 Scientific and Technical Achievements

Denny Clairmont, co-founder of Clairmont Camera, receives the John A. Bonner Medal of Commendation

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif.—The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) honored 10 scientific and technical achievements represented by 22 individual award recipients at its annual Scientific and Technical Awards Presentation at the Beverly Wilshire on Saturday (2/12).

Unlike other Academy Awards to be presented this year, achievements receiving Scientific and Technical Awards need not have been developed and introduced during 2010. Rather, the achievements must demonstrate a proven record of contributing significant value to the process of making motion pictures.

The Academy honorees for scientific and technical achievements are:

Scientific and Engineering Awards (Academy Plaques)

To Dr. Mark Sagar for his early and continuing development of influential facial motion retargeting solutions.

Dr. Sagar's work led to a method for transforming facial motion capture data into an expression-based, editable character animation system that has been used in motion pictures with a high volume of digital characters.

To Mark Noel for the design, engineering, and development, and to John Frazier for his contributions to the design and safety features, of the NAC Servo Winch System.

The NAC System allows full-size

cars, aircraft and other heavy props to be flown on wires with unprecedented freedom of motion and a high degree of safety, on-set and in real time. The intuitive control system responds to the motion of the operator's hand, permitting the recording and playback of all axes of motion simultaneously, which may be edited and refined for playback in subsequent takes.

To James Rodnunsky, Alex MacDonald and Mark Chapman for the development of the Cablecam 3-D volumetric suspended cable camera technologies.

The evolution of the Cablecam technology has made it possible to move a camera safely and accurately anywhere through a three-dimensional space.

To Tim Drnec, Ben Britten Smith and Matt Davis for the development of the Spydercam 3D volumetric suspended cable camera technologies.

The evolution of the Spydercam technology has made it possible to move a camera safely and accurately anywhere through a three-dimensional space.

Technical Achievement Awards (Academy Certificates)

To Greg Ercolano for the design and engineering of a series of software systems culminating in the Rush

render queue management system.

Mr. Ercolano's work has been influential across the industry, and has enabled scalable render farms at numerous studios.

To David M. Laur for the development of the Alfred render queue management system.

This system was the first robust, scalable, widely adopted commercial solution for queue management in the motion picture industry. Its user interface and support for multi-machine assignment influenced the design of modern day queue management tools.

To Chris Allen, Gautham Krishnamurti, Mark A. Brown and Lance Kimes for the development of Queue, a robust, scalable approach to render queue management.

Queue was one of the first systems that allowed for statistical analysis and process introspection, providing a framework for the efficient use of render farms.

To Florian Kainz for the design and development of the robust, highly scalable distributed architecture of the ObaQ render queue management system.

ObaQ has scaled from managing a few hundred processors in 1997 to many thousands today, with minimal changes to the original design.

To Eric Tabellion and Arnauld Lamorlette for the creation of a computer graphics bounce lighting methodology that is practical at feature film scale.

This important step in the evolution of global illumination techniques first used on the motion picture "Shrek 2," was shared with the industry in their technical paper "An Approximate Global Illumination System for Computer Generated Films."

To Tony Clark, Alan Rogers, Neil Wilson and Rory McGregor for the software design and continued development of cineSync, a tool for remote collaboration and review of visual effects.

Easy to use, cineSync has become a widely accepted solution for remote production collaboration.

Portions of the Scientific and Technical Awards Presentation will be incorporated into the Oscar® ceremony on Sunday, February 27, 2011, at the Kodak Theatre at Hollywood & Highland Center.

Clairmont honored

During the evening's award proceedings, Denny Clairmont, one of the industry's premier motion picture camera technologists, received the John A. Bonner Medal of Commendation by the AMPAS Board of Governors.

In 1976 Clairmont, along with his brother Terry, co-founded Clairmont Camera, a camera rental company that has grown into one of the largest in the world. In facilitating the exchange of ideas between camera users and manufacturers, Clairmont Camera has helped to bring new features and products into the marketplace. The company also assists student filmmakers by providing advice and equipment packages for use on thesis films.

"For more than three decades Denny has been at the forefront of camera technology, helping cinematographers, camera assistants and film students with evolving technologies and related equipment," said Tom Sherak, AMPAS president. "His dedication to his craft and service to the Academy are well known throughout the industry."

A member of the Academy's Scientific and Technical Awards Committee since 1993, Clairmont has served for several years on that and numerous other subcommittees.

Named in honor of the late director of special projects at Warner Hollywood Studios, the John A. Bonner Medal is awarded for "outstanding service and dedication in upholding the high standards of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences."

Actress Marisa Tomei served as emcee for the awards show.

The Mill LA Triples 3D Department, Breaks Ground on New Studio

CULVER CITY, Calif.—The Mill LA has hired eight new CG Artists.

The company's 3D department has grown rapidly in size, tripling in staff from the start of 2010 to present, with several of the latest key hires having contributed to a number of leading theatrical motion picture and television commercial productions.

Co-head of 3D Robert Sethi said, "Winning various visual effects and animation awards last year triggered a rush of quality projects."

The Mill LA team's body of work in 2010 included high-profile, CGI-driven spots such as Verizon's "Towers," Wrigley's "React" and Nintendo's "Past is Prologue".

Projects thus far in 2011 include a Liberty Mutual campaign with the Stylewar directing collective, and, following last year's Cannes Grand Prix of "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like," new Old Spice spots with Wieden + Kennedy, Portland, also directed by Tom Kuntz of MJZ who helmed



Back row (l-r): Michael Panov, Yorie Kumalasari, Gawain Liddiard, Nick Lines, Andre De Souza. Front row (l-r): Josh Hatton, Felix Urquiza, Sam Kao.

the original work in the campaign. A record number of Mill spots also made this year's Super Bowl.

"With a full range of expertise among our new hires, we have been able to refine the technical aspects of

our department and move into larger scale projects," related co-head of 3D John Leonti.

New visual effects hires include senior artist Josh Hatton, most recently with Hydraulx, who counts contribu-

tions to *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *Avatar*, 2012, 300 and many other films among his credentials.

Previously with ILM and Weta Digital, senior artist Sam Kao worked on a slew of films, including *Avatar* and sequels for *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars*. Senior artist Nick Lines' experience spans both features and commercials including Halo: Reach and Subaru "Crowd Rider" via his former roost, Animal Logic.

Senior artist Gawain Liddiard joins The Mill L.A. from Double Negative where he led a team of 20-plus artists. There he served as a lead artist for *Prince of Persia* and *Hellboy 2*, and senior artist on *Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince*.

Senior artist Felix Urquiza brings an array of experience in both features (Hydraulx) and commercials (Method) to The Mill LA.

Senior CG artist Andre De Souza's experience includes projects at Weta,

Animal Logic and Moving Picture Company (MPC).

Other new hires are CG artists Michael Panov and Yorie Kumalasari, who join from The Mill New York, where they worked on various commercial projects, including the award-winning Coca Cola commercial titled "It's Mine," which made a major splash with its debut on the '08 Super Bowl telecast. Nicolai Fuglsig of MJZ directed "It's Mine" for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

The spot garnered assorted accolades including '08 AICP Show honors in the Production, Visual Effects, and Animation categories.

The new 3D hires are only a part of The Mill's expansion story. The Mill's West Coast operation has developed significantly since arriving on the scene in 2007 and will be moving to a new space in Culver City this summer.

Construction began in December on a 30,000-sq-ft warehouse that will house additional suites, CG stations and newly created departments.

