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Filmmaking at the Galaxy's Edge

To Zoom or Not to Zoom

Robert Zemeckis Takes to the Air Again with *Flight*

Six Fatal Errors in Screenwriting

How to Boost Your Film Crowdfunding Success

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On the Cover

Crew on the set of *The House at the Edge of the Galaxy*



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This wonderful edition highlights educational, informative, and inspirational articles written by Peter Stein, ASC, David Worth, Paula Brancato, and Scott Essman. Join us in welcoming new contributing writers Norman C. Berns, John Klein, Bayou Bennett, and Philip Goetz. Interviews with Richard H. Topham, Jr. and Roy Harter conducted by Nash Choudhury and Megan Harr are sure to encourage and motivate you.

The House at the Edge of the Galaxy is a look into the making of the allegorical film from casting to post production. Take a look behind the scenes and learn about the making of the film. (Production Department.)

Peter Stein, ASC shares invaluable advice in his article, **To Zoom or Not to Zoom: That is the Question**. Norman C. Berns shares **Six Quick Steps for Better Images**. (Cinematography Department.)

John Klein's success story and key pointers for film financing will help propel you into your next campaign. Check out his article, **11 Tips for Boosting Your Film Crowdfunding Success**. In the article **The Rebranding of Batman**, Michael Uslan shares some of the reasons the *Batman* franchise became one of the most successful in film history. (Film Business Department.)

Paula Brancato gives important advice and **Six Fatal Errors in Screenwriting** that you must know and avoid. Don't let your ideas fall by the wayside. (Screenwriting Department.)

David Worth's article, **Art & Artifice**, is super inspiring. We asked him for "the list." You should too! (Commentary Department.)

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Making the Documentary on L.A. Artist, Dave Tourje

L.A. ABORIGINAL

by Bayou Bennett

Producing and directing the documentary “L.A. Aboriginal” about L.A. artist Dave Tourje was like filming a feature and putting it into a few minutes. I am from the South and lived in NYC for 10 years, so learning about the underground gang and graffiti life was very exotic for me. We never knew what new adventure or what new thing about the California Locos was around the corner. I enjoy sometimes being an outsider looking in. If I was from L.A., I might not have walked up to an intense group of gangster looking guys in Highland Park and asked to get shots of their authentic low rider cars. But I did and found out just how gentle and full of cultural pride they could be. Besides, I never use stock footage when I can shoot the real thing.

I actually think the most important and exciting thing about being a filmmaker is the way it opens your eyes to worlds and cultures that you might not have known about. Dave Tourje has lived many life times in this life. I got to learn about surf, gang, skateboarding, punk and graffiti cultures. Some of these cultures are not mainstream so it was interesting investigating them. Dave taught me about the raw underground creation of all of these art forms and yes, to me they are all art forms. As filmmakers, we directly saw how Dave was influenced by his environment and its swirling mass of creativity, which filtered deep into his imagination and art. And this in turn inspired us as filmmakers.

When you are creating a film, you are communicating something to the world, just as you would with a painting. My writing/co-directing partner Daniel Lir and I kept trying to think how we could create the ultimate documentary as filmmakers and communicate how deep, meaningful and influential growing up in Southern California really can be. We were in search of capturing a time, place and feeling like Jack Kerouac did with the Beat Generation in “On the Road.”

The way we did this was to gather all the information we could about Dave, his past, his art, and his environment, and portray this in a multi-dimensional way. We really worked with Dave to get the authentic music of the time period and the truest photos and archival footage. For us, the editing especially reflected the



L.A. rhythm and style we were experiencing. And when we won an award on the editing, we knew we were on the right track, especially with the diverse soundtrack of punk, salsa, blues and skate rock which stitched together the stories of the various neighborhoods and ethnic environments.

Each frame was like a colorful piece in one of Dave’s paintings. In fact, when I color-corrected the film, I wanted it to feel like L.A. with the bright colors that contrast with the rough dirty smog and hazy afternoon light. When we shot the documentary, we paid attention to the symbols, graffiti and L.A. imagery that are a sort of moving painting in itself. As a filmmaker, I will actually never look at graffiti the same again. I never knew graffiti could be used to express such deep cultural pride as well as to highlight aspects of society that really need to be fixed.

Both Daniel and I lived in New York City for over 10 years. You always hear about the art that comes out of NYC. But why not California? As we were creating this documentary, we wanted to create a film that was as rich and layered as Dave and his roots and also to pay homage to the City of Angels, the home of a truly rich art heritage.

As filmmakers we had memorable experiences filming Dave, and that’s what a documentary is all about—the creation of meaningful memories and finding out about life and people. I especially enjoyed capturing Dave’s old stomping grounds, such as the bowl he and his wild friends would clean out and skate, turning abandoned cement into a legendary playground. I also enjoyed connecting with Dave’s Latin mother about his roots in Mexico City and how a young, curious boy was initially inspired by the great Mexican muralist, Diego Rivera. There were also some intense moments such as revisiting the savage yet somehow humorous encounters Dave had interacting with gang members in his Highland Park neighborhood. And last but not least, blazing down the street in his competition-style lowrider drag racer. All of this compilation of life through film led to a dynamic layered creation that I am proud of and that mirrors L.A. itself.

Bayou Bennett, www.dolcefilms.com
Documentary website: www.laaboriginal.com



To Zoom or Not to Zoom

That is the Question

by Peter Stein, ASC

You have just gotten your first big film to shoot. This is an exciting time. You want it to be a fantastic experience, because it will be a mainstay of your reel – and a possible entrée into the industry. You have a great relationship with the director and even the producer thinks you are a talented shooter – and you feel that you can light the project using your own unique abilities and a deep understanding of the story... After all, you have been practicing compositions and lighting for a few years now. You just don't want to “blow it” by taking too much time. This is a chance to bond with the above the line folks who will certainly be making more films in the future. A slow DP is a DP who doesn't work very much. What are some of the things that will slow a production down?

As a Director of Photography for over 35 years on projects ranging from major releases for the Hollywood studios, to small independent films and television movies, I have learned that time can present an opportunity as well as become the greatest enemy of a DP. It is in the last 10 minutes – after all the lights have been hung, aimed, diffused, gelled, spotted, flooded, cut, and otherwise shaped, that the real art in painting with light is achieved. That is the time when you can set the intensity of each unit to make it all bled together into your specific vision of realism that will bring the scene to life – that will fold the audience into the story, not even aware that they are sitting in a theater having paid far too much for an hour and a half's entertainment.

The zoom lens has a bad rap. In fact some of today zooms are not even called zooms, they are called variable primes – which is in fact a zoom lens. It is one of the greatest tools in saving time and getting the exact frame you want in a

fraction of a second. Many students have said to me – I only shoot with prime lenses. Well think of the amount of time it takes to change from one prime lens to another: cleaning the lens; checking the gate; setting up the rods; adding the follow focus; getting new marks. It all takes time – maybe 5 minutes if you have a speedy AC. If you change lenses 12 times on one day, you have just lost an hour in which you could have been creating art. On a TV movie you could not consider doing this.

To use a zoom lens does not mean the audience has to be aware it is a zoom. If you want to adjust your framing within the shot use a zoom lens with a standard zoom control and motor – as Ridley Scott does all the time, and you will hide the zoom in a pan, dolly, tilt or in the movement of the actors. By adjusting the lens a millimeter here or there, you will get the exact framing you want without making huge time consuming camera moves or compromises in the actor's blocking. Today's zooms are fast, and sharp, and are a tool never to be discounted.

Be efficient and take advantage of the great advances in lens technology.

As the Director of Photography on over 50 feature films, TV movies, and documentaries, Peter Stein, ASC has photographed classic cult films in various genres, including comedy and horror, as well as major studio and independent releases - and noted documentaries. He has been on the NYU graduate faculty since 2002 where he serves as Head of Production.

A WALK TO REMEMBER THE ABYSS ALICE IN WONDERLAND AMERICAN HORROR STORY THE ARTIST
 AVATAR THE AVIATOR BABEL BEASTS OF THE SOUTHERN WILD BIG LOVE BLACK SWAN
 BLOOD DIAMOND BLUE VELVET BOARDWALK EMPIRE BRAVEHEART BREAKING BAD
 BRIDESMAIDS BURN NOTICE CARNIVALE CATCH ME IF YOU CAN THE CHRONICLES OF
 NARNIA: THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER CITY SLICKERS THE CLOSER CLUELESS
 COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM THE DARK KNIGHT RISES DAYS OF HEAVEN
 DEEP IMPACT DJANGO UNCHAINED DOLPHIN TALE ERIN BROCKOVICH ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE
 SPOTLESS MIND FAST FIVE **YOU KNOW OUR GRADUATES' WORK.** GREEN TOMATOES GLEE
 GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS **DO YOU HAVE** THE HANGOVER HEAT
 HOMELAND HUGO HUNTER FOR THE REPTILES **WHAT IT TAKES** INCEPTION INDIANA JONES
 AND THE KINGDOM OF THE SKY **TO BE ONE** INSIDER INTO THE WILD
 IRON MAN 2 JUSTIFIED **OF THEM?** ORDER: SVU LIKE CRAZY
 LITTLE CHILDREN MAD MEN REPORT MODERN FAMILY
 MONEYBALL MONSTER MATHS **REPORT/TUCK ONE FALSE MOVE**
 OUT OF SIGHT THE PACIFIC PARKS AND RECREATION THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
 PAY IT FORWARD RAGING BULL THE RIGHT STUFF REQUIEM FOR A DREAM RUSH HOUR 2
 SAVING PRIVATE RYAN SCENT OF A WOMAN SCHINDLER'S LIST THE SHIELD THE SOCIAL NETWORK
 SOUTH PARK TAXI DRIVER TEMPLE GRANDIN THERE WILL BE BLOOD THIRTYSOMETHING
 THE TOWN THE TREE OF LIFE TROPIC THUNDER TRUE BLOOD UP IN THE AIR
 THE WACKNESS WAITING FOR GUFFMAN WAITING FOR "SUPERMAN" WALK THE LINE
 WAR HORSE WELCOME TO THE DOLLHOUSE WINTER'S BONE THE X-FILES

Six Quick Steps for Better Images

Looking Good on Camera

by Norman C. Berns

Shoot and run. Grab the shot. Run and gun. Just shoot it...

We all know the drill. Technology has been condensed down to a camera we carry in our hands. And suddenly we're shooting everything, everywhere. The world is all HD and we're grabbing it on the run.

That speaks well for immediacy, but it's not doing a damn thing for the look of things.

Problem is that eyes and film (or video) don't see the same. Our eyes let us sit in a darkened room while staring through a window to the sunlight outside and see both the darkened room and sunlight equally well. Amazing technology, these eyes of ours. Video may someday catch up, but it's not there yet. Bright lights flare out, dim corners turn black. And film just doesn't have the latitude to see everything. It can see bright. Or it can see dark. But not both at the same time.

DPs and gaffers know how to paint with lights. Dim the lights outside, boost the lights within. Get them within four or five stops of each other and film can handle both. Take the light off the things you don't want to see, and add a bit to the things you do.

Problem is, when it's just you and your camera, the lady in the gray suit sitting in her dimly lit office with the faded brown walls looks, well, *meh*. Everything looks the same, everything is lit the same. You may have grabbed the shot, but the shot will never grab the viewer.

I'm not talking about pretty here. This ain't just aesthetics. The viewer doesn't know where to focus or what's important to see. And that's what you really want, isn't it? Not just to get the shot, but to show that shot too.

