



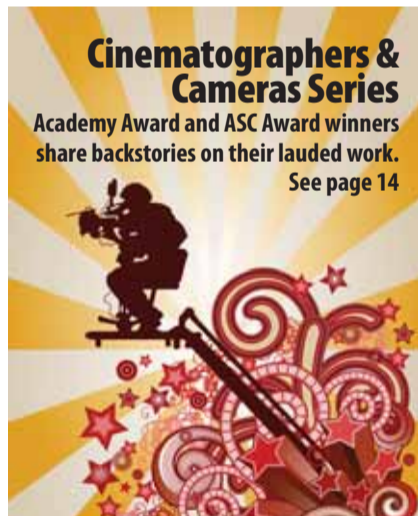
## 20 Midwest Series

Is the glass half full or empty? Midwest executives and artisans assess the region's creative and business prospects for 2012.



## 22 Music & Sound

Our first quarterly Top Ten Tracks Chart of the new year, and a look at the hand spot music artisans had in a 2012 Oscar win.



### Cinematographers & Cameras Series

Academy Award and ASC Award winners share backstories on their lauded work. See page 14



# Spring DIRECTORS series

See page 9

## Directors Make Their Mark At SXSW Fest

By Robert Goldrich

AUSTIN, Texas—When Brian M. Cassidy and Melanie Shatzky, a.k.a. Brian and Melanie, were featured in our Up-and-Coming Directors feature story as part of SHOOT's Fall 2009 Directors Issue, an overriding observation was that their narrative fiction films had a heightened sense of realism while their documentaries tended to have a bit of an engaging fiction storytelling feel.

While Brian and Melanie—who continue to be handled for spots and branded content via Washington Square Films—have seen their careers progress markedly since then, that slight blurring of lines between disciplines continues to underscore their work as recently reflected in *Francine*, a narrative drama starring Oscar winner Melissa Leo (*The Fighter*) in the title role. *Francine* made its North American debut earlier this month at the South By Southwest Film Conference and Festival.

Produced by Washington Square and Pigeon Projects (which is Brian and Melanie's production company), *Francine* tells the story of a woman struggling to find her place in a downtrodden lakeside town after leaving behind a life in prison. Written and directed by Brian and Melanie, the film centers on Leo's performance as a woman who has a hard time connecting with people and instead finds solace with animals. But her love for the latter has her taking in assorted strays, resulting in an uninhabitable environment. A character study of a misfit

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## The Long and Short of It At Tribeca Film Festival

By Robert Goldrich

NEW YORK—Comedy and the Super Bowl are two of the hallmarks in director Bryan Buckley's career. But the helmer from *Hungry Man* takes a 180-degree turn from his perceived mainstream norm with a short film, *Asad*, which will debut at the Tribeca Film Festival next month.

Slated for the Character Flaws-Narrative portion of Tribeca's Short program, *Asad* centers on the title character, a 12-year-old lad in a war-torn fishing

village in Somalia who must decide between falling into the pirate life or rising above it to choose the path of an honest fisherman.

Buckley noted that the project was sparked in part by a United Nations short documentary, *No Autographs*, which brought him and his *Hungry Man* producer Mino Jarjoura to refugee camps in Kenya and Sudan a couple of years ago. Buckley and Jarjoura encountered Somali refugees in Kakuma, Kenya. "Their stories and their outlook

on life haven't been fully told and haven't gained the exposure they deserve," related Buckley. "The media has a fascination with the Somali prates and to a lesser extent with the Al-Shabaab [terrorist] group in the Southern territory of Somalia but the spirit of the everyday people themselves gets glossed over and overlooked."

Based on insights gained during his experience on the UN short, Buckley wrote a script in an at-

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Bottom row, left to right: Cassie Brooksbank, Senior, USC School of Cinematic Arts; Cameron Combe, Student Filmmaker, Cal State Long Beach; Brian Smith, Award-winning Photographer; Brooke Mailhiot, Cinematographer

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## spot.com.mentary



### Passion Projects

The title of this installment of spot.com.mentary is a prevalent theme throughout this Directors Series issue as filmmakers ranging from emerging to established continue to be sparked by their passions, yielding notable work.

On the established director front, consider the POV below this column in which we cover director David Ramser of The Artists Company

who in-between his paid professional spot gigs is pursuing projects of personal interest, including *The Foreclosure of Cristina Ramos*, a short which puts a human face on the mortgage meltdown. At press time, Ramser was in South Central Los Angeles—with camera in hand—covering an after-school program designed to prevent inner city kids from turning to drugs or crime.

Ramser explained, “I wanted to take on other kinds of projects that directly

affect me, that have been brought to my attention by some relationship to the subject matter. For me, this is fun. This wasn’t a directorial decision so that I could skip out on comedy and get more work of a different sort. I love comedy—that’s what I do professionally. But I wanted some passion projects to express myself in other ways, to

ing. The light show plays like classic animation, made up of thousands of still images assembled to sync up to a dubstep rendition of “Midnight City” by M83, remixed by PatrickReza. The short has also sparked heightened industry interest in Diebold who is covered in this week’s Up-and-Coming Directors feature.

reclaiming their lives, and a female attorney who fights to see that the perpetrators of this crime are brought to justice.

Junge knew about incidents of acid attacks on women in South Asia, often committed by their husbands or boyfriends as part of an ongoing pattern of abuse.

**Filmmakers ranging from emerging to established continue to be sparked by their passions, yielding notable work.**

explore interesting things I care about or that just strike my imagination.”

Similarly, directors looking to establish themselves find that guided by their passions they can gain exposure for their talent, a prime case in point being Jimmy Diebold of Bodega Studios whose *Midnight Lights*—an art/architectural film centered on an ambitious, logistically complex light show he orchestrated at CenturyLink Field in Seattle—has generated some 500,000 hits on YouTube and count-

And a passion pursuit of an established yet at the same time still emerging director, Daniel Junge, who too is a focus of our Up-and-Coming Directors feature story, has yielded *Saving Face*, this year’s Academy Award winner for Best Short Subject Documentary.

Junge and Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy co-directed *Saving Face*, which introduces us to Dr. Mohammad Jawad who returns to his Pakistan homeland to help victims of acid burns. We see the women who are recovering and

The director found an avenue to pursue the subject when he heard a BBC Radio report about Dr. Jawad who’s based in the U.K.

The result is a documentary which movingly captures both the plight as well as the courage of these victimized women in Pakistan, chronicles the progress being made to prosecute the perpetrators of these attacks, and the efforts of a plastic surgeon to heal not just the physical wounds but the emotional scars as well.

## POV



### David Ramser’s Side Gigs

David Ramser of The Artists Company is best known as a comedy director. But in-between those humorous ad jobs, he has donned a reporter’s hat, turning out mini-documentaries which he directs, shoots and edits. We thought it appropriate in the context of our Directors Issue to focus on one helmer’s personal filmmaking pursuits during his spare time.

“There’s an old saying, ‘Dying is easy. Comedy is hard,’” related Ramser. “So for fun, I wanted to take on other kinds of projects that directly affect me, that have been brought to my attention by some relationship to the subject matter. For me, this is fun. This wasn’t a directorial decision so that I could skip out on comedy and get more work of a different sort. I love comedy—that’s what I do professionally. But I wanted some passion projects to express myself in other ways, to explore interesting things I care about or that just strike my imagination.”

One passion project in particular, *The Foreclosure of Cristina Ramos*, has struck a responsive chord upon being covered in *The Huffington Post*, putting a human face on the housing meltdown as Ramser interviewed Ramos, a housekeeper whom the director has employed twice a week for the past 15

years. She and her husband bought their South Los Angeles home six years ago with \$15,000 down on a \$425,000 sales price. The home’s value has plummeted to \$170,000. Refinancing and loan modifications have been denied. And auction dates have been set for the house only to thus far be postponed.

Ramos explains she isn’t angry, just sad and depressed. She said the realtor wasn’t forthright, telling them they were qualified for home ownership with “no problem” and that their monthly mortgage payment would remain stable. Instead, the variable rate shot the mortgage from the former Countrywide up from \$2,300 to \$3,000. Ramser’s seven-and-a-half minute documentary notes that from 2007-’10, nearly half of all foreclosures involved Hispanic borrowers. (Bank of America, which has since bought Countrywide, paid \$335 million to settle allegations that its Countrywide unit discriminated against African-American and Hispanic borrowers during the housing boom.)

“I just tried to show how a person and her family have been impacted. I wasn’t looking to take sides in a fight or make a political statement,” said Ramser who noted that online feedback for the most part has been either empathetic or derisive. In today’s polarized era, Ramser

observed that he wished more moderate people were vocal.

Still, the film serves as food for thought. Conversely another mini-documentary from Ramser, *Bug Nation*, serves as thought for food, profiling Mathew Krisiloff, a college student who teamed with others to form Entom Foods, short for entomophagy, which is the eating of insect meat. Introducing bugs to American cuisine, Krisiloff contends, is healthy, good for

the environment, economical and believe it or not, tasty.

As for what’s next, Ramser plans to do a follow-up piece on Ramos. And at press time, the director was headed to Watts to explore the Urban Compass program which helps provide elementary school kids with productive activities during the vulnerable 3-6 p.m. daypart so that they will be more inclined to continue their education and not get detoured into gangs or drugs.

## Flash Back

**March 23, 2007** Director/DP **Robert Leacock**, whose experience includes spots and documentaries, has come aboard **New York-based Identity....** **Jim Bouvet** of **Traktor** fame has come aboard @ **radical.media** as exec producer of its NY office....**Director Thom Higgins** has joined **Reactor Films** for exclusive representation.... **Academy Award-winning** visual effects veteran **Jim Rygiel** has come aboard **Millennium Pictures** for exclusive U.S. spot representation as a director.

**March 22, 2002** Joining **JWT NY**, are director **Richard Sabeen** and writer **Jeff Watzman**—as group creative directors working on the **Domino’s Pizza** account. Both began freelancing at the agency last year.... **Holland Henton** has been tapped by **Foote, Cone & Belding, Irvine, Calif.**, as senior VP/exec creative director. Most recently he was sr. VP/group creative director at **MacCann-Erickson, NY....** **VFX** house **The Mill, London**, is set to open a satellite office in NY this spring....**Director Tom De Cerchio** has launched **Incubator Films....**

## Directors Brian and Melanie, Stephen Kessler Score At SXSW

Continued from page 1

and her fragile first steps to start a new life, *Francine* made its world premiere to sold out screenings and favorable reviews at the Berlin Film Festival in February.

“We brought our documentary methods to this narrative project,” related Shatzky. “Our script was only 10 pages long but it was a very densely packed 10 pages. Within the scenes, it was very clear where we were going. But there was room

for the actors and non-actors to find their own voices as characters.”

Cassidy additionally served as DP on *Francine* in order to bring to it some of his documentary aesthetic, noting, “I like to direct from behind the camera when I can.”

Particularly gratifying to Brian and Melanie was the fact that Leo flew into Austin for the film’s SXSW debut, taking time from a busy schedule.

“She’s proud of the movie and her work in it, which means a lot to us,”

said Shatzky.

Also meaningful is “how extremely supportive Washington Square Films has been of us commercially and in our film work,” she continued. “We brought *Francine* to them because of their commitment to us.” (This commitment was also evident in the relationship between Washington Square and director J.C. Chandor on the feature *Margin Call*; see Chandor’s profile in this week’s Directors Series.)

Cassidy added that he and Shatzky have benefited from being active in commercials and features via Washington Square, their latest spot collaboration being some documentary-style, real people fare for FDA-approved weight loss product Alli out of TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York. The Alli work had Brian and Melanie chronicling the stories of those whose lives changed for the better due in part to Alli.

“*Francine* is a 74-minute film. Then you direct a :30. Knowing how to tell a story in long form somehow allows you to recognize what the essence of a character is, making you better able to distill a story down to its essence,”



Brian and Melanie

observed Cassidy. “I feel that’s been the case with the commercials we’ve taken on, including for Alli.”

Indeed one discipline informs the other. “Commercials can be a playground for ideas that can be used in feature filmmaking,” said Cassidy. “The creative problem solving, the different methods and techniques you can tap into can only serve you as a filmmaker whether it’s a :30 or a full-length feature or documentary.”

As for what’s next, Brian and Melanie hope to continue to direct a mix of commercials, branded content, narrative and documentary features.

Meanwhile, *Francine* is scheduled to hit the festival circuit in a major way over the coming months.

Brian and Melanie are hardly strangers to the festival scene. The very first film they had screened publicly—*God Provides*, a portrait of New Orleans and its people during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina’s devastation—premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival.

### Stephen Kessler

Making its U.S. debut at SXSW this month was the feature-length documentary *Paul Williams Still Alive*, directed by Stephen Kessler who recently returned to the commercialmaking marketplace, joining Assembly Films, the shop headed by executive producer Robert Wherry.

Kessler had spent the past four years on the documentary, shooting and chronicling Williams’s life off and on during a three-year span, and then editing over the course of a year.

The film, which had its world premiere last September at the Toronto

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Francine

## Bryan Buckley, ricki+annie Reflect On Their Tribeca Projects

Continued from page 1

tempt to do justice to the humanity of the Somali people. In that lensing in Somalia would have been too dangerous a prospect, the short was shot entirely in South Africa, spoken in Somali (with English subtitles). The cast consisted entirely of real people, including two refugee boys, the title character and a younger sidekick. Neither spoke English and both were illiterate so Buckley had to deploy a translator and the youngsters had to memorize their Somali lines sans a script or written point of reference.

The two main boys were brothers of a family with 16 kids. Buckley described his two young “actors” as being “amazing and so bright. They were able to memorize all the dialogue. What’s sad is that they were too

old to get into the schools in South Africa. It’s great that the country has opened its borders to these refugees. But the opportunity for education isn’t that great, even for two boys like these who are so intelligent.”

The logistics of filming the short were a bit daunting. Buckley doesn’t speak Somali so instinct and careful planning, including the meticulous blocking out of scenes, were key in helping to ensure that the right lines were being said at the right time and in the right place. Buckley and his crew recreated a Somalia fishing village in South Africa, about three hours north of Cape Town. Production services were provided by South African company Asylum.

Buckley hopes that this short, which he describes as being “fable-like,” will

make more people aware of the spirit, humanity and aspirations of Somalians. Gaining exposure for the film at Tribeca, he said, is a positive step in that direction. “With New York being my home base, it’s a thrill to have the film get selected and open here.”

Buckley is looking to Tribeca to kick off a festival circuit run for *Asad*, bringing its story to other audiences throughout the U.S. and worldwide.

### ricki+annie

While Ricki Stern and Annie Sundberg, a.k.a. ricki+annie, are no strangers to Tribeca, the directors’ latest feature-length documentary, *Knuckleball!* is their first to make its world premiere at the festival. Earlier ricki+annie’s *Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work*, an acclaimed profile of the famed comedian, and *The Devil Came On Horseback*, which explored the genocide in Darfur through the eyes of a former U.S. marine looking to raise stateside awareness of the situation, were shown at Tribeca—but only after debuting at the 2010 and ‘06 Sundance Film Festivals, respectively.

A co-production of ricki+annie’s Break Thru Films in association with Major League Baseball Productions, *Knuckleball!* is a love letter to baseball, focusing on those rare artists known as knuckleball pitchers—in particular Tim Wakefield who last season was on a quest for his 200th career win,

and R.A. Dickey who has started to establish himself as a big league hurler. Wakefield has since retired from the Boston Red Sox while Dickey of the New York Mets is now the lone MLB knuckleball pitcher.

The documentary explores the fraternity of knuckleballers, a close-knit community with Wakefield and Dickey often mentored by their predecessors such as Charlie Hough, Phil Niekro, Wilbur Wood, Tom Candiotti and Jim Bouton who all appear in the film. Big league managers and the catchers who struggled to corral the knuckle ball are also interviewed.

“There’s so much emphasis on fast ball pitchers and power hitters that knuckleball pitchers are largely overlooked even though they stay in the game much longer than anyone else,” observed Sundberg. “They are kind of a throwback in that they can pitch more innings and on consecutive days due to the pitch putting less strain on their arms. One year Wilbur Wood pitched almost 400 innings.”

A throwback to an era when pitchers more commonly threw 300 innings a season (200 innings is the lowered benchmark standard for most starting pitchers today), the knuckleballer represents a bit of nostalgia. But the documentary is bittersweet, observed Stern, because while there is reminiscing and a look at a special fraternity, the knuckleball is in danger of becoming

extinct in an era of radar guns, emphasis on speed—and the Big Leagues being down to but one such pitcher to carry on the quirky pitch’s tradition.”

“We had been looking to do a sports story,” said Stern. “There’s no through line to our films with the exception of strong characters and stories that have their own propulsion and drama. When this baseball project came to us, we were immediately drawn to it.”

Ricki+annie first met Wakefield and Dickey during spring training in 2011, and this month at spring training the directors wrapped filming. The DP was Charles Miller who shot the Joan Rivers documentary. For *Knuckleball!* Miller’s lensing included capturing the beauty of the knuckleball pitch and knuckleballers’ motion from windup to delivery.

The Tribeca premiere is well timed in that it comes as baseball season gets underway—plus this is a season marking Fenway Park’s 100th anniversary (home of the Red Sox) and the New York Mets’ 50th anniversary. Ricki+annie also hope to have screening events at Fenway and Citi Field (home of the Mets) to provide additional exposure for *Knuckleball!* Additionally, TV and theatrical release talks have begun.

The directorial duo continues to be repped by kaboom productions for commercials and longer form branded content/marketing opportunities.