Reflecting On Challenges

VES-Winning
Artisans Discuss
Lessons Learned
And Obstacles
Overcome

A SHOOT Staff Report

When one thinks of the lauded feature film *Inception*, one can't help but think of its director Christopher Nolan—and deservedly so. Nolan earned a DGA Award nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement In Feature Film. He won the Writers Guild Award for Best Original Screenplay. And Nolan garnered the inaugural Visual Effects Society (VES) Visionary Award.

Yet as Nolan affirmed in accepting the latter honor, there are numerous artists who collaborate and contribute to making master works like *Inception*. The overall VES competition recognized that fact as *Inception* won all four categories in which it was nominated: Outstanding Visual Effects in a Visual Effects-Driven Feature Motion Picture; Outstanding Created Environment (Paris Dreamscape) in a Live-Action Feature; Outstanding Models and Miniatures (Hospital Fortress Destruction) in a Feature; and Outstanding Compositing in a Feature. The lead VFX house on *Inception* was Double Negative Visual Effects, which maintains studios in London and Singapore. Models and miniatures for the film came out of New Deal Studios, Los Angeles.

To shed more light on what goes into stellar work, *SHOOT* tapped into several of the artists who were VES Award recipients earlier this month, including talent at New Deal to discuss *Inception*; a rigger at Framestore, London, to share backstory on work for *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I*, which earned Outstanding Animated Character In a Live-Action Feature Motion Picture (for the character Dobby); and artisans at Method, Los Angeles, and MPC, London, regarding two of the winning commercials.

MPC won the VES Award for Outstanding Animated Commercial on the strength of Cadbury's "Stars V Stripes," which was directed by Nick Gordon of Academy Films, London, for agency Fallon, London. (Gordon has since left Academy and co-founded Somesuch & Co. in London.)

And Method's VES winner was Halo: Reach's "Deliver Hope," which earned distinction in the category Outstanding Animated Character in a Broadcast Program or Commercial. "Deliver Hope" was directed by Noam Murro of Biscuit Filmworks, Los Angeles, for agencytwoofifteen, San Francisco.

SHOOT posed the following two questions to visual effects artists involved in the VES Award-winning work:

- 1) What was the biggest creative challenge you faced on this project?
- 2) And what noteworthy surprise or surprises arose (a lesson learned or an unexpected discovery) during the course of the project?

Here's a sampling of their feedback:

Laurie Brugger, rigger, Framestore, London

1) Dobby's eyes proved a challenge for rigging—by design they had a large proportion of their curvature showing, and we found this sometimes distracting or cartoon like, especially from certain camera angles. We had to reshape his eyes without pulling the character [Dobby is a prime character in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I*] too far from the original design, which was already familiar due to his appearance in earlier films.

Instead of remodelling, we chose to modify their shape within the rig so changes could be more dynamic. In some ways this was super beneficial, as the deformers were used to define the surface shape, therefore we could see the deformation effects more clearly. For example, as the eyeball moves around, we can feel the "egg" shape of the eyeballs themselves displacing the skin.

This level of freedom in design, particularly in the rigging department, is rare for us in 3D character production and I think ultimately contributed to the overall success of Dobby's endearing quality.

2) One "aHa!" moment for me was seeing a test our animation supervisor, Pablo Grillo, created where he composited the reference actor's eyeball directly onto a render of the animated character. The contrast in the frequency of motion was really significant at that stage. The eyeball darting around, the eye area contractions, the entire orbital region was really alive with activity even in the smallest movement.

As a result, we explored further the presence of micro movements in facial muscle behavior—for example, small twitch like movement in the face, not necessarily caused by an intentional emotional expression. We found their relevance equal to traditional poses and experimented with incorporating them more in the rig.



Hospital fortress destruction scene from *Inception*.

VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

Dan Glass, senior creative director, Method, Los Angeles

1) The biggest challenge with Halo's Reach: "Deliver Hope" was trying to find a balance between the feeling of a cinematic trailer—with its expanse, narrative arc and more objective point of view—with that of the first person experience of the game itself. We wanted to immerse the audience in the battle whilst telling an important story in the Reach mythology which directly ties into the new game. We deliberately chose to start the piece in a very real environment, enhanced significantly with additional practical and CG explosions and alien creatures but nevertheless based in a recognizable reality. The spot builds to its epic ending weighing much more heavily on vast CG environments, digital matte paintings and complex effects simulations. Part of the challenge, as ever within a tight timeline, was allowing the filmmaking process a natural flexibility to evolve as a piece which meant some very careful planning to map out the broad strokes of the work and several custom tools to be able to adapt as required by the visuals and



Laurie Brugger

edit as everything came together.

2) The process, whilst supremely challenging in its schedule and creative demands, was extremely rewarding. Two aspects turned out better than expected: firstly we always planned to use Nuke and its 3D capabilities to the full force but we were very excited by how far we were able to push its capabilities. All 3D cameras were by default exported into the Nuke pipeline as well as scene geometry so that we were able to reproject textures and place elements correctly in 3D within the scenes. In a few cases shots were designed fully in Nuke (including 3D camera) and actually exported out to CG for generation of elements, and in a couple of instances we even used



Dan Glass

Nuke to animate, texture and light CG into the scene without the need to move material between the 2D and CG departments. Secondly we devised a system to handle in an automated fashion the color correction and conform process for the dozens of versions ultimately required for the international distribution. This was done in close collaboration with Company 3 and helped gain us many hours of additional shot design time.

Ian Hunter, creative director/co-founder, New Deal Studios, Los Angeles

1) What we did on the film *Inception* was provide the action of a large snow-bound mountain fortress as it



Ian Hunter

is destroyed with explosive charges. The scene starts with close-ups of the bombs going off using live action explosives done by the first unit effects crew. We at New Deal came into play to show the wider shots of the overall destruction of the fortress. We elected to build the fortress as a miniature, but a very large miniature. Using a miniature allowed us to film physical destruction and explosions that would interact with each other in a convincing way. In order to make sure the explosions and flames scaled out correctly—that the way the walls and floors broke apart looked realistic—meant that we had to build the model in the relatively large 1/6 scale, meaning the model was one-sixth the size

of the real building, if the real building ever existed.

Whenever we take on a project there are always new challenges that we have to overcome to accomplish the job. Looking back, these challenges make the job interesting, but when you're in it at the time it drives you crazy—"How are we going to do this?" So in the case of the fortress collapse from *Inception*, we had several challenges. Our director Christopher Nolan wanted the building to come down like a controlled demolition and he wanted to see the building collapsing from the bottom up. Also the action had to start in the front and appear to be a chain reaction of destruction that spread to the back. This meant we couldn't just build a big model and pack it with explosives and hope for the best. Rather we had to devise a way of bringing down the building that combine physical effects with pyrotechnics. Many parts of the building were mounted to hydraulic-powered elevator jacks that could pull the building down at a programmable speed. Floors were mounted to elaborate breakaway skeletons inside that

