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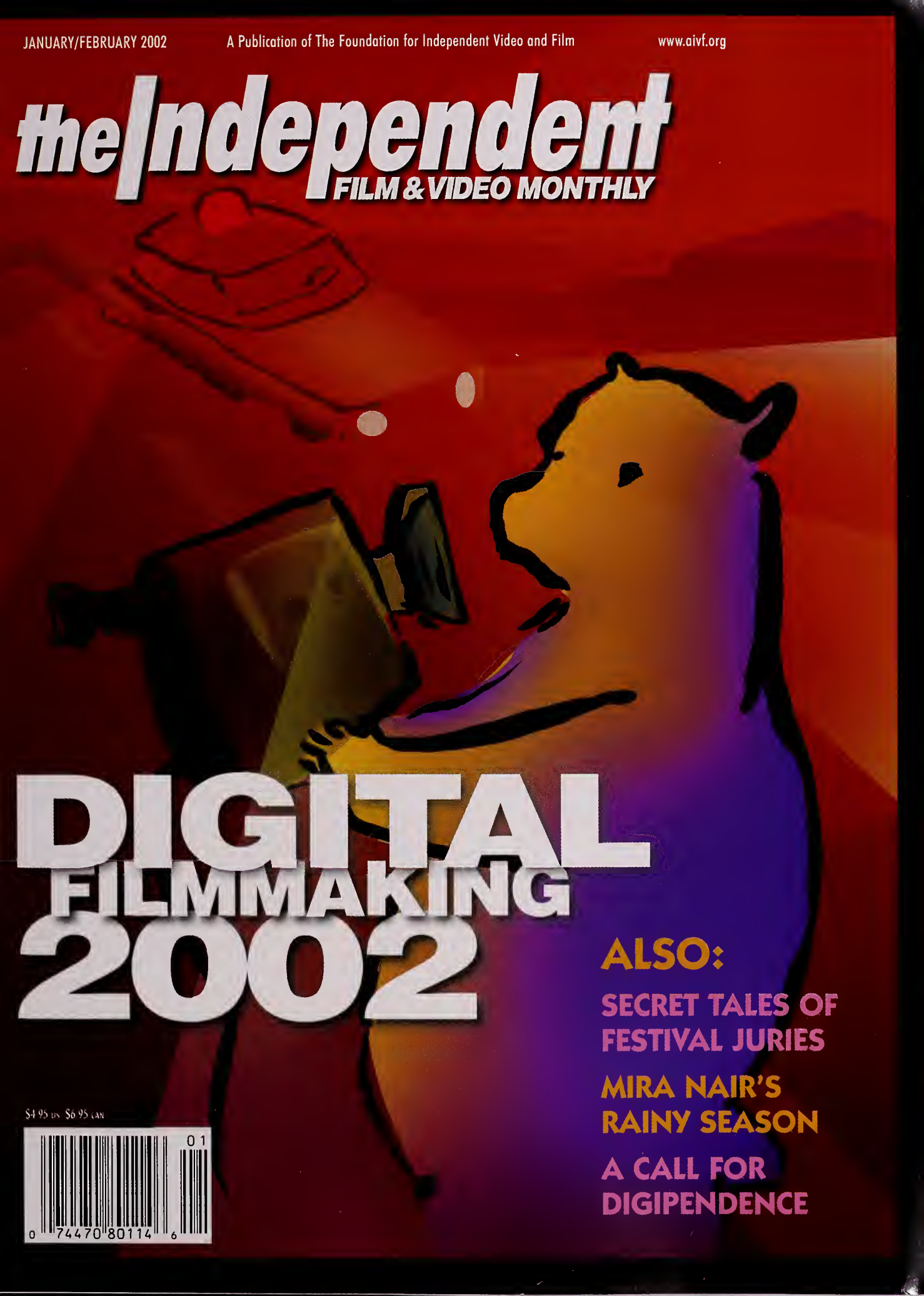
the Independent
FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY