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Asad



## Ad Artisans Gain Traction At SXSW

Continued from page 4

Film Festival, provides insights into Williams, the popular, diminutive musician and actor whose songwriting credits include The Carpenter's "We've Only Just Begun" (debuting in a Crocker Bank commercial, commissioned by the late, legendary ad man Hal Riney when he was at BBDO San Francisco), the Oscar-winning "Evergreen" from *A Star Is Born*, and the Oscar-nominated "The Rainbow Connection" from *The Muppet Movie*. Williams also was a frequent guest on *The Tonight Show*, countless game shows, and had acting roles in films like *Smokey and the Bandit* and *Battle of the Planet of the Apes*.

*Paul Williams Still Alive* is the story of how Kessler pursued and found the childhood idol he thought was long dead (Williams is currently president of ASCAP)—and what happened to both of them as a result.

We see their relationship develop from one of Williams being wary of Kessler to regarding him as a trustworthy friend. It's a trust that has Williams opening up, sharing his victory over addiction (now sober for more than 20 years) and his contentment with life after fame, devoting himself to the roles of husband and father.

"It's a story about a man who had everything and was downright miserable, and then evolved into someone who lost most of what he had and became happy," observed Kessler.

"The fact is that the famous guy I was enamored with as a kid is not nearly as interesting as the Paul Williams I know today. He's truly a remarkable guy and much more deserving now to be the subject of a documentary than he was in his so-called heyday."

*Paul Williams Still Alive* will continue to be alive and well on the film festival circuit, hitting it in a big way in the coming months with screenings scheduled in assorted fest locales, including Florida, Boston, Cleveland, Nashville, Wisconsin and Newport Beach (Calif.). Theatrical release may also be in the offing as the film has garnered rave reviews.

Kessler credited executive producer Lesa Lakin with playing a key role in bringing the documentary to fruition. Lakin had served as Kessler's executive producer back when he maintained his own production house, Promiseland. His spot production house affiliations over the years have included HSI, Sandwick and Form. Kessler's directorial credentials in advertising include his having been a Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nominee for Best Commercial Director of the Year, and spots for such clients as Snapple, McDonald's, HBO, MasterCard and Major League



**Paul Williams, Stephen Kessler**

Baseball's New York Mets. Last year, he directed a series of promos for the Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN), which profiled people who took 180-degree turns in their lives and moved into new, positive directions. Prior to that, Kessler helmed a Maxwell House campaign out of Ogilvy New York.

Kessler first broke into the ad arena years ago as an agency creative, serving as a writer at JWT New York, and then at Chiat/Day, Los Angeles.

Kessler continues to have strong roots at and ties to what is now TBWA\Chiat\Day. The movie poster for *Paul Williams Still Alive* was created by TBWA\Chiat\Day Los Angeles chief creative officer Rob Schwartz and art director Becca Morton.

Director Kessler's filmography also includes *Birch Street Gym*, a live-action short which earned an Academy Award nomination in 1992.

### Lightning strikes

Nestled in SXSW's Documentary Spotlight lineup was *Waiting For Lightning*, the feature directorial debut of Jacob Rosenberg whose spotmaking/branded content home is Bandito Brothers, which produced this SXSW film. Bandito Brothers founders Mike "Mouse" McCoy and Scott Waugh (producers/co-directors of this season's narrative documentary style, action/adventure boxoffice hit *Act of Valor*) served as executive producers on *Waiting For Lightning*, which tells the story of Danny Way, a young boy from a broken home in Vista, Calif., who became a skateboarding legend.

The film delves into a Way creation, a skating ramp of ambitious and dangerous proportions designed to traverse physical, cultural and ideological barriers in an attempt to achieve the seemingly impossible—to jump across China's Great Wall on a skateboard. Nonetheless, this documentary shows that Way's life, full of personal adversity, setbacks and triumphs, is more captivating than even his prodigious skateboarding exploits.

Director Rosenberg developed his passion for filmmaking as a skateboarder in the early 1990s, making acclaimed videos for Plan B Skate-

boards. He then diversified into directing music videos, commercials and shorts before entering feature-length filmmaking with *Waiting For Lightning*, which McCoy cited as a leading example of branded entertainment. He noted that DC Shoes, a division of Quiksilver, served as a sponsor and played a key role in helping to bring the documentary to fruition.

### Lineup

Besides Brian and Melanie, Kessler, and Rosenberg, there are assorted other directors with spotmaking ties whose films were presented at the SXSW proceedings.

Among them are directors Amir Bar-Lev (repped by RSA Films) with the documentary feature the *Re:Generation Music Project* (*SHOOT*online, 2/24), Jonas Akerlund (repped for commercials by Serial Pictures) with the feature length dark comedy *Small Apartments*, Kevin MacDonald (handled by Chelsea) with the documentary *Marley*, Emmett Malloy (half of The Malloys directing duo repped by HSI Productions) with the feature *Big Easy Express*, Joe Berlinger (repped by @radical.media) with the documentary *Under African Skies*, Matt Piedmont (handled by PRETTYBIRD for commercials) with his feature filmmaking debut *Casa de mi Padre*, and Jessica Yu (Nonfiction Unlimited) with the documentary *Last Call at the Oasis*.

Screening their short films at SXSW were directors Matt Lenski (whose spotmaking roost is Supply & Demand Integrated) with his *Meaning of Robots*, Bill Plympton (Acme Filmworks) with *Summer Bummer*, Julie Pott (Hornet) with *Belly*, Henry Joost and Ariel Schulman (who direct spots under the Henry & Rel banner at Moxie Pictures) with *A Brief History of John Baldessari*, and Daniel Del-Purgatorio (creative director at design, VFX and animation studio Vitamin) with *Other*, a sci-fi/horror film.

And showcasing music videos at SXSW were directors Daniels (Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, a duo repped by PRETTYBIRD) with Battles' "My Machine," Keith Schofield (Caviar) with Duck Sauce's "Big Bad Wolf," and Trish Sie (repped for commercials by Bob Industries) who co-directed with the band OK Go and Pilobolus the OK Go clip "All Is Not Lost."

Additionally, Justin Corsbie (Synthetic Pictures) screened *Hot Dogs and Hand Grenades*, a comedy series pilot, as part of the SXSW Austin Film Society Showcase.

(See our SXSW preview in *SHOOT* and *SHOOT*online, 2/17, for further details on many of these features, shorts and music videos.)

## Short Takes

### DAVID O. RUSSELL GOES RETRO '70s FOR DRAFTFCB

Feature filmmaker David O. Russell (*The Fighter*) continues his successful diversification into the ad arena via production house Wondros, most recently wrapping a three-spot package for KFC consisting of "Launch," "The New Big" and "Drive Thru" for Draftfcb, Chicago.

For "Drive Thru," Russell delivers the epitome of 1970s cool. The :30 features a pair of dudes gliding through the KFC drive-thru in a 1970s' red Dodge Charger to order their new retro menu item, the Chicken Pot Pie. Cranking on the car radio is a track from the era. Upon getting their order, one of the gents simply affirms, "Classic."

Gina Zapata executive produced for Wondros with Helga Gruber serving as producer. The DP was Oscar-winning cinematographer Mauro Fiore (*Avatar*).



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

### LYNCH, PAVESIC, MALLOY LAUNCH FARM LEAGUE

Exec producers Tim Lynch and Tienke Pavesic have teamed with director Chris Malloy to form Farm League, a production and content company based in Southern California and Oregon. The founding trio is known for its surf and adventure films, as well as branding projects.

In addition to Malloy, Farm League's roster includes director/editor Tim Wheeler and director Corey Adams who's behind Native Shoes' outlandish campaigns. Directors Danny Moder, Alex Kopps, Jason Baffa and Keith Malloy are available for special projects.

Since opening its doors, Farm League has worked with Nike, Ford, Bear Naked Granola, Barefoot Wine, Patagonia and Native Shoes. The shop is currently in production on projects for Acura and Strava.

Director Chris Malloy is the eldest of the Ventura Malloy Brothers (Chris, Keith, Dan) and cousin to the H.S.I. directing team The Malloys. Chris Malloy is relatively new on the spot scene but has been influencing the film, surf and environmental industries for more than a decade. He is one of the founders of Woodshed films, which turned out *Shelter*, *Thicker than Water*, *A Brokedown Melody* and *180° SOUTH*, ushering in a new movement in surf films. Malloy has created branded pieces for Patagonia, Nixon and Ford, among many other collaborative projects.

Lynch is also a Woodshed co-founder. Beyond the surf and adventure films, his producing credits include documentaries and videos for bands like Green Day, The White Stripes and Mumford and Sons. Lynch has also produced commercials for such brands as Converse, Volkswagen, Kashi, New Balance, Nike, PlayStation and Audi.

As a TV producer, Pavesic cut her teeth at Wieden + Kennedy (Portland, Amsterdam, Tokyo, Shanghai), creating work for brands like Nike, Miller High Life, Sapporo and Fox NFL. She went on to freelance for agencies such as Cutwater, TBWA\Chiat\Day and CAA, producing for Jeep, Ford, Powerade, Siemens, ESPN and Coca-Cola, to name a few.

### PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Director Alejandro Toledo has joined Harpoon Pictures—the NY-based production house headed by exec producer Chester Mayer—for



Alejandro Toledo

exclusive U.S. spot representation. Experienced in shooting worldwide and fluent in English, Spanish and French, Toledo has directed for such clients as Mercedes-Benz, Nissan, BMW, Lexus, Stella Artois and Nike. This past summer he helmed a project for Sabra out of StrawberryFrog, NY....NY-based brand engagement firm Sullivan has hired Bill Westcott as managing director of strategy, a newly created position at the shop. He will be responsible for providing leadership across all aspects of client engagement, including brand and channel strategy, for JPMorgan Chase, Allstate, DuPont and PepsiCo, among others. Westcott joins Sullivan from Core-Brand Communications, where he was managing director, strategy....

## Directors With Spot Affiliations To Showcase Work At Tribeca

Continued from page 4

Ricki+annie's filmography spans feature documentaries, shorts, spots and promos. The helming team also has to its credit directing *The Fashion Fund*, a six-part series for Vogue that premiered on Hulu, following 10 young fashion designers and chronicling their exploits in a *Project Runway*-esque manner.

*Knuckleball!* is in Tribeca's Spotlight program. Additionally the documentary is part of the Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival program.

### Rundown

Besides Buckley and ricki+annie, other directors with spotmaking affiliations who have work slated for Tribeca 2012 include:

- Harmony Korine, the filmmaker handled for spots by MJZ, is one of three directors behind a trio of shorts presented under the feature-length banner of *The Fourth Dimension*. The protagonists in each short are all in search of the fourth dimension—whether they know it or not. The short storylines consist of: a motivational speaker named Val Kilmer (played by Kilmer) delivering a sermon at a roller rink; a Russian scientist who builds a time machine in his apartment; and four friends who stumble upon a village in the Polish countryside.

- Oscar-nominated (*Super Size Me*) documentarian Morgan Spurlock, whose spotmaking roost is Saville Productions, will have his *Mansome* make its world premiere at Tribeca. In an age of manscaping, metrosexuals and an abundance of grooming products, what does it mean to be a man? *Mansome*, directed by Spurlock and exec produced by Ben Silverman, Will Arnett and Jason Bateman (who is on the spot directorial roster of HSI Productions), explores manhood through the humorous prism of interviews with everyday people as well as such notables as Arnett, Bateman, Paul Rudd and Zach Galifianakis. As for further ad industry connections for those behind *Mansome*, Arnett and Bateman are partnered in sponsor-driven advertising and production company DumbDumb. And Spurlock has teamed with the DOC NYC festival and Grey New York to create Launch PAD, an initiative to help documentary filmmakers find sponsorship and product placement deals with advertisers. Spurlock made product placement the subject matter of his 2011 documentary *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold*.

- Making its world premiere as the gala screening of the Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival is *Benji*, helmed by the team of Coodie and Chike who are handled for spots and branded

fare by production house Holmes Defender of the Faith. *Benji* tells the story of Ben Wilson, Chicago's top high school basketball prospect, who was murdered at the age of 17.

- Lauren Greenfield, who directs spots via Chelsea, will have her

*Beauty Culture* screened as part of the Triptych-Documentary portion of the Tribeca Shorts Program. *Beauty Culture* delves into society's obsession with beauty and the influence of photographic depictions on female body image and the persistent "beauty con-

test" of daily life.

- Ondi Timoner, who's repped by @radical.media for commercials and entertainment projects, co-directed with Robert James the short film *Library of Dust* in which an investigation into the deplorable conditions at

Oregon State Hospital uncovers thousands of corroded copper urns containing the cremated remains of unclaimed psychiatric patients. *Library of Dust* will be screened in the Long Story Short-Documentary portion of the Tribeca shorts program.

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Top Spot of the Week

# Dir. Ringan Ledwidge, BBH Share A Modern Take on Three Little Pigs

By Christine Champagne

There was a time when journalists fed the news to the public. But that's no longer the case in a digital age that finds tweeters and bloggers breaking stories. Well aware of the shift, the *Guardian* has embarked on a more modern form of newsgathering that has the venerable British newspaper relying on collaboration with outside sources. This approach is demonstrated in a clever re-telling of the classic Three Little Pigs fairytale.

Created by BBH London, the two-minute spot—also titled “Three Little Pigs”—is the work of director Ringan Ledwidge of London's Rattling Stick, which also maintains an office in Los Angeles.

“*Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger has been doing an amazing job putting his open journalism methodology into action, but there'd been some issues articulating what the benefit was for consumers. The one thing that was absolutely clear to us was that in order to illustrate the importance of open platform collaboration and the *Guardian*'s curatorial role in the process, we needed to do a product demonstration,” said BBH creative director David Kolbusz, noting, “Three Little Pigs was the most universal story we

could find.”

While the Three Little Pigs as originally told is a rather simple tale, BBH's version is a much more complex story involving murder, insurance fraud and mortgage defaults.

Social media chatter, newspaper clips, YouTube videos and other graphic elements appear throughout the spot, supporting the narrative, which takes surprising twists and turns.

“So many moving pieces meant retracing our steps every time we spotted something new,” Kolbusz said. “Sound, music, graphics and shot footage all needed to work together in perfect harmony.”

Ledwidge said he wanted the spot to feel like a film trailer and for it “not only to pose relevant questions but also to excite and entertain viewers. Tonally, I felt it should be played with a straight bat and that the comedy should be of a satirical nature rather than a broadly comedic one.”

### Three pigs, two days

Remarkably, the director and DP Franz Lustig shot the action-packed “Three Little Pigs” over just two days—“two very long days,” Ledwidge specified—on location at London's

Old Royal Naval College, where they filmed courthouse and protest scenes, and at Wimbledon Studios, where they were able to take advantage of the facility's pre-built courtroom and street sets as well as build three other sets in the main studio.

As we see in the commercial, the pig and wolf characters are human/animal hybrids, with human bodies and animal heads.

Kolbusz says the mix lent an air of “magical realism” to the spot, helping to create a believable reality so that the audience wouldn't question why pigs and wolves walk among us.

The pig masks worn by the actors were built from the same mold used to create the pig heads worn in the Royal Ballet's production of Beatrix Potter. “Nothing on the masks was animatronic, but with the body language of the actors alone you could sense each pigs' character,” Ledwidge said.

Artisans from the London office of The Mill later created movement in the pigs' eyes, ears and mouths, relying on film that had been shot of the actors rehearsing sans the masks to inform their characterizations.

“We knew that subtlety was the key in this job,” explained David Fleet, who was The Mill's lead 3D artist on the job. “So looking at the tiny eye darts and mouth shapes of the actors proved extremely valuable reference when the animation process began.”

The Mill also seamlessly integrated the public discussion and newspaper coverage of the case into the spot, with one of the most impressive integrations finding a forensic specialist entering the three little pigs' house and walking down a hallway onto which is a newspaper story is projected.

“With the graphics, we wanted to use elements of social media, popular websites and the *Guardian* that were instantly recognizable but integrate them so they always felt like part of the film,” said Gary Driver who served as The Mill's lead 2D artist. “In the forensic scene, the shot had to be tracked in 3D so we could accurately project the graphics onto the walls. Certain elements were then rotoscoped and added back over the top to held bed the graphic effects in.”

The Mill also built the Wolf's “huff and puff” animation test and performed other tasks, including various bits of clean up and set extensions.

### Precise cut

Rich Orrick of London's Work Post Film Editors cut “Three Little Pigs.” “The edit like every other part of the

job was exhausting. There was barely anything left out as the board—due to the interaction of type—was pretty precise. The struggle was more the amount of layers we were dealing with, particularly as Avid isn't great with type. Basically, it was a head scramble,” Ledwidge shared.

“Somehow,” continued the director, “Rich Orrick kept a calm head whilst I drove myself to distraction.”

“All of it was a monumental challenge,” Kolbusz said, looking back on the job.

“But every party involved,” he noted, “was so passionate about the film that they gave one hundred percent at all times to make sure it came off without a hitch.”



Ringan Ledwidge



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

The classic tall tale of *The Three Little Pigs* gets a bit taller—and more complex, more full of surprises, twists and turns, and more endearing to conspiracy theorists and murder mystery lovers—under the guidance of director Ringan Ledwidge and a creative ensemble from agency BBH London.