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AUSTIN CHICAGO DETROIT

LOS ANGELES NEW YORK SAN FRANCISCO

VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

	TITLE	VISUAL EFFECTS/ ANIMATION	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Huggies' "Soirée"	MassMarket, New York. Justin Lane, Rich Rama, executive producers; Nancy Nina Hwang, Marcus Lansdell, producers; Justin Romero, associate producer; Cass Vanini, editor; Damon Ciarelli, CG supervisor; Andy Jones, CG lead; Todd Akita, Jonah Friedman, Soo Hee Han, Xuan Siefert, CG artists; Tom Cushwa, CG modeler; Ian Brauner, CG pre-vis; Joerg Liebold, tracking lead; Denis Trutanic, tracking; David Parker, lead Flame; Jamie Scott, Joanne Unger, Jeen Lee, Adam Flynn, Flame artists. (Toolbox: Flame, Maya, Soft Image XSI, Boujou, Silhouette for Rotoscoping) Animation Buck, New York. Kate Treacy, Anne Skopas, executive producers; Kevin Hall, producer; Orion Tait, creative director; Lars Holmgren, CG supervisor; Kevin Couture, Arvid Volz, Dave Soto, 3D generalists; Ryan O'Phelan, CG lead/modeling/comping/texturing; Claudio Salas, texturing.	JWT New York	MJZ, bicoastal/international Fredrik Bond, director
2	 NBA's "Nash"	a52, Santa Monica Pat Murphy, VFX supervisor; Glyn Tebbut, lead Flame artist; Jennifer Sofio Hall, exec producer; Heather Johann, VFX producer. (Toolbox: Flame, Smoke)	Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Park Pictures, bicoastal Chris Sargent, director/DP
3	 Coca-Cola's "Siege"	Framestore, London Diarmid Harrison-Murray, VFX supervisor; Sarah Hiddlestone, VFX producer; Simon French, CG supervisor; Mike Mellor, animation lead; Johnny Han, crowd lead; Russell Dodgson, composite lead; Martin Aufinger, VFX lead; Simon Bourne, telecine. (Toolbox: Nuke, Maya, Houdini, Flame, Photoshop, Mental Ray, Mantra) Nexus, London Fx & Mat, directors; Chris O'Reilly, executive creative director; Julia Parfitt, exec producer; Isobel Conroy, produce; Claire Thompson, production manager.	Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.	Nexus Fx & Mat, directors
4	 Volkswagen's "Black Beetle"	The Mill, London Tim Bussell, shoot supervisor/3D lead artist; Rob Sethi, Patrick Krafft, shoot supervisors; Juan Brockhaus, lead 3D artist; Barnsley, Darren Christie, lead 2D artists; Adam Scott, colorist; Gemma Smith, VFX producer. (Toolbox: Flame, Baselight, Maya, Nuke, Softimage, ZBrush)	Deutsch LA	MJZ Dante Ariola, director
5	 Bridgestone's "Carma"	Method, Los Angeles Gil Baron, Andy Boyd, VFX supervisors; Robert Owens, exec producer/producer; Mike Wigart, producer; Andy Boyd, lead 3D artist; Masa Nartia, Joon Lee, Brian Burke, Kerry Graham, 3D artists; Jake Montgomery, lead Flame artist; Chris Hunsberger, Flame artist; Stephanie Ide, roto artist. (Toolbox: Maya, Houdini, Zbrush, Flame, Nuke)	The Richards Group, Dallas	House of Usher Films, Santa Monica, Calif. Kinka Usher, director
6	 Planters' "Tree-athlon"	LAIKA/house, Portland, Ore. Mark Gustafson, dir.; Lourri Hammack, EP; Rebecca Bowen, Colin Thacher, producers; Kirk Kelley, CD; Barry Bruce, animation dir.; Paul Harrod, art dir.; Fred Gardner, prodn design; Colin Batty, Felicie Haymoz, character design; Robin Ator, Chris Purdin, Aaron Sorensen, storyboards; Jenny Kincade, Lauren Bair, Don Flores, Jon David Buffam, Photoshop artists; Ktie Mello, fabrication dept. lead (character), Rob Melchior, art dept. lead (set/props); Tony Merrithew, sculptor; Colleen Flanigan, Sarah Hall, Charissa Niles, armaturists; Yvonne Kowsun, lead character painter; Margaret Mayer, lead costumer; Karl Richter, Patrick Van Pelt, EFX animation; Eric Adkins, DP; Julianna Cox, Wendy Fuller, Chris Ohlgren, Bartek Prusiewicz, Anthony Scott, Suzanne Twining, animators; John Nolan, David Trappe, mo. control; Rex Carter, Flame; Nick Childs, Michael Nicholas, composers. (Toolbox: After Effects, Nuke, Kuper, Lightroom)	BEING, New York	Smuggler, bicoastal Ringan Ledwidge, director
7	 Swedbank's "Under the Oak Tree"	Aardman Animations, Bristol, U.K. Steve Harding-Hill, director; Jason Fletcher-Bartholomew, producer; Mark Chamberlain, DP; Nathan Sale, lighting; Dave Osmand, Inez Woldman, Martin Davies, animators; Kate Timmons, assistant animator; Nick Herbert, rigger; Sarah Laborde, art director; Felicie Haymoz, character design; James Grant, set design; Theresa Whatley, Jo Hepworth, Eve Coy, storyboard; Alexis Hoskins, lead modelmaker; Johnny Tate, Sarah Edwards, Gary Losh, Grace Deberker, Terrie Payne, Sue Black, modelmakers; Rachel Bowen, Kath Miller, Rob Slagter, Sue Black, set dressers/prop makers; Fred Gray, scenic artist; Sion Lane, sets; Bram Twineham, CGI supervisor/VFX; Jim Lewis, CGI supervisor; Paule Quinton, Valeria Romano, Spencer Cross, Tom Readdy, composers. (Toolbox: Nuke X, Fusion 6, After Effects, Photoshop, Stop Motion 7, Mark Roberts' animoko motion control tracker, Canon 1D Mark 3s still camera)	Colony Agency Production AB, Stockholm Lowe Brindfors, Stockholm, Sweden	Aardman Animations, Bristol, U.K. Steve Harding-Hill, director
8	 JP Morgan Chase's "Change"	Psyop, bicoastal Alex Hanson, Thibault Debavey, creative directors; Lydia Holness, Neysa Horsburgh, exec producers; Eve Strickman, producer; Tony Barbieri, TD; Patrick Arrasmith, Pete Sickbert-Bennett, Lutz Vogel, Samantha Ballardini, Stephanie Davidson, designers; Borja Pena, Daniel Fine, Entae Kim, George Smaragdts, Helen Choi, Michael Shin, Russ Wooten, Soo Hee Han, Zed Bennett, Jordan Harvey, 3D artists; Borja Pena, Jason Conradt, composers. (Toolbox: Maya 2011, Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects)	mcgarrybowen, New York	Psyop/Smuggler, bicoastal Psyop, director
9	 Yahoo! Mail's "Lover Come Back"	Blacklist, New York Andrew Linsk, EP; Rachel Walchak, producer; Will Rexer, DP; Irfan Akdag, art director; Cass Vanini, editor; David Parker, Flame; Nick Tanner, color correction. (Toolbox: Flash, After Effects, Cinema 4D, Photoshop, Flame) SDF-1 Studios, Santa Monica, Calif. Tina Starkweather, producer; Morgan Schweitzer, character designer; Elad Tibi, Rustam Hasasnov, illustration; Evan Parsons, Luke Yoo, compositing; Eddie Moreno, Joshua Dotson, Shervin Etat, Victor Malcervelli, Jahmad Rollins, Jamal Otolorin, Song Kim, Leah Ordonia, cel animation; Luke Yoo, Luis Gonzalez, previs.	Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Blacklist, New York Zoe Wishart, director; Laurent Barthelemy, live-action director
10	 Chef Boyardee's "Nightlight"	MPC, Santa Monica Eric McCasline, VFX producer; Daniel Marsh, lead 3D artist; Rya Knowles, lead compositor; Fred Durand, 3D artist; Adam Frazier, Smoke artist; Brinton Jaecks, compositor. (Toolbox: Maya, Nuke, Smoke)	Venables Bell & Partners, San Francisco	Epoch Films, bicoastal Matt Aseton, director

A Pair Of Wild Rides: One To A Party, The Other To The Past

Huggies' "Soirée" And National Basketball Association's "Nash" Top SHOOT's Quarterly Chart Kicking Off 2011

A SHOOT Staff Report

A baby runs amok through a party full of adults. Yet paradoxically his fast-paced reckless abandon is depicted via freeze frames in a commercial entitled "Soirée" for Huggies. The still images create a sense of frenetic motion that captures the elusiveness of the baby whose dad is in hot pursuit but to no avail.