That's what lighting does. It helps the viewer focus; it helps the filmmaker make a point. Shine a light in the corner and everyone knows that's the place to look. Suddenly the filmmaker who controls the action on set can control the viewer at home, too.

That's powerful stuff.

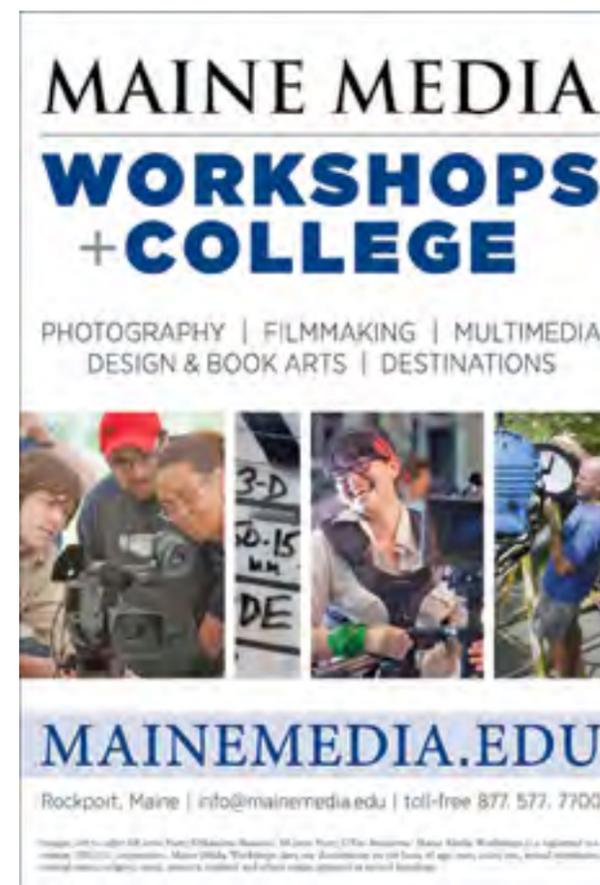
Fortunately, for the most basic indie work, we don't need to do very much. And we don't need much to do it with either.

Here are six easy steps that will give you better shots, all without adding a single light.

- (1.) Move your characters away from that sunny window. Put them off to the side so the outside light doesn't flare in the lens, but can still spill onto the actor.
- (2.) Use a white card – usually a 24x36" showcard available from any art supply store. In a pinch, any white 'anything' will work. Now bounce that sunny window's sunlight onto the actor's dark side. Don't flatten it out so both sides are equal – keep one side dimmer and you help shape the face.
- (3.) Add a second showcard right in front of your actor. The first card fills in the light opposite the source, the second adds a soft fill.
- (4.) Use a backlight (or a showcard) aimed at the back of the actor's head. It helps separate the actor from the background.
- (5.) Hide smaller cards where you need extra bounce light without adding any lighting. Use these to isolate a prop or fill in a too-dark corner. In a pinch, 3x5" index cards work well. Don't use tin foil; it's too shiny.
- (6.) Turn off the overhead (ugly top light) and turn on a desk lamp in the dimmed room. Now that cameras don't need much light to see, just a bit can add dramatic focus. Keep in mind you may need a smaller bulb. A bit of light goes a long way in a dim room.

Be aware of mixing daylight and tungsten (light bulbs) and fluorescents. They operate at different color temperatures and can appear anywhere from green to pink to red to blue. And those are the colors that will shine on the actors. Either use a filter to change the color temperature or change the bulb to match the rest.

Norman C. Berns is teacher, writer and Emmy Award winning filmmaker. He is currently producing The Enlightenment, about James Cook's discovery of Hawaii. His documentary series, The Writing Code, aired on PBS and Norman was line-producer on television's first almost-reality cop show, The Street, for Universal and the CBS series, Wish You Were Here. A senior producer at Fallon-Minneapolis, he was on the team that created the internet's first web series, The Hire, sponsored by BMW.



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Robert Zemeckis Takes to the Air Again with *Flight*

by Scott Essman

After immersing himself in the world of motion-capture-based animation with the ImageMovers Digital company on his last three features, Robert Zemeckis can count a full 12 years since his last film with live actors, *Castaway*. That is, until the release of *Flight*, a vehicle for star Denzel Washington that is wholly unlike any film in Zemeckis' career, and for that matter, a unique film in and of itself in many respects.

"There was a lot of discussion in my brain trust of partners and representatives about the wisdom about doing another movie with a plane crash in it," Zemeckis said of the inevitable comparisons between *Castaway* and *Flight*. After pausing, the director of such megahits as the *Back to the Future* series and *Forrest Gump*, noted

what first drew him back to live-action features. "It's so rare to find a good screenplay like this," he reflected. "I never felt that I went away. Movies are movies. Some bend light through a lens. Some create moving images virtually."

After *Polar Express*, Zemeckis continued with his ImageMovers projects *Beowulf* and *A Christmas Carol*. Though all three projects were at least partially successful in critical terms, they were incredible expensive to produce, leading to some rumblings that Zemeckis' lengthy experiment with ImageMovers represented his first true commercial failure. But he set the record straight on getting any project made, whether in live-action or animation. "My feeling is that movies are like love affairs," he said. "Two people

come together and if there is the right place and the right time, it gets made. I've connected with screenplays—it's the romantic within me."

One of the surefire elements to get a movie like *Flight* made is the attachment to the project of its leading man, in this case, Washington. "When I read the material, I said, 'Wow this is good.'" Washington said of his reaction to John Gatins' *Flight* script. "My late agent, the last two scripts he gave me were *Safehouse* and *Flight*. That was part of it – the promise I made to him." *Flight*'s protagonist is anything but a traditional hero; instead, he is a seriously flawed main character which recalls the Washington vehicles *He Got Game* and *Training Day*, but Washington chose the role nonetheless. "I don't try to decide what people should get from it or why," he said. "I don't do a part for those kinds of reasons."

Self-proclaimed "nervous flyer" Gatins, a veteran screenwriter of sports films such as *Hardball*, *Coach Carter*, and *Dreamer*, which he directed, worked on the *Flight* script over a ten-year period putting it together piecemeal amongst other projects. "I wanted it to be ambiguous," Gatins said of the unpredictable story arc and nature of the Washington character, an airline pilot who saves a troubled flight in questionable personal circumstances. "We really don't know what he's going to do next – he's unpredictable."

Washington concurred about the role. "There's a rawness that sticks out," he stated. "Everybody was covering their own behinds

– the pilots' union, the airlines. They needed him to be a great hero in order to fulfill their agenda. They've wanted him to be the hero they wanted him to be."

Without Zemeckis and Washington on board, Gatins' pet project lingered, but once he had those two men involved, the rest came relatively easily. "It was bold and audacious," said Zemeckis of *Flight*. The project reunited him with *Castaway* cinematographer Don Burgess to shoot the movie on location in Georgia. "I love the complexity of everything and the moral ambiguity in every scene."

For Washington, who described himself as a fully pragmatic actor, once he picked up the *Flight* screenplay, he couldn't put it down. "You felt like you read it in 14 minutes," he said. "This was one of those scripts I had to be a part of. It was on the page – the guts and the pain, the tears. It was like a play."

Since the mid-1980s, Scott Essman has been writing and producing projects about motion picture craftsmanship. He has published over 350 articles as a freelancer and has produced over twenty publicity projects for Universal Studios Home Entertainment where he made video documentaries and wrote publicity materials. He published his first book, "Freelance Writing for Hollywood," for Michael Wiese in 2000, and has a new book about Tim Burton.

Six Fatal Errors in Screenwriting

Don't Let Your Ideas Fall by the Wayside

by Paula Brancato

In my career as producer and script developer, I have read over 5,000 screenplays. So many promising concepts fall by the wayside because of errors that a knowledgeable screenwriter can easily avoid. The errors screenwriters make are always the same, whether the writer is a novice or a professional.

Six fatal errors in screenwriting are:

#1 Switching protagonists mid-stream. If your leading man/lady has fewer lines after page 20, shows up on fewer and fewer pages, and maybe even disappears altogether for ten or more pages at a time, you have switched protagonists and your screenplay will fail. Another character has taken over the screenplay. Your leading man/lady's reappearance on page 80 or 90 or 100 will do no good at all. Rule #1: Stay with the horse you rode in on.

#2 Having a weak, passive leading lady/man. Maybe your protagonist is there on every page but just sits and watches or says inane things like, "Oh, my. That is not good," while quietly sipping his or her beer. Not good. A protagonist, even one whose innate character is passive and iconoclastic must act. Small actions matter: crushing a flower with the heel of a boot, getting drunk, kissing a mirror, stealing a \$20 bill. Onscreen the audience can only see action, not what is in a character's head. If your leading man is thinking and feeling up a storm but the audience has no way to see it, your screenplay will fail.

#3 Having a weak, passive or nonexistent antagonist or one who arrives too late in the game. A protagonist can only be as strong and interesting as his or her antagonist, the person he pushes against, the person he fights, e.g. the joker in *Dark Knight*, who literally made that movie. An antagonist must be a very strong character, not an institution, not a feeling and not an idea, but a flesh and blood embodiment of antagonism,

who shows up early and gives the protagonist an extremely hard time.

#4 Not enough conflict. Every scene, even in a comedy, must have conflict. Two people have to fight over something, each at the expense of the other, for a scene to come alive. What are they fighting over? How do they get in the way of one another trying to get it? Nice, agreeable characters make for very bad screenplays. Give everyone trouble and don't stop.

#5 Too much exposition. Talking heads are, mostly, boring on the screen. Show don't tell. Use action, move characters through various unusual changes of scenery, if nothing else, anything you need to keep the story moving forward. Movies are moving pictures, so keep your scenes and characters moving along.

#6 Not enough action, even small actions. The audience can only tell the nature of a character in a play or screenplay by the way the character acts, the choices he or she does or does not make. The writer must dramatize what is in the character's head with actions, because onstage or screen the audience cannot be inside the character's head, the way one can, for instance, through the words of a novel. A character makes an important decision. How do we see that moment of decision-making? That action can be as small as a wink or as big as detonating an explosive device. Load up your scenes with action.

Most of all, keep writing!

Paula Brancato
 Full-time Lecturer, University of Southern California
 Mobile: 310-429-5181 Office: 212-249-0255
http://www.thewritersplace.org/script_consultation.shtml
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Q&A with Richard H. Topham, Jr.

Advice and tips for novices in sound production.

by Nash Choudhury

Richard H. Topham, Jr. is one of the foremost experts in sound production for film and television. He's worked on everything from major films and television series to commercials and industrial videos. He has won six Emmy Awards in Technical Support in Sound. We talked with Topham about his work and what advice he has for those starting out in sound production.

How did you get started in the film industry and working in production sound?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: I moved to Hollywood in 1977 and opened a sound company with my father. I sold, rented, and repaired equipment for all the major studios and soundmen. In doing so, I got involved in solving sound problems on the set. I then started booming on commercials, then low budget films.

What are some of the major misconceptions that people have about your end of production?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: The object on location is to get crisp, clean dialogue and eliminate the noises around you.

Effects and music can be added later in production.

Give us the breakdown of the jobs on the sound side of film production. On what side is the greatest difficulty working, during production or post production, and what is your role during pre-production?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: There are several main jobs in production sound. On a reality series you have to chase the camera trying to get good sound in a rushed environment. (One man band.) On a TV series, it's more dramatic and controlled (2 or 3 person crew: mixer, boom operator, cable). And on a feature

film, there is a more controlled and a larger budget (3 person crew: mixer, boom operator, cable).