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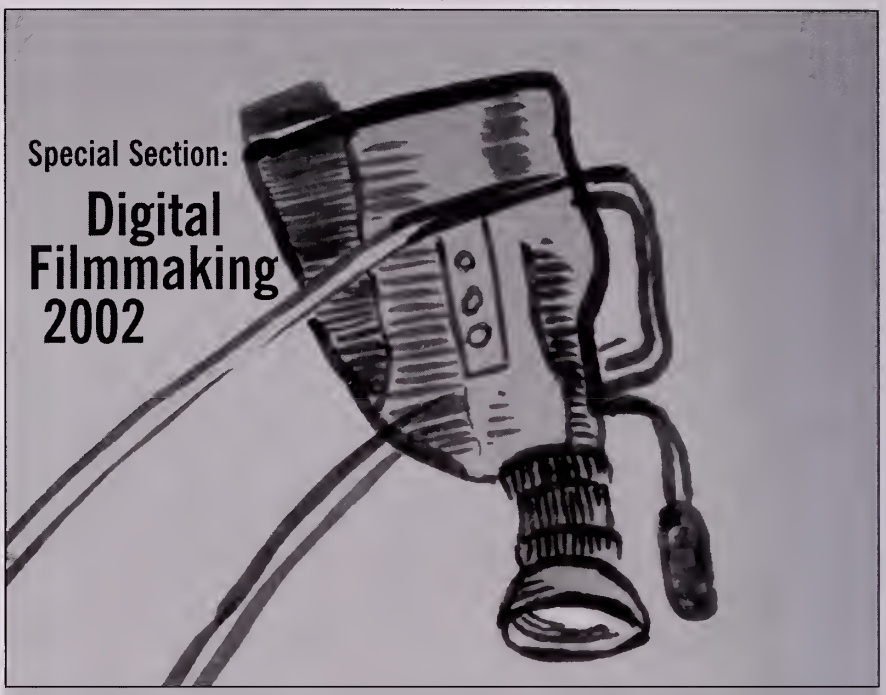

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BY BETH PINSKER

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Dear Readers,

Even if you've never considered switching to digital to make your films, you'll want to take a look at our special Digital Filmmaking 2002 section. The special supplement to this issue of *The Independent* offers lots of practical advice for those who are deeply involved in the digital craft, but it also attempts to help filmmakers navigate the choices involved at every step of the production process.

Do you want to start by finding out which digital camera to use? Check out the experiences of filmmakers Richard Linklater and Nicole Holofcener, who started off skeptical and wed to film, but ended up getting something out of their transitions to digital. Or if you're ready for the advanced course, find out why some cameras are better than others at things like close-ups or outdoor shots.

If you've picked your camera and now need to find out all the cool gadgets and accessories, see what our expert, Robert Goodman, recommends. (He also reviews the new Canon XI1s later in the issue.)

Are you editing your film and having trouble with Final Cut Pro? And who isn't? See what *Independent* readers have asked our advice columnist, Bart Weiss, and what answers he's come up with.

Have you considered side-stepping the whole Hollywood scene to make your own DVDs? Greg Gilpatrick, who produces his own, dreams up his ultimate system for self-production. And if the price tag for all of that is a little steep, you can consider some products we've found for the low-budget filmmaker.

As always, you'll find much more information about filmmaking throughout the magazine. In this issue, Chicago film critic Ray Pride takes you into the secret world of festival juries and critics awards to figure out just what goes on. Filmmakers Alliance founder Jacques Thelemaque lobbies for a new definition of independent film that takes independent distribution into account. We inaugurate a monthly DVD and video review column. And, as always, our staff compiles a comprehensive list of festivals, competitions, and other listings.

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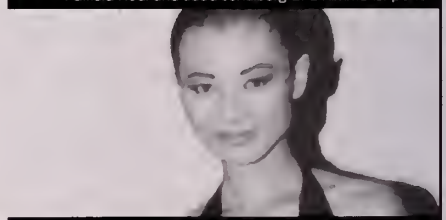
2000 premiere *"Wild Flowers"* - starring Daryl Hannah and Clea Duvall.

2001 Stony Brook Filmmaker Reception from l to r - Jena Malone, Stony Brook University President Dr. Shirley Strum Kenny, Mary Stuart Masterson, *The Book of Stars* Producer Marie Cantin and Director Michael Miner, Festival Director Alan Inkles.

Patricia Neal and Budd Schulberg at a Filmmaker panel.


Bai Ling at 1999 opening night party.

2000 Stony Brook Film Festival Filmmaker Reception L to r: Village Voice Critic, Michael Atkinson; Newsday Chief Film Critic, John Anderson; Lion's Gate *"Steal This Movie"* director, Robert Greenwald; Festival Director, Alan Inkles.