Meanwhile in another spot we open on a fresh-faced Steve Nash back in Victoria, British Columbia, in 1996, prior to his being drafted by the Phoenix Suns and becoming the basketball superstar he is today. This archival footage shows Nash wearing a Santa Clara University jersey as he practices on a hardwood court at a gym. All the while, we see a modern-day element inserted into this footage and interacting with the young Nash—that contemporary element is a youngster who purports to be from the future.

The time-traveler begins, "You're going to be a two-time MVP, seven-time all star, and you break your nose,

like, a dozen times." Incredulous, Nash smiles and drives toward the hoop and makes a lay-up.

The boy from the future continues, "Come on, Steve. Okay, okay. How 'bout this: ten years from now, you'll visit my school and it'll help turn my life around."

Not buying it, Nash steals the ball from the boy who says, "Still don't think I'm from the future, huh?" Nash sinks a three-point shot, prompting the boy to declare, "They're gonna love that shot in Phoenix," and the scene cuts to the NBA logo and tag, "Where amazing happens."

These two spots are distinctly different wild rides which top this quarter's SHOOT Visual Effects and Animation Chart. MassMarket, New York, was the visual effects house on the number one entry "Soirée" while right behind it was NBA's "Nash" for which a52, Santa Monica, was the effects studio.

Chris Sargent of Park Pictures directed and shot the NBA Entertainment



Huggie's "Soiree"

ment :30 for Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco. In a nutshell, a52 was tasked with designing a visual effects pipeline that would enable Sargent and the Goodby ensemble to get a genuine performance from the "future kid" and not have the youngster hindered by static cameras and by having to hit marks. Working with Sargent and editors Matt Murphy and Michael Wadsworth of Final Cut, the a52 coterie of talent-headed by VFX supervisor Pat Murphy-choreographed

a sequence of actions that could be split into different shots so that the focus wasn't on getting one complete performance, but rather a series of shots that when cut together told the story Sargent and Goodby envisioned. Prior to shooting, a52 cleaned the archival footage to remove Nash's high school coach and create a clean plate that the future kid could be composited into. After the edit was refined, tracking and lighting played a big role in the overall composite. There were

nuances in the archival footage that a52 had to replicate in order to make the composite feel believable.

Now here's a more detailed backstory on the number one entry for Huggies:

"Soirée"

Directed by Fredrik Bond of MJZ and featuring the VFX work of MassMarket, the Huggies' :30 "Soirée" for JWT New York centers on a baby who wreaks havoc at an upscale loft party.

The spot was designed to promote Huggies Little Movers diapers, which are shaped to fit in a way that allows babies to move faster and more freely. That insight led the creative team at JWT to wonder, could Huggies have created a diaper that has babies moving so fast they can't be caught? From that question came the idea of producing a spot that finds a baby in overdrive. But rather than have the baby whizzing around at full tilt speed, which would seem like an ob-

Continued on page 21

Take Your Career To The Next Level

SHOOT's 9th Annual 2011 New Directors Search Is On!

Do You Have What It Takes To Be The Next Hot New Director?

New Directors Wanted For SHOOT's Class of 2011 Talent Showcase

SHOOT is now conducting a worldwide search to discover the best up-and-coming directors who, based on their initial work, show promise to make positive contributions to advertising and/or entertainment in its traditional and emerging forms. The search is conducted by SHOOT's editorial staff with input from ad agency creatives, heads of production, production company heads and established directors.

After the best work is selected SHOOT will compile the 2011 SHOOT New Directors Showcase Reel and interview the directors for a special feature that will appear in SHOOT's May 6 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 ad agency and production industry decision-makers at SHOOT's 2010 New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA Theatre in

New York City on May 10th. Coverage of the event will appear in SHOOT in June and the showcase reel will be posted on SHOOT's website.

See last years 2010 New Directors Web Reel at <http://nds.shootonline.com>. The directors selected for the Showcase come from diverse backgrounds. Some first established themselves on the agency side, while others were DPs, feature filmmakers or film students. One bond the directors share is great style and vision, whether it be reflected in comedy, visuals or storytelling.

ENTER SHOOT'S New Directors Search... This Is Opportunity!

It could be a big step towards being noticed by companies that can represent you and ad agency & entertainment industry executives that can hire you.

Eligibility: Directing advertising or entertainment content professionally less than 3 years.



New Directors receive enormous career-making exposure!

"There are many wonderful phone calls one can receive in life. But I have to say, few feel as good as, 'Hello, you've just been included in SHOOT's New Directors Showcase.' Like the chicken and the egg, I'm still not sure which came first: getting to direct good scripts or getting into SHOOT's New Directors Showcase."

Harold Einstein
SHOOT 2008
New Director,
Station Film



"Being included in SHOOT's New Directors Showcase is one of those great touchstones. Besides the breadth of industry exposure only SHOOT can provide, it provides a very real increase in offers for work as well as validation that you're doing something right. I will always count it as a big moment in my career."

Kevin Kerwin
SHOOT 2009
New Director,
Authentic Films



"It was quite an honor to be selected to participate in the 2010 SHOOT New Directors Showcase. I am especially humbled to join the ranks of the super creative and innovative directors with whom I share this special honor. Being selected for the showcase affirmed for me the value of my determined effort to create work that's not just "good enough", but better than anyone imagined. Thanks for the shot in the arm, SHOOT!"

Varda Hardy, 2010
New Directors
Showcase, LiveTribe
Productions



What Work is Eligible to Enter?

Category 1
Traditional Broadcast: TV spots, spec work, cinema ads, branded content, music videos, trailers, broadcast promos

Category 2
Alternative Media Content: webisodes, spots created for online, mobile-phone content, in-game ads, advergaming, virals, alternate reality gaming, ads created for PDAs

Category 3
Film/TV Entertainment Content; feature films, independent films, short films, TV Programs

Directors can submit work completed during 15 month period of Jan. 2010-March 2011. (excerpts from shorts, longform film or other entertainment fare should be NO MORE than 5 minutes in length)

Final Entry Deadline: **April 4, 2011**

Entry Fee
\$85.00 for first piece of work, \$35.00 each additional entry from same director.

Eligibility
Directing advertising or entertainment content professionally less than 3 years.

For additional entry information, www.shootonline.com/go/search
For questions, please contact Bob Goldrich at email: rgoldrich@shootonline.com phone: 323/960-8035, ext 6681

Become a 2011 New Directors Showcase Event Sponsor! (receive 4 months of promotion)
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Entry Forms are available at WWW.SHOOTONLINE.COM/GO/SEARCH

Will Anthem Stir Action?

A High-Profile Catalyst Emerges; Another Could Be Curtailed

A SHOOT Staff Report

The Detroit Lions did not play in the Super Bowl this month. Nor did Ford Field host Super Bowl XLV pitting the Green Bay Packers against the Pittsburgh Steelers. Yet Detroit got a big shot in the arm from the Big Game in the form of a two-minute Chrysler commercial that aired during the telecast to critical and public acclaim.

“Born of Fire,” directed by Samuel Bayer of Serial Pictures for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore., plays as a stirring anthem to Detroit. In some respects the sought after economic comeback of Detroit is intertwined with that of Chrysler as we see gritty urban images and vacant factories, yet feel an attitude of perseverance and survival in the face of adversity. Also captured are city landmarks, skyscrapers and facial expressions of hope from people in the Motor City. We also eventually see Eminem driving a Chrysler 200, with all the action playing to the strains of his music from *8 Mile*.