**TOP Spot OF THE WEEK**

**CLIENT**  
*Guardian.*

**AGENCY**  
*BBH London.*

*David Kolbusz, creative director; Matt Fitch, Mark Lewis, creative team; David Karbassioun, producer; Genevieve Sheppard, production assistant; Jason Gonsalves, head of strategy; Ngaio Pardon, team director; Alex Monger, team strategy; Katie Burkes, team assistant.*

**PRODUCTION COMPANY**  
*Rattling Stick, London.*

*Ringan Ledwidge, director; Franz Lustig, DP; Chris Harrison, producer.*

**EDITORIAL**  
*Work Post Film Editors, London.*

*Rich Orrick, editor; Ellie McNaughtan, assistant editor.*

**POST/VISUAL EFFECTS**  
*The Mill, London.*

*Gemma Humphries, VFX producer; Gary Driver, shoot supervisor/lead 2D artist; David Fleet, shoot supervisor/lead 3D artist; Adam Lambert, 2D artist; Tom Bolt, Jonathan Wood, Adam Droy, Luke Tickner, Alberto Lara, Iker De Los Mozos, Natalie Rocks, Adam Darrah, 3D artists; Ivo Sousa, motion graphics; Mick Vincent, colorist; Adam Brandon, art department; Robert Granger, rotoscoping.*

**MUSIC**  
*Woodwork Music, London.*

*Phil Kay, composer.*

**SOUND DESIGN/AUDIO MIX**  
*BBH.*

*Sam Brock, head of radio; Will Cohen (freelance).*

# DIRECTORS

**Welcome** to *SHOOT*'s spring edition Directors Series featuring helmers who have broken new ground in varied disciplines, a look at promising new directorial talent, and conversations with cinematographers about their work spanning short and long-form fare, including this year's Oscar winner and a pair of ASC Award recipients.

In our lineup of well established directors, we have J.C. Chandor of Washington Square Films who earned Best First Feature honors from this year's Film Independent Spirit Awards, as well as an Oscar nomination for Best Original Screenplay, all on the strength of *Margin Call*. Chandor plans to move heavily into commercials and branded content later this year.

Then there's David Gordon Green of Chelsea who changed his commercialmaking course dramatically with Chrysler's Super Bowl anthem spot starring Clint Eastwood--all the while continuing a feature filmmaking career which spans socially relevant indie dramas and mainstream comedy.

Noam Murro of Biscuit Filmworks is in line to direct the sequel to the feature *300* after earlier this year

winning his second career DGA Award as Best Commercial Director of the Year.

Mike "Mouse" McCoy and Scott Waugh of Bandito Brothers produced and co-directed *Act of Valor*, the box office hit that opened up a new genre of realistic narrative cinema, and put Bandito Brothers on the map as a full fledged independent feature studio, complementing its ongoing work in commercials and transmedia.

Jake Schreier, who's built a commercialmaking track record at Park Pictures, just made his feature film directorial debut at Sundance with *Robot & Frank*, the first theatrical motion picture out of Park Pictures Features.

HSI's *The Malloys*--Emmett and Brendan--come off of a mix of ambitious commercials, an acclaimed HBO documentary series and a music doc. that just played at SXSW.

And Moxie Pictures' Henry Joost and Ariel Schulman, a.k.a. Henry & Rel, sport recent endeavors ranging from the feature *Paranormal Activity 3* to an upcoming Partnership for a Drug-Free America cam-

paigned to a short on John Baldessari, the godfather of conceptual art, which just ran at SXSW--and a TV series producing gig for a show based on their breakthrough documentary *Catfish*.

Meanwhile, our roster of Up-and-Coming Directors includes a filmmaker whose first splash in ad waters is an innovative feature documentary that debuted at SXSW; the co-director of this year's Oscar-winning short subject documentary; another co-helmer whose short was nominated in the same category; a helmer whose art/architectural film lit up a stadium and the viral charts; and a Broadway director/choreographer entering the ad arena.

So read on and enjoy. As always, we very much welcome your feedback.



—Robert Goldrich, Editor  
rgoldrich@shootonline.com

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# J.C. Chandor

## Dispelling a Myth

By Robert Goldrich

A cursory look might give the illusion that director J.C. Chandor is an overnight success story based on his auspicious feature filmmaking debut. *Margin Call*, which he wrote and directed, earning Best First Feature honors from the New York Film Critics Circle Awards and most recently the Film Independent Spirit Awards. At the latter competition, *Margin Call* also won the coveted Robert Altman Award, the Spirit's Best Creative Ensemble honor spanning its director, casting directors and cast. Plus Chandor earned Best Debut Director distinction from the National Board of Review. And all for a script springing from a draft he wrote in a scant four days and which went on to become an Oscar nominee for Best Original Screenplay.

But reality has a way of getting in the way of such a neatly coiffed Hollywood tale. The magic wasn't readily apparent nor did it happen overnight. "I was at a place in my career with a young family to support, the economy was tough," recollected Chandor. "I hadn't written before about something this topical [the Wall Street meltdown] but somehow because of my experience, I felt I could. This [script] meant a lot. That sounds kind of melodramatic but it's true. After all the years I spent trying to make it in the industry, I wanted to give it one last go before moving on if things didn't work out."

The fact is that the movie was made possible by actions over many years, not just an inspired four-day writing surge. Chandor worked on the story off and on in his head for a prolonged stretch. He amassed hands-on experience directing some commercials, numerous corporate films, even running footage for varied forms of ad, marketing and corporate communication. Also providing motivation was a prior feature project that fell through when an investor walked away just as the film was on the cusp of principal photography, after some seven-and-a-half years

of nurturing and development.

Chandor recalled that when he sat down and wrote for those four pivotal days, the script "came out of me in a very intense way, like nothing else had before. It's as if all my experience came together. Then when the film began, I found that all my work in short and long-form filmmaking had given me the leadership, the communication skills I needed to oversee a multi-faceted project. It was if everything I learned over the years had meant something that I hadn't fully realized before--that I had become a better filmmaker, a better manager of people, an overseer of production. To have this ride work out the way it has, it's emotional to realize I might have walked away but didn't--that the ideas and beliefs I had bouncing around in my head dating back 15 years to when I was in film school finally came to fruition."

Come to fruition indeed. Chandor is now set to direct Robert Redford's return to the big screen in *All Is Lost*, which the writer/director describes as a contemporary take on Hemmingway's "The Old Man and the Sea." Filming is set to get underway in May at Baja Studios in Rosarita, Mexico, a complex built by Fox for *Titanic*. Lionsgate has bought domestic rights to *All Is Lost* while Universal has struck an international deal spanning multiple territories.

Redford is the lone cast member in *All Is Lost*. He and Chandor met when *Margin Call* made its world premiere at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival.

Based on his first two theatrical features, Chandor is making a concerted effort not to be pigeonholed. From a Wall Street thriller with an ensemble cast to a self-described "adventure art film" with but one actor, his brief feature filmography is already quite expansive.

### Constraints as motivation

*Margin Call*'s cast was stellar and a bit unusual for a first-time director to land--Kevin Spacey, Zachary Quinto, Stanley Tucci, Paul Bettany, Jeremy Irons, Penn Badgley, Simon Baker and Demi Moore. Helping Chandor connect with this

Continued on page 13



Margin Call



# David Gordon Green

## Changing Direction

By Robert Goldrich

“When I heard the concept and read the initial proposal of what Wieden was thinking, I knew more than ever that I had to go all out to get this gig,” said director David Gordon Green of Chelsea. “It’s something that speaks to us and my hope was to make a piece that kind of unites perspectives of Americans.”

The “gig” Green went all out for and successfully landed wound up making the biggest ad splash on this year’s Super Bowl. Chrysler’s stirring “It’s Halftime in America” featuring Clint Eastwood out of Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

For the second consecutive year on Super Sunday, Chrysler managed with a two-minute spot to weave itself into the American fabric, paralleling the comeback of the automotive industry to that of Detroit and the entire country. It started during last year’s Big Game with “Born of Fire” (directed by Samuel Bayer of Serial Pictures). Fast forward to last month’s Super Bowl and Eastwood is our country’s voice with a spot which appeared during halftime, a time when both teams are trying to figure out what it will take to win in the second half.

Eastwood notes that the U.S. is at halftime, except this is not a game—it’s real life, with people worried about being able to get work to support their families. At times it seems we’ve lost our way, that divisiveness has become the calling card of the day. But it’s been this way before and ultimately Americans have overcome problems by coming together. Eastwood is akin to a coach with a halftime pep talk. He affirms that the second half is about to begin for America, during which the world will once again hear “the roar of our engines.” Indeed the resurgence of Detroit can prove inspirational for the country’s rally from tough times.

“It’s Halftime in America” represents a departure from Green’s recent spot exploits and a return to his initial ad endeavors. Prior to the high-profile Chrysler anthem, much of Green’s work has been comedic in nature, ex-

emplified in assorted ESPN SportsCenter promos. “I was looking to change the nature of what I’ve been doing, moving onto a new challenge,” explained Green.

That new challenge is cut in some respects from the socially relevant cloth of Green’s first commercials produced by Chelsea when he arrived there in 2004 after making his mark with such indie features as *George Washington* and *All The Real Girls*, the latter winning a Special Jury Prize at the 2003 Sundance Fest.

Those early Green-directed commercials included several moving pieces in the American Legacy anti-smoking “Truth” campaign. Green’s spotmaking continued in this vein over the years until he made a conscious decision to diversify into the comedic, reflected in the ESPN fare as well as in his broadening his feature signature from indie film drama (i.e., *Snow Angels*) to mainstream comedy with such releases as *Pineapple Express* and *The Sitter*—as well as the dark comedy series *Eastbound & Down* on HBO.

### Mirrored reflections

“I try to make a feature every year or so, jumping back into commercials. I’ve done a ton of spots over the last few years and really enjoy it. In ways my commercials have mirrored where I’ve been in features. Dramatic, socially relevant spots when I was in the independent world; humorous ads when I’m in feature comedy. I have an instinct for doing things that I’m not the first one on anybody’s list for. With my recent comedy work, you wouldn’t think I’d be in line for directing Clint. Thankfully agency creatives have afforded me these opportunities.”

There was nothing routine about “It’s Halftime in America.” “We found out that Clint hadn’t been directed by another director since 1993,” said Green. “That was a bit intimidating at first but since he is such a nice, well-grounded guy, it was easy. But the commercial entailed much more than Clint. Certain aspects were scripted and staged but there was room to be creative as we hit a diversity of demographic and residential locations. I am open to happy surprises on set or location. Additionally, a lot of times for my work I bring in a second unit

*Continued on page 13*

“I have an instinct for doing things that I’m not the first one on anybody’s list for.”



Chrysler’s “It’s Halftime in America”



# Henry & Rel

## The Social Media Phenomenon: Humanity

By Robert Goldrich

Akin to the manner in which they connect with each other and enjoy a personal rapport, directors Henry Joost and Ariel Schulman, a.k.a. Henry & Rel, strive to make a human connection with their audience no matter what the discipline—and there are many in the case of this duo, spanning features, documentaries, short films, TV, commercials and branded content.

Perhaps most telling, though, is how the directors strike a responsive emotional chord in the context of social media, their first major splash in that regard being the documentary *Catfish*, which centered around Facebook and an online relationship between a 24-year-old New York photographer, Nev Schulman (Rel’s brother), and a family in rural Michigan, initially an eight-year-old girl and then broadening in scope to include others such as her adult half-sister. A budding romantic relationship takes shape online and via phone between the photographer and the older sister. But twists and turns, the surfacing of certain facts, and face-to-face meetings reveal that things aren’t quite what they seemed with this Michigan family. This colliding of online impressions and stark reality translated into an emotionally impactful, much talked about film, which made its worldwide debut at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival.

Shortly after Sundance, director Danny Levinson, a principal in Moxie Pictures, sought out Henry & Rel, leading to their signing with the company for commercials and branded content. In their subsequent endeavors in the ad arena, Henry & Rel have again made touching emotional connections with viewers, perhaps most notably in a social media setting with last year’s lauded Google Chrome :90 titled “Dear Sophie” out of BBH New York. A father stores videos, photographs, writes down remembrances and chronicles the life of his young daughter all

in the context of a letter he someday hopes to share with her when she’s grown up. This simple storyline tugs at the heartstrings and has resonated with viewers on a grand scale, the last YouTube tally approaching 5 million hits.

“Our *Catfish* experience influenced our Google experience,” observed Ariel Schulman when asked about how work in one filmmaking discipline can inform another. “Having done *Catfish*, we felt really comfortable telling a story through the Internet. We didn’t need staged live action. We knew we could make a story work on a 2D interface, moving through emails, text and images on a screen, knowing how quickly it all registers in a viewer’s mind today. We were ready to tell ‘Dear Sophie’ through a computer screen.”

Joost observed, “We hear people say they cried a bit at the end of ‘Dear Sophie.’ That was also true for *Catfish* but that took an hour and a half. To be able to touch people emotionally in 90 seconds is challenging but if you have a story and structure, you can do a great deal within a short time frame.”

### Similar parallels

There are also parallels between two other Henry & Rel-helmed projects—the box office hit *Paranormal Activity 3* and an upcoming Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PDFA) campaign out of DDB San Francisco.

Joost explained, “The sensibilities we were trying to bring to *Paranormal Activity 3* involved immediate cinema. The characters are filming themselves and the audience feels like they are alongside them, experiencing with the characters. That same dynamic is what we are trying to bring to the Partnership campaign, so viewers feel like they are with the people we are focused on.”

At press time, the PDFA spots were being edited and Henry & Rel weren’t at liberty to publicly discuss them in detail. The PSAs are but one element in a comprehensive integrated campaign that involves Facebook, widgets and assorted other components.

*Continued on page 24*

“If you have a story and structure, you can do a great deal within a short time frame.”



*Paranormal Activity 3*

# The Malloys

## Extending Their Filmmaking Reach

By Robert Goldrich

Even the most accomplished documentarians who have made substantive inroads into spots and integrated campaigns—the latter including the acclaimed Oasis “Dig Out Your Soul In The Streets”—still have room for growth. And during a recent ongoing stretch, The Malloys—brothers Brendan and Emmett, whose roost is HSI Productions—have grown in terms of the breadth and scope of their documentary filmmaking and brought those chops to bear in new ways on ad projects.

On the documentary front, The Malloys are best known for their varied work spanning music (White Stripes’ *Under Great White Northern Lights*) and surfing (*Thicker Than Water*). Most recently they have broken new ground with *On Freddie Roach*, an acclaimed HBO series chronicling renowned boxing trainer Roach who has been stricken by advanced Parkinson’s disease. Executive produced by Roach, Peter Berg and Jim Lampley—and co-exec produced by Brendan and Emmett Malloy—*On Freddie Roach* extends the documentary filmmaking reach of The Malloys, and for that matter the sports documentary genre.

“We managed to move into a different subject matter, a pure human interest story outside the world of music and surfing,” said Brendan Malloy. “These six episodes opened up a whole new world for us and hopefully the audience.”

That world is cut from atypical documentary cloth. “Normally you have a lot

of content centered on interviews with your subject and people who know him, gaining insights that way,” related Emmett Malloy. “Instead we laid back and shot. Freddie has advanced Parkinson’s and there are so many layers to the guy. We often just put a camera on him and watched him work and interact. We were hired to shoot everything, to go out and capture Freddie and define the series”

The job entailed 50 days of shooting. There’s no narration, except for some brief off-camera voiceovers by Roach. But there’s plenty of heart and engrossing moments that come together to tell Roach’s story. You see a frail looking man—dealing with the Parkinson’s which he feels was a result of all the hits he took to the head as a boxer, who still manages to excel in his physically demanding field.



On Freddie Roach

Festival. Meanwhile Brendan was putting his signature on the prep for a Google ad assignment, with Emmett later joining him.

*Big Easy Express* invites us aboard a train ride/traveling concert unlike any other with the likes of Mumford & Sons, Edward Sharpe & the Magnetic Zeros,

*Continued on page 24*



“Our blessing and curse is that we like to do many different things.”



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## Mike "Mouse" McCoy & Scott Waugh *Act of Valor* breaks new ground

By Robert Goldrich

Mike "Mouse" McCoy and Scott Waugh, producers/directors of *Act of Valor*, can reflect on the movie's many accomplishments: finishing first in the U.S. box office derby during its opening week; helping to firmly establish them as successful independent feature filmmakers and their Bandito Brothers as a viable indie studio; even creating a genre that sets a new standard for authenticity in narrative documentary-style cinema.

Yet none of these even remotely ranks as the motion picture's most gratifying achievement for McCoy and Waugh.

"The reaction to the movie from those we tried to depict—the Navy SEALs—is the most humbling, significant accomplishment," affirmed McCoy. "To have people who've served in our military thank us for making a movie like this—for accurately telling the story of the Navy SEALs, the sacrifices they and their families have made to protect our country is far and away the most important thing we take away from this experience. Box office is irrelevant compared to the heartfelt letters we received from veterans expressing thanks."

Helping to elicit that feedback in part was a filmmaking approach that Waugh described as "going for an immersive experience—into the human side of the NAVY Seals and the dangerous work they do." The approach was cut from the cloth that has been the Bandito Brothers' calling card, telling emotional human stories immersed in action. "That's our company brand," said Waugh.

McCoy observed, "We found that Hollywood had completely misrepresented these guys. The SEALs are intelligent, intellectual. They are dedicated family men and down to earth, extremely humble. For Scott and myself, once we got to know them, it became clear that we had to have them portray themselves in the film, to tell their story for real, to set course to make a narrative live action

film starring the real guys based on real acts of valor, real stories. Everything you see happen to a SEAL in the movie has actually happened to them in the battlefield at some point during the past 10 years. Their experiences are more amazing than a screenwriter could ever write. Everything about the movie became about legitimacy and authenticity."