Rod Steiger receives Lifetime Achievement Award and is surrounded by the cast of *"The Headhunter's Sister."*

NEWS

Anais Reboux and Roxane Mesquida in *Fat Girl*.

PHOTO COURTESY COWBOY PICTURES

ONTARIO BANS BREILLAT'S *FAT GIRL*

Will the U.S. follow the lead?

BY FARRIN JACOBS

WHEN THE ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD (OFRB) deemed scenes of nudity involving teens in Catherine Breillat's *Fat Girl* too controversial to rate, it effectively banned the film. Unlike in the United States, where films can be distributed without being rated by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), a movie that is rejected by the OFRB cannot be distributed at all in the province. If this sounds like something that needn't concern the average U.S. filmmaker, take note: it could happen here, too.

Fat Girl, which was approved by the stringent review board in Britain, passed in Quebec, and got an R rating in the U.S., has received much critical acclaim for its treatment of a girl's sexual awakening and, in fact, played at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2001. But according to the OFRB's decision, the nudity in question isn't necessary and should therefore be excised. The board has called for scenes that span 15 minutes of the film to be cut.

The co-distributors, Cowboy Pictures and Lions Gate, appealed the initial ruling, stating firmly that they would not allow the film to be censored. "Even a few seconds is bad," remarked Noah Cowan, co-president of Cowboy Pictures, the night before he learned that his appeal was denied. "But 15 minutes is unfathomable." The appeal included letters of support from noted Canadian directors Atom Egoyan and David Cronenberg.

The dissenting judges—the board ruled three to two against rating the film—each issued written opinions. "This intelligent handling of a controversial subject, adolescent sexuality, does not glorify or glamorize the subject," wrote board member Sara Waxman. "If anything, this is an anti-sex film." And Roger Currie agreed, writing that he "felt the nudity in questions was not gratuitous and was a legitimate choice for the filmmaker to make. I feel strongly that in such a situation the board should exercise discretion."

According to Cowan, who is pretty well-versed in the ways of the OFRB having been an international programmer at the Toronto Film Festival: "Child pornography is always a hot-button issue. No amount of violence will drive them to ban a movie. But [so-called] child pornography is an issue that is very easy to galvanize the public on, especially when people haven't seen the film."

In the past, the board has refused to rate other critically acclaimed yet controversial films, including Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby* and Volker Schlondorff's *The Tin Drum*. In 1995, however, Larry Clark's *Kids* made it through with an AA (Adult Accompaniment) rating. And in 1998, Adrian Lyne's *Lolita*, which created much controversy and had trouble finding distribution in the U.S. (it eventually aired on Showtime), was given an R rating.

The decision about *Fat Girl* is in line with the board's Theatres Act, in which one provision states, "After viewing a film, the Board may refuse to approve a film for exhibition or distribution in Ontario

where the film contains…a scene where a person who is or is intended to represent a person under the age of eighteen years appears nude or partially nude in a sexually suggestive context, or in a scene of explicit sexual activity.…"

That language sounds a lot like a provision in the U.S.'s 1996 Child Pornography Prevention Act, currently getting its time on the U.S. Supreme Court's stage. Given its title, the embattled statute wouldn't seem to affect as much of the filmmaking community as it actually does. But as we go into round three of a suit arguing the constitutionality of certain provisions of the law, the implications of what the statute might portend are becoming more clear. Filmmakers who once thought their biggest battles were with the MPAA over NC-17 ratings may now face an even greater challenge—dealing with law enforcement.

When Congress passed the 1996 law, it marked a shift from protecting children actually involved in pornography to protecting the interests of children in general, and was specifically directed at the new possibilities digital media allowed. According to the statute, child pornography is now defined as: "any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, drawing or computer or computer-generated image or picture, which is produced by electronic, mechanical or other means, of sexually explicit conduct."

At issue when the arguments were first heard in November was the stipulation that anything that "appears to be a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct is considered child pornography."

Directors have always handled the sexual censorship issues in different ways. When the French film *Baise-Moi* ran into trouble last year with the Ontario board, 20 seconds had to be cut before the film was deemed suitable for rating. In Todd Solondz's case, he decided to go the least subtle route: In his upcoming feature, *Storytelling,* Solondz uses a big red box to block out a scene the MPAA found to be "pornographic." "I just didn't want to be the victim of censorship," the director told IndieWIRE back in July. He said he didn't want his audience to be in the dark in terms of what they weren't allowed to see. "The one thing I didn't want was what happened to Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*, where everything was so elegantly removed digitally, so the audience never knew what it never saw. And I want the audience to know what it's not allowed to see."