“What does this city know about luxury, huh? the narrator asks. “What does a town that’s been to hell and back know about the finer things in life? Well, I’ll tell you—more than most. You see, it’s the hottest fires that make the hardest steel.

“Because when it comes to luxury, it’s as much about where it’s from as who it’s for. Now, we’re from America, but this isn’t New York City or the Windy City or Sin City, and we’re certainly no one’s Emerald City.”

Online buzz was overwhelmingly positive about the spot and its “Imported from Detroit” mantra/tagline.

And industry feedback was generally glowing, as reflected in *SHOOT*’s annual informal survey of ad agency creatives regarding the crop of Super Sunday ads. For example, Neal Davies, partner in Naked Communications, New York, assessed, “What I really enjoyed, what saved the Super Bowl for me, was Chrysler’s ode to Detroit. A two-minute celebration about a city that’s been to hell and back. It was done in such a convincing and beautiful way, with the Eminem music from *8 Mile* and then the reveal that he’s driving the car. They used the two minutes to make a statement in the Super Bowl environment, asking us to

indulge them while they shared what they thought was something important. That stood out for me in a positive way.”

Cindy Winetroub Rogers, creative director, Partners+Napier, Rochester, N.Y., said of the Super Bowl commercials, “My favorite was the Detroit anthem for Chrysler—powerfully written, beautifully executed, cinematic and big yet real and honest. I’m a sucker for those manifesto sort of things. It made me want to root for Detroit and Chrysler.”

Whether that rooting will translate into buying Chrysler offerings remains to be seen. Still, the Chrysler anthem did—on the biggest ad stage of them all—what its creators hoped it would do: make Chrysler a buzz-worthy topic, the first step in reviving a brand.

This rallying cry seemed to buoy not only Chrysler but Michigan itself. Paradoxically, though, this catalyst commercial—though it was shot entirely in Detroit with a local cast and crew—didn’t qualify for Michigan’s extensive tax credit program, which applies to theatrical features and television programs. So one catalyst wasn’t aided by another. But now there’s even some question as to whether those filming incentives will be as inviting as before, even for movies and TV.

Indeed as an anthem on the Super Bowl invigorates Michigan, there’s some doubt as to the future of another catalyst—the state’s groundbreaking tax credits program. It all boils down to whether or not the expense of the initiative, which covers as much as 42 percent of local expenses for an eli-

gible project, is justified on the basis of return on investment. That debate went on during the recent gubernatorial election won by Rick Snyder and continues as states throughout the U.S. battle significant budget shortfalls and understandably are looking to cut expenses.

As *SHOOT* went to press, Gov. Snyder was scheduled to release his first fiscal year budget for Michigan. The film industry is keeping a watchful eye on that budget in that it’s likely that changes could be made in the state’s film tax credits program. During the gubernatorial campaign, it was anticipated that Sny-



Chrysler’s Super Bowl spot, “Born of Fire”

der would look to rein in the filming incentives package. He has said that the program needs to be carefully explored and scrutinized. Speculation as to how or if he intends to reform the program will be answered in large part with the release of his budget for the State of Michigan.

Snyder's predecessor, former Gov. Jennifer Granholm, said last year that the program has proven to be successful. "Michigan's film incentive program has made our state one of the top three in the nation for the production of all types of media," said Granholm during her weekly radio address on April 2, 2010. "An entire new industry is emerging in Michigan, one that'll help keep our talented young people here."

In its 2009 annual report, the Michigan Film Office related that filming expenditures in the state increased from \$125 million in 2008 to an estimated \$223.6 million in '09. That figure was a mere \$2 million in '07, prior to the incentives program being enacted.

In its latest semi-annual project report released last month, the Michigan Film Office related that in 2010, 119 production companies applied for film and digital media incentives, with 69 projects approved. Forty-eight incentivized projects wrapped in '10. From July 1-December 31, 2010, 26 approved projects represented a total estimated Michigan investment of some \$168.6 million as compared to some \$65.7 million in credits requested. Additionally, many of the projects approved in late '10 do not start production until this year.

However, another report—prepared

by economist David Zin for the state's Senate Fiscal Agency—concluded that the price of the Michigan film incentives program exceeds the economic activity generated.

Indeed Zin's study does not look at lensing incentives through rose-colored glasses. Part of his report's conclusion read:

"The analysis of film incentives is a complex process. Many assumptions and interactions must be accounted for and studies will differ in both the manner and degree to which these issues are addressed. Failure to address several of the issues that arise can cause results to differ by factors of more than 10, or even produce results that differ in the direction of their impact. Studies that have produced lower impacts for film incentives have generally addressed more of the issues and/or used more realistic assumptions, but such a claim cannot be made universally about the studies...."

"Regardless of what factors are accounted for in the analysis, film incentives have generally exhibited a positive private sector impact in the form of creating employment and generating income. The magnitude of impacts depends upon a wide variety of assumptions. In Michigan, however, the sector is very small relative to the size of the economy, accounting for less than 0.1 percent of gross domestic product by state and about 0.14 percent of wage and salary employment. If the MSU [Michigan State University Center for Economic Analysis] report's employment projections are correct, the sector will increase in size by approximately 50 percent over the

next five years. However, this growth would represent only roughly 2,900 jobs, about 8.1 percent of the jobs lost between May and June 2008. The information sector, of which media production is a subsector, lost 3,100 jobs in 2008—even with the film incentives. If the incentives have the impact forecasted in the MSU study, it will be insufficient to bring the information sector back to its 2007 level. Any probable impact from the film incentives is likely to have a negligible impact on economic activity in Michigan, particularly when the economy is viewed as a whole.

"As is true for most incentives," continued the Zinn report, "the film incentives represent lost revenue and do not generate sufficient private sector activity to offset their costs completely. As with other types of incentives and credits, whether the relationship of costs to benefits is acceptable is a decision for individual policy-makers."

Still there are tangible benefits that are difficult to put a specific dollar amount to, such as the impact on tourism with state locations and attractions gaining exposure in film and on TV. Plus there's the infrastructure being created by increased filming business. For example, Raleigh Studios is slated to open a stage facility and production complex in Michigan later this year.

The Chicago Code

Premiering on FOX earlier this month was the primetime series *The Chicago Code*, which according to early projections will generate approximately \$25 million in economic activity and create more than 400 Il-

linois jobs. Created by Rockford, IL, native Shawn Ryan and starring Chicago born Jennifer Beals, *The Chicago Code* is a drama that follows Chicago police detectives daily on the streets of the Windy City.

Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn described the series as being a "great example of how the film industry creates good Illinois jobs and improves our economy. The state's strengthened film tax credit demonstrates our commitment to growing this industry and creating more opportunities for people to work."

During a visit with the series cast and crew, Gov. Quinn indeed affirmed the importance of Illinois' Film Tax Credit as being instrumental in spurring growth of the state's film industry and infrastructure. Illinois offers a 30 percent tax credit to filmmakers for money spent on Illinois goods and services, including wages paid to Illinois residents. Previously the tax credit was 20 percent. As a demonstration of Illinois' commitment to the film business, the yearly sunset provision was removed in '09. The tax credit program applies to features, TV, commercials, branded entertainment and other content forms.

Betsy Steinberg, managing director of the Illinois Film Office, noted that *The Chicago Code* provided "an additional boost to what has already been a terrific year for the Illinois film industry. Not only has production of the series been great for the local labor force and industry vendors, but the economic impact—on top of other blockbuster productions [i.e., *Transformers 3*] this year—is great for the

Illinois economy and job creation.

Incentive impact

While several states face staggering deficits which have caused them to revisit the viability of their film incentive programs, perhaps they, including Michigan, could learn a lesson from Los Angeles, a production mecca which too has a massive budget shortfall as does for that matter the State of California.