That authenticity included many scenes in which live ammunition was being fired, with McCoy and Waugh in camouflage and body armor on the main cameras literally right in the middle of gunfights. The action in the movie is at a heightened pitch.

A year of development went into the film, followed by two-and-a-half years of filming, then posting and finishing. A bit of fortuitous timing came with the advent of the portable, lightweight Canon 5D Mark II digital camera, with one of its biggest proponents and early experimenters being DP Shane Hurlbut, ASC, who served as cinematographer on the movie and is now repped as a director on the Bandito commercial/branded content/transmedia roster.

"To be running operations in real time, getting into the boots of the SEAL operators without having to move 50-pound cameras made it possible for us to be integrated into the action," said McCoy. "We had 14 cameras running at a time on those big assaults. The beauty is that we could move the 5D cameras in ways you couldn't easily move before. You can defy physics with this camera, as you can see in the movie."

Waugh added, "The 5Ds gave us a totally dynamic look without sacrificing image quality." Some 75 percent of the movie is shot on 5Ds, with the remaining 25 percent lensed on 35mm film. "And you can't tell one from the other in the final film," said Waugh.

### Industry roots

McCoy and Waugh grew up in the film business, each with a parent or parents

*Continued on page 25*

"The SEALs are a brotherhood of men that up until then [meeting them] we thought only existed in mythology."



*Act of Valor*



## Noam Murro

### DGA Awards come seven years apart

By Robert Goldrich

It was a delayed yet gratifying déjà vu a couple of months ago as Noam Murro of Biscuit Filmworks won his second career Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award as Best Commercial Director of the Year. The first came for his body of entered work from 2004, the latest based on spots from 2011.

The interim between wins didn't seem all that great, though, as he had two nominations during the interim for his commercialmaking exploits in 2005 and '07. Add in his first two noms for 2002 and 2003, and Murro has been up for the coveted honor a half dozen times.

"It never gets old and as I get older, I appreciate it more," observed Murro. "Winning as well as being nominated are both enormous honors. I'm grateful to keep being invited to the competition and to be recognized by my peers."

This year's win came on the strength of four entries: Heineken Premium Light's "Handle Bar Moustache" from Wieden+Kennedy, New York; DirecTV's "Hot House" for Grey New York; Volkswagen Tiguan's "Pinata" out of Deutsch LA; and EA Battlefield 3's "Is It Real?" for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

Murro topped fellow nominees Lance Acord from Park Pictures; Dante Ariola of MJZ; Fredrik Bond, also of MJZ; and Steve Miller of @radical.media.

On stage at the DGA Awards ceremony in the Grand Ballroom of Hollywood & Highland, Murro was true to the succinct and attention-span challenged nature of the commercial medium, limiting his acceptance remarks to a simple "Thank you."

However, moments later backstage, Murro was a bit more talkative about his DGA win when *SHOOT* caught up with him. "It's an amazing honor and a great feeling to get it twice. This year the competition was unbelievable with an unbelievable bunch of guys [as nominees]. I am in awe of them."

Murro noted that in order to be nominated to begin with, the concepts and stories are essential, meaning that significant thanks must go to the ad agency creatives behind each piece of work.

Also meriting acknowledgement, as the DGA nominations themselves do, are the team members supporting the director. For Murro's latest slate of winning entries, the DGA made it a point to credit the following artisans: James Powell Veal was unit production manager on the Heineken Premium Light, DirecTV and VW Tiguan commercials. Tommy Gormley was first assistant director, Ian Robert Calip second assistant director and Michael King, 2nd second assistant director on Heineken Premium Light. Scott C. Harris was first assistant director, Mark R. Robinson second assistant director and Brady Sloan 2nd second assistant director on DirecTV. Scott M. Metcalfe was first assistant director and Ty Arnold second assistant director on the VW Tiguan ad. And Michael David Salven was first assistant director, Ery E. Gentry second assistant director and Eric Schneider 2nd second assistant director on the EA Battlefield 3 ad.

### Evolving

Murro's DGA Award-winning entries seven years ago were: Adidas' "Carry" out of TBWA\Chiat\Day, San Francisco; Starbucks' "Glen" for Fallon New York; and eBay's "Toy Boat" from Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco. Asked to reflect on how his career has evolved since receiving that first DGA Award, Murro related, "I continually look for new ways to tell a story. I keep reinventing myself and seek ways to surprise myself. That element of surprise shows that what you're doing is fresh and unique. You need to keep your DNA as a filmmaker yet evolve the ways you do justice to a story."

For Murro, reinvention is sparked by being true to each concept you run across. Consider the lauded DirecTV spot "Hot House," one of the entries which earned him this year's DGA Award.

You can practically feel the heat blasting from the TV screen when you watch

*Continued on page 25*

"You don't just look to solve problems from a technical standpoint. You look to solve them emotionally..."



DirectTV's "Hot House"

## Jake Schreier

### A Quartet of Firsts

By Robert Goldrich

What a way to kick off the new year. In January, the feature *Robot & Frank* made its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival where it secured its first distribution deal—with Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions and Samuel Goldwyn Films partnering on the U.S. theatrical release in addition to jointly acquiring North American rights. Additionally Sony acquired all media rights for Latin America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Scandinavia and Eastern Europe.

But a pair of firsts—Sundance and distribution—was only half the story. *Robot & Frank* is the very first movie out of Park Pictures Features, the narrative feature motion picture company formed last summer (*SHOOT*, 7/12/11) by longstanding commercial production house Park Pictures.

Furthermore, *Robot & Frank* marks the theatrical feature directorial debut of Jake Schreier, who's on Park Pictures' spotmaking roster.

Set in the not-too-distant future, *Robot & Frank* follows aging curmudgeon and retired jewel thief Frank (portrayed by Frank Langella), a confused loner with a love for books. His sole friend is a librarian named Jennifer (Susan Sarandon) whom he regularly visits. Other than his library outings and weekly visits from his son, Frank lives a quiet life until his grown-up kids (James Marsden, Liv Tyler) install a caretaker robot to look after their dad and an unlikely friendship begins. With the help of his new robot buddy, Frank looks to woo the librarian and resume his criminal career.

*Robot & Frank* was produced by the four partners in Park Pictures Features, director Lance Acord and executive producer Jackie Kelman Bisbee—founders of Park Pictures—and film producers Galt Niederhoffer and Sam Bisbee.

Schreier credited some fortuitous timing for the realization of *Robot & Frank*, which was written by Chris Ford, based on his thesis short film



Jake Schreier

at NYU, which Schreier produced. "A few years ago we were looking for a feature property to develop and Chris' short came to mind as a project that was interesting and achievable," said Schreier. "Park was starting a feature division just as we finished the first draft of the script. Sam, Galt, Lance and Jackie gave us a great opportunity—and to work with people you know provides a great comfort level."

That comfort level comes from Schreier's six years and counting at Park Pictures where he's helmed assorted commercials, including: multiple jobs for Verizon, among them being the iPhone introductory spot out of agency mcgarrybowen, New York; a Sony PlayStation job, "Doubles Syndrome," for TBWA Paris; Levi's "Run-away Jeans" viral from Cutwater, San Francisco; and McDonald's "Closet" out of DDB Berlin.

And the theatrical feature film expertise of Niederhoffer has proven invaluable as well.

"Going in, I thought doing this feature in 20 days of shooting would be nearly impossible to pull off," recalled Schreier. "But Galt who comes from the independent filmmaking world and who has made so many of these features has the confidence to know exactly what can be done in a relatively short time."

Niederhoffer also brought a Sundance pedigree to the equation. She has produced eight features over the years that have been screened in com-

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Robot & Frank

## J.C. Chandor

*Continued from page 9*

seasoned cast was the fact that he had written the screenplay. "As a first-time filmmaker you are potentially at a disadvantage getting points across to actors. But I had the advantage of a deep understanding of the Wall Street world. My father was an investment banker at Merrill Lynch for over 30 years. I grew up in a household and my friends' families were in households run by the sword of capitalism. I understood the impact of this world, the emotions and responsibilities involved."

*Margin Call* was made for a budget under \$3 million and lensed in 17 days. "We shot 85 percent of the movie in a building—on one floor, in the lobby, on the roof. I started seeing advantages to the constraints we were under," observed Chandor. "For one, we got a better cast because the actors would only have to come in for a week or two. From a performance standpoint—I'm not sure whether I've thought this through or its revisionist thinking on my part—there was something challenging and exciting about top tier class A actors being put into a vise they hadn't been in for quite a long time, locking them into one floor of a building."

"We were kind of subconsciously putting them in the kind of situation their characters were in—type A, highly intelligent financial people trained to never show they were panicking on the worst day of their lives. Seeing actors' perfor-

## David Gordon Green

*Continued from page 10*

DP to wander off and capture different visuals and slices of life while we shoot the main scripted stuff. I call that my ninja unit. It brings an organic feel to a world which can get too locked down if you're not careful."

For the Super Bowl spot, Green said, "We tried to capture the experience of being an American today. I traveled around with a great micro-crew and I'm modeling my next movie after how we structured the crew and approach—which was more of an exploration—for this commercial."

Another lesson learned from the commercial was the impact of surprise. "There was no preview of the Chrysler spot, no blog, no teaser. That's what helped to make it successful—that the audience discovered it."

For that same reason, Green is secretive about his alluded to movie, hoping it will be as much a discovery for viewers as it will be for him as he looks to once again challenge himself.


mance with that undercurrent of struggling lent itself to the story."

### Spot future

After principal photography and when postproduction starts on *All Is Lost*, Chandor foresees a window coming open during which he plans to make himself available for select commercials and branded content projects through Washington Square Films, a production house that has been behind him and integral to his endeavors in the ad/corporate communications arena as well as in features throughout his career. Washington Square, for example, produced *Margin Call*, and is

on board for *All Is Lost*.

Chandor expressed gratitude to Washington Square, noting that its president/executive producer Josh Blum "has supported me for 10 years with a desk and an editing room whether for a small documentary or a major feature." Chandor added, "I was first introduced to Josh Blum and Jonathan Schwartz [Washington Square's director of sales and marketing] years ago, because I specifically wanted to break into commercials. Ironically we ended up making a feature film, before we ever made a commercial, but commercials and short-form films are something I have always wanted to do."




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# Focus On The Awards Season

Three of This Year's Lauded DPs Reflect On Their Wins, Recent Endeavors

By Robert Goldrich

One cinematographer earned his third Academy Award and seventh career nomination this year.

Another garnered his second career ASC Award in the feature film category, as well as his fifth Oscar nomination.

And a third DP secured both his first ASC Award win and nomination, topping the miniseries/TV movie category.

Here are close-up looks at Robert Richardson, ASC, Emmanuel "Chivo" Lubezki, ASC, AMC, and Martin Ruhe.

## Robert Richardson, ASC

Having won the Academy Award for Best Cinematography twice (*JFK*, *The Aviator*) didn't prepare Robert Richardson, ASC, for his recently receiving the coveted honor a third time in his distinguished career (*Hugo*).

"Winning the Oscar this year was virtually an out-of-body experience," reflected Richardson. "I recall little from the first moment my name was announced until I pulled a meter from my belt on an exterior shot of *Django Unchained* [Quentin Tarantino's latest feature] two days later."

As for the biggest creative challenge posed by the Martin Scorsese-directed *Hugo*, Richardson simply cited the fact that the feature was shot in 3D.

"We began testing with no experience, hence we were at square one... Furthermore, we were forced to ask if it were viable both physically but also financially to shoot in 3D or would it be best to do 3D in post. Graham King (*Hugo* producer) allowed us to evaluate these questions through a series of tests, then all parties sat down and conversed—and obviously the decision was to shoot in 3D."

While Richardson's longstanding collaborative relationship with Scorsese (*The Aviator*, *Shutter Island*, *Shine A Light*, *Bringing Out The Dead*, *Casino*) "allowed us," said the cinematographer "to move rapidly through the central questions/problems," *Hugo* still had a sophisticated learning curve. Asked what the most valuable lesson was that he learned from *Hugo*, Richardson replied, "Imagination is more valuable than experience."

However, *Hugo* did represent Richardson's first theatrical feature experience with ARRI's ALEXA digital camera.

"At that time the camera was not yet in production so we started with prototypes,"

recalled Richardson. "Not only was it new to me but it was also new to Vince Pace who created rigs to accommodate the ALEXA. The camera has exceptional range. And that is ever expanding. Digital cameras are akin to computers—constant shifts in software and capabilities. But concept of design is what fundamentally holds the ALEXA tight."

Richardson observed that his commercialmaking endeavors have added to his digital lensing experience.

"I have shot a few commercials with digital capture [with director Erich Joiner at production house Tool of North America]. We used both the RED and the ALEXA," said Richardson. "I have not yet experienced the Epic... That said, the

ALEXA is at this time my camera of choice. I followed *Hugo* with *World War Z* and we shot that production on the ALEXA as well."

Given his positive experiences on ALEXA, how does Richardson now view digital relative to film? "I would say that I am a proponent of what suits the director and the project best," he assessed. "If that be film, then film. If that be digital, then digital."

Richardson has been on back-to-back features with little time in between for three-plus years so his availability for commercials has been significantly reduced. Still, though, he enjoys the commercialmaking medium—both as a DP and a director. On the former score, he has shot all of his most recent spot work for Tool's Joiner. And Richardson's last spot directorial gig was the co-helming of a Toyota Prius job with Joiner via Tool of North America, which represents Richardson as a commercial director. The Skouras Agency continues to handle Richardson as a cinematographer spanning long as well as



From top left, clockwise: *Hugo*, *The Tree Of Life*, *Page Eight*

short-form projects.

*Hugo* marked Richardson's seventh Academy Award nomination. Besides his other Oscar-winning efforts for *JFK* (directed by Oliver Stone) and *The Aviator* (Scorsese), the balance of Richardson's Best Cinematography Oscar nominations came on the strength of *Inglourious Basterds* (directed by Tarantino), *Snow Falling On Cedars* (directed by Scott Hicks), *Born On The Fourth of July* (Stone) and *Platoon* (Stone).

Additionally, *Hugo* earned Richardson his 10th career nomination for the prized ASC Award. He was previously nominated for *Inglourious Basterds* (2010), *The Good*

*Continued on page 16*

Michael Condon, SOC  
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## Award-Winning DPs Look Back On Their Acclaimed Work

Continued from page 14

*Shepherd* (2007, directed by Robert De Niro), *The Aviator* (2005), *Snow Falling on Cedars* (2000), *The Horse Whisperer* (1999, directed by Robert Redford), *Heaven & Earth* (1994, directed by Oliver Stone), *A Few Good Men* (1993, directed by Rob Reiner), *JFK* (1992), and *Born on the Fourth of July* (1990).

### Emmanuel "Chivo" Lubezki, ASC, AMC

It's been an eventful awards season for Emmanuel "Chivo" Lubezki, ASC, AMC, who won his second career ASC Award for feature film excellence on the strength of director Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life* (SHOOTonline, 2/12). The film also earned Lubezki his fifth Best Cinematography Academy Award nomination (SHOOTonline, 1/24), the previous four coming for *Children of Men* in 2007, *The New World* in '06, *Sleepy Hollow* in '00 and *A Little Princess* in '96. Alfonso Cuarón directed *Children of Men* and *A Little Princess*. Malick helmed *The New World*. And Tim Burton directed *Sleepy Hollow*.

This new year has also seen Lubezki diversify beyond his cinematography shingle, signing with Park Pictures for representation as a commercials director/DP.

He has already made his Park Pictures debut by directing and lensing a yet-to-be-released Powerade :60 for Wieden+Kennedy, Amsterdam.

Lubezki—who will continue to be active as a feature and commercial cin-



Robert Richardson, ASC

ematographer via ICM—said he gravitated to Park Pictures for its visual bent and track record of helping DPs to extend their creative reach into directing, prime examples being the production house's co-founder Lance Acord, ASC, and Ellen Kuras, ASC.

First drawing Lubezki to Park Pictures, though, was the personal rapport he struck up with producer Mary Ann Marino years ago on a commercial he directed. It was prior to Marino's current tenure at Park as an executive producer.

"We became friends and remained in touch over the years. I respect her judgment and intelligence," related Lubezki. "When she introduced me to Lance, it felt right and everything fell into place."

While one discipline informs another, with commercials enabling an artist to bring something extra to features and conversely theatrical film experience contributing to subsequent spotmaking endeavors,

Lubezki said another dynamic comes into play when he goes back and forth between short and long-form fare.

"Directing commercials makes me a better cinematographer because having been in those shoes I better understand what a director needs, how to help, how to translate a director's ideas and vision into the final project. And being a cinematographer collaborating with great feature film and commercial directors helps make me a better director. You learn so much about directing by being around Terrence, Alfonso and all the other great directors I've been fortunate to work with."

In accepting the ASC Award on stage at the Hollywood and Highland Grand Ballroom last month in Hollywood, Lubezki thanked Malick, whom he described simply as being "my friend, my teacher and one of my favorite directors."

In terms of collaborating with Malick, Lubezki affirmed, "Every second with Terry—in pre-production, production, postproduction, or any phone call with him—I treasure. He's not just a film director. He is a master of cinema. I'm learning from him all the time. He's incredibly smart and a wonderful person. I believe Terry could shoot the movie himself. He can do anything on his own. But thankfully he chose to work with me. He is an incredible collaborator."

Lubezki has since shot another feature for Malick, an untitled romantic drama shot in Oklahoma. "It's very different than anything we've ever done before," said Lubezki whose latest feature endeavors also include a return engagement with Cuarón on an adventure/science fiction 3D movie called *Gravity*, which marked Lubezki's first entirely digitally captured feature, with the camera of choice being ARRI's ALEXA.