But that kind of circumvention might not be enough if the Supreme Court rules that the Child Pornography law can be used constitutionally to prosecute people like Solondz for scenes in their films. A decision is expected to be handed down by late spring. But until then, U.S. filmmakers should look to Ontario for a vision of what their future might hold.

Farrin Jacobs is managing editor of The Independent.

FILMMAKERS RALLY FOR IRAN'S TAHMINEH MILANI

BY RICHARD BAIMBRIDGE

RENOWNED IRANIAN FILMMAKER Tahmineh Milani is no stranger to controversy. But now fact and fiction are becoming intertwined as the filmmaker faces possible execution for "supporting factions waging a war against God."

Earlier works like *The Legend of a Sigh* and *Two Women* have clearly demonstrated Milani's willingness to take on the Iranian establishment, especially when it came to the taboo subject of feminist issues. Milani's most recent work, *The Hidden Half*, focuses on a woman who reveals her political past to her husband, a judge traveling to a small village to hear the death row appeal of a woman imprisoned for involvement with a left-wing group prior to the Islamic revolution in 1979. The script was submitted to Iran's Ministry of Culture and the film was shown at the Fajr Film Festival in Tehran last February and then at Tehran theaters with official government approval. Nonetheless, in a Kafka-esque twist, Milani was arrested in August and has now become like the character in her film.

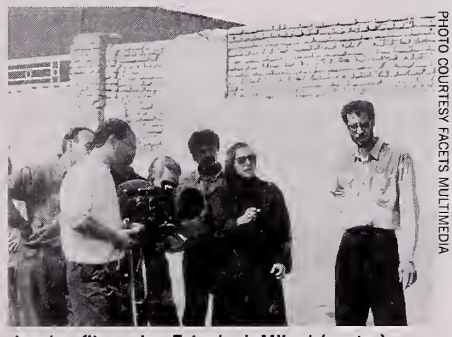


PHOTO COURTESY FACETS MULTIMEDIA

Iranian filmmaker Tahmineh Milani (center) is on trial for alleged comments she made.

It is the first time that a filmmaker has faced such a serious sentence in Iran, according to Ray Privett of Chicago-based Facets Multimedia, which is spearheading the campaign to have the charges against Milani dropped. The drive has successfully brought together major Hollywood names like Francis Ford Coppola, Ang Lee, and Oliver Stone, and groups like AIVF.

But more importantly, says Privett, it has generated an almost unprecedented response from the international film community, including countries like China, where similar policies continue to stifle political and artistic freedom in cinema. Iran's president, Mohammad Khatami, has also publicly spoken out in favor of Milani, directly opposing the fundamentalist Revolutionary Council, which issued the charges and ransacked Milani's home and office looking for "evidence" against her. The director was subsequently released, and has since been free to travel outside the country, yet the charges still remain in place. Thus, although no trial date has been set, Milani could feasibly be dragged into court at any time.

After consulting with Milani's husband, Mohammad Nikbin, who plays the judge in *The Hidden Half*, Facets Multimedia, which has distributed Milani's previous work in the U.S., asked a number of filmmakers to join a petition drive publicizing the case. Privett says that even though Milani is now out of prison, the charges are being held over her head. "Whether these are just scare tactics or not is irrelevant," he says. "Some may think [not bringing Milani to trial] is an acceptable solution. But it's clear that others have, in fact, been executed, and that she won't be free as an outspoken filmmaker until these charges are completely dropped."

While Iranian film has enjoyed a relative amount of freedom, as witnessed by films like Jafar Panahi's *The Circle* and Milani's own *Two Women*, authorities decided that she crossed the line of acceptability with *The Hidden Half*, which explores sensitive political subjects without cloaking them in allegory. Another big factor in the harsh reaction, according to Privett, was the interview that Milani gave to an Iranian newspaper two days before her arrest in which she openly criticized the status quo in Iran. Asked why he thinks Milani would dare take such a risk, Privett says, "She is definitely a woman fighting for her own human rights, and she is not afraid to be very clear about how she feels."

To add your name to the petition, and find out the latest developments on Milani's case, check out www.facets.org.

Richard Baimbridge is a contributing editor at The Independent.