The second half of this question is one of the most debated questions of sound people. Production is hard because you have to get rid of the noise while capturing dialogue when a director is saying, 'We'll fix it in post.' The audio-post people are wondering why there is noise or why the director didn't have a second take for sound. And on pre-production, you go on a location scout to make sure the locations are quiet (i.e., no freeways or factories) and so that they don't change locations because they decided that another one had the 'right look.'

What are some of the challenges of recording sound on a real location, especially one as noisy as New York City?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: Having time to set up and find good positions for booming and checking wireless frequencies as well as wiring talent so you don't get clothing noise.

What have been some of the biggest changes in sound since you've started

going from film to digital and DSLR filmmaking?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: They keep trying to record audio on camera or have a cameraman do sound.

What recommendations do you have for filmmakers trying to record/mix sound with limited resources?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: Get someone (anyone) to record sound instead of shooting and getting sound by yourself. If you have a dedicated sound person, the sound in your film is 100% better.

You've recorded on productions that ranged a wide gamut of mediums from major productions to documentaries to music videos to web series. Tell us a bit about recording for such a wide range of formats.

Richard H. Topham Jr.: Dialogue is dialogue, and microphones are a tool. It's a matter of how many tools you have with you.

Tell me a bit about some of your favorite pieces of recording equipment that you like to use on sets.

Richard H. Topham Jr.: The Schoeps CMIT 5U shotgun microphone is the best out there. Lectrosonics wireless systems are the most reliable.

Do you have any tips or advice for students interested in getting into sound production?

Richard H. Topham Jr.: Learn at an equipment rental house. You will meet other sound people and learn all the sound equipment that is used in the industry. That way when you go to boom or work

with different sound people, you will know all his equipment (different sound people have different kits) because you've tested all kinds at the rental house.

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Nash Choudhury is a graduate from Binghamton University with a BA in Creative Writing. He is currently a freelance writer with a passion for movies.

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– Rich Topham Jr. Owner, Professional Sound Services



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Interview with Roy Harter

Sound Design for Film and Television

by Megan Harr

Emmy award-winning, New York composer, sound designer, and audio mixer Roy Harter shares his experience working in television and film.

From a very early age Harter was always interested in the technical aspect of making music. He gives due credit to piano lessons he received as a child in the development of his appreciation for and skill in the music industry. He has worked to compose and mix for many major television networks including Nickelodeon, MTV, and Lifetime.

How did you start learning about sound design?

Roy Harter: I've been hanging around recording studios ever since I was 14 years old. I started off running tapes, making coffee, and doing [errands] for the clients. While it's easy for people to label me a "sound designer," my skill-set is actually more varied. I feel as if I ride the line between music composer, audio engineer, entertainer, and psychiatrist.

How has your training helped you acquire skills necessary for your work?

Roy Harter: I've never gone to school for this, and I have a problem with some of these schools churning out "audio engineers" with degrees in ProTools. For me it was a natural progression of watching from the masters and developing my skills in private. Clients labeled me a sound designer once they saw me incorporating musical instruments into their spots. By the time I was 30 years old, I was running my own facility.

What did you find most challenging when you started? What do you think is challenging for students working to break into the industry today?

Roy Harter: Catching your first break. I sat in a machine room for years, before I was first offered to engineer a session. Truthfully, I would have waited even longer, because this is what I was meant to do. It makes it easy to weed out the people who "think" they should be working in this industry, from the people who "know" they should be working in this industry. I do believe that we all catch *one* break. It's up to you to make something out of that first opportunity. By the way, it doesn't get easier. Even now, with an established studio in Times Square, and clients across the industry, I'm still constantly learning and reinventing myself.

Can you name a few synths that you like most for designing sounds?

Roy Harter: I could name the latest and greatest plugin synths out you, but the reality is, I spend the most time just tweaking presents. I have a ridiculous database of sounds that are already logged in Soundminer Pro. While I use my location recorder all the time, it's mainly used to document melodic ideas. When I am forced to design from scratch, I will usually work in Ableton Live, using Kontakt, Battery, and Absynth. I prefer to mix within ProTools. I've spent decades developing my modular synth programming skills, but truthfully, the piano lessons I got as a child, are much more valuable to me.

Are there any softwares that you prefer to work with and why?

Roy Harter: I compose within Ableton, and then I mix within ProTools. This answer will probably disappoint the gear-heads. My plugin set is fairly basic. The most exotic plugin I have is probably the Sony Oxford EQ. The Waves Restoration bundle comes in handy when I'm dealing with location sound. Most people would be very surprised to learn that my most exotic sounds are achieved



with basic pitch-shifting, reversing, or delays. There are plenty of great sound designers releasing sounds to the public on a daily basis. Because my projects typically have a large audience, I feel it would be a shame if I wasn't able to use their incredible sounds and expose them to the masses.

What aspects of a project make it more labor intensive, or difficult to compose?

Roy Harter: The only really challenging part of this business would be surpassing the expectations of your client. My clients know that if I'm involved with their project, I'll pretty much do whatever I can to blow their minds. Sometimes, I even like to set limitations upon myself in the studio, to challenge myself. It's *easy* making weird sounds using today's studio gear. Try limiting your sonic palette to see how creative you can get with a smaller toolkit. That's when you really learn the tricks. The main problem in modern studios are the endless amount of possibilities.

What are some typical sound design challenges that you encounter? How do you overcome them?

Roy Harter: The most challenging part is trying to decipher the silly sounds that producers make when they are describing sounds to me. I don't mind a challenge. I actually seek them out. It's the only way we can grow professionally, and as human beings. I love dealing with the different personalities in my studio. Fulfilling someone's sonic vision is very satisfying to me, no matter how difficult of a personality they might prove to be in a creative situation.



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The House at the Edge of the Galaxy

A look into the making of the allegorical film from casting to post production.

The House at the Edge of the Galaxy is an allegorical short film about the beauty and significance of the here and now, versus the quest for the bigger and better world perpetually beyond our grasp. This cosmic tale takes place at a desolate outpost where a lonely boy is taught by a passing Cosmonaut how to plant a “star” to transform his existence. In the process of yearning for the heavens, he discovers that paradise instead resides in his own backyard.

“I am drawn to the concept of perpetual cycle, psychological barriers, illusion of entrapment and inevitability, and how people project their own emotions of disillusion into attempts to escape themselves.

In the allegorical search to escape, The House at the Edge of the Galaxy explores that the exit can be found through its recognition, and that the cycle can be broken from within.

The theme of longing to escape, either physical or psychological, is woven through my work. While trying to escape, a trapped child meets a lonely traveler who teaches the child how to plant a ‘star’.

I am interested in the arc of relationship between father and son and old and young that develops from the rejection of the own psyche to the renewal of tight bonds that exist internally, but begin to disintegrate. I use simple allegory to reveal the cyclical pattern in the complex reality of people’s lives.” – Gleb Osatinski

Location

Gleb has carried an image of an old house in his mind with him since childhood. Growing up in Russia, he would see old wooden houses in remote areas of the country. The idea of frozen time in a universe that exists inside such a house greatly attracted Gleb. Time stopped in the house, but life around it had progressed, and Gleb



has always been drawn to the concept of the reality that coexists with the present. An instance of memory or subconsciousness may exist somewhere else, and he thought an old house would be the perfect setting to support this concept. When writing the script, he had a house like this in mind.

While location scouting at the Blossom Hill Farm in Alum Bank, Western Pennsylvania, the filmmakers discovered the physical form of Gleb’s vision. The home appeared completely lost and abandoned, surrounded by the forest. It had been locked up and neglected since 1954. It had no electricity, running water, or any roads or passes that led to it. When Gleb stepped inside, he was submerged with the internal world that waited to be explored.

To prep the interior of the house for shooting, a local carpenter was hired to shore up the home’s collapsing foundation. The walls and ceiling were secured, and the porch was supported with additional beams. Rubble was also partially removed from the second floor.

A temporary wooden bridge was built across the small creek that surrounded the house to allow the crew to carry equipment and lights. To stay true to the director’s vision, dolly shots were needed to avoid using a handheld camera. The bridge was essential to bring the dolly, tracks and equipment to the set.

Casting

The main hero of the story is a seven-year-old boy who prefers to just be himself in front of the camera. Gleb decided to cast the actors himself, and met with many young actors for the role of The Boy before discovering Grayson Sides. In fifteen minutes during the casting session, Grayson was able to demonstrate a wide range of emotions and exhibit deep involvement in the story. He was not afraid of the camera and the hard work ahead of him. His parents Todd and Tamara were extremely supportive. When Gleb mentioned that the film would be filmed in an old, dilapidated house, they were excited. Todd and Tamara said that Grayson would love to play the child - he loves exploring. Grayson Sides was a perfect fit for the role. It started as an adventure, and never ceased to be one from the day he and Gleb met.

This is Gleb's second film with Richard Manichello. Their first collaboration was *Pisces of an Unconscious Mind* where Richard acted as a fisherman and therapist. This time, Richard became the director's inspiration yet again.

When Gleb was ready to make another film, he called Richard and invited him for coffee to brainstorm the next script. Suddenly, Gleb saw Richard in the Cosmonaut suit, and that triggered the whole story.

There is something in Richard's performance that allows the creation of complex characters that Gleb uses in his story. He combines elements of surrealism and drama as well as bits of satire that Richard unmistakably brings in with his performance. This combination and tones was exactly what Gleb was looking for the Cosmonaut in his film.



The Creative Production Team

Once the script was written, Gleb began the search for an experienced cinematographer to shoot the film. After watching hundreds of reels on-line, he was struck by the beauty of light, angles and camera film radiating from Jarin Blaschke's work (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, *Babygirl*, *Fray*), and instantly knew he was the one. Gleb sent Jarin a note asking if he would be interested in this collaboration. Once he read the script, Jarin fell in love the story and the two began working together. It was a deeply creative process. What Gleb loves about working with Jarin is his attention to the tiniest details and his drive to execute the most complex shots with the highest possible quality.

To round out the creative team, Gleb began the search for a Production Designer. Jarin introduced Gleb to Robert Eggers. Jarin and Robert had worked together on *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *The Five Stages of Grief*. When Robert read the script, he also loved the material, and agreed to come on board. Robert is a walking encyclopedia of facts about architecture, costumes, and styles. Robert helped tremendously to solidify the vision of the story, and brilliantly created the world inside of the house the Director had envisioned.

Filmmakers

GLEB OSATINSKI – WRITER/DIRECTOR

Gleb Osatinski has Masters degrees in Physics (Kharkov Polytechnic University) and Computer Science & Finance (New York University). After a few years of working on Wall Street, he decided to follow his true passion and become a film director. His recent short film *Pisces of an Unconscious Mind* won a Drama Award at the 2011 Official Best of Fest and screened at the Atlanta Film Festival, Woods Hole Film Festival, Magnolia Independent Film Festival, New York City International Film Festival, New Filmmakers NYC and other film festivals around the globe.