California is in the second year of its Film and Television Tax Credit program, which has proven successful but underscores how more is needed. With \$100 million allocated this current fiscal year, 30 projects (19 features, eight TV series and three telefilms) applied and were approved fairly quickly, exhausting the year's funding, and leaving assorted others on a wait list.

Still, limited reach is better than no reach at all as reflected in on-location filming activity as reported by FilmL.A., the not-for-profit community benefit organization that coordinates permits for organization that coordinates permits for filmed entertainment shot on-location in the City of Los Angeles, unincorporated parts of Los Angeles County and various other local jurisdictions.

On-location feature production posted a 28.1 percent fourth quarter gain and a year-over-year gain of 8.1 percent (5,378 film permitted production days in 2010 vs. 4,976 in 2009). According to FilmL.A., the annual increase can be wholly attributed to California's Film and Television Tax Credit. Estimates from the California Film Commission show that since program inception, incentivized projects have injected \$2 billion in direct spending into California communities, including over \$697 million in wages paid to below-the-line workers.

In 2010 alone, the state program attracted dozens of new feature film projects to Los Angeles, which were responsible for 26 percent of local feature production for the year (totaling 1,400 permitted production days). Were it not for these projects, 2010 would have been the worst year on record for on-location feature filming in Los Angeles.

"The California Film and Television Tax Credit is one of many ladders to help our state climb out of the fiscal ditch we have dug for ourselves by pushing away businesses and jobs," said state Assemblyman Cameron Smyth (Santa Clarita, Calif.).

She continued, "Here in the legislature, we need to use the success of this tax credit as a model for how to stimulate California's economy. I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to create jobs and to continue fostering a healthy environment for production."



Stirring scenes from Chrysler's "Born of Fire."

SXSW Preview; Directors With Spotmaking Ties A Major Presence

Continued from page 1

years. The script he and Mark Palermo penned turned out to be *Detention*, an offbeat horror/comedy.

The storyline for the movie centers on a 17-year-old girl who's sent to detention where she must survive a slasher film killer and save the world in time for the high school prom. The cast includes Josh Hutcherson, Dane Cook, Shanley Caswell, Spencer Locke and Aaron David Johnson.

Six months ago, related Kahn, he was on a train with his producer and second unit director on a commercial shoot. Kahn turned to everybody and declared that he was going to make *Detention* on his own dime. Two days later he was prepping and casting.

The film was originally scheduled for a 31-day shoot but grew to 51 days, lensed during part of last summer when the desired high school was more readily available as a venue.

Kahn describes *Detention* as "a genre-busting movie." And he busted a number of conventions in order to bring it to fruition.

"I wanted to make a movie that I personally enjoyed," related Kahn. "Movies feel very stale, very committee to me today. I liked the freedom I got by funding the film myself, along with a few investors here and there. I wanted to see if without censors or politics I could make a movie that would appeal to me. I never thought about the festival circuit for the film. I'm not strategizing in order to get a

distributor. I'm just putting the movie out there—I made it strictly for myself and hope that others will like it. I've come this far and haven't thought about how to sell it. I just wanted to make a bad ass movie for myself. It's like I catered to my tastes. The festival is an open party but it's all my food. I know it sounds crazy but even if the film doesn't get picked up, I'm happy to have done it and to now be able to watch it myself."

Kahn called in favors from his music video and commercial collaborators who worked for no or little pay. Among the artisans whom he brought into the *Detention* fold were cinematographer Christopher Probst and editor David Blackburn who is on the roster of Beast.

Upon wrapping shooting, Kahn didn't take a breather while he leisurely posted *Detention*. Instead he dove right back into commercials and videos, handling post for the movie in-between those projects.

Among his most recent exploits were FOX NASCAR promos that aired during the Super Bowl, an LG commercial for BBDO China, a series of Old Navy spots for Crispin Porter+Bogusky, and videos for such artists as Dr. Dre and Keri Hilson.

Kahn credited his music video and commercialmaking with informing his approach to features.

"There's no way I could have ever made this movie without the technical and artistic level experience of do-



Joseph Kahn

ing commercials and videos," noted Kahn. "Plus most of my collaborators on this film were from the commercial and music video worlds—the rest were support people who were new to me but sacrificed for the movie. I have since brought them into my commercial and video work."

Conversely *Detention* has impacted Kahn's video and spot endeavors. "Shooting a movie over 51 days can't help but influence how you see narrative, how you see what works and what doesn't. I'm the kind of person who has to work really hard and keep shooting constantly to get better. Practice makes perfect. The experience of shooting so many days in a row and being responsible for the movie helps you grow."

SXSW lineup

Opening the 2011 SXSW Festival is the Summit Entertainment film *Source Code*, an action thriller which is the second feature from director Duncan Jones, and stars Jake Gyllenhaal, Michelle Monaghan, Vera Farmiga and Jeffrey Wright.

Gyllenhaal portrays decorated soldier Colter Stevens who's part of a government experiment called "Source Code," a program that enables him to cross over into another man's identity during the last eight minutes of his life. This thrusts Stevens into trying to thwart a terrorist attack in Chicago, reliving the terrorist incident repeatedly, gathering clues each time until he able to solve the mystery of who is behind the bombing.

Director Jones is an SXSW alum-

nus. SXSW Film Conference and Festival producer Janet Pierson said of Jones, "His debut *Moon* showed an intelligence, skill and exceptional use of limited resources that's exactly the kind of filmmaking we love to support. *Source Code* is a terrific follow-up; it's a smart, suspenseful thriller, and a perfect fit for our 2011 festival opening night."

As for the aforementioned directors with commercialmaking ties, Moxie's Morris will have his *Tabloid* screened at SXSW. Already a hit on the festival circuit, *Tabloid* tells the tale of Joyce McKinney and the infamous "Case of the Manacled Mormon." In 1977, McKinney, a former Miss Wyoming, flew to England with a pilot and a bodyguard to abduct the love of her life. Or was it to liberate him from a cult? McKinney, all of the people who cross her path, and the British tabloids help construct an epic *Rashomon*-like tale that is as hilarious and surprising, part dark comedy, part film noir.

Just last month, Sundance Selects acquired North American rights to *Tabloid*. The company plans to continue the movie's festival run before rolling it out theatrically and on its video on-demand platform in the summer.

Also screened at SXSW is *How to Die in Oregon*, directed by Peter D. Richardson whose spotmaking home is Food Chain Films.

Richardson's documentary tells the complex stories of terminally ill Oregonians as they decide whether to end their lives by lethal overdose under Oregon's Death With Dignity Act. How their families and friends are impacted is also explored. The film was edited by Greg Snider of The Whitehouse. Last month, *How to Die in Oregon* won the Sundance Film Festival's coveted grand jury U.S. documentary prize.

Director Susser, who's available for commercials via Bob Industries, will have his feature *Hesher* shown at SXSW. Written by Susser and David Michod, *Hesher* centers on the title character whose favorite things include pornography, loud music and "burn-

ing shit down." His is just the brand of anarchy that's needed to shake the burdens of sorrow from a boy and his father. Cast includes Natalie Portman, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Rainn Wilson, Devin Bochu and Piper Laurie.

Hesher, *How to Die in Oregon* and *Tabloid* are part of SXSW's Festival Favorites program which showcase acclaimed films and select previous premieres from this season's festivals worldwide.

Another film to be screened at SXSW as part of the Favorites program is *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold*, a documentary exploring product placement in movies—but with a unique twist. Director Morgan Spurlock made the movie itself an exercise in product placement, directly pitching companies on the idea of funding the documentary in return for visibility in the film. The movie shows Spurlock as he seeks backing from corporate folks, brand managers and ad execs.