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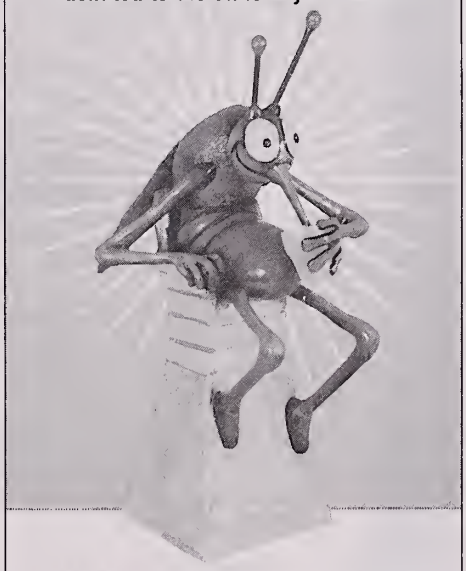

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Please send a vita, statement of teaching philosophy, and three references with contact information to: **Chair, Search Committee, Department of Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College, 120 Boylston Street Boston, MA 02116.** Review will begin on November 15 and continue until the position is filled. A portfolio of creative work will be requested after the initial review. Please do not send work samples. Positions begin September 2002.

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NEWS

SONY SAYS GOODBYE TO THE BETACAM SP

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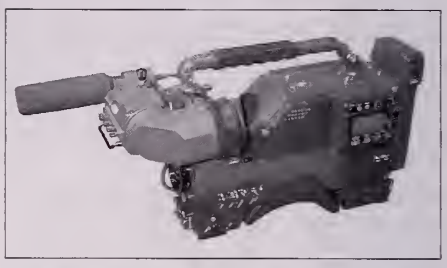

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The Sony BVW-400 Betacam, which Sony is cutting from production in favor of mini-DV formats.

might want to consider weaning themselves off their analog addiction. Betacam SP customers, however, won't be left completely in the cold. They'll still have product support from Sony.

"We are discontinuing manufacturing our lineup of Betacam SP camcorders," explains a Sony spokesman. "However, we are continuing to make Betacam SP VTRs and continuing to make the media for it." In fact, he stresses, "Sony will continue to make the parts and service the parts for seven years after the last camcorder is sold, which is Sony corporate policy."

The reasons for discontinuing the analog camera have a lot to do with cost efficiency. A digital camera, like the DSR-500, runs somewhere in the $16,000-to-$20,000 range and now purports to offer almost the same picture quality as an analog camera, which costs approximately $55,000.

"Sony has a long track record of protecting legacy recordings," said Larry Thorpe, senior vice president of acquisition for Sony Electronics' Broadcast and Professional Company, in a press release. "We will continue to support our analog based product lines far into the future so that they can play in the emerging digital era."

For more information go to www.sony-biz.net or www.sel.sony.com.

—Farrin Jacobs

NEWS BRIEFS

MILE HIGH PROFIT SHARING

A new distribution company is aiming to make Denver a breeding ground for independent films. New Deal Pictures, which just started operating in the city, is geared to providing independent filmmakers with a chance at affordable theatrical distribution. New Deal's strategy, which it calls "The Denver Model," is to structure distribution deals to enable revenue sharing among all interested parties (investors, artists, producers, and New Deal itself). The innovation of the method is that it eliminates the standard distribution fee. "Our prime goal is the creation of a self-sustainable community with distribution being the engine that drives it," says New Deal chairman Joel Ehrlich. For now, the company is focusing on Colorado filmmakers but intends to eventually expand into other markets. "We are trying to encourage growth of a resident film community in Denver," Ehrlich says. The first project will be a comedy by Richard Dresser called *Below the Belt*, which will be filmed entirely in Colorado on DV.

—*Jason Guerrasio*

GETTING SHORTY

The International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, which is held each year in Germany in May, has created an Internet magazine that is totally devoted to short films. This e-zine (www.shortfilm.de) will report, promote, and publicize all aspects of short films, including events and new projects. Its goal is to "engage the participation of national and international partners in order to represent short films in a fitting manner," states the introductory release. Along with monthly feature articles, the magazine contains interviews, commentaries, and news about the short film industry. The magazine also offers services such as a newsletter, calendar of upcoming events, and a forum intended to help all short filmmakers communicate with one another. And it's not just in German.

—*JG*

ONE BIG DISH NETWORK?