GRAYSON SIDES – BOY

Seven year old, Grayson Sides, from Mooresville, North Carolina, has wanted to be an actor since the age of two. After prodding his parents for several years, they finally decided to give his acting career a shot by signing him with an agency in Charlotte, North Carolina. It soon became evident that he was serious about becoming an actor. He auditioned with the song "I'm Yours" for *America's Got Talent* at age 7, and turned out to be a natural in front of the judges, camera and crew. After the audition, Grayson said that he liked singing, but really wanted to be an actor. Soon his agency connected him with Writer and Director, Gleb Osatinski, and his first audition in New York City was a success! He was selected for the lead in Osatinski's short film "House at the Edge of the Galaxy". Grayson dreams of acting in a feature length film, and someday starring in a TV series.

RICHARD MANICHELLO - COSMONAUT

An Emmy Award-winning director and writer of stage, film, and television, Manichello's career spans over 25 years. From commercial film editing, he went to CBS Reports, then on to 60 Minutes. He produced and edited for the acclaimed television magazine during the "golden years" of Mike, Morley, Dan, and Harry Reasoner. He toured with opera star Luciano Pavarotti, for a segment that won two Emmys. He has produced for ABC, NBC, Fox, Public Broadcasting, and cable independents. He's produced for four Olympic telecasts, and two Paralympics in Atlanta and Sydney. He has been a member of the Directors Guild of America since 1982.

The Physical Production Team

Once the team got closer to the shoot, Gleb met with Line Producer David Ross (*The Circus Animals*, *The Whithering Winters*), who agreed to help with physical production. David was very enthusiastic about the film, and demonstrated a can-do attitude from day one. David organized equipment requirements, contracts and all necessary details to make the shoot happen.

In the meantime, while attending the 2012 Woods Hole Film Festival for a screening of *Pisces of an Unconscious Mind* that took place July 29th, Gleb was less than four weeks out from shooting. Here, he met Executive Producer Gavin Behrman who was in attendance for the screening of his short film, *Admissions*.

After spending time together at the film festival, Gavin and Gleb realized they shared many common ideas about filmmaking. Gleb soon offered Gavin a spot on the team, and he agreed to come on board. While David continued to prep from New York, Gavin offered a wide range of assistance while he was working on another project in Toronto. He helped with the crew and equipment. When the deal for the generator suddenly fell through a few days before shooting, Gavin tapped his relationship with David Haddad of Haddad's Inc. to secure a new one, and the production was saved.

Two weeks before the shoot, Gleb discovered Assistant Director Eric LaFranchi (*Hypothermia*, *Yelling to the Sky*). Eric and Gleb clicked immediately - both shared their love of Andrey Tarkovsky. It felt like they could spend hours just talking about him. Eric loved the ideas contained in the script, and jumped in. In just a few days, Eric put the shooting schedule together. They were ready to shoot.

The film was shot in six days from August 24th to August 30th, 2012. Most of scenes were exteriors, and five days of shooting required favorable weather. As luck would have it, rain only fell on August 26th - the exact day Eric scheduled working indoors.

The mountainous terrain at the Blossom Hill Farm made the shoot challenging. Extensive set up time was needed to level track for the dolly shots on the hills that surrounded the house. Time ran short, necessitating rewrites of the script to make the schedule.

Shooting the house interiors provided its own degree of difficulty. Due to the condition of the house, only six people could work on the second floor at any given time for fear of the floor collapsing. Assistant Director Eric LaFranchi did an excellent job making sure this part of the shoot was handled in a safe, effective manner.



Filmmakers

GAVIN BEHRMAN – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Gavin Behrman is an 18-year veteran of the movie industry. He has worked all over the world on the production of over 30 feature films – both Hollywood blockbusters and independently made film festival favorites such as *Tower Heist*, *The Adjustment Bureau*, *The Book of Eli*, *Valkyrie*, *Thank You For Smoking*, *Spider-Man*, *Erin Brockovich* and *The Horse Whisperer*. Gavin's most recent projects include the transformational short film *Admissions* starring James Cromwell that has been honored with 22 film festival awards, and the feature film *Love and Honor*, sold at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival. Gavin believes that important films can send a powerful message to the world, influencing society's views and ultimately the destiny of human kind.

JARIN BLASCHKE – CINEMATOGRAPHER
Jarín Blaschke is an award-winning cinematographer and alumni of the Sundance Director's Lab. His recent feature film credits include the long-anticipated *Unicorns* by Leah Meyerhoff and *Babygirl* by Macdara Vallety, which premiered at the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival. Other film credits include *Bomb*, *Bitch* and *The Dawn Chorus*, which simultaneously screened at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, and *Crazy Beats Strong Every Time*, a version of *Meadowlandz*, directed by Moon Molson and workshopped at the 2008 Sundance Director's Lab. His commercial and promotional work includes clients such as Atlantic Records, Nautica, L'Oreal, IKEA, International Olympic Committee, Amnesty International, Hearst Corporation and Intimissimi/Victoria's Secret. Blaschke has designed celebrity and fashion lighting for Vanity Fair Magazine. Additionally, he recently directed live miniature photography for the New York Philharmonic on the groundbreaking New York premiere of *Le Grand Macabre* at Lincoln Center.

LAURA ISRAEL – EDITOR
Laura Israel cut her teeth editing award-winning commercials and music videos while still a film student at NYU. She worked on projects including John Lurie, Lou Reed, Patti Smith, Keith Richards, David Byrne, Sonic Youth, New Order, artists Laurie Simmons and Robert Frank. Israel's first film as a director, *Windfall* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, winning top prize at Doc NYC. The NY Times called it "urgent, informative and artfully assembled." Ms. Israel has also been named one of Filmmaker's 25 New Faces of Independent Film for 2011.



Editing

Finding the right editor for a project is an integral part of the filmmaking process. Gleb was recommended to contact Laura Israel (*Fishing With John*, *Windfall*). She read the script, and loved the footage. It was an intense and fruitful process cutting with Laura. She always found tiny gestures, moves in the eyes of actors, or a camera move which may be hidden at first, but are then revealed with a single mouse click. Laura's editing is accurate, intricate and subtle – her work elevated the film to the next level.

Scoring

This is Gleb's second project working with Romain Collin (*Pisces of an Unconscious Mind*). The two met just before the film was shot, and Gleb gave Romain the script so he could start thinking about themes for the score. Romain loved the script, and was excited to

be a part of the team. Once the film picture was locked, Gleb and Romain began their creative process.

Gleb wanted the music to carry an idea of a ballad, sounding something like an old, dusty record that was found in an attic. The music should have a soul of its own, and carry this soul to the viewer when they see the story about a small child. The score was recorded on Romain's piano and later mixed at Jeremy Loucas' (*Pisces of an Unconscious Mind*, *Lino Tagliapietra*, *Glass Musician*) studio.

To create the desired mood, the score was converted from digital to an analog tape, and then back to digital.

Post Production Sound

Laura Israel introduced Gleb to the Emmy nominated sound editing team Margaret Crimmins (*Short Cuts*, *Welcome to the*

Dollhouse) and Greg Smith (*Jesus Camp*, *Taxi to the Dark Side*) of Dog Bark Sound. Gleb listened to their work online, and was instantly impressed. He could not wait to meet them. Working with Margaret and Greg was another incredible collaboration for Gleb. Their idea about the sound design is that it should open a separate dimension when the audience sees the house. The director wanted to be sure the film's visuals were expanded into another world – the world of sound. Margaret and Greg created this world, which exists inside of the film, and will stay there forever.

A Few Words About Financing

Crowd financing has become a popular method of raising funds for short films. The filmmakers used the funding resources of RocketHub.com, and were able to cover a portion of the production budget. 91 very generous people came together to help us raise over \$10,000.

Here is the link to the fundraising site for the film:

<http://www.rockethub.com/projects/9414-the-house-at-the-edge-of-the-galaxy>

The rest of film was financed with Gleb's credit cards and some of his family's savings.



Filmmakers

ROMAIN COLLIN – SCORE

Described by NPR host Jon Weber as "a visionary composer, an extraordinary jazz pianist and a very bright young rising star in the jazz world", and touted by the Boston Globe as being "among the leading lights of a new breed of jazz players." Romain, who was originally born in France, came to the US and attended Berklee College of Music (class of 2004) on a scholarship. In 2007, he graduated from the prestigious Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz (TMIJ) where he held a Full Scholarship as the pianist of an ensemble handpicked by Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Terence Blanchard. During this time, Romain studied with Ron Carter, Charlie Haden, Wynton Marsalis, and toured with Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter in Vietnam and India. He has also performed at a Kennedy Center concert hosted by Quincy Jones, featuring Stevie Wonder, Patti Austin, Joshua Redman and John Patitucci among numerous others. Romain has also composed orchestra scores for short films including Vlada Subotic's *About Me* (2010), and Gleb Osatinski's award winning *Pisces of an Unconscious Mind* (2011).

ROBERT EGGERS – PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Robert Eggers works as a designer for film, television, commercials, print, theater and dance. Eggers has designed and created sets, costumes, wigs, puppets and more for Sesame Street, Comedy Central, AT&T, Toyota, Sharp, Johnson & Johnson, Pantene, Chipotle, at Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, La MaMa E.T.C. and many others. Films he has designed have screened at SXSW, Tribeca, NYFF and many more. As a director, Eggers has staged many classics including *Romeo & Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Othello* (NYIT Award – Best Costumes by Eggers), *Faust*, and notably an original stage adaptation of Murnau's *Nosferatu*. Eggers' first short film was an expressionist adaptation of *Hansel & Gretel*, followed by his award-winning *The Tell-Tale Heart*, an official selection of many major international festivals and markets from Los Angeles to Krakow, premiering at Mar Del Plata. Eggers is currently in development with his first feature, *The Witch*, a horror film set in 1630s New England.

DOG BARK SOUND, INC. – SOUND DESIGN AND MIX

Dog Bark Sound is the premier boutique sound design studio in New York City. Founded by Margaret Crimmins in 1996, Dog Bark Sound does sound design and mix on independent and documentary films. Margaret Crimmins and coworker Greg Smith have completed films that include *Mad Hot Ballroom*, *The Bridge*, *Taxi to the Dark Side*, *Windfall*, *Freedom Riders*, *Soul Food Junkies*, *Sexy Baby*, and *The House at the Edge of Galaxy*.

How to Boost Your Film Crowdfunding Success

by John Klein

Every indie filmmaker knows the difficulties of making a movie. And I would guess that every single one of those filmmakers would tell you that, unless they funded the film out of their own well-lined pockets, raising money for the film was by far the hardest, most stressful element of the entire process. No one likes to ask for money, and no one likes rejection, especially filmmakers!

Kickstarter, IndieGoGo, and other crowdfunding sites aim to take some of that stress out of the equation. It's no surprise that indie producers latched onto the platform so quickly. However, it's important to know that the process of crowd-funding is just as much work as approaching investors, and in many ways involves a lot of the same steps: crafting a business plan and a budget, pitching the exciting parts of your project, and making sure those backing you get something out of the deal.

Our production company, Glass City Films, embarked on a Kickstarter campaign in August of 2011 to fund our post-apocalyptic zombie film *Chrysalis*. It was our first foray into crowdfunding, and by our standards, we were incredibly successful, managing to raise over \$35,000 through the site and raising nearly 120% of our target. It took us months of planning and work before the site even launched, and running the campaign was like a full-time job for us during the month of August! But we pulled it off. And, given that, we thought we'd share some advice for other filmmakers considering the same platform.

(1.) Get everyone on board early.

Before we launched our Kickstarter campaign, we already had most of the core creative team on board, all of whom were already invested in the campaign's success. Our goal was to get people on board who were professional, talented, and passionate about both the project and working with us.