Those companies that provided support were somewhat fearless in that there was no promise of how they would be depicted in the film. Spurlock's credits after all include *Super Size Me* in which he showed the effects of eating a diet consisting exclusively of food from McDonald's for an entire month.

Nonetheless coming aboard *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold* were lead sponsor POM Wonderful 100% Pomegranate Juice, Hyatt Hotels, JetBlue, Amy's Kitchen, Sheetz Convenience Stores and outdoor/lifestyle shoes and clothing company Merrell.

Spurlock's film pretty much makes the film's 13 "sponsors" look good as risk takers for their decision to align themselves with a project that delves into the at times unseemly mesh of art and commerce. In addition to Spurlock's pitch sessions, the documentary also interviews filmmakers such as Quentin Tarantino, Brett Ratner and Peter Berg regarding product placement and artistic compromise.

The Greatest Movie Ever Sold is slated for wide release in April by Sony Pictures Classics.



Detention

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VES Winners Share Project Insights

Continued from page 15

allowed the walls to crumble away faster than the building was falling. And specific explosive charges were added at the base of faux support columns to “trigger” the collapse, even though most of these explosions were for show and the actual falling was done mechanically.

Another big concern when making this scene happen was that the building itself was mostly built sort of upside down. The main building is an inverted pyramid or ziggurat—smaller at the base than it the top. So it is inherently unstable. Plus we had to develop a new technique for manufacturing all of the wall and floor parts in a way that they would be strong enough to support themselves but weak enough to break up on cue. It was like some huge Faberge egg, and we had to hoist it up on a crane to stand 40 feet in the air in our backlot to shoot in a very specific natural lighting condition at a specific time of day in order to match the look of the live-action footage we were cutting into. There were over 200 individual explosive and mechanical effects that had to be timed out to the literal split second in order to pull off this wave of destruction. And after we did it once, we took the broken parts down and put up a new one to do it all over again within days. What’s so challenging about this work



Jake Mengers

is coming up with a prototype—something that has never been done before—and finding a way to do it so it looks like you can do it over and over again in a specific manner. We were thrilled to have received the VES Award for Best Miniature in a Feature, especially on the same night Christopher Nolan was being honored with the first Visionary award from the VES. So I guess we did something right.

Jake Mengers,
VFX creative director,
MPC, London

1) When the script [for Cadbury’s “Stars V.Stripes”] first arrived, it was the intention to create the entire commercial from live action footage. This process would have meant piecing together a narrative using stock footage of underwater creatures and shot elements. 3D was to be used for augmenting creature

markings and seaweed bubbles.

However, we soon realized that finding the right stock footage to tell the story was not straightforward. So Nick [director Gordon] asked us to recreate the creatures in 3D. If we could create the whole cast in 3D, we would be able to have much more control with the narrative and give back the power to direct a character piece.

The stock that had been found became reference for the 3D, storyboards were drawn up and then reality dawned. In the first run of boards the creature count was over 20 different species. Many of these were dropped and we ended up with 14 creatures, not forgetting the seaweed bubbles, sand, water and detritus elements. Although this represented a huge challenge in terms of sheer volume of work, there was nothing ground breaking about our approach. We used a tried and tested 3D pipeline of Maya, Z-brush, Real Flow, Mental Ray and Nuke.

2) Our 3D/Nuke pipeline proved again that it is the only tool that gives you the flexibility to easily exchange 3D and share the workload. Importing cameras from Maya gave the compositor control over projecting and rebuilding matte-paintings in a 3D view. Though this was possible before, it’s the ease at which the two disciplines now merge that’s impressive.

MassMarket Tops Quarterly Chart

Continued from page 17

vious route to take, the creative team, including copywriter Daniel Gonzalez and art director David Suarez, created a sense of speed through a series of frozen vignettes. While the baby is a whirlwind of destruction, whipping around the party and knocking over everything from a plate of spaghetti to an aquarium with his dad in hot pursuit, the action is depicted in a series of intricate still moments.

At the outset of the project, senior integrated producer Owen Katz was confident his creative colleagues at JWT had conceptualized a brilliant spot, but he confessed he wasn’t sure Bond would even look at the brief given that it was for a diaper commercial.

Bond did look at it and was impressed by the possibilities and challenges offered by the concept. The director not only executed what he read on paper, but he “took it the next mile. He added value. He pushed the boundaries. He pushed the budget,” Katz said with a laugh. “He made the spot better, and you don’t always get that when you hire a director.”

Given the complexity of what JWT and Bond wanted to pull off, MassMar-

ket executive producer Justin Lane felt it was important to get everyone involved in the project in one room together to plot out a course of action. Going low-tech, Lego toys were spread out on a conference table, serving as representations of the people in the spot, and a camera phone was flown through the setup to show how the camera would move within the environment. MassMarket used the resulting video to create an animated pre-vis.

Just over a week later, Bond and DP Hoyte van Hoytema shot “Soirée” on location at a Manhattan loft. “We shot all of it for real,” Bond said.

Each vignette was arranged and lit, and shot individually, a motion control camera snaking through the scene. For the most part, the actors, which included Rod Luzzi as the dad and Bond’s friend Emil Moller, whom he described as an amazing pantomime, had to make an expression and hold it. Some were standing, while others hung from the air on wires. (A mannequin stood in for the baby.) But Bond didn’t require total stillness. “If you look closely, they are all moving slightly,” Bond shared, explaining that the movement—you’ll see one

girl’s eyes darting toward the end of “Soirée”—gave the spot life.

As far as postproduction, MassMarket touched every frame of the spot, rotoscoping the individual vignettes and marrying them together; adding 3D elements, including the cake and cake bits we see hanging in the air and the water in the fish tank; completely removing the ceiling of the loft and replacing it with a 3D ceiling; and speeding up or slowing down certain segments. Massive amounts of rig and wire removal were also performed.

When it came to marrying the vignettes, “Something that worked to our advantage was the spot was shot on RED,” sr. Flame artist Jamie Scott said. “Shooting digitally meant the motion control shots lined up a lot better than if it had been shot on film.”

The biggest challenge was the 3D head replacement on the baby, according to lead Flame artist David Parker. Katz credited MassMarket with developing a camera rig that—as unobtrusively as possible—swung around a real baby and captured numerous facial expressions from varying angles. MassMarket’s 3D department then used those stills to create CGI baby heads.

February 18, 2011 SHOOT 21

Emerging Studio Leviathan Primetime Ready

CHICAGO – The principals of production studio Leviathan announced that their latest work for Whirlpool and advertising agency Arc Worldwide debuted as part of the official Super Bowl XLV pre-game broadcast on Fox. Company exec producer Chad Hutson, exec creative director Jason White, chief scientist Matt Daly feel Leviathan is now prepared to face the world’s biggest content creation challenges.

Grammy Awards TV Ads Celebrity Endorsements Soar

LOS ANGELES -- GreenLight released the results of its annual GreenLight Ad Gauge of the 53rd annual Grammy Awards, revealing that the number of celebrity endorsements in the show’s ads have returned to pre-recession levels. Nearly one out of every four ads featured a celebrity endorsement, a 47% increase from last year and more than 250% increase from 2009 during the depths of the recession.