The announcement that EchoStar would be the company to buy Hughes Electronics, with its crown jewel of DirecTV, is hardly the end of the complicated history of the American satellite TV industry.

The proposed deal, which involves a switch of stock and assets designed to keep Hughes parent General Motors from paying capital gains taxes, now has to pass regulatory hurdles at the FCC and Congress.

EchoStar's main satellite.

PHOTO COURTESY ECHOSTAR

At issue is competition. DirecTV is the larger of the two American satellite TV providers, with 10.5 million customers to EchoStar's 6 million. If these entities are combined into one company, it would hold the licenses of all the available broadcast satellite frequencies, and there could be no possibility for further competition. (There used to be three satellite entities in the U.S. back in the 1980s, but when the third went out of business, its assets were split between EchoStar and DirecTV.)

No matter who ended up with the winning bid for DirecTV, there would have been regulatory scrutiny. If a company like Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. had been the one to buy the company, the issue would have been competition of a different sort, namely that a broadcast network would then also own a key distribution system.

EchoStar is already arguing that satellite competition isn't what's of concern, but that cable competition should be on the front burner. A mega-satellite company would just start to measure up to giants like Time Warner and AT&T. And since those big guns split up the country now, holding cable franchise monopolies city by city, a revved up satellite company could provide a real alternative where it hasn't been able to so far.

What this means for consumers, or for independent networks, public channels, and those looking for alternative programming sources, is not yet clear.

WorldLink TV, for instance, is currently carried on both EchoStar and DirecTV as part of the satellite companies' commitment to give 4 percent of its capacity to public interest programming. The question, says WorldLink president Kim Spencer, is: "Will this reduce the number of public service slots? More slots means more chances for channels like WorldLink, Free Speech TV and others that present a different point of view."

—*BP*

SQUEEZED AT PBS

PBS trimmed its staff almost 10 percent in November, after losing almost that much in March. This round of cutbacks, however, includes the closing of the PBS Midwest office, which had just opened up less than a year ago under the leadership of Alyce Myatt. Myatt will not lose her job and will transfer to the main PBS office in Virginia. But facing an uncertain future in the budget crunch at the network is the public affairs series *Public Square*. The show was supposed to premiere this spring, but may be delayed.

—*BP*

ERRATA

In the November 2001 issue, the film *Boomtown* was incorrectly identified on p. 29 in the article "Appeasing the Festival Gods: 10 Filmmakers Assess Their Chances." It is a feature-length documentary produced by Mixed Greens and Sweetspot Pictures.

Digipendence for All

How to rethink independent film

BY JACQUES THELEMAQUE

I THINK IT'S CLEAR TO MOST INDEPENDENT filmmakers that not only does the term "independent film" need rethinking, so does the whole business of independent film. Greater access to production has not created greater access to distribution—in fact, quite the opposite. This is where the true power of digital filmmaking has yet to be realized. While there are a few companies committed to digital filmmaking as a tool for greater creative growth and independence, they are still operating in the conventional distribution marketplace and are forced to "play the game" with the existing marketplace realities.

I recently completed a digital feature called *The Dogwalker*. In the process, I realized how much I had to fight influences outside of my own creative voice—I had to pare down all the bullshit I had unconsciously embraced from the dominant movie language and aesthetic that I thought I had rejected. We shot a lot of digital tape in a lot of different ways to get past all of that. Ultimately, I think we succeeded, and were helped immensely in the process by the ease, efficiency, and relative low cost of our digital tools. It was an incredibly freeing and fulfilling experience, but one that left me still concerned over the film's fate in the brutal independent film marketplace. I succumbed to the poverty consciousness of thinking there are just too many films out there, and mine was just another on the slush pile.

But upon second thought I quickly realized the utter ridiculousness of that kind of thinking. Have you ever heard anyone complain that there are too many songs in the world? Too many paintings? Or too many novels? All creative work organically finds its meaningful place in the world when it is completely free to do so. Just as each human being is unique, so can be their work if they are willing to go there. And there will be an audience for that bravery and authenticity. This belief is not just an act of faith but a recognition of the history of creative work that is,

PHOTOS COURTESY AUTHOR

Jacques Thelemaque

nonetheless, unembraceable to those invested in the prevailing production-distribution paradigm. But today's gatekeepers will be the dinosaurs of tomorrow.