(2.) Craft a Kickstarter video that reflects the quality of the final product.

Writer/DP Ben Kurstin and I wrote a short teaser trailer containing iconic imagery and a monologue featured in the actual script, delivered by Penelope (Sara Gorsky). Because we shot it with much of the same equipment, in the same locations, and with the same crew that will shoot the feature, we could easily tell people, "Look at what this group of people can accomplish with no money. Now imagine what we could do with your funding!" Your video is the first thing people will see; if it's bad, or if it's unmemorable, you won't get repeat visitors and no one will share the video with anyone else. Take the time to do it right.

(3.) When it comes to perks and prizes, do your research.

I can't stress this enough: make sure, whatever cool prizes you want to offer, that you know how much it will cost and how much people might be willing to pay for it. If someone has to pledge \$250 before you offer them a DVD of the film,

you're off base; you can find printing companies that can produce high-quality, full-color DVDs for as little as \$1.50/disc. Likewise, don't promise a behind-the-scenes photo book to all your \$10 backers without knowing that it'll probably cost you triple that just to make the book! Think of free or cheap prizes to offer. Digital versions of the soundtrack, tickets to the premiere, credits on IMDb... They're free for you and exciting for backers. Remember: Shipping is expensive. Credits are not. Likewise, don't offer more than ten pledge levels; you'll confuse people. Think of it like cable: if you've got 300 channels, is there ever anything good on?

(4.) Choose a reasonable target amount.

When you budget your film, include the cost of creating and shipping prizes. Also, remember that Kickstarter takes anywhere from 8-10% of the money you raise. Plan accordingly. And, lastly, feel free to shoot for the moon, but only if you think you've got the crowd and the resources to make it happen. If you're a two-person crew planning to raise \$100,000, and you've only got about 200 friends on Facebook between the two of you, I would politely consider growing that base a bit more and adding some heft to your project before your campaign.

(5.) Don't overstay your welcome.

You can choose a time frame for your campaign ranging from 1-60 days.

We chose 30 days, starting August 1 and ending August 31. Any more time than that, and I guarantee we would have lost momentum throughout the month.

(6.) Social media is your friend. For the couple of weeks before the campaign and especially throughout, we were a constant presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, blogs, and message boards. We allied with other Kickstarter campaigns and had live chats. It's an integral part of a crowdfunding campaign: create the crowd online, where it can spread with a single well-timed update. (And if you don't think timing your posts is important, consider this: people on average check Facebook and Twitter more often at the beginning of every hour than at the end. You could make more money simply by posting at 11:05am instead of 10:55am. True fact.)

(7.) Update consistently and distinctly. Don't spam! We always put up new content, ranging from pictures from Wizard World ComicCon to posters to our favorite apocalyptic quotes and zombie memes. However, we never wanted to seem like bots spamming everyone with the same "Give us money!" update. We like our movie, and we want other people to like it for all the cool things about it. Then we want them to fund us. It's not the other way around.

(8.) Have promotions and giveaways.

One of our biggest days was August 13, which also was the 13th day of our campaign. As a promotion, we offered copies of our short horror films for anyone who pledged or re-upped their current pledge by at least \$13. We had close to 30 backers on that one day. We also had raffle drawings throughout the campaign that offered prizes for anyone who backed on certain days or got us to certain dollar amounts. Translation: always do something to

keep people excited and to keep them coming back to the Kickstarter page!

(9.) Find ways to expand your project's network. Thanks to our prior films, we had an established fan base, but that will only get you so far. Our chosen genre provided ample opportunity to break into a new market through events like Wizard World and through zombie blogs, websites, and writers. Everyone on board also brought his or her own social network to the *Chrysalis* bandwagon. The more people who see your site, the better. Know your genre, know your audience, and pursue them!

(10.) Communication is key. Reply to every message, comment, and tweet people send you – yes, even the spam ones. Update frequently – by our Kickstarter's end, we had posted one update almost every day, sometimes talking about the project itself, sometimes advertising a new contest, and other times simply offering new information about the campaign. At the end of the day, the goal is to forge a personal connection and relationship with every backer and potential backer and person of interest out there.

(11.) Be grateful. Every night before going to bed, I would check our list of new backers and send each of them a thank-you message. Nothing fancy, but always different

– remember, don't spam – and often personalized. I'd also encourage them to tweet, blog, and post about the campaign – every little bit helps. Put it this way: every backer now has a vested interest in making sure your campaign succeeds. Make sure they know that, and make sure they do something about it. And, every chance you get, make sure you thank them for it, because without them, your project wouldn't happen. Remember that, every day.

Inevitably, you'll have ups and downs during the campaign. There were days when we only raised about \$50, and others where we raised over \$3,000. But it's all worth it to see that final stamp: "Your project was successfully funded!" And now you've got a whole fan base eagerly waiting to see your film before you've shot a single frame. Go show them what you've got.

John Klein (www.windycitycamera.com) is the director of Chrysalis (www.chrysalis2013.com) and the executive producer of Glass City Films (www.glasscityfilms.com), an award-winning Midwest-based production company. He is also an accomplished cinematographer of various short and feature films, music videos, and commercials. Chrysalis is slated for production in January and for release in October.

WHETHER YOU WANT TO OBSERVE REALITY, OR create your own, join the community of filmmakers at THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS. Department of Communication B.A. and M.A. concentrations in Film and Video Production www.memphis.edu/communication/fvp.php

The Rebranding of Batman

Exec Producer Shares How His Vision Helped the Dark Knight Take Wing

It's been more than two decades since Batman was resurrected – *rebranded* – to the mainstream world, and it's largely due to a boy and his dream.

"I wasn't just rejected from every studio in Hollywood; I was emphatically rejected because Batman was known only as a punch line to a joke," says Michael Uslan, who became one of the highest-grossing movie executive producers of all time with the Batman film franchise. He writes about his personal journey in rebranding his hero to the world in his memoir, *The Boy Who Loved Batman* (www.theboywholovedbatman.com).

"When I watched the sitcom in 1966, I was both thrilled and horrified – the former because my idol was on TV with a cool car, and the latter because people were laughing *at* Batman and that just killed me. I knew then that my purpose in life was to show everyone who the Dark Knight really was."

Uslan reviews some of the reasons the Batman franchise became one of the most successful in film history:

A Talented Team

Thanks to genius filmmakers like Christopher Nolan and Tim Burton, super producers, daring execs, amazing casts, and incredible crews, the rebranding of the character became so strong that the word "Batman" wasn't even included in the titles of the last two films, "The Dark Knight" and "The Dark Knight Rises."

Branding – A Built-In Narrative

A cool symbol, check; tall, dark and handsome, check; a relatable origin story (no superpowers) check; great technology for the character to use against villains, check ... You know a brand has hit the mark when a logo conveys all of the key points. But rebranding can be tricky. Uslan knew about the innate potential, but Hollywood couldn't see Batman as the Dark Knight after the 1960s sitcom, which is why it took a decade after acquiring the

rights to Batman to actually start production. *Rebranding* is often the art of uncovering a product's past, he says.

Branding – a Safer Investment

Other successful movies -- Marvel's "The Avengers" and "The Amazing Spider-Man," "The Hunger Games" – all carry strong brands. Most successful products, in and out of Hollywood, have successful brands behind them, Uslan notes. When a brand has been established, it becomes a safer risk for investors and opens multiple revenue streams across many platforms.

Unwavering Conviction

How does a middle-class kid in his 20s, the son of a stonemason and a bookkeeper, buy the film rights to Batman? How does that same guy create the comic-to-film craze that society has witnessed in the past two decades when no one believed in his vision? Every time his resolve was questioned, it came down to the same answer, "I had 100 percent confidence it would work," Uslan says.

"Branding is absolutely the most important aspect to marketing any product these days," Uslan says. "We succeeded. I believed 100 percent in a vision that involved my favorite super-hero of all time, a character the world recognized and responded to across borders and even cultures. Batman needed to be presented in a way he'd only been seen in the comic books – as the Dark Knight."

Michael Uslan, (www.theuslancompany.com), is the Originator and Executive Producer, along with his partner Benjamin Melniker, of the Batman franchise of motion pictures. In his 36 years in the film and television industry, he has been involved with such projects as "National Treasure," "Constantine," and countless animated projects. His projects have won Oscars, Golden Globes and Emmy Awards. He is the author of "The Boy Who Loved Batman," his autobiography, now in bookstores and at amazon.com.

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Art & Artifice

A cautionary tale...

by David Worth

I was working on a play with Peter Bogdanovich that was adapted from an early F. Scott Fitzgerald novel, "The Beautiful and Damned." Peter was a true gentleman and included yours truly, who was merely a visiting journeyman filmmaker in the creative process often encouraging my input and seeking out my opinion.

While paging through his working copy of the novel, I could see the herculean effort that Mr. Bogdanovich had made in turning the lengthy prose into useable dialogue. We were already in our off, off Broadway run, with the cast that included Dustin Hoffman and Diane Keaton, who always managed to wear the most beguiling, enticing and intoxicating perfume that I had ever had the privilege of inhaling...

There had already been an afternoon run through and Peter asked me if I had watched it, but I informed him that I was waiting to watch the next performance on order for the actors to settle into their characters a bit more.

One of the lesser cast members was miffed about exactly how much money Dustin Hoffman was receiving and almost in unison both Peter and I were informing him that no one in the audience was coming to see this gentleman's performance or really even the work of the director, Mr. Bogdanovich. All they were coming to see was the stars, Dustin Hoffman and Diane Keaton and without their participation, none of us would have a job!

Then I woke up!

I was not working with Mr. Bogdanovich or Mr. Hoffman or Ms. Keaton. There was no beguiling perfume and I was in my room of my shared apartment in Westwood California, near UCLA where I was a part time professor, teaching filmmaking to the next generation of filmmakers.

This had been one of the best dreams of my life, but it had never happened, it wasn't about to happen and in fact it was never in my lifetime going to happen. This left me profoundly aware of exactly what I had managed to accomplish in the Business of Show and wondering if the door was still open for me to do more.

Way back in the day, during the 1970's, without any connections into the film industry I had still managed to claw my way up as an independent cinematographer and editor doing a fistful of totally forgettable and forgotten feature films. Three of those films, *Death Game*, *A Great Ride*, and *Hollywood Knight*, barely saw any form of distribution and all three of the budgets *combined* would not total \$500,000.00, but they happened to be the right films in the right place at the right time and led directly to me being the director of photography on two Clint Eastwood films: *Bronco Billy* and *Any Which Way You Can*.

That piece of luck and timing gave me the credibility to go on and have a career and led to my being the cinematographer on *Bloodsport* and the director on *Kickboxer*, which launched the career of the man who brought the art to martial arts, Jean-Claude Van Damme. Eventually, I made over 35 independent feature films as a director and DP not only in Hollywood, but in many corners



of the world: Hong Kong, Bangkok, Macau, Indonesia, Italy, Israel, South America, South Africa and Bulgaria.

Then the phone calls stopped coming...

This happens to everyone and not just in the Business of Show, but everyone. Still it stings when it happens to you, but you have to adapt, adjust and move on. There's a classic Hollywood saying that describes the five stages of your career, you can insert nearly anyone's name into it and it goes like this:

1. *Who's Jean-Luc Godard?*
2. *Get me Jean-Luc Godard!*
3. *Get me a **young** Jean-Luc Godard.*
4. *Get me the **next** Jean-Luc Godard.*
5. *Who's Jean-Luc Godard?*

This cycle is true of nearly everyone but especially in the Business of Show. In fact whenever I mention the names of many classic

directors and their films to my students, I get nothing back but a blank stare... Many of today's students and young filmmakers have been raised on Television, the Internet, YouTube and are the descendants of Video Cameras, the iPhone and the iPad...