Lubezki gave the ALEXA a positive review, saying it was ideal for a movie which Cuarón wrote to be 3D.

"This wasn't a case of a studio trying to impose 3D on a film. 3D was essential to the storyline created by Alfonso," said Lubezki, adding, "We live in an incredible time where we have all these tools—film, RED, ALEXA, Sony cameras. We have a bigger palette. If you're like me, you can pretty much pick the camera you feel is most appropriate. If you're a new cinematographer starting out, even if you can't choose, you have access to inexpensive digital cameras that you can do very cool work with."

Having said that, Lubezki affirmed, "I hope film doesn't go away. I'm not one of those who says film is the only way. It all depends on the particular project. A lot of the work I do with



Emmanuel "Chivo" Lubezki, ASC, AMC

Terry [Malick], though, couldn't be done on anything but film. In *The Tree of Life*, we shot with no movie lights. The latitude of film is what allowed us to shoot inside and capture all the detail that we needed."

Still there's room for mixing and matching. Lubezki noted that for some of the modern-day scenes with Sean Penn in *The Tree of Life*, RED was deployed. And in the next Malick movie shot in Oklahoma, RED figured even more prominently.

Lubezki's spot shooting too has spanned film and assorted digital cameras, including RED, ALEXA and the new Phantom.

He said that the latter proved invaluable for a particular project because "it allowed us to do some things that in film might have been cost prohibitive to attain."

Among the directors Lubezki has lensed commercials for over the years are David Fincher, Fredrik Bond, Tom Kuntz and Dante Ariola. For the latter, Lubezki shot Jim Beam's "Parallels" spot for Strawberry Frog, New York. "Parallels" has scored assorted kudos, helping to earn Ariola of MJZ a DGA Award nomination this year, and Lubezki a 2011 AICP Show honor in the Cinematography category.

Lubezki is gratified by the recognition from the feature and commercial-making communities, citing the ASC honors as especially touching. His first ASC win came in 2007 for *Children of Men*; his first nomination in 2000 for *Sleepy Hollow*.

"What's best is the ASC dinner a couple of nights before the awards show," observed Lubezki. "You are hanging out at the ASC clubhouse with the greatest cinematographers of all time; legends the likes of Haskell Wexler and Owen Roizman who truly helped shape who you are as a DP and how you perceive cinematography. I remember during my youth in Mexico my friends and I would buy old, torn copies of *American Cinematographer* in the black market. It was like reading fiction, and very exciting. That stays with you and helps define who you are. Now I'm in a room with some of these legends written about

in *American Cinematographer*. It is just so inspiring."

### Martin Ruhe

"It was a big honor and a big shock," affirmed Martin Ruhe on winning this year's ASC Award for Outstanding Achievement in a Television Movie or Miniseries on the basis of his work on the telefilm *Page Eight*.

Both the ASC nomination and award were career firsts for Ruhe whose earlier industry accolades include Camerimage and British Independent Film Award nominations in 2007 for the Anton Corbijn-directed feature *Control*.

But now *Page 8* turns a special page for Ruhe who describes the peer recognition represented by the ASC Awards as "the highest honor possible." He noted, "I thought it was special just being invited to the awards ceremony and being among so many great cinematographers."

With a filmography steeped in music videos and commercials accompanied by several theatrical features, Ruhe hasn't nearly been so active in TV programs. So there's a tinge of irony to his winning the ASC honor for a TV movie. A contemporary spy thriller for the BBC, *Page Eight* has drawn its share of kudos this awards season. Beyond Ruhe's ASC win, Bill Nighy garnered a Golden Globe as Best Lead Actor in a Miniseries or TV Movie for his portrayal of old guard secret agent Johnny Worricker.

"I was sent the script and I liked it," recalled Ruhe. "It was smartly written with a lot of subtleties. And the people involved were of such high caliber, including the producers of the *Harry Potter* movies [David Baron, David Heyman], and of course Sir David Hare." A noted playwright, Hare wrote and directed *Page 8*, his first film since 1989. Also appealing to Ruhe was a stellar cast including Nighy, Rachel Weisz, Michael Gambon, Tom Hughes, Ralph Fiennes and Judy Davis.

*Page 8* additionally afforded Ruhe the chance to work extensively and intensely on the ALEXA.

"Out of all the digital cameras at the moment—and things change every moment—I think the ALEXA ranks as the best," assessed Ruhe. "And when they get the optical viewfinder, that will put it over the top. For me, that's important. I'm not a big fan of most electronic viewfinders."

While a film proponent, Ruhe has embraced digital cinematography. And his endeavors on that front extend well beyond the ALEXA. On the Daniel Barber-directed feature film *Harry Brown*, for example, Ruhe deployed the Sony F35 and found the



Hugo



The Tree of Life

# CINEMATOGRAPHERS & CAMERAS

experience favorable.

"Digital is getting better but I feel we still need film to be around," said Ruhe. "There are still many things you can do in film that you can't do in digital. I love film on the big screen. I want film to be here so that we can continue to have a choice between digital and film—and can go with what's right for a particular project. Sometimes you have decisions about digital that are made before the DP is even involved."

Repped by Dattner Dispotto and Associates, Ruhe continues to be active in music videos and commercials.

It was his music video work with Corbijn that led to Ruhe shooting features for the director, first the aforementioned *Control*, and then *The American* starring George Clooney. Ruhe's theatrical feature credits also include the Julie Delpy-directed film, *The Countess*.

Ruhe's music video credits span assorted performers, among the most notable being U2 and Coldplay.

His commercial lensing exploits include such clients as ESPN, Netflix, Comcast, CareerBuilder, Orange, Adidas, Mars, McDonald's, Ikea, BMW, T-Mobile, Mercedes-Benz, Renault,



**Martin Ruhe**

Nivea and the Volkswagen Polo. Ruhe has shot for numerous notable directors, including the likes of Neil Harris, Steve Miller, Markus Walter, The Perlorian Brothers, Rick Lemoine and the Happy collective.

Ruhe has also shot commercial and feature work for director Daniel Barber. However, it was hardly a spotmaking rapport that led to Barber selecting him to shoot the aforementioned movie *Harry Brown*, which starred Michael Caine and Emily Mortimer.

"Someone had recommended me to Daniel," recollected Ruhe, "and as I was prepping for my first commercial with him, we met at an airport for a half-hour and after the first 10

minutes, he gave me the *Harry Brown* script. It was wonderful, considering all the DPs he knows, that he trusted me with his movie, that he had a gut feeling about me. He's been a great, trusted collaborator."

Fluent in English, Spanish and German, Ruhe grew up in a small town in West Germany. He found the film business alluring but was hardly connected to it.

"I had no clue how to break in but I loved film and at first wanted to be a film director," he recollected.

Sifting through the *Yellow Pages* in a phone booth, he made calls to get his foot in the door but to no avail until he managed to land a job at a leading camera house in Berlin.

"One weekend, I went out to a shoot to see what a cameraman does. As soon as I began to see what the job entailed, I knew immediately that's what I wanted to do professionally," said Ruhe. "There was so much for a cameraman to explore, to give, to learn, to dive into. I did everything I could in order to make myself a better, more well-rounded cinematographer."

That included, he continued, "taking acting classes so that I would bet-

ter understand and appreciate actors and their process—so that I could work better and connect in a more relevant way with them."

Now Ruhe finds it gratifying to be part of the filmmaking process with the director, helping him or her to create, to as he says, "allow space, allow room for things to happen."

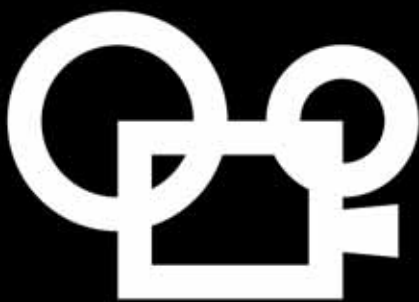
Ruhe added that he's looking for more things to happen in the U.S. for him as a cinematographer. Hopefully the ASC Award will help towards that geographic end. While he's been active on both sides of the Atlantic,

shooting European and American spots, Ruhe would like to step up his activity for stateside clients.

At press time, Ruhe was waiting for a couple of feature projects to come together. "I would love to continue the mix of theatrical features and commercials that I've been able to enjoy throughout much of my career," said Ruhe. "I feel that work in features allows you to bring something more to commercials, just as commercials help you to bring a greater dimension to your features. Working in both has been ideal."



**Page Eight**



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# Our Spring Ensemble

Directors bring music, documentary, visual, Broadway production chops to ad/branded content community

By Robert Goldrich

*SHOOT*'s batch of up-and-coming directors this spring includes: a filmmaker whose ad/marketing arena debut, a recent music documentary done in association with the Grammys and sponsored by Hyundai Veloster, represents a distinctive form of branded entertainment; an Oscar winner as well as a nominee this year in the Short Subject Documentary category; a helmer whose vision for an art/architectural short film has translated into 500,000 YouTube hits and counting; and an accomplished theater director and choreographer.

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

## Amir Bar-Lev

For his first splash in what can be murky advertising/marketing waters, director Amir Bar-Lev has come out swimmingly with the *Re:Generation Music Project*, a feature documentary produced by music-focused entertainment studio GreenLight Media & Marketing in association with RSA Films, the production house which represents him for commercials and branded entertainment.

The film fittingly debuted at the recently concluded South By Southwest (SXSW) Film Conference and Festival, an ideal venue in that like SXSW, *Re:Generation* marries the worlds of film and music. Made in association with the Grammys and sponsored by Hyundai Veloster, *Re:Generation* follows five noted DJs—DJ Premier, electronic duo The Crystal Method, Pretty Lights of dub-step fame, Grammy winner Skrillex and producer Mark Ronson—as they remix, recreate and re-imagine five traditional styles of music. Ronson creates his take on jazz, Skrillex on rock 'n roll, Pretty Lights on country music, DJ Premier tackles classical, and The Crystal Method forays into soul. Each artist collaborates with another artist or artists from each respective genre. For example, The Crystal Method teams up with soul

singer Martha Reeves (of the Motown group Martha and the Vandellas).

The collaborations speak to the past, present and future of music—the history entailing artists taking a crash course on the roots of the musical genres they're grappling with as *Pretty Lights*, for instance, travels to Nashville to get an education on country western fare, getting exposed to a recording of the folksy crooning of Burl Ives, among others, who provide creative influence. The present and future are somehow embodied via the creative collaborations themselves as musical tastes and genres mesh to create distinctively original new music—all the while providing insights into the often elusive artistic process.

Ronson, for instance, created a New Orleans jazz mix in "A La Modeliste" that features an all-star cast of Erykah Badu, Mos Def, Trombone Shorty, Zigaboo Modeliste, and members of The Dap-Kings. DJ Premier enlisted NAS and Boston's Berklee Symphony Orchestra for his "Regeneration." And *Pretty Lights*' "Wayfaring Stranger" showcases vocals from LeAnn Rimes and Dr. Ralph Stanley. Prior to its screening as part of SXSW's Special Events program, *Re:Generation* was showcased during two separate daylong engagements in some 175-plus theaters across select cities nationwide—the first coming on Feb. 16, followed by an encore showing on Feb. 23. The film had its premiere at a red carpet event at Graumann's Chinese Theater in Hollywood on Feb. 9.

Director Bar-Lev has a filmography which includes such feature documentaries as *Fighter*, *My Kid Could Paint That*, and *The Tillman Story*, the latter two earning nominations for the Sundance Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize in 2007 and 2010, respectively. Bar-Lev was also co-producer of *Trouble the Water* (directed by Carl Deal and Tia Lessin) which was nominated for the Best Feature Documentary Oscar in 2009. This body of

work—marked by documentary acumen with underlying music sensibilities—drew the attention of RSA which was looking for a filmmaker to take on *Re:Generation*. Tom Dunlap, an exec producer at RSA and one of the producers of *Re:Generation* (along with RSA president Jules Daly) reached out to Bar-Lev, who eventually earned the opportunity from GreenLight to direct the assignment. Bar-Lev said that shortly after embarking on the job, he felt simpatico with RSA, resulting in his joining the company's roster for commercials and longer form branded projects.

Assessing his introduction to the branded/advertising arena, Bar-Lev said he's gratified that *Re:Generation* works as a film unto itself. "It was my first time working with a creative director [GreenLight's Nick Davidge, one of the film's executive producers] and it was a great experience," related Bar-Lev. "We shared an obsession with music, I was passionate about my ideas and brought them to him. He had some great ideas and we came together, balanced some things out and found that our visions complemented each other's quite nicely. The film doesn't play like something branded. It works as a film and yet fits into this unconventional creative campaign they have developed...As a music lover, I'm glad to see the film shows that it can be wildly entertaining to watch people make music."

Upon first hearing of the idea for *Re:Generation* from Dunlap, Bar-Lev couldn't help but smile. "I came up with an idea like this eight years ago," he recalled, "and got it set up as a pilot on a network which then became Spike. It was one of those horrible TV experiences where they developed the idea into the dirt. The project never went to air. I had described it as being *Iron Chef* for DJs. But this project [*Re:Generation*] is a much better version of what I had come up with. Plus the times are different. The landscape has changed. People didn't care all

that much about DJs back then. Now they have arrived."

## Daniel Junge

Daniel Junge's career has steadily progressed as reflected in his climb up the Oscar ladder. In 2008, Junge's documentary *They Killed Sister Dorothy* made the Academy Awards shortlist. The next year his documentary short *The Last Campaign of Governor Booth Gardner* earned an Oscar nomination. And last month *Saving Face*—which Junge co-directed with Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy—wound up winning the Oscar for Best Short Subject Documentary.

So what's the next step after an Academy Award? To be sure, more documentary work is in the offing and perhaps other longer-form fare. Yet also on the docket are commercials and branded entertainment as Junge recently signed with Futuristic Films, a production company focused on advertising and brand content.

Junge's first job since officially joining Futuristic was a film for Century-Link which centers on the passions and emotional stories of people at the telecom company. "It's the kind of project—about the ethos of folks and a company—that's in my wheelhouse," assessed Junge who is no stranger to Futuristic. Prior to formally coming aboard the production house, he directed select projects there off and on for a prolonged stretch in-between his documentary endeavors. Via Futuristic he helmed a series of anti-smoking ads for the State of Wyoming, as well as a branded film titled *Why We Fly* for Frontier Airlines. It was in the midst of another Futuristic assignment—a film exploring how different children around the world see the future—that Junge came aboard the production company's directorial roster. Entitled *One Day*, the film marked the 100th anniversary of office furniture company Steelcase and is slated for showing at a special commemorative event and online.

"Working in documentaries for most of my career," related Junge, "I'm used to working on projects for two or three years. So I was intrigued by the idea of joining a company like Futuristic to represent me in this new arena of ad projects, where authenticity and emotion are desirable."

Plus commercials and branded films have afforded Junge the opportunity to collaborate with artists he had previously admired from afar, like DP Luke Geissbuhler (*Borat, Helvetica*) who shot *One Day*.

Still, Junge acknowledged that he originally approached the ad/branding arena with "a bit of hesitation, having come from long-form documentaries with a lot of my stuff being more social justice related. I've been pleasantly surprised how everything has come together. I've been able to make cool films and spots in the realm of human emotion—and that is what I've been doing in my feature work. The two go hand in hand. I've been able to work with bigger crews and different cameras that I wouldn't have been able to experience otherwise."

And one discipline has informed the other, he observed. "If you look at my commercials and branded films, they are much more stylized than my feature documentary work which is more traditional cinema verite. This isn't to say there wasn't artistry in my films previously but ad projects have helped me think a little more visually and open myself up to tell stories in a more stylized manner. I went to NYU film school and wanted to be a narrative filmmaker at first. In a sense I'm moving a bit back towards that, with a more filmic approach to all my work."

While Junge may be progressing to a better mesh of style and substance, the latter remains at the core of his filmmaking, movingly embodied in this year's Oscar-winning *Saving Face*, which introduces us to Dr. Mohammad Jawad who returns to his Pakistan homeland to help victims of acid burns. We see the women who are

# UP-AND-COMING DIRECTORS



**Amir Bar-Lev**

recovering and reclaiming their lives, and another woman who fights to see that the perpetrators of this crime are brought to justice.

Junge knew about incidents of acid attacks on women in South Asia, often committed by their husbands or boyfriends as part of a pattern of abuse and misplaced revenge. The director found an avenue to pursue the subject when he heard a BBC Radio report about Dr. Jawad who's based in the U.K. "That didn't sound like an Anglo name so I sought him out. He is a Pakistani going back to his country to help acid burn victims. He told me he was about to go there in a month so I went with him. Shortly after getting there, it became apparent I would need a partner on the ground. I've done this before when I made *Iron Ladies of Liberia*, partnering with a Liberian co-director [Siatta Scott Johnson]."

For *Saving Face*, Junge had the good fortune to connect with director/producer Obaid-Chinoy who became his local partner in Pakistan. "She happens to be a woman as well, which brings those sensibilities to the mix," observed Junge.

The result is a documentary that movingly captures both the plight as well as the courage of these victimized women in Pakistan, chronicles the progress being made to prosecute the perpetrators of these attacks, and the efforts of a plastic surgeon to heal not just the physical scars but the emotional ones as well.