It's our challenge, however, to nudge them along the road to extinction. This can be done if enough of us simply believe that there is a market for our films that extends beyond the limited taste range of the gatekeepers. And I believe digital technology will light the way. Already we have direct-to-home DVD and satellite exhibition broadening the possibilities beyond theatrical and cable distribution. The Internet tried and died, but only temporarily. The technology is quietly continuing to develop and eventually Internet distribution will realize itself powerfully.

Thelemaque's *The Dogwalker*.

Whether or not a new Internet environment will provide a balanced forum for fresh creative voices will depend on what we do as citizen-filmmakers. It could easily go the way of TV, where theoretically public airwaves are now completely under the control of the highest bidding corporations. It will take our collective imagination and determination to uproot the existing paradigm. Although the forces of technology seem to support our cause, it is up to us to seize those technological reigns and make it happen.

At Filmmakers Alliance, the film collective my wife and I created eight years ago, our goal is to democratize filmmaking, and in the process, clarify for ourselves what it means to be an independent filmmaker. What is it we filmmakers are independent of, anyway? The easy, common answer is big studio filmmaking. But just because you aren't actually making a film under the auspices of a studio, is it truly independent film if you are still working under its influence and/or embracing a nearly identical creative agenda?

We have, therefore, chosen to define independent film for ourselves as "personal cinema" (it seems much too precious a term to adopt officially). After all, true creative independence is not independent of any one thing; it is independent of all things save the pure expression of the individual creative soul. To be truly independent is to create work that speaks from the depths of our innermost creative selves. And digital filmmaking quite simply provides the most efficient, accessible, and supportive format for that kind of work. As we see more digital work, it constantly re-defines itself, refusing to be confined to a singular aesthetic definition and providing unlimited potential for personal expression.

In other words, if distribution is the dam, our films are the flood. We have the means to overrun traditional distribution with an unstoppable flow of personal, visionary work whose force cannot be ignored.

Independent film, as we know and love it, is not dead; it has simply shifted, as it does from time to time. It slips away from the scene-makers and waits to be found again. And, for now, it's hiding in the promise of digital filmmaking, knowing that it is destined to be discovered anew by an audience longing to see work that is truly from the soul—independent film that is truly independent.

Filmmakers Alliance, based in L.A, purchased the Digidance Film Festival and is hosting the 2002 event in Park City, Utah from Jan. 11 to 13. For more information, see www.filmmakersalliance.com or www.digidanceonline.com.

Natural History of the Doc

The anthropology of the Margaret Mead Festival

BY SCOTT MESERVE

Dennis O'Rourke's *Cannibal Tours* travels through Papua New Guinea.

AT THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF the Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival, the present caught up with the past in unexpected ways. "The Mead," as New York City's only anthropological documentary festival is familiarly known, had planned a loving and sometimes ironic look back at a quarter century of classic ethnographic work and favorites from the recent past, as well as the latest international non-academic documentaries that have become its standard fare.

However, the attacks of September 11 added an undercurrent of emotional introspection, even tension, to the Mead's annual review of global culture. The debate over the terror attacks and the nation's response was echoed in conversations after films about Afghanistan, U.S. nuclear testing in the Pacific, anti-abortion terror in the U.S., and an historic song protesting lynching, to name but a few. In hindsight this seemed only appropriate; the Mead is named for one of America's most influential voices on understanding other cultures, and as a nation we are now struggling with how to do that, abroad and at home.

Nowhere was this heightened sense of relevancy more poignant or powerful than at the festival kick-off. With the usual opening night theater under renovation, guests were invited to the Museum of Natural History's Hall of Ocean Life under the massive, suspended Blue Whale to listen to spoken non-fiction presented by the Moth, a New York City storytelling collective. Asked to investigate how generations affect each other, the storytellers included maestro Tony Amato, subject of film entry *Amato: A Love Affair with Opera*, and Margaret Mead's granddaughter, Sevanne Martin.

The final storyteller was Dan Duddy, a member of the New York City Fire Department's elite Rescue Company 1, which lost 11 men at the World Trade Center. Off-duty on the 11th, he waited at his station house until, seeing the towers collapse, he raced to ground zero. During the following weeks, Dan told how Kelly, his California-based daughter, would turn their shared telephone conversations of hope and determination into e-mail chain letters sent out across the nation. Dan's father, himself a retired New York fireman, and Kelly joined Dan on stage to help him tell his story and get him—and the breathless audience—through aching moments of silence and tears.