Since they have the ability to make films instantly with today's modern technology many of them feel no real need or desire to study and learn from the visionary filmmaking masters of the past 100 years. Men whose shoulders they are standing on every day whenever they capture on their DSLR, edit on their Final Cut Pro and sell their DVD's on their Websites or upload their films to the Internet.

Like, in the recent Martin Scorsese 3D epic *Hugo*, where the inventive filmmaker from the early 1900's Georges Méliès', was found late in his life selling toys and trinkets in a train station in Paris, the masterful French filmmaker Abel Gance, who made the staggering achievement of *Napoleon* in 1927 was found in the 1950's selling pencils in the streets of Paris.

Able Gance was literally the, (tragically missed) Tony Scott of the 1920's who's film *Napoleon* boasted the futuristic techniques of

hand held cameras, cameras on horseback, cameras on pendulums, fast cutting and superimpositions that predated the techniques of MTV by fifty years. As well as, three cameras and projectors side by side for the last reel of his epic that was in both black & white and color and predated three-camera Cinerama by thirty years!

Also, the American film master D. W. Griffith who literally invented the language of filmmaking while he and his cameraman Billy Bitzer were making over four hundred and fifty (450!) one and two reel films in the early 1900's. Before making the first blockbuster *The Birth of a Nation* in 1915 and one of the most artful and inventive films of the last century *Intolerance* in 1916, died an alcoholic, in the late 1940's, forgotten and rejected in the Knickerbocker Hotel only a few yards from Hollywood Boulevard in the town and industry that he had literally created.

The great actor Sir Anthony Hopkins is quoted as saying about the Business of Show: "Accept everything and expect nothing..." That more or less sums it up. As long as you go into filmmaking because you *have to do it*. Because you *love* the process and because you are *passionate* about making films...

Fine... Now is the best time to become a filmmaker. But kindly take the time to first study the visionary films and filmmakers of the last century on Netflix... (Email me, and I'll send you the list!) Then you can also study your favorite modern films and filmmakers. Purchase a DSLR HD Camera and Final Cut Pro, gather a small team of your friends and become your own studio.

In the 1990's there were garage bands... Today there are garage studios!

There are even young film artists who are making film after film by just their subscriptions from YouTube or other social media. It is a totally new paradigm and a brave new world of filmmaking out there on the horizon. Give it all you've got, give it your best shot, dream big and make those dreams a reality. You can also do it on weekends, like the guy who just did *Bindlestiffs*...

Google it and see how you can make your film while still in school or not giving up your day job...

Hey, even I could do that!

*David Worth (www.davidworthfilm.com) has a resume of well over thirty five feature films as a Director of Photography and Director and has worked with talents like Clint Eastwood, Jean-Claude Van Damme, Shelly Winters, Roy Scheider, Dennis Hopper, Sondra Locke and Bruce Campbell. He has taught filmmaking at Chapman University, USC and at Chapman Singapore where he also lectured at the NYU Tisch Asia campus. He is an adjunct professor at his Alma Mater, UCLA and at The Academy of Art University in San Francisco. His first textbook, *The Citizen Kane Crash Course in Cinematography*, was published in 2008 and is available at www.amazon.com.*

**WHO'S JEAN-LUC GODARD?
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Advantages and Benefits of Shooting with the **Canon XA10**

by Philip Goetz

My favorite camera to shoot on is the Canon XA10. I like to use it and be able to hand it off to a second shooter. It is easy to teach and to learn. It is 1080 native. It has face detection. It has image stabilization. It has 64GB internal storage for 6 hours recording at the highest quality. It has XLR inputs.

When shooting weddings, for example, there is often no time to change lenses like on a DSLR, and I often have second shooters who do not have a lot of experience. The XA10 does great on full auto. It only has 10x zoom but you can still get the three main types of shots: wide, medium and close up.

Capturing the Story

When the bride is getting ready, shots must be obtained in a timely manner. You have to watch the bride as well as the reactions of everyone coming in and out of the room. Image stabilization allows hand held shooting, without a tripod. Face detection removes the guess work of focusing through the camera viewfinder. I always have an on camera light that has a dimmer so the colors of flowers, makeup, hair and other details really pop even in low light. The story is the wedding day and the goal is not to be in the way.

Shoot to Post Workflow

The XA10 shoots AVCHD, and I edit in Final Cut Pro 7. This program is discontinued, and I have not moved on to the current version, Final Cut Pro X. The camera files can be played in FCP X, Adobe Premiere or Sony Vegas without being processed. I have to transcode before editing, and this takes time but editing ProRes LT is flawless and the computer runs perfectly. I always immediately back up my files to two hard drives. If I have a hard drive die, I am not stuck. Since moving beyond the days of videotape, I have only one hard drive, and I have a backup to work from.



Canon XA10 Tips

Always format the internal flash drive before shooting. There is no reason to back up footage more than once. Spend time to reset all the settings in the camera. This allows you to build them up the way you want them. It also keeps you ready if a button gets pressed accidentally or if you want to try something new, you understand the menu. I like to set the two buttons on the flip out screen to control focus, and then, one to turn image stabilization on and off. Auto focus is great generally, but not for those extreme close ups of the rings or flowers. You want to get very specific details in focus with no drifting or uncertainty. Image stabilization can be turned off when you put the camera on a tripod. You can leave it on, but again, like auto focus, if the function isn't essential to the shot at hand, turn it off. Image stabilization can drift and hunt which causes an unnatural look when on a tripod.

Philip Goetz is a consultant, producer and teacher. Philip studied Radio, Television, and Film at Purdue University and The University of Texas at Austin. He has taught Media Production at Concordia University Texas and currently works at Omega Broadcast in Austin, Texas. He runs Three Point Production with his wife Monica and they are currently focusing on weddings.



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Top 10 Tools for Film and Video Makers

This edition's "Top 10 Tools" features gear that can help give new inspiration and jumpstart your projects, whether you're shooting a narrative, documentary, or music video - commercial, TV/Web series, or event video. These are highly recommended products designed and manufactured by highly reputable companies leading and pioneering the entertainment industry. Some of the equipment listed here are tools we have seen exhibited and demonstrated at key industry tradeshows like NAB and IBC. A lot of the gear featured here are solutions we have featured and demonstrated at the StudentFilmmakers.com Workshops in Manhattan, New York, as well as used ourselves for our own video and photo shoots.

1 BeachTek DXA-SLR PRO HDSL Audio Adapter

Unleash your sound with the Beachtek DXA-SLR PRO. The essential DSLR camera audio adapter. The DXA-SLR PRO bridges the gap between DSLRs and professional video cameras by enabling pro audio features that facilitate high-quality audio recording directly to the camera. Includes dual trim controls, ultra low noise preamplifiers for exceptionally clean audio, fast acting limiters, VU meters, phantom power and headphone monitoring plus a unique AGC Disable feature to reduce hiss. Ergonomic chassis mounts securely to camera and tripod for a truly portable all-in-one high quality audio solution. Two year warranty. www.beachtek.com/dxa-slrpro

2 Steadicam Merlin 2 Camera Stabilizing System

The Merlin 2 system offers videographers, cinematographers, and video enthusiasts an ultra-smooth, elegant handheld camera stabilizer system with unparalleled performance and precision. The Merlin 2 system supports a wide range of DSLR, compact and professional camcorders, point-and-shoot cameras, and other video-capture device models weighing from 0.5 to 5 lbs (0.23 to 2.2 kg). The Merlin 2's forward-thinking "Folding-Caliper"™ hinge allows instant fold-up, perfect for shouldermounted shooting, and just as quickly, returns precisely to its original position for handheld camera work. The newly enhanced precision-adjustable stage offers shooters exacting balance. Highlights of the Merlin 2 include the following: robust stage design featuring a rigid camera plate, multi-angle viewable level, and larger easily adjustable knobs for secure camera mounting and ease of use; a secure gimbal lock allows for precise tuning; the lens platform adjusts to various heights and angles to help support longer lenses and camera bodies; the ergonomic handle affords a comfortable grip for hours without undue fatigue, for either right or left handed users; all parts are stainless steel, aluminum or brass for corrosion resistance; dovetail plate and gimbal are retrofittable with original Steadicam Merlin; top dovetail plate has been designed to clear battery doors on most DSLR cameras; secure metal interconnect to Merlin arm post; sleek new black and stainless steel styling. www.tiffen.com/steadicam_merlin2.html



3 FloLight MicroBeam 128

High output compact LED light, 100W hotlight equivalent output. Multiple versions are now available to choose from, Daylight (~5600K) or Tungsten (~3200K), in either 30° beam angle or 60° beam angle versions. Models are available for Panasonic and Sony batteries. Runs for over 6 hours on some large camera batteries (genuine NP-F970).

Specifications: 128 Ultra Bright LED's. Daylight (~5600K) and Tungsten (~3200K) Versions Available. Spot (~30° Beam) and Flood (~60° Beam) Versions Available. External DC input 7-16v DC. Full dimming via dimmer knob on back of unit. Runs for hours on standard Lion camera batteries. Heavy duty anodized aluminum case. Color correction/diffuser gels included. Hotshoe swivel mount included. Slide in filter holder. Full filter pack (including a Tungsten filter for daylight models and vice-versa). 12VDC, includes camera battery mounting plates for (your choice of one) Sony, and Panasonic. Also accepts 12V DC directly (PSU Included). Heavy duty anodized aluminum construction available in black or red. Brighter than units costing much more. On camera LED light operates for hours on standard Li-Ion camcorder batteries. Use your existing batteries with mounts for Sony. www.flolight.com/led-lighting/microbeam-128.html





4 Miller Compass Series of Fluid Heads

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5 Tiffen Dfx v3

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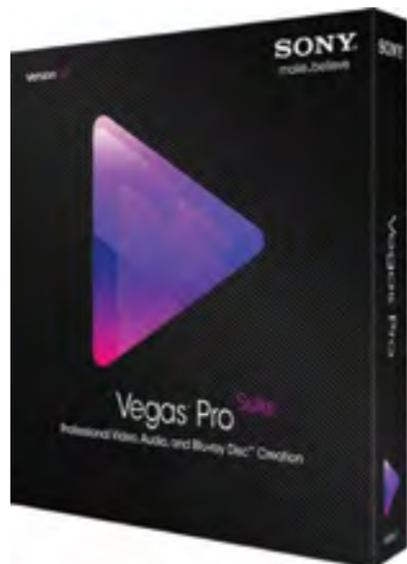
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6 Sony Creative Software Vegas Pro 12 Suite

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www.sonycreativesoftware.com/vegasprosuite



8 Panasonic AG-HPX370 P2 HD Shoulder-Mount Camcorder Featuring Advanced U.L.T. Imager

The AG-HPX370 is an affordable second-generation, interchangeable lens camcorder with 10-bit, 4:2:2, independent-frame full 1920 x 1080 resolution AVC-Intra recording. The HPX370 incorporates newly-developed 1/3", full-HD 2.2 megapixel U.L.T. (Ultra Luminance Technology) 3-MOS imagers and a 20-bit Digital Signal Processor to acquire native 1920 x 1080 resolution images. Rivaling the image quality and sensitivity of 1/2" imagers, the new U.L.T. sensor results in marked improvements in sensitivity, measured at F10. The same levels of sensitivity and image production that characterize the interlace mode are now possible in progressive mode courtesy of Progressive Advanced Processing (P.A.P.), a 3D adaptive processing technology. www.panasonic.com/business/provideo/hpx370demo.asp

7 Carl Zeiss Compact Prime CP.2 25/T2.1 Lens

With an even larger aperture, the new Compact Prime CP.2 25/T2.1 lens from Carl Zeiss achieves outstanding images in challenging lighting conditions.