Junge's filmography also includes such feature films as: *Chiefs*, winner of the Best Documentary honor at the 2002 Tribeca Film Festival and broadcast on PBS; *Iron Ladies of Liberia*, (2007) which premiered at the



**Daniel Junge**

Toronto Film Festival and aired on PBS, BBC and assorted other broadcast outlets; and *They Killed Sister Dorothy*, Audience and Jury Winner at the South by Southwest Film Festival, broadcast on HBO, and News & Documentary Emmy Award-nominated in 2010 for "outstanding long-form investigative journalism." Junge has made over a dozen other films and television programs,

## Robin Fryday

Robin Fryday—who co-directed with the late Gail Dolgin this year's Oscar-nominated documentary short film *The Barber of Birmingham: Foot Soldier of the Civil Rights Movement*—has joined bicoastal Nonfiction Unlimited for commercials and client-sponsored documentary projects.

Fryday has already wrapped her first project with Nonfiction: "True Value," a documentary spot for Bank of America out of Hill Holliday, Boston. The commercial features a Chicago family who has run its mom-and-pop hardware store for three generations.

Both the commercial and the Academy Award-nominated documentary represent the breaking of new ground for Fryday who first established herself as a still photographer and photojournalist. She and Fredi Juni launched The Bay Area Heart Gallery some seven years ago, a collaboration between social services and photographers to capture still pictures of children in foster care who are in need of adoption. Fryday has also traveled the world, capturing on film kids in indigenous cultures as part of a nonprofit fundraising initiative to provide aid and homes to children.

So how did this translate into her



**Robin Fryday**

jumping into the world of documentary filmmaking, with her first effort as a documentarian earning an Oscar nomination? The impetus came from within, sparked by the at the time 2008 potential nomination of Barack Obama and the prospects of his becoming the first African American President of the United States. This moved Fryday to explore the impact of these unfolding events on aging Civil Rights activists in the South. "I didn't want to find the leaders who were already well known, but rather the unsung heroes who risked their lives and livelihoods, who sacrificed so much for their civil rights and the civil rights of others," related Fryday.

A research trip to Alabama confirmed her belief that the stories of those who fought for the right to vote in the 1960s needed to be captured and preserved. That Birmingham visit led her to 85-year-old James Armstrong, an African-American barber who spoke of his experiences and the manifestation of an unimaginable dream: the ascent of an African-American to the country's presidency.

Upon returning to the San Francisco Bay Area, Fryday thought she had the makings of a viable, valuable documentary. Still, she sought an experienced filmmaker to collaborate with on her first venture into documentary-making. Serendipity intervened as of all people, her hairdresser, introduced her to Gail Dolgin, a documentarian whose accomplishments included co-directing (with Vicente Franco) *Daughter from Danang*, nominated for a Best Feature Documentary Oscar in 2003. Dolgin saw the still photographs Fryday took of Armstrong in his barbershop and immediately em-



**Jimmy Diebold**

braced the project.

"Gail was an amazingly courageous woman," said Fryday. "She had been battling breast cancer for over 10 years and was in the late stages of the disease. She didn't let anything stop her. We spent a great deal of time together and she mentored me through this project." Dolgin passed away in October 2010 but would have undoubtedly been gratified by *The Barber of Birmingham* and it having earned her a second career Oscar nomination.

"Gail's daughter was with me at the Academy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles," said Fryday. "We know how proud her mom would have been."

*The Barber of Birmingham* debuted at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. Its point of view is through the eyes of Armstrong. Among the memorable scenes are witnessing this activist of the Civil Rights era cast his vote, celebrate Obama's victory and unfurl the American flag as he is inducted into the Foot Soldiers Hall of Fame.

## Jimmy Diebold

Back in 2002, Jimmy Diebold won an AICP Show honor in the Student Commercial category for Sony Style's "Dueling DJs." He served as director/executive producer/editor of the spot back during his days at Art Center College of Design.

Fast forward to today and Diebold, now with Bodega Studios, has made his biggest professional stateside splash to date with an unlikely project, a short titled *Midnight Lights*, which has become an online sensation and could soon be rocking the house at CenturyLink Field for home games of the Seattle Sounders soccer team.

Between the book-ends of the



**Casey Nicholaw**

AICP Show-winning student spot and *Midnight Lights* are some nine-and-a-half years which prove that rarely does the oft-cited term "overnight sensation" apply to a filmmaker's career progression. Indeed it was during that "interim" span that Diebold got his education in the field, first scrapping for whatever projects he could get, then garnering a big break with high-profile beauty/fashion work in Eastern Europe spurred on by a successful Rexona deodorant commercial. All the while Diebold was looking to find his voice in his home country, the U.S., with varying degrees of success at a few different shops.

He and his wife then moved from N.Y. to San Francisco to be closer to family. Diebold originally thought that he'd eventually have to relocate to L.A. to further his directorial ambitions—an assumption that was proved wrong when he connected with Clint Goldman, a Bay Area-based producer active in multiple production disciplines over the years, most notably features (producing *Spawn* for New Line Cinema, and the animated movie *The Wild* for Disney) as well as varied commercials. The two struck up a rapport, and Goldman—who was in the process of becoming Bodega's West Coast exec producer/company partner—secured Diebold some work, including a campaign for Parx Casino in Philadelphia. "Clint has been a mentor," related Diebold. "He's enthusiastic about young talent, he's hard working and has provided me with real no-nonsense guidance. He's the perfect balance of what I had been waiting and hoping for."

That mentorship included Gold-

*Continued on page 25*

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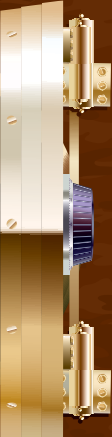
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## Execs, Artisans Assess Business, Creative Prospects For 2012

*A rundown of developments, dynamics, trends and work that helps to define the Midwest marketplace*

### A SHOOT Staff Report

The Chrysler Super Bowl spot "It's Half Time in America" is an ode to Detroit, the Midwest work ethic, perseverance and the will to turn things around. Indeed the American auto industry has rebounded and there are some key U.S. economic indicators pointing upwards for the first time

in a long time. For our first Midwest feature of 2012, we asked execs and artisans in Chicago, Detroit and other points Midwest to assess prospects for the new year and to cite their best recent work and how it exemplifies what they and the Midwest have to offer.

At last month's Film Independent Spirit Awards, director Steve James,

who won the Best Documentary honor for *The Interrupters*, noted that Chicago is a great place for filmmaking and it once again proved to be for the Windy City story that is *The Interrupters*. In that spirit, we posed the following two-part question:

1) *While crystal balling is in-*

*herently difficult—if not impossible—we nonetheless ask you to assess the business and creative prospects for your company and the Midwest this year. What gives you cause for optimism? What concerns you?*

2) *What do you consider your*

*company's best recent work and how does it exemplify what you and/or the Midwest market have to offer?*

Here's some of the feedback we received (check online and this week's electronic edition for full answers to both questions):



### Mark Androw, executive producer, Story, Chicago

1) Business in the Midwest has been strong and we foresee continued growth and development.

Many national advertisers have discovered the benefits of shooting in Illinois and are getting the benefit of the Illinois Film Tax Credit. Walmart has been shooting a lot in Illinois due in a large part to the Illinois Tax Credit and we were fortunate to recently get a chance to work on Walmart

for The Martin Agency.

Last year we started The Whole Story for the editing of our own work and that has proven to be a very successful addition to our core production business. We foresee continued growth in handling complete projects from start to finish.

2) We are very proud of the project that John Komnenich did for Walmart and The Martin Agency that told small everyday stories. David Orr's recent work for Bissell via Cramer Krasselt really showcased how David combined live action and effects to create stunning product visuals. Robb Fischer's recent work for AARP combined very real talent performance and visual storytelling. And John Komnenich's "Mean Stinks" campaign for Secret Deodorant told a very emotional story of how mean teenage girls can be to each other and how hurtful this can be.

We produced promos for the TV shows Boss and Mob Wives which was a lot of fun and took us away from regular commercial projects. John Komnenich has also been directing longer form projects for International Trucks which features real people's interesting stories.



### Tom Duff, president, Optimus, Chicago

1) For all of us in the Midwest advertising world, the new business agencies have been winning is a cause for optimism across the board. It seems like all of us in the production/post world have had pretty busy starts to the year, which is healthy, obviously. That's the optimistic side.

The concerning side, as always, are the strangling budgets and "got you by the balls" discount dictates. It stinks, 'nuff said there.

What hasn't changed is still the fun of collaborating with our clients on the creative side of the business and having that mutual fulfilling feeling of kicking out wonderful work together. And for us specifically, our "all under one roof" production through post model has been incredibly effective for us lately, and we see this trend continuing more and more as clients look for great work with the efficiencies this kind of model provides.

2) We partnered with some real brilliant people at the Chicago based agency commonground in creating an Illinois Lottery Powerball spot that launched their 20th anniversary campaign. The spot aired on both the Super Bowl and the Oscars.

We also traveled to Austin, TX to shoot some Ford F150 truck spots for the incredibly talented creative and production folks at Team Detroit/Retail First. Posted at Optimus Chicago and LA.

And we just shot and finished here in Chicago a package for US Bank out of Kaplan Thaler NY. And talk about skilled professionals, their first-class creative team was even complemented by none other than J.J. Sedelmaier Productions.

These examples for us, and I'm sure the same for our competitors/brethren, makes us all proud to be carrying the torch for the terrific creative talent this market offers from agencies through to us collaborative partners.

Truly, we in Chicago are second to none!



### Lisa Masseur, executive producer, Radar Studios, Chicago

1) I think business is definitely on an uptick. Especially in the Midwest. At Radar Studios we have many reasons to be optimistic. In the last few months, we have expanded our directorial roster to include four additional directors/artists. AK, who is based in South Africa, shoots large scale, cinematic spots that often include VFX. Argentine photographer and director, Pix Talarico, also directs spots that combine live action and VFX, but his layered, kinetic work has an energy that is palpable. Stop motion/Claymation director Adam Pierce is known for bringing unique characters to life.

VFX and directing team Vico Sharabani and Alex Frisch also joined us late last year, but they didn't come alone. They recently launched their virtual VFX studio, COPA (copanetwork.com). COPA is a global collective of high-end VFX artists. Radar Studios will serve as the Chicago hub for COPA, allowing clients to have seamless, real time access to the best VFX artists from around the globe. By expanding our directorial roster and forming this partnership with COPA, not only are we adding incredible depth to our already fantastic artist driven team, but we are now able to take on projects that were previously undoable either due to their timelines or due to the scope of the work. Our production and VFX capabilities have just expanded tenfold. In fact, we just celebrated our creative expansion with "RADAR Revamped", an industry party of 600+ in Chicago. I have nothing but optimism at this time!

2) RADAR and COPA just completed their first project together, jointly handling VFX and postproduction for a P&G spot for "Secret" starring Jenny Poulos from Bravo's "Flipping Out." VFX supervisor Frisch worked with director Dave Meyers from Radical Media to design the complex CG environment for the spot. RADAR's Greg Somerlot traveled to LA for the shoot and edited on set due to the quick turnaround. RADAR's design/animation team led by Steven Gray created the demo and tag and the RADAR VFX team worked in collaboration with the COPA team.



### Clayton Condit, editor/partner, Splice Here®, Minneapolis

1) Today, where you are located is less of a barrier to landing high-profile work. As budgets continue to tighten, clients are looking beyond the usual suspects on the coasts to get their work done. Web distribution and the explosion of acquisition formats are also dramatically changing the landscape. Now, in the right hands, even the smallest budgets can accomplish great things.

Ironically, because of our smaller market, we had to embrace these alternative formats early on. We have focused on streamlining our workflows to allow us to offer strong creative that delivers on time with a minimum of fuss putting us on an international stage in our industry.

2) We've been fortunate to partner with some young directors that are creating some outstanding, diverse work. These include national Best Buy spots, primetime specials like The Mystery of Easter Island for NOVA and Nat Geo, the IMAX 3D film Space Junk and the Tribeca Film Festival darling Stuck Between Stations. For the holidays, our VFX team worked with emerging feature director Eric Howell to create an in-house short, Santa In Space. We'd intended it to be just a silly little gift for our clients, but it was mentioned on Engadget and received nearly 100,000 views.



### Chad Hutson, executive producer, Leviathan, Chicago

1) Leviathan is a relatively new company (less than two years old), so I'd be lying if I said it wasn't daunting to go up against well-established worldwide competition. But in the same breath, we ARE going up against competition of that caliber and winning, which is flattering and very encouraging for us, and should be encouraging for any studio in the Midwest. Continuing to innovate both creatively and technically has served us well since inception...whether it's in this region or an entirely different country, that's the key to companies landing solid creative work.

With several recent agency wins in the Midwest like Sprint and Sony PlayStation, and large existing accounts such as S.C. Johnson and Samsung staying in Chicago, I think the forecast for both Leviathan and other companies here is sunny with a strong chance of success.

2) Beyond our broadcast work, such as campaigns for Nintendo, Callaway and The North Face, we've had opportunities to meld high design with new technologies, such as with recent projects for HP, Dodge and electronic artists Amon Tobin and Skrillex. The visuals follow many of the same standards as broadcast, though the means by which they're displayed or controlled involves feats of hardware hacking, application development and technical improvisation.



### Tim McGuire, CEO, Cutters, Chicago

1) Business prospects: I believe the Midwest agencies are healthier than they've been in the past several years and they seem to be winning back some of the larger consumer accounts. Look at the auto industry, they struggled mightily and that industry is certainly on the rebound. Corporate America may not be adding capacity and hiring as in the past, but they are maximizing efficiency and trying to gain market share through the marketing of their product lines. In a nutshell, Midwest advertising is on the upswing. Over the past eighteen months our company has been very expansionary in order to compete nationally and globally. We've partnered in the purchase of Ringside Creative in Detroit and opened a Cutters office there. All told we've added ten editors in Chicago, LA and Detroit, greatly enhancing our creative profile.

Concerns: Continuing tight budgets and profit margins are always a concern and this is probably the norm going forward and we have to plan for that. With all the volatility in the world, we're just one crisis away from bringing economies to a standstill and we all know that advertising is one of the first to fall.

2) During my career, I had always heard many clients saying they needed to go to the coasts to find the best directors, FX artists, and editors. . . however, I have not heard that conversation very much lately. My colleagues and I have watched and helped to grow the editorial talent in the Midwest both creatively and physically, and our clients are taking notice. A natural realization of what is actually available to clients in the Midwest has truly occurred.



### Steve Morrison, VP/general manager, Foundation Content, Chicago

1) The continuing economic slump has surprisingly produced an expansion of media outlets and forms of messaging. Clients and advertisers have been challenged to innovate how the products and companies they represent are marketed. Challenged by smaller budgets and a heightened demand for results. This has set the stage for stronger messaging than the usual 30 second spot could ever provide. Now the message must spread across a much wider spectrum, one in which the broadcast, web, print and experiential avenues must all be addressed. To that end Foundation is poised to have one of its strongest years. It's not just our ability to bundle production, post, graphics and color that makes us unique and respected by clients. It's our true collective approach to the work. All the departments at Foundation are integrated and collaborate which is one of the main reasons I re-joined the company as VP/general manager. We are more than a shop of designers, directors, or editors. We approach all of our work as a team of artists where our main focus is producing a quality effective messaging that works within the context of it's media environment. This attitude is an asset in this splintered media landscape

## Steve Morrison, continued

and our clients respect our ability to navigate different arenas and customize our style to whatever is defined by the project. We've become known as creative problem solvers and innovative storytellers. That skill will always be in demand.

2) Foundation has a Midwest hub and an office in Culver City and the two work together on most projects. Some of our best work represents this collaboration between the offices. Two projects for Participant Media exemplify this. The first viral video for the film, "Contagion" was nominated for a TED award. Our new film in support of the upcoming doc release, "Last Call at the Oasis," about the coming water shortage is due soon. All creative development was handled out of L.A. while all animation work was done by our Chicago based design team. Another



**Steve Wild, CEO, RingSide Creative, Oak Park, Mich.**

1) Industry related business in the Detroit area has seen a resurgence in many areas. Meanwhile, resources have also evolved to more appropriately match the volume of work. It's been nearly a year since Cutters and Wild Acquisitions joined together to acquire RingSide Creative and since that time RingSide has expanded and 'brand' defined its service offerings. The first step was opening a Cutters office in Detroit which provided the marketplace an international roster of editors and expanded the quality of services in Detroit. In addition, RingSide and Cutters developed Picnic, an integrated media resource. The Picnic group are interactive design, development and marketing specialists who integrate campaigns for broadcast, internet, iPhone and tablet applications, etc. We've also moved heavily into the production marketplace in a joint venture, Moonlink Studios, with Jeff Moon Production Services. But even though the marketplace resources have matched the volume of work, we are always concerned that economic conditions could affect the demand for marketing budgets. While I believe that advertising is the nearly last thing to go in a company (you even have to advertise a 'going out of business sale') we do notice that discretionary spending can be affected early on in poor economic conditions. That discretionary spending can have a broad impact. This year will likely continue to be a roller coaster due to the impending election, and who knows what the economy will look like afterwards...?

2) RingSide Creative has seen a steady stream of projects over the past six months from Ford "BCS Rant" to One Main Financial, LaZboy and Quicken Loans. National campaigns recently and/or currently in-house include "Follow the Value" for Little Caesars, "Swap Your Ride" for Ford and a project for the National Education Association. RSC's success can be directly attributed to the talented artists throughout the Company that continually prove clients can have their national work done in Detroit.

example is our series of web films for Whole Food which can be seen on their site. All aspects of the films were created by artists who at one point started in our Chicago office and or by team members who were part of the ensemble who went to various locations to shoot and or edit. We don't subscribe to the theory of Midwest market work. There is just creative work and that is what we excel at.