Tyles Spindel Joins MAKE + MODEL

LOS ANGELES -- MAKE + MODEL has added to their already solid directing core with the acquisition of the versatile Tyler Spindel, an accomplished writer, director, and stand-up comedian. His directorial work crosses the realms of film and advertising, with movie promo sketches for “The Expendables,” “Burlesque,” and “Just Go With It” to his credit. Spindel’s commercial credits include directing spots for Bacardi, Samsung, AT&T, Mountain Dew, and Garnier. In the comedy realm, the Harvard University graduate is repped by William Morris Endeavor Entertainment

Pixeldust Creates Prehistoric Creatures For Nat Geo

BETHESDA, MD -- Pixeldust Studios has created a dramatic presentation of prehistoric creatures that were featured in a one hour special presentation of the “Explorer” series which aired February 14th, 2011 on the National Geographic Channel.

MuchMusic Director Michael Maxxis Gets Juno Nom

EDMONTON -- Director Michael Maxxis has been nominated for the 2011 Juno Awards for his directing work with Canadian rockers Billy Talent’s “Saint Veronika.” Maxxis won the 2010 MuchMusic Video Director of the Year Award for the same video in June.

Elias Scores In Super Bowl Producing Music For 6 Spots

SANTA MONICA, CA, February 08, 2011 -- Elias Arts created and produced original music for six TV spots, on behalf of Budweiser, Audi, Chevy, BMW and Lexus, featured during Super Bowl XLV.

Hollywood Icon Connie Stevens Directing A Western

LOS ANGELES -- Hollywood icon Connie Stevens has attached to direct her second feature film, “Prairie Bones.” The film will be produced by IsWas, It Starts With A Story Productions, principals: Susan Touchbourne, Tom Ecobelli, Carolyn Long, Concetta Di Matteo.

Method Builds CG Beaver for Bridgestone Bowl Spot

LOS ANGELES -- Visual effects company Method recently completed work on Bridgestone’s :30 “Carma” via agency The Richards Group. The commercial, which debuted during Super Bowl XLV, features a beaver that repays a surprised motorist’s kindness. Method VFX Supervisor/Lead 3D Artist and Producer Mike Wigart discuss the challenges of creating the CG beaver.

Commercial Helmer Jim Sonzero Launches Sonzero Films

HOLLYWOOD -- Commercial Director Jim Sonzero has opened a new production company, Sonzero Films, in alliance with Los Angeles based Smashbox Studios. The new company’s primary focus is advertising, servicing brands and creating brand related media in domestic and global markets.

Filmworkers Colorists Subject of Art Portraits

CHICAGO -- Colorists are used to making images look beautiful, but almost never do they find themselves in front of the lens, serving as the subject matter for provocative pictures. Photographer Dean George has created imaginative portraits of colorists from Filmworkers facilities here.

Stardust’s Slamdunk Animation for adidas

SANTA MONICA, CA -- Production company Stardust Los Angeles was tapped by 180 LA to give its latest brand campaign for adidas Basketball a retro urban, illustrative twist. Directed by Stardust’s Jake Banks, Stardust handled all animation, including traditional cel animation overlaid on top of live-action footage, and edited and finished the campaign, which broke in China, France and Spain.

Rabbit’s +jacksonkarinja Drive Change For Kia

LOS ANGELES -- Rabbit, Bicoastal, directing duo +jacksonkarinja fuse eco-consciousness and driving space in the new :30, “Share the Road,” for Kia out of David & Goliath Canada, Inc. The spots were shot in the San Francisco bay area and premiered for Canadian broadcast in early January.

2150 Welcomes Editor Alejandro Santangelo

MIAMI -- 2150 has added award-winning film editor Alejandro Santangelo to its staff. Santangelo recent editorial work includes spots for such top brands as Coca-Cola, McDonalds, Heineken, Axe, Renault and Subway.

For the full stories, videos, and contacts [and many more] visit SHOOT Publicity Wire (SPW) at www.SHOOTonline.com. SPW is a publicity news release distribution service for the filmmaking, commercialmaking, television, cinema, and online & mobile video production and postproduction Industries. To get info on SPW and to post your news release visit www.shootonline.com/go/publicitywire.

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Leading Commercial & Film DIRECTORS Profiles

In-depth look at some of today's Top Directors & their recent work

Up-And-Coming DIRECTORS

Emerging Directors you're sure to be hearing more about soon

Cinematographers & Cameras

Perspective from leading DPs with insights into current projects / cameras they are using.

Southeast Production

SHOOT checks out some directorial talent in the region.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES, NEWS & SCREENWORK

Music & Sound

Our first quarterly Music & Sound feature of 2011 looks at agency producers taking on music responsibilities- PLUS SHOOT's Top Ten Tracks Chart.

Latest advertising & entertainment production and post industry news

plus Top Spot of the Week, The Best Work You May Never See, regular columns

NAB Preview: A look at the upcoming NAB Show.

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News

street talk

Director Kim Gehrig, a noted agency creative at Mother who broke into the directorial/production house ranks via Academy Films, London, has joined London-based Somesuch & Co., which will handle her in the U.K. She will be represented internationally via Somesuch & Co's close partnership with Caviar in Los Angeles, Belgium, Amsterdam and Paris. Among her directing credits is the Ikea "Always Find You in the Kitchen at Parties" spot. Gehrig earned inclusion into SHOOT's 2009 New Directors Showcase....Feature director Edouardo Ponti has joined superstudio, Santa Monica, for spot representation.

Ponti's credits include his feature debut, *Between Strangers* starring Sophia Loren and Mira Sorvino, which premiered at the Venice and Toronto International Festivals. Last year, Ponti directed *Away We Stay*, the first in a series of branded short films for the W Hotel starring Helena Christensen and based on the iconic film *Blow Up*. Ponti was born into filmmaking, his parents being director Carlo Ponti and actress Loren....Ad agency Duncan/Channon, San Francisco, has brought Brian Bacino aboard as a creative director. He most recently headed up creative at Swirl Integrated Marketing and prior to that at Draftfcb in S.F. Over the years he has created campaigns for such clients as Levi's 501s, Hilton Hotels, MTV, eBay, Fox Sports, Sega and the San Francisco Giants....Thornberg & Forester, N.Y., has hired Javier Gonzalez as head of production. He had previously been both a staff and freelance sr. producer at various design/VFX shops in N.Y. At Thornberg & Forester, Gonzalez will be production lead on a wide range of projects spanning such disciplines as VFX, animation, branding, design, live action directing, editing and digital media....

rep report

Paranoid US has secured DiMaggio Representation, headed by Jeanie DiMaggio, to handle the West Coast and Texas....Lisa Sabatino has joined Über Content as director of sales & marketing. Working out of the Hollywood office, Sabatino is heading up sales for the West Coast and Texas, and directing marketing strategies. Sabatino will also be a strategic partner with exec producers Phyllis Koenig and Preston Lee in developing and managing the careers of the Über Content directors. Before joining Über, Sabatino was with Anonymous Content's N.Y. office....Indie rep firm OPTIONS has taken on the West Coast and Texas for Venice, Calif.-based production house Wild Plum....Photographers and motion directors The Wade Brothers—David Lindsey Wade and Lyndon Wade—have changed their U.S. representation. Bob Industries, Santa Monica, will rep the duo for all motion projects, including spots, music videos and movies, while Art Department in N.Y. will handle editorial and advertising photo commissions....WPA|Worldwide Production Agency, Hollywood, has signed DPs Jeff Cutter, Jonathan Sela and Adam Santelli....

bulletin board

>Feb. 26/Santa Monica. Independent Spirit Awards. www.spiritawards.com

>Feb. 27/Hollywood. Academy Awards. www.oscars.org

>March 11-20/Austin. SouthbySouthwest. www.sxsw.com

>April 11-14/Las Vegas. NAB Convention. www.nabshow.com

>April 20-May 1/New York. Tribeca Film Festival. www.tribecafilm.com

>**Save the Date:** May 10/New York. SHOOT Directors & Producers Event and 9th Annual New Directors Showcase (details to be announced soon)

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