The Compact Prime CP.2 25/T2.1 succeeds the Compact Prime CP.2 25/T2.9, which will continue to be available as long as supplies last. "We are responding to the wish of many cinematographers and video producers who would like a high-speed CP.2 lens with a maximum aperture of T2.1 for the 25mm focal length range as well," says Anna Rausch, Product Manager Cine Lenses in the Camera Lens Division of Carl Zeiss AG. "Our optical experts have virtually eliminated the chromatic aberrations on these lenses through a special design and selection of materials. We can now offer a constant max T-Stop of 2.1 for all of our CP.2 lenses in the focal length range of 25-135mm." This gives users even more possibilities to compose their images and requires less effort with the lighting. The biggest advantage on set it that the light does not have to be adapted when switching lenses because they all have the same F-Stop. The lens speed is ideal for playing with the depth-of-field.

The Compact Prime CP.2 lens series are extremely popular among ambitious cinematographers thanks to its 14 fixed focal lengths from 15 to 135mm. By using the interchangeable mounts for PL, EF, F, MFT and E, the lenses can be easily adapted to numerous camera systems, ensuring compatibility with future cameras as technology changes. Thanks to the interchangeable mounts and the 36 x 24mm image-circle illumination the Compact Prime CP.2 lens family is versatile to use — on HD/SLR and HD video cameras as well as on professional cine cameras. The lenses are characterized by their robustness, a standard focus rotation angle of 300 degrees and uniform measurements. This combination makes the lenses ideally suited for every demand on the film set. All Compact Prime CP.2 lenses have a standard cine-style housing with gearing that allows the attachment of any standard follow-focus system.

http://lenses.zeiss.com/camera-lenses/en_de/cine_lenses.html



9

Lowel Blender™ 3 Light Kit

Compact, powerful and versatile Power LED Lighting for interviews. The Lowel Blender™ 3 Light Kit combines three color-changing Lowel Blender LED fixtures, with stands and AC adaptors, to bring further creative options and a faster way to light 'Run and Gun' interview setups. As a result, the classic three-light interview setup now gains the ability for each light to output tungsten color, or daylight, or any blend of the two. Choose to match a location's ambient light color, or change each Blender's color to create a visual contrast, increasing contrast and a sense of depth in the image.

Lighting pro's familiar with compact LEDs have been impressed with Blender's considerable output power, boasting a full-mix brightness of 50-foot candles at 6ft, even with its Lite Frost Diffuser installed. Blender is also efficient electrically, with each light drawing only 16 Watts of power. It can be powered by its auto-setting AC adaptor or a host of DC battery options, from camcorder battery sleds to professional 12-volt sources. The Lowel Blender 3 Light Kit comes in a lightweight soft case with adjustable Velcro partitions and room inside for accessories.

Lowel Blender 3 Light Kit Details: Size: 23 x 9 x 6 (58 x 23 x 15 cm). Weight: 17 lbs. (7.7 kg). Three Lowel Blenders, each with auto voltage-setting AC adaptor (including 120v Edison & 240v 2 pin Euro plugs), and three accessory front diffusers to vary the character of the light output. Three Lowel Uni-stands, each with a full height of 7' 11". One Slim Litebag with adjustable Velcro partitions and padded shoulder strap.

www.lowel.com/kits/blender3light.html



10

Domke® RuggedWear™ Camera Bags

www.tiffen.com/results.html?search_type_no=458&tablename=domke

Domke's new RuggedWear lineup includes a wide range of courier bags, slings and satchels, ergonomically designed for comfort and performance. Like other Domke bags, the RuggedWear collection is durable, roomy, lightweight and versatile. Bags are designed to provide photographers with a solution that is easy to work with while providing the utmost protection. Features include the following: High-quality, weather-tough cotton canvas treated with special non-solvent, environmentally friendly waxes that give the fabric a lifelong resistance to inclement weather as well as a unique, distressed look. A soft, well-padded interior that protects camera lenses from scratches. A flap and oversized YKK zipper for quick and easy access, while steel hardware keeps the shoulder strap safely secured. Twin tracks of high-friction rubber woven into the thickest, toughest cotton webbing, allowing it to cling to the shoulder. Interior and exterior pockets for additional storage for accessories.



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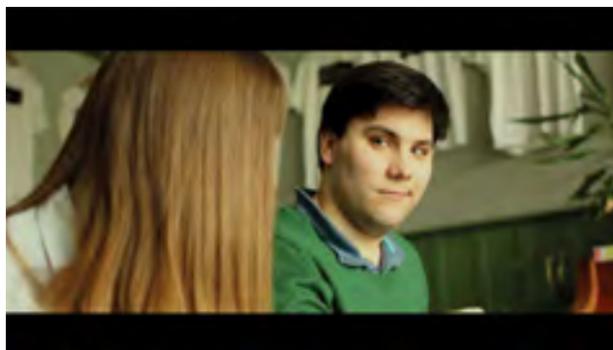
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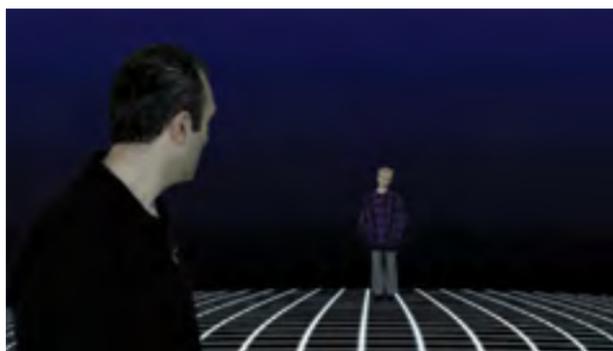
Benjamin Harding

United Kingdom

<http://networking.studentfilmmakers.com/benofbath/>



Still frame of *Charlie In The Middle*



Still frame of *Cyber Space*



Still frame of *The Man Who Almost Cycled The World*

Getting Started:

"I got started in filmmaking when I went to City of Bath College, (United Kingdom), at the age of 17 in 2006 to study digital media. As soon as I started, I discovered my passion for filmmaking. I carried on studying film production at Norwich University College of the Arts in 2009 and graduated this year."

Cameras:

"When I started filmmaking we would shoot with the Sony Z1E. DSLRs were then being used for filmmaking more often during 2009/2010. Here in Britain, the two cameras that were of great quality and popularity (and still are today) are the Canon 5D Mark II and the Canon 7D. I currently shoot using the Canon 550D Mark II (Rebel T2i)."

A Unique Experience Working On Set:

"One of my favourite experiences that I will never forget is working as a sound recordist on a low budget feature film entitled, 'Another Day,' which will be hitting the film festival circuit in 2013. It was shot in 26 days over a period of 8 weeks. Because it was such a small crew, we all bonded and had a great time making this film. The people I worked with I now consider to be friends, and I will never forget the amazing time I had on this film set."

Current Projects:

"This year I finished a short film entitled, 'Charlie in the Middle.' I then went on to produce an education fashion design film entitled, 'Sitting by Nellie: Presented by Joan Brown.' I'm now looking to produce music videos and hopefully get back into producing a short film again."

Editing Tips

from Benjamin Harding

- (1.) Don't be afraid to cut out shots or scenes that you love but are not necessary for the overall film.
- (2.) You should almost certainly have different takes of shots from a day's shooting. Experiment when possible using not only different takes, but cutting together different shots intended for a cut further back or forward in the timeline.
- (3.) It's surprising what you can do, matching video with the dialogue of a different take.

Jason Croot

United Kingdom

<http://networking.studentfilmmakers.com/magicactor11/>

Getting Started:

"I found my love for acting on a TV dating show, this may sound bizarre but true. I believe right from an early age I wanted to be on stage but never really achieved that through lack of confidence. Okay there was the school plays at Christmas but that is far as I got. I always remember walking past the stage at my grammar school every time I went to class and the stage was leaping out at me but nothing ever prevailed. Ten years later I appeared on a TV dating show called *Blind Date* where three guys try to woo one girl. Fifteen million viewers, I never have felt a sensation as much as this before. I turned my charms into beloved comedy and told the nation {UK} I was a train spotter. Obviously I never got the girl but better still I found my niche. I went on to start college moving on to university and then attended drama school."

Unique Experiences Working On Sets:

"I love film sets and since moving into filmmaking I can appreciate the beauty of everything unfolding. To pick a few experiences that stand out, let's see. As an actor my most memorable and favorite are a subway advert where I played a giant olive dressed up in prosthetics. I alongside two other olives had to make our escape in a gondolier after stealing a sandwich. The gondolier was motorized and I was at the front standing up holding a flag in rehearsals. I

Acting Tips

from Jason Croot

- (1.) At castings remember you've been called there because they like your reel or image and the casting director has a problem – they need to fill the role you're going for. You {the actor} are the solution to that problem.
- (2.) It's a really tough industry and you will get knocked all the time. Don't take it personally. There are millions of people who have felt or who are feeling the same as you. Get back up and keep fighting.
- (3.) Help others. If you know of a casting or a film part that might fit someone you know, email them. Tell them about it. Don't be concerned if more people know. You might not get the part. Helping others is a must.



was holding the flag in one hand and a pole on the boat to secure my balance in the other, however, the director did not like this so I had to stop holding the pole. This was a very difficult situation, as if I fell in the water I was told I would be drowning for 10 seconds until the frogmen rescued me. The same frogmen were told to go back 50 feet as they were in the cameras view. I was very nervous but managed to stay out of the water. Another memorable experience was my role as an hit man in a TV series called *The Fixer*. I had to use an AK47 which was firing rubber bullets. This was a great role. I loved the director and the scene came out pretty well. Finally, I will pick one from my student days. I was improvising on stage at University and I was playing a mafia guy in the scene. I broke into a house and terrorized a guy played by another actor. I got so much into the role the other actor got scared for real. The teachers stopped the performance worried I was going to kill him. That always sticks in my mind. I have hundreds more stories."

Current Projects:

"As an actor I have a few in the pipeline. "The Secret of Botticelli," (www.imdb.com/title/tt2378720) a 15th century historical thriller set in Italy. I was approached by the director Lorenzo Raveggi and after finding out more, I was honored to take on the role of Lorenzo Il Magnifico. We are filming on location in 2013. I will be getting the character down beforehand and working closely with the director. I have a few possible roles but always looking for more. As a filmmaker, I have four films in post production. "Meeting Place" is my next film out. (www.imdb.com/name/nm2907429)



Jared Myers

Eden Prairie, MN

<http://networking.studentfilmmakers.com/koolaid330/>

Getting Started:

"I picked up a video camera when I was in 4th grade and started filming short movies throughout junior high mostly with my four younger brothers as the main actors in those movies. In high school, I got involved in an advanced broadcast journalism class which produced a weekly high school news show. I filmed and edited news stories, as well as sporting events, and eventually even produced the show each week. Now I am attending film school which has helped me learn more about filmmaking and gain more hands on experience with it."