**Angelo Valencia, sr. creative editor/founder, Beast Chicago**

1) There has been a lot of movement this past year with Midwest agencies winning accounts from the coasts as well as accounts shifting to other agencies within the same city that leads me to be optimistic for the creative possibilities both

for our company as well as other companies in the city. Change and movement usually leads to new challenges which could lead to better opportunities. A consistent concern is still budgetary constraints that come along with the ever shrinking schedules of delivery.

2) We have been fortunate to work on a variety of good work with great people. We recently did a couple of PSAs for The Partnership for A Drug Free America that really reso-

nated with a lot of people and utilized the creative talents of Energy BBDO and director Phil Joanou.

It really came to life with the collaborative efforts of all involved. This is telling in that the Midwest market is just like every hard working market on either coast. Good work comes out of a respect for the collaborative process and the Midwest does not have a shortage of this.

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# MUSIC & SOUND

	TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 <b>Volkswagen's "The Bark Side"</b> (online/broadcast teaser)	Endless Noise, Santa Monica, Calif. Jeff Elmassian, creative director/arranger; Mary Catherine Finney, producer. (An all-canine chorus arrangement of John Williams' "The Imperial March" from <i>Star Wars</i> .)	Lime Studios, Santa Monica Mark Meyuhaus, mixer	Deutsch LA	Caviar, Venice, Calif. Keith Schofield, director
2	 <b>Chevy Sonic/OK Go's "Needing/Getting"</b> (music video)	OK GO (Damian Kulash, lead singer; Tim Nordwind, bassist; Dan Konopka, drummer; Andy Ross, guitarist/keyboardist.) Noises Digital, San Francisco Kim B Christensen, producer/supervising sound editor Kickstand, Venice, Calif. Damian F. Wagner, music supervision, sound design and rerecording mixer.	One Union Recording, San Francisco Joaby Deal, mixer	Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Caviar, Venice, Calif. Brian L. Perkins, director
3	 <b>NBC's "Brotherhood of Man"</b>	Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif. Andrew Feltenstein, John Nau, arrangers/composers; Adrea Lavezzoli, producer.	Sound Lounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer; Jill Silberstein, executive producer	Triple Double, Santa Monica	Hungry Man, bicoastal Taika Waititi, director
4	 <b>Budweiser's "Eternal Optimism"</b>	Songs: The Cult's "She Sells Sanctuary" and Flo Rida's "I've Got a Feeling" Yessian, New York Marlene Bartos, EP/managing director; Mary Ellen O'Brien, EP; Dan Zank, composer Jafbox Sound, New York Joseph Fraioli, sound designer	Heard City, New York Phil Loeb, mixer	Anomaly, New York	MJZ, bicoastal/international Fredrik Bond, director
5	 <b>Ferrari's "RPM" (short film)</b>	Q Department, New York (original music and sound design)	Q Department, New York	None (direct to client)	Marco Brambilla, director
6	 <b>Gatorade's "Isn't Enough"</b>	Amber Music, New York Mark Tewarson, composer; Michelle Curran, exec producer/producer; Jennie Armon, associate producer. Lime Studios, Santa Monica Rohan Young, sound designer	Lime Studios Rohan Young, mixer	TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles Michael Gross, music producer	Smuggler, bicoastal Jaron Albertin, director
7	 <b>Midnight Lights (short film)</b>	"Midnight City" (PatrickReza Remix)-M83"	PatrickReza, mixer	None	Bodega Studios, bicoastal Jimmy Diebold, director
8	 <b>British Heart Foundation's "No Kissing"</b>	The Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive"	Grand Central Sound Studios, London Ben Leeves, engineer	Grey London	Hungry Man, London Wayne McClammy, director
9	 <b>Campbell's/Swanson Chicken Broth's "Shared Recipe"</b>	Trivers/Myers Music, El Segundo, Calif. John Trivers, Elizabeth Myers, composers.	Blast, New York Joe O'Connell, mixer.	BBDO New York Loren Parkins, music producer.	GARTNER, Santa Monica, Calif. David Cornell, director.
10	 <b>Target's "Color Changes Everything"</b>	Song: "Allouette"; Artist: The Delta Rhythm Boys Heard City, New York Phil Loeb, sound designer; Gloria Pitagorsky, producer	Heard City, New York Phil Loeb, mixer.	Wieden+Kennedy, New York	Smuggler, bicoastal Filip Engstrom, director

## Striking A Responsive Chord During Awards Show Season

A lower-profile, Oscar-winning "silent" film was spurred on by an artful score from Breed Music, Dallas

By Robert Goldrich

Artisans with commercialmaking ties fared well at last month's Academy Awards (*SHOOTonline*, 2/27). And the spot music/sound community contributed to that performance—at the Oscars and for that matter, the Grammys—this awards season.

For one, consider accomplished composer Mark Foster whose commercials/branded content roost is music/sound house Mophonics.

The singer-songwriter and his band, Foster the People, were nominated for two Grammy Awards this year, including Best Alternative Album honors for "Torches."

Meanwhile another two-time nominee—this one for the Academy Awards—was Ren Klyce whose company Mit Out Sound is well known in the ad industry. Klyce has handled audio and sound design for assorted commercials over the years, working with a number of directors, including David Fincher.

On the strength of his work for Fincher's *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, Klyce was nominated this year for a Best Sound Editing Oscar and



**John Hunter**

*The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore*—directed by author/illustrator William Joyce and Brandon Oldenburg who are with Moonbot Studios in Shreveport, Louisiana—shows us a young man whisked off by a powerful storm to a place where books are living entities, depicting a fanciful world to which book lovers everywhere can relate.

"It's one of those dream projects," said Hunter whose background is steeped in commercials, with a smattering of features.

"It's ironic," continued Hunter. "I had to move from Los Angeles to work with these guys in Shreveport in

title character Morris Lessmore's identity. The directors also mandated that "Pop Goes The Weasel" couldn't be too cutesy.

"That second prerequisite was the hardest part," assessed Hunter. "I had to manipulate and arrange the melody, hinting at different versions. I didn't want the viewer in the end to hear 'Pop Goes The Weasel.' You weave the versions or suggestions of the melody in and out at times, balanced with original music.

Hunter cobbled together a 50-piece orchestra piecemeal, finding local players and having groups of them perform in separate studio sessions—strings, small brass, large brass.

"We recorded them, overdubbed them, used every trick in the book to make it sound as big as possible, all on a tight budget," said Hunter who spent two months at Moonbot in Shreveport so that he could work directly on the short and collaborate with the artisans there.

"Shreveport is about a three-hour drive from my Dallas studio but it made sense for me to be right at Moonbot, being included in a lot of conversations, getting a feel for what they wanted the music to do," explained Hunter. "I'd go to the next room, do some music and they would animate to that. Then once they were finished, I would adjust and tweak the music further. That made all the difference in the world. With most films, I get a final cut and start working from there. Here I had access to the animators as the short was being animated. I could noodle around with 'Pop Goes The Weasel' and present it to them on the spot. I think that's why the score fit so well for this film. It was an ideal way in which to work."

Hunter also collaborated closely with Joyce and Oldenburg on the short film's accompanying app for iPad which garnered positive feed-



(L-r) John Hunter, William Joyce and Brandon Oldenburg

back, sales and reviews. The app allows the reader to participate in and throughout the Morris Lessmore story on various levels.

### Collaborative track record

The composer and the directors have a track record that goes back a number of years, especially Hunter and Oldenburg who first collaborated in the mid-1990s when the latter was at Reel FX in Dallas and Hunter was partnered with composer Jon Slott in Dallas-based Juniper Music.

"That's where we first cut our teeth together on commercials and then Brandon introduced me in '97 to Bill [William Joyce] who's written and created famous children's works like 'Rolie Polie Olie' and 'Meet the Robinsons.' We first worked on a film based on Bill's picture book 'The Man In The Moon.' From there we all get to know each other, which laid the groundwork for our being able to collaborate successfully."

Indeed Juniper and Reel FX went on to team on various jobs, including GI Joe commercials for Hasbro from Dallas ad agency Uproar! and DVD movies GI Joe: Spy Troops (featuring the first CG-animated GI Joe) and then GI Joe: Valor vs. Venom.

For a stretch at Juniper, Hunter worked out of Los Angeles, composing, producing and arranging for commercials as well as such theatrical feature films as *Big Stan*, *American Virgin* and *Tekken*.

Fast forward to the summer of 2010 when Oldenburg approached Hunter about scoring Morris Lessmore.

"We were both starting new chapters in our careers at that time—Brandon had moved to Louisiana and started Moonbot with Bill, and John and I had merged our company, Juniper, with a competitor in Dallas, composer Brian Flores' *The Listening Chair*, to form Breed Music.

"Brandon told me they had this great project which they envisioned as being the definitive calling card for Moonbot," recalled Hunter. "They knew they had something special and now it's won an Oscar."

Heading the sound design team for Breed Music on *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* was sound designer Oliver Benevidez. The 5.1 audio post mix was done by Scottie Richardson at another mainstay commercial house in Dallas, Fast Cuts Edits.

Breed's spot clients include Budweiser, ESPN, McDonald's, HBO, BMW, Ford, Comcast and Coca-Cola.



*The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris*

was part of the team—also consisting of David Parker, Michael Semanick and Bo Persson—in the running for the Sound Mixing Oscar.

Moving over from the nominees' field to the winner's circle, consider the musical contributions to *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore*, which earned the Academy Award last month for Best Animated Short Film.

Though he didn't receive a golden statuette, composer/arranger/producer John Hunter of Breed Music, Dallas, feels like an Oscar winner given that he scored the film, the success of which relied significantly on music and sound elements, particularly since the short had no dialogue. Seems like the resurrection of the silent film era goes beyond just the higher profile *The Artist*, which topped this year's Academy Awards derby.

order to get closer to the movie industry and the Oscars. The short winning the Academy Award means a lot to me because with no dialogue, music was the voice of this film."


### Finding one's voice

The responsibility for creating such a voice was both incredibly daunting and inspiring.

"The biggest creative challenge was internal," observed Hunter. "If at the end the film had lacked emotional content, the composer would get the blame. I was kind of entrusted with writing the dialogue with music, which can be a lot of pressure. But once I got over that hurdle, I realized that there's no better showcase for the music than this kind of project."

Another built-in challenge was the directors' mandate that the tune "Pop Goes The Weasel" represent the

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## Henry & Rel

Continued from page 10

"It's interesting going back and forth between commercials and feature work," said Schulman who along with Joost is on the verge of moving into TV as producers of a series for MTV based on *Catfish*. "After the release of *Catfish*, we got hundreds of emails from people around the world who had a similar experience or thought they were in the midst of a similar experience. Nev became the lightning rod for *Catfish* stories so the series has him going out to meet people who are in online relationships and getting to the bottom of them."

The series pilot has already been shot and the show has been picked up for 12 episodes. Plans call for the series to debut this year.

Also add to the mix for Henry & Rel—this time back in the director's chair—notable short films for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the most recent being *A Brief History of John Baldessari*, profiling whom many regard as the godfather of conceptual art. Tom Waits narrates the short which has a whimsical, frenzied tongue-in-cheek feel. Originally

produced for a LACMA event in November honoring Baldessari and Clint Eastwood, respectively, as titans of art and film, the Henry & Rel-directed short paying tribute to Baldessari has since been screened at the South By Southwest Film Conference and Festival in Austin. Earlier Henry & Rel helmed a LACMA-commissioned documentary short which profiled Chris Burden and his *Metropolis II*, a kinetic sculpture that took four years to build.

### Plum opportunity

Also developed over time is the strong creative bond between Henry & Rel, dating back to one summer when they were college students and working at Plum TV, a small cable network catering to luxury markets. Both were living on Long Island and had the mutual idea to make a documentary about a strange real estate battle in the Hamptons. They never finished the project—perhaps someday they will—but they learned that they worked well together, a collaboration which spilled over into what proved to be an ideal training ground at Plum TV, making budget-challenged com-

mercials for upscale clients for play on the station. "They were cable access budgets for luxury accounts—AmEx, Sperry, Bank of America," recalled Joost. "We had to make them look like they could be national commercials and somehow we did. It all came down to being creative, coming up with the right ideas and executions."

Henry & Rel then went on to establish themselves professionally, making an initial mark in the ad marketplace, turning out branded shorts like Nike's *Rush Hour Four* in which four commuters using different modes of transportation (bike, bus, skateboard, taxi) raced to see who could get from Brooklyn to Manhattan, and Cadillac's *Bike Monkey* profiling a young entrepreneur who quit his desk job and turned his bicycling/outdoor enthusiast passion into a viable business.

With this experience as a foundation, Henry & Rel made an auspicious feature directorial debut with *Catfish*.

As for what's next, Henry & Rel hope to continue to be involved in a broad mix of disciplines. Currently they're in discussions for taking on the next *Paranormal Activity* sequel.

## The Malloys

Continued from page 11

and Old Crow Medicine Show.

"This gave us a break from one another and the chance to try out new things," explained Brendan Malloy. "Our partnership is great, being able to bounce ideas off of someone you trust. But sometimes it makes a partnership stronger to get away from dependencies, to go out on your own and then return, able to bring that much more to the collaboration."

Two such collaborations bringing The Malloys' documentary where-withal to the ad arena emerged recently, the long-form spots Nike Jordan Brand's "Love The Game" from W+K, NY, and Mitsubishi's "Ride The

Storm" for 180LA. The former takes us on a global tour with NBA stars playing in pickup games with local organized teams. Part of the NBA lock-out "For The Love of the Game" campaign, this spot had The Malloys going to basketball courts in L.A., NY, New Orleans, Beijing. What was supposed to be a two-hour shoot in an impoverished part of Beijing was shut down by the government after 40 minutes.

"Besides the hipsters in New York, every single person in the campaign was real," noted Brendan Malloy. "Even though this had a scripted framework, we also were given the opportunity to let things happen, to roll the ball out there and try to channel

as many real moments as we could."

Meanwhile for Mitsubishi's all-wheel-drive cars, The Malloys went into the teeth of a weather storm. "No prep time. We just jumped in and shot," said Emmett Malloy.

With varied disciplines and work within those disciplines, Emmett Malloy observed, "Our blessing and curse is that we like to do many different things. There are times we get envious of focused artists who are good at a particular thing. But at the day's end, we like being brothers who are alike yet very different as well. Combining those different interests results in diverse work, which is good—it's where the challenges are that drive us."

## On The Wire

### Daniel Strange Joins Über Content

HOLLYWOOD—Über Content announced the addition of director Daniel Strange to its roster for worldwide commercial representation.

### duMonde Produces VFX Shots for "21 Jump Street,"

NEW ORLEANS -- duMonde Visual Effects has produced and delivered over 160 VFX shots for the new action/comedy film "21 Jump Street" for client Sony Pictures. The film opened nationwide on March 16th.

### NAB 2012: MTI Film to Showcase "Cortex"

HOLLYWOOD-- At NAB 2012, MTI Film will showcase its new Cortex platform, a family of products that marks a major step forward in digital asset management for production and post-production.

### Fred Story Produces Score Behind PBS Special

CHARLOTTE, NC -- Fred Story has written and produced a contemporary, dramatic and cinematic orchestral score that will be featured behind the upcoming TV special "American Masters Margaret Mitchell: American Rebel." Mr. Story just won his Fifth Regional Emmy Award.

### CSS Studios Brings Michael Benavente To Soundelux

HOLLYWOOD -- Supervising Sound Editor Michael Benavente has joined Soundelux. Benavente arrives with more than 40 credits as a Supervising Sound Editor, including the comedies *No Strings Attached*, *Paul Blart: Mall Cop* and *Idiocracy*. He also served as ADR Supervisor on *Moneyball*, recently nominated for an Academy Award for Sound Mixing.

### KickStand Kicks-Off With String Of Projects

VENICE, CA -- KickStand has launched with a bang, orchestrating the sonically adventurous viral video for OK GO's "Needing Getting" and their Chevy Sonic Super Bowl spot; Shock Top's "End of the World" spot, which earned *Adweek's* Ad of the Day; sound designing David Guetta and Nikki Minaj's sensational "Turn Me On" music video (with 44 million YouTube views).

### Optimus SM's Hovig Menakian Newest Editor

SANTA MONICA, CA -- Optimus announced the promotion of Hovig Menakian to editor. Based out of Optimus Santa Monica, Menakian most recently cut spots for the Taco Bell® Doritos® Locos Tacos launch.

### Stephen Arnold Creates Sonic Brand for CCTV America

DALLAS -- With the launch of China Central Television America (CCTVA), the network has expanded the presence of mainland China's predominant television outlet into the U.S. market for the first time. CCTVA turned to Stephen Arnold Music to create the music behind much of their original programming.

### Gravity Produces CG Spot Via Arnold For Titleist

NEW YORK--Through agency Arnold, Boston, Gravity has produced an all CG 30-sec. spot for Titleist Golf Balls. The spot broke in early March.

### 32TEN Announces "Professional Workshop Series"

SAN RAFAEL, CA -- 32TEN Studios has launched a Professional Workshop Series. This new series of educational, hands-on gatherings has been designed to help filmmakers, game designers, and a variety of entertainment industry professionals further their technical and theoretical application of production and post production skills.

### Fitzgibbon Produces *Real Vice Miami* Episode

HOLLYWOOD -- Writer/producer/director Mo Fitzgibbon of Walker/Fitzgibbon TV and Films has collaborated as Episodic Producer with Big Machine -- Robot Field & Post for INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY CHANNEL'S new documentary reality series 'REAL VICE MIAMI' episode titled, "The Miami River Cops."