A Unique Experience Working On Set:

"I was the director of photography for my film group's final project for Intermediate Filmmaking, a 16mm filmmaking class through my college. We had three days to shoot a short film on black and white 16mm negative film using an Arri B1 camera. Our shoot required filming in a forest located in a park outside of Moorhead, MN. It consisted of two night shoots in which we had to figure out how best to light the forest for my shots using only one small light kit, a generator, and a couple extension cords. This was the hardest challenge I've come across so far as a director of photography due to the fact that up to

that point I had mostly worked with digital and the use of film brought about very different challenges that I had not even expected to encounter, such as not having enough light for the shot to even show up on film and not being able to see the footage until it was developed weeks later. Luckily the film looked great when we got it back developed. What made this shooting experience the most unique for me though was that during our first night shoot in the woods, our cast and crew were encountered by drug dealers in the parking lot of the park. A fight was going down which ended with a dealers car ending up in a river nearby. During this whole ordeal I was on set in the forest about two football fields away striking lights because we had just wrapped. Suddenly, I get a phone call telling me a car has ended up in the river and there are drug dealers running around in woods. I am by myself and I have one light set up, lighting the forest, and I see the shadows of people running through the woods, and they are not my crew. It was very scary, but the cops showed up and the dealers were caught and arrested but not after a long and frightening amount of time in which our crew was trying to strike set and get equipment up to our car while a drug deal was going bad near us. It was definitely a unique experience."

Cameras:

"My favorite camera that I have been able to use is an Arri B1, which is a classic 16mm film camera that I had the privilege to use in my film school. It was a great experience to be able to shoot on actual film because it is so much different than digital."

Current Projects:

"Currently I am taking a semester off from school to work on a business idea involving film that I have. I can't give too much away about it but it has to do with documentary work which I find very interesting. I have a couple of films in festivals as well right now which I have been able to travel to attend since I am not taking classes. I have also been working on a couple of videos and films for contests including a music video and a stop motion animation. So even though I am not study film this semester I am still very busy working on films and continue with filmmaking."



Camera Movement Tips

from Jared Myers

- (1.) Never go completely handheld, unless it is an absolutely essential movement for the story. Always use a tripod to try and steady the shot (a steadycam would work even better); have rarely shot completely handheld with the exception of a few shots in action sequences when it will add to the action of the scene. If at all possible though use something to keep the camera steady if the shot itself is supposed to be steady.
- (2.) A track or dolly shot can be a very effective alternative to a static shot. Adding just a little bit of movement to your shot can really make a difference. If you can't find a dolly track you could try and make one yourself using PVC pipe, skateboard wheels, and a wooden board. You can find detailed instructions to put it together easily on the internet and it can be relatively cheap. I've seen people make them for \$20. Otherwise you can go with alternative methods of "track" like movement using household objects. In my experience with DIY filmmaking I have gone so far as to use rolling chairs, skateboards, and bikes to create dolly track like movements.
- (3.) One of my favorite camera movement techniques which is used in movies such as *Jaws*, *Vertigo*, and *The Fellowship of the Ring*, is the dolly zoom movement. Going with my number two tip, you will need some sort of dolly system to pull this off as best as possible. During the shooting of the shot, the camera tracks either in or out from the subject of the shot. Meanwhile the camera operator also zooms in or out, the opposite way the camera is tracking, at a speed which keeps the subject the same size in the frame throughout the whole shot. This movement when done at the proper speed of tracking and zooming will create the illusion that the background is getting bigger or smaller throughout the shot compared to the subject. It is a very unsettling and wonderful shot to experiment with and really quite a cool camera illusion as well when you pull it off.



Dan Banici

Southington, Connecticut

<http://networking.studentfilmmakers.com/optionquest/>

Getting Started:

"About two years ago I was hired to get a company's image out of the rut, and I made a video in a hurry, talking about paradigm shifts. A viewer criticized the work and his remarks hit hard. It pushed me to hire an actor, then to learn about cameras, lights, and as time passed, I now have literally studied over 20 essential books, invested half my income in equipment and courses, and I never looked back. As my friends say, 'I've been bitten by the film bug.'"

Cameras:

"I shoot film with a Canon Rebel T3i with the Magic Lantern hack and a variety of vintage manual lenses. For example, I do indoor work with a Carl Zeiss Jena f1:1.8 and moderate lighting; needs very little light to work even in the darkest environments. I do outdoor work with a 75-210mm Yashica Yashinon with a Polaroid adjustable ND filter. Wide screen anamorphic work I do with two setups. For scheduled, blocked shots I put a Kollmorgen anamorphic lens at the end of the Yashinon lens and I use a diopter to focus on close shots. For quick on the go widescreen filming, I pack a Pentacon 135mm (in mint condition) with a Proskar 16mm anamorphic (a rare find) and together they give superb results. For aerial shots on the quad copter, I use the stock Canon 18-55mm lens for weight considerations.

"For any work that ends up viewed on a TV, including interviews and documentaries, I use a shoulder-mount Panasonic AG-AC7. I know interlaced footage gets a bad rap; however, it has its place. If you do good work nobody will ever stop to ask what camera you used. This camera gives me excellent sound from the internal microphone, and I also keep a Sennheiser shotgun microphone on it for times when ambient

sounds are too distracting. A 160 LED light also sits on it, and with a 4 hour battery and a spare, and a bag of sound toys, it is the quickest and most reliable workhorse to grab when I don't want to spend time thinking what I'm going to need on site. Because it is a low price camera, possibly the cheapest shoulder mount out there, it is the kind of tool that I won't have a heart attack if something accidentally happens to it; and when working in manual mode, the footage never disappoints me."

Unique Experience Working On Set:

"I do a lot of interviews for local activists and businesses, and I have set up a large room in my house as a studio on one side and 26 foot green wall on the other. Over the last year I have collected countless bloopers from people who think they can say their lines without a teleprompter."

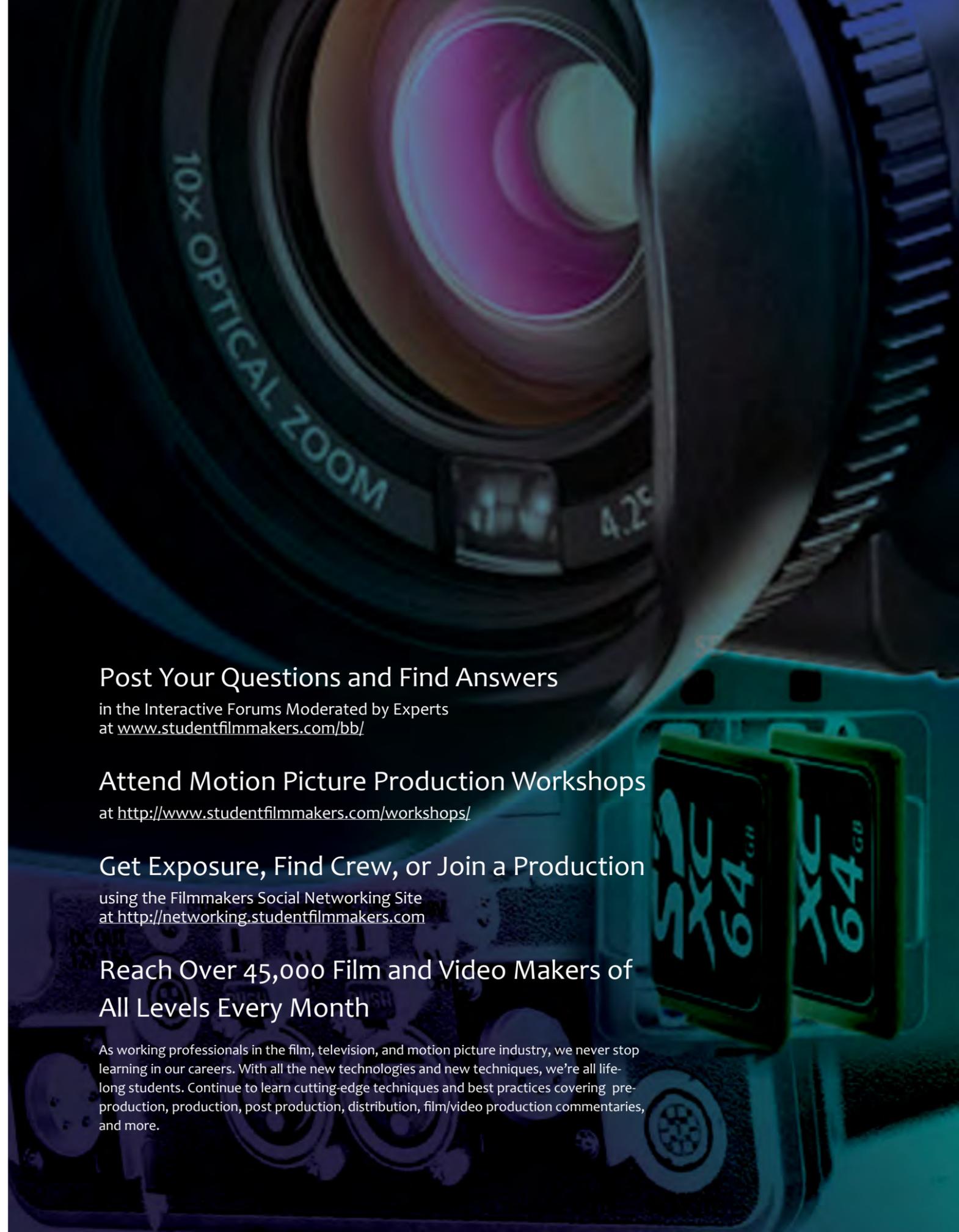
Current Projects:

"Just like any other passionate filmmaker, I have some ideas in the burner about work good enough to show at indie festivals, but it's the small jobs that currently pay the bills. So I focus on local work and I use my recently acquired film knowledge as an extension of my marketing work. My most recent work was filming TV spots and other video work for a local senatorial candidate, as part of a more elaborate campaign."

Camera Tips

From Dan Banici

- (1.) Use your HDSLR every day and learn it well. Focus on what you find difficult until you resolve it, so you don't botch a real job. For example, if you're returning from night film trips with grainy footage, figure out why and resolve it. Don't wait until you shoot a wedding to end up delivering mediocre work.
- (2.) Have a decent low light prime lens for indoor work, and a decent prime telephoto for outdoor work. I am not saying a zoom lens is always bad, but less glass means more professional detail. Learn lighting because it's important, but don't think watts will compensate for F stops, because it's not the same thing and it shows in the results.
- (3.) Budget for decent sound equipment (wired, shotgun, lavalier), lights and backdrops, slider, crane, dollies, and a solid lightweight tripod. Learn everything you can get your hands on about proper shot composition, timing and cutting. Above all else, never stop learning.



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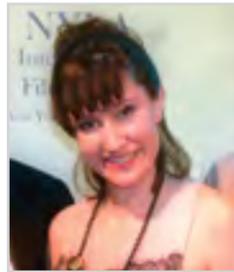
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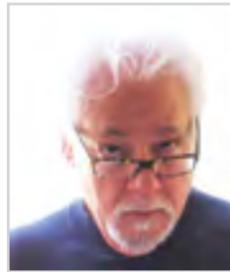
Many Thanks



Bayou Bennett



Peter Stein, ASC



Norman C. Berns



Scott Essman



Paula Brancato



David Worth



Megan Harr



Philip Goetz



Nash Choudhury



John Klein



Michael Uslan

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