### Scion, ATTIK Begin 10th Year of Partnership

SAN FRANCISCO -- Ten years ago, Scion surprised the advertising industry by selecting global creative agency ATTIK as its creative agency of record. ATTIK remains the brand's creative agency of record and the breaks new national cross-media campaign for Scion's new, premium micro-subcompact iQ.

### motion504 Unfolds Short for CITGO via Carmichael Lynch

MINNEAPOLIS, MN-- Minneapolis-based ad agency Carmichael Lynch recently tapped motion504 to help create an inspirational animated short for *Fueling Good*, a charitable giving program by CITGO®.

### ASSIMILATE Supports REDgamma3 and REDcolor3

SANTA CLARA, CA -- ASSIMILATE announced both SCRATCH® and SCRATCH Lab® support for REDgamma3 and REDcolor3, the latest advancements in RED's Color Science.

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## Up and Coming Directors: Jimmy Diebold, Casey Nicholaw

Continued from page 19

man believing in and supporting Diebold's passion project, which became *Midnight Lights*, Goldman played a key role in bringing the project to life, including through a personal contact securing access to Century Link Field for a night of filming.

Created and directed by Diebold, this short features a spectacular light show in CenturyLink Field (home of the NFL's Seattle Seahawks as well as soccer's Sounders). Making it all the more spectacular are that Diebold and a skeleton crew made the short sans special effects and with only that one night in the stadium.

Diebold took thousands of still photos from assorted perspectives, and assembled them to sync up with a dubstep rendition of "Midnight City" by M83, remixed by PatrickReza. Choreographing the light show in but a single night was a logistical challenge given that the stadium lights take con-

siderable time to warm up. Securing the help of DP Adam Marsden, CSC, and recruiting via a Craigslist ad seven Seattle-based photographers, Diebold and Goldman were able to bring the short to fruition and had it posted online prior to the Super Bowl; at press time, it had generated some 500,000 YouTube hits and counting.

Calling the piece a light show doesn't do it full justice. The show plays almost like an art film, essentially like a classic animation, made up of thousands of still images and entailing the selection of the proper light combinations from potentially hundreds of thousands in order to capture the rich details of each light in a unique manner.

"Creating the light effects in-camera—how it bounces and spills off of the stadium's contours—requires special consideration, but it's the only way to achieve such beautiful, natural images," related Diebold. In the big picture, the director said he wanted "to

create a piece that was an architectural appreciation and provided a sense of place, but also captured the raw energy and excitement of what happens there. I knew it would be a departure from anything I'd done before."

Diebold worked closely with PatrickReza on the latter's already existing dubstep remix of "Midnight City" and how to best deploy it in the film.

As *Midnight Lights* continues to generate buzz and other project possibilities for Diebold, he has been directing steadily via Bodega, among the latest jobs being a NAIR shoot in Miami for The Joey Company, N.Y.

### Casey Nicholaw

There's no film reel to substantiate Casey Nicholaw's prowess as a commercial director—at least not yet. But there are experiences in the theater that attest to the Broadway director and choreographer being able to translate his talent into spots and

branded content.

Nicholaw—who won the 2011 Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for his work as co-director (with Trey Parker) on "The Book of Mormon"—recently signed with Rascal Films for his first career representation as a commercials helmer.

"I love directing buoyant, lively projects that build on quirky and original ideas," said Nicholaw. "With commercials it is about being concise with storytelling—no matter the scope of the production—while reflecting each brand in an interesting way. Working with Rascal, and its extensive advertising experience, feels like a great match."

Besides "Book of Mormon," Nicholaw's Broadway credits include his serving as director/choreographer on "Elf: The Musical" and "The Drowsy Chaperone" (2006 Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle nominations), as well as choreographer on Monty Python's "Spamalot," directed by

Mike Nichols (2005 Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle nominations for Best Choreography).

Among Nicholaw's other N.Y. credits are: the acclaimed productions of "Anyone Can Whistle" and "Follies" (direction and choreography), "Bye Bye Birdie" (choreography) and "Can-Can" (musical staging) for City Center Encores!; "Candide" (choreography) for the New York Philharmonic; "South Pacific," also on PBS' *Great Performances* (musical staging) at Carnegie Hall; and "Sinatra: His Voice, His World, His Way" (choreographer) at Radio City Music Hall. Nicholaw directed and choreographed the world premieres of "Minsky's" at Center Theatre Group, "Robin and the 7 Hoods" at the Old Globe, and Disney's "Aladdin" at the 5th Avenue in Seattle. He has shown a penchant for working with talent and directing projects that marry musical performance, choreography and comedic timing.

## McCoy and Waugh

Continued from page 12

in the industry. As youngsters McCoy and Waugh spent considerable time on sets and location, later observing and learning from top directors and producers. Both became stunt men; McCoy was also a professional motorcycle racer. Waugh was a second unit director, co-producer and an editor on *Step Into Liquid*, a seminal surfers' documentary. He and McCoy came together for the first time as producers on *Dust to Glory*, an action-adventure documentary chronicling the Baja 1000, tapping directly into the racing expertise of motorcycle Supercross driver McCoy.

It was this action filmmaking pedigree that caught the eye of the Special Warfare Combatant Crewmen (SWCC), a support team for the SEALs. McCoy and Waugh were hired to shoot some spots and virals for this Navy Special Operations division, and then took the initiative of shooting a seven-minute film on their own. After this successful collaboration, the Navy called Waugh and McCoy to explore the possibility of a longer-form look at the SEALs.

"Once they pulled the curtain back and we got to meet the men, we were totally blown away by them," recalled McCoy. "The SEALs are a brotherhood of men that up until then we thought only existed in mythology."

From the get-go, Waugh said, "Our intention was to make an incredible action movie that was entertaining and did justice to the SEALs. This was truly an independent film. We fi-

nanced quite a bit of it through Bandito, which meant we had no one questioning how we should do it. We only had to answer to ourselves as filmmakers. We went with the 5Ds before they were all that well known. I'm not sure we could have done that or many of the other things we did had we been overseen by a big studio. There was a purity of process."

### Dust to Glory to Bandito

The alluded to *Dust to Glory* laid the groundwork for the launch of what would become Bandito Brothers in 2007. "It was a great experience, shooting a theatrical documentary on a 1,000 mile race across the desert, deploying 55 camera, doing all the post ourselves. We worked on marketing *Dust to Glory*, distributing it. We were a one-stop shop," recollected McCoy. "And then we thought this can apply to the advertising/branding world and to the future world."

But after *Dust to Glory* and before Bandito came a call from Anonymous Content to take on a series of ambitious extreme sports films for Philip Morris—all heartfelt storytelling wrapped in action. Their positive experience on this project crystallized McCoy and Waugh's resolve to form their own independent studio—spanning full production and post talent and resources—in the filmmaking and the then budding transmedia space, resulting in Bandito Brothers.

Bandito has since assembled a directorial roster than extends well beyond McCoy and Waugh (who

both co-direct and individually helm projects), expanded its post operations to encompass such capabilities as feature DI, become partnered in a VFX house—Cantina Creative—which is on the premises, and most recently brought spotmaking veteran Suzanne Hargrove aboard to serve as managing director/executive producer of Bandito's commercial division (*SHOOT* online, 3/9).

"We set out to create a place for filmmakers to flourish, where you can start out with an idea and have the support you need to realize your vision," said McCoy who sees new opportunities unfolding in advertising and entertainment, in some cases intertwining the two as reflected in *Waiting For Lightning*, the feature directorial debut of Jacob Rosenberg whose spotmaking/branded content home is Bandito Brothers.

McCoy and Waugh executive produced and Bandito Brothers served as production house on *Waiting For Lightning*, which debuted at this month's South By Southwest Festival in Austin, Texas. The feature documentary tells the story of Danny Way, a young boy from a broken home in Vista, Calif., who became a skateboarding legend.

The film delves into a Way creation, a ramp of dangerous proportions designed to traverse physical, cultural and ideological barriers in an attempt of the seemingly impossible—to jump across China's Great Wall on a skateboard. Nonetheless, this documentary shows that Way's life is more captivat-

ing than even his prodigious skateboarding exploits.

Director Rosenberg developed his passion for filmmaking as a skateboarder in the early 1990s, making acclaimed videos for Plan B Skateboards. He then diversified into directing music videos, commercials and shorts before entering feature-length filmmaking with *Waiting For Light-*

*ning*, which McCoy cited as a leading example of branded entertainment. He noted that DC Shoes, a division of Quiksilver, served as a sponsor and played a key role in helping to bring the documentary to fruition.

"This," noted McCoy, "is what we're looking to do at Bandito Brothers—open up filmmaking of all kinds to our directors."

## Noam Murro

Continued from page 12

"Hot House." We first see a man lying in bed and calmly watching his bedroom fill with flames. It turns out what he's viewing is a dramatic film sequence on DirecTV that later has a fireman falling through the floor and rescuing a little boy. Indeed the original man's viewing experience is so intense that it looks and feels as though the scenes are literally playing out within the walls of his home as he moves from room to room.

With visual effects from MPC LA and Full Scale Effects along with animation from Buck NY, the spectacularly cinematic "Hot House" is part of a series of spots that promotes DirecTV's multi-room viewing feature by depicting people watching films, pressing pause to freeze the action, then moving to other TV-equipped rooms to continue the flicks.

With such a technically ambitious and sophisticated commercial like "Hot House," Murro observes that "part of

the trick of finding new ways to tell stories is to take a technical problem and make it an emotional one. You don't just look to solve problems from a technical standpoint. You look to solve them emotionally so that the work will have the right emotional impact, so that the story will be conveyed properly and make that human connection. That's what is so essential to the process."

Indeed when "Hot House" was designated a *SHOOT* "Top Spot" shortly after its on air debut (*SHOOT*, 6/17/11), Todd Tilford, at the time Grey New York's executive creative director (now chief creative officer at Draftfcb, Chicago), cited Murro for bringing humanity to "Hot House."

Tilford observed, "When all is said and done, the effects are amazing, but you've got to have that human connection, both the viewer connected to the commercial he's watching and the film he's watching within the commercial with the fireman and the

Continued on page 26

## Noam Murro

Continued from page 25

young boy. You want that to be honest and real, and I thought Noam did an amazing job of bringing that humanity to it.”

### Long-form prospects

Murro affirmed that his plan and priority are to continue directing spots. And all is going according to plan as evidenced by this past Super Bowl Sunday, just eight days after the DGA Awards.

Murro-directed commercials appearing on the Big Game telecast were: Kia's

“A Dream Car. For Real Life” via David & Goliath, Los Angeles; Chevy Silverado's “2012” from Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco; and Pepsi's “King's Court” out of TBWA\Chiat Day, Los Angeles. Additionally Murro co-directed with Biscuit colleague Clay Weiner a Time Warner Super Bowl spot, “Anthem” featuring Ricky Gervais, for Ogilvy, New York.

“I love the challenge of commercials, of telling these short stories and touching people on different levels,” related Murro.

Still, there looks to be a long-form project on the horizon, the sequel to stirring action/adventure box office hit *300*. Yet while Murro will embrace that feature opportunity (as he did his first theatrical motion picture, *Smart People*, which debuted at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival), he doesn't see filmmaking as a hierarchy.

“It's all part of a big picture. I don't think one discipline ranks over another. They are both valuable storytelling disciplines with their own special sets of challenges.”

## Jake Schreier

Continued from page 13

petition at the Festival, with several garnering honors, including *Grace Is Gone* which garnered the Sundance Audience Award in 2007.

### The Sundance experience

This year marked the first time that Schreier attended Sundance.

“It was wonderful,” he assessed. “You're on a whirlwind schedule when you have a film being screened. You attend your screenings, you do press, you meet with distributors.”

On the latter score, Schreier said he feels lucky.

“We found that the Sony and Goldwyn guys really connected with the film in a personal way. To have the people releasing the film care about it as much as you do—and we got the sense that they did—means a lot and we feel extremely fortunate to have made a deal with them.”

At the same time, Schreier observed that part of Sundance was “nerve wracking. You can't do anything about your film at that point. Whatever the problems are will be the problems every single night it's before an audience. I found it difficult to watch the entire film. There's a moment in the

film where on a good night you have a good chance of getting a certain kind of reaction. I would come back about 15 minutes before the end of the movie to see that scene. The audience reaction there would be what I'd use as my barometer of how the film was being received.”

As for lessons learned from his first feature, Schreier cited, “You can't kick the can down the road. If you ignore a problem, it becomes a bigger problem later. There's just no way of escaping that reality. If Chris [Ford] and I felt the script wasn't quite working, we would address it right then and there, take the time to figure it all out on set. If not, we'd only be looking at a problem later in production or in the editing process. You deal with things earlier rather than waiting. You find that waiting will often result in you having to spend considerably more time and money later on.”

Schreier said his commercial production experience also proved pivotal. He noted that due to actors' schedules, the movie ended up having relatively little prep time, only between two and three weeks.

“Having experience in commercials made us accustomed to gearing up quickly. Also you instinctively know how to deal with things as they

emerge. Commercials give you great experience in dealing with things you can't always anticipate or account for. Doing commercials all these years made it second nature to deal with the inevitable surprises.”

Also bolstering Schreier was the confidence others had in him to pull things off.

“Just getting the chance to direct a feature film was gratifying—to know that the people at Park Pictures had the faith and belief in me to pull it off. Lance and Jackie have been so supportive of me over the years.”

Now Schreier said he's eager to get back into the spotmaking groove via Park Pictures. At press time he was involved in some final postproduction tweaks on *Robot & Frank*.

Tentative plans call for a late summer/early fall theatrical debut, starting in a few cities and then expanding from there over the weeks as part of a platform release.

Schreier is looking forward to when he can go to his local theater and sit for about 10 minutes to soak in the fact that *Robot & Frank* is in release. “Maybe I'll go to a matinee three weeks into the run and just sit in the dark theater for awhile and watch the movie—that will be a dream come true.”

## street talk

Untitled, a Los Angeles-based production house headed by owner/exec producer Jim Evans, has signed directorial duo Big TV—consisting of Andy Delaney and Monty Whitebloom—for representation in the U.S. market. Big TV's spot credits span such brands as Lincoln, Mercedes, Kodak, Reebok and Levis. The duo has also helmed music videos for Maroon 5, Lauryn Hill, Usher, Macy Gray, George Michael, Seal and KT Tunstall, among other performers. Big TV joins an Untitled roster that includes directors Geoffrey Barish, The Cronenweths, Glenn Martin and Adam Reed....New York-based animation production company Blacklist has secured Tendril for U.S. representation. Based in Toronto, Tendril is a director-driven workshop where designers and artists from diverse backgrounds employ a wide range of techniques to craft visual experiences. Launched in 2010 by Brazilian-Canadian directorial team Chris Bahry and Alexandre Torres, Tendril has grown into a full-service visual design and animation studio able to bring a project to life from the initial concept through to design, execution and delivery....Editor Nathan Petty has joined Whitehouse Post, working out of its San Francisco shop but available via its offices worldwide. Petty had previously been freelancing, cutting for houses such as Arcade, Final Cut, and Beast. Earlier he was with Umlaut Films, and served as a sr. editor at former agency Goldberg Moser O'Neill. Petty's latest credits include a “Got Chocolate Milk” campaign via Deutsch NY for the 2012 Olympics in London. His work outside of the spot realm includes Edward Feldman's short film A Day's Work, which was an official selection at SXSW, and received top honors at the Savannah Film Festival....

## report

DP Tim Ives has returned to WME for exclusive representation in features, television and commercials....Production designer David Batchelor Wilson has joined The Skouras Agency, Santa Monica, for exclusive representation. Additionally, production designer Keith Cunningham has completed principal photography on Don Scardino's *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone*, and is again available for spots and features through The Skouras Agency....ALL Crew Agency, Burbank, Calif., has signed commercials DP Don Matthew Smith for exclusive representation. Smith has shot national spots for such clients as Coca-Cola, Nike, Lexus, Taco Bell, Nintendo and Chevron. He also has to his credit music videos and feature film title sequences. ALL Crew has also secured production designer Jodi Ginnever whose commercials include MasterCard, M&M's, Toyota, Verizon, Cheer and Minute Maid....The Mill, which maintains studios in London, NY and L.A., has appointed Alex Conaway as group director of marketing. Conaway joins The Mill from Wieden+Kennedy, London, where he was global business director and head of account management....



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## bulletin board

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<http://diff2012.dallasfilm.org>  
>April 26-29/New York, NY: Tribeca Film Festival  
<http://www.tribecafilms.com/festival>  
>May 10/Marina Del Rey, CA: AICE Awards Show  
<http://www.aice.org>  
>May 17/New York: SHOOT Directors/Producers Forum & 10th Annual New Directors Showcase  
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- We will kick off the day with speakers and panels addressing the age old two-pronged question, "Where Is The Future of Advertising & Entertainment Production headed?" and "how can my company or I get there?" We'll break for lunch downstairs mid-day for some sustenance and casual conversation
- The evening agenda will consist of the debut screening of SHOOT's 10th Annual New Directors Showcase Reel and opportunity to meet the new directors in the follow-up panel discussion.
- The event ends with the After Party downstairs providing opportunity to mingle with colleagues and network with new business connections, End the day with a drink in your hand, food in your belly, and insights into and inspiration about the future of the business and/or your career. **Where & When?** Thursday, May 17 at Directors Guild (DGA) Theatre, 110 W. 57th St., NYC

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