In some cases the 25th anniversary films sought to recognize how different the festival has become compared to its founding philosophy. Festival Artistic Director Elaine Charnov was eager, even impatient, for the Mead to shed its reputation as only an exercise in museum-style education. "We've moved away from [ethnographic film] so much. We consider ourselves not just an anthropological festival, but showcasing modern documentary styles... I've really tried to reposition the festival to open up to larger audiences," she says

To that end, iconoclastic Aussie Dennis O'Rourke was on hand to introduce his 1987 *Cannibal Tours*, which follows Western tourists paying to "spiritually connect" with Papua New Guinean tribes while haggling over grass skirt souvenirs for home. In *Cannibal* and his latest work, *Cunnamulla*, about race and sex relations in a dead end town in the Queensland outback, O'Rourke inverts the traditional assumptions of enthographic filmmaking by suggesting that we have met the anthropological "Other" and they are us. As O'Rourke commented, "We're all ugly tourists, we can't help it."

Fabrizio Lazzaretti and Alberto Vendemmiati's *Jung (War): In the Land of the Mujahaddin* follows an Italian doctor in Northern Alliance territory in Afghanistan working to set up a field hospital. Graphic images of mutilated stumps and the cacophony of war and pain are co-mingled. Doctors Without Borders

Friends like Stan Brakhage talk about Maya Deren's life in Martina Kudlácek's *In the Mirror of Maya Deren*.

USA Executive Director Nicolas de Torrente took questions after the screening and was immediately deluged with

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Strange Fruit tells the story of Billie Holliday's anti-lynching protest song.

questions about conditions on the ground in Afghanistan.

A dramatic highlight of the festival was *Strange Fruit*, Joel Katz' work in progress, which delivers Abe Meeropol, a Jewish Bronx high school teacher, from obscurity. Meeropol wrote "Strange Fruit," the anti-lynching ballad made famous by Billie Holliday. So moving are its lyrics that even Holliday claimed off and on that she wrote part or all of it. The film looks at the response of the American Communist party and radicalized Jews in the 1930s to racial injustice (á la Scottsboro Boys), and also follows current artists who have revived the song for today's civil rights cause.

"It will be sad where we start, but don't cry, I promise it will be funny at the end." So pledged Victor Kossakovsky during the introduction of his *I Loved You...(Three Romances)* (2001), a U.S. premiere that appeared in the anniversary program with his 1992 *The Belovs*. *I Loved You...* binds three separate shorts together in an attempt to parse the moment-by-moment state of being in love.

Kossakovsky begins with an elderly wife doting on her bedridden husband, then shifts to cover a nondescript wedding between lovers, and finally brings down the house with a heart-wrenching and hilarious last afternoon of the year at a Moscow kindergarten. Kossakovsky gives us more than quotidian heartbreak, for these moments capture a poet's fear and joy that love can exist only in the moment.

Fresh from winning the Vienna Film Award from the Viennale, the U.S. premiere of Martina Kudlacek's *In the Mirror of Maya Deren* brought a celebration of the avant-garde to the Mead. Deren's life and work as a dancer, filmmaker, Voudou disciple, and aggressive sexual aesthete are retold by contemporaries like Katherine Dunham, Jonas Mekas, and Stan Brakhage, all set to a score by John Zorn. Deren delved deeply into Voudou in Haiti, and Brakhage talks of being cursed by her—literally. But the use of never-before seen footage of Deren's work and personal images dug up from the basement of Film Anthology Archives (not even Mekas knew they existed) makes the film a discovery.

The Mead closed with Matthew Testa's *The Buffalo War*, which follows the fortunes of bison that wander off in Yellowstone National Park and into the crosshairs of Montana's state-sanctioned culling program. As iconic as the buffalo are, the story's real power lies in its even-handed assessment of the separate struggles of Native American and environmental activists to change policies long-supported by ranchers and Montana bureaucracies. It is a model approach to laying out conflicting voices with empathy and restraint.

The Shinjuku Boys are really women living as men in Japan.

After 25 years, the Mead remains a vital, dynamic, and relevant gathering place for cultural documentary—this year possibly even more than could have been imagined. And once again, a small package of 12 to 15 Mead titles will travel to more than 25 cities domestically and abroad with institutions interested in building a program around the festival's selections. Said Charnov, "We provide the Good Housekeeping Seal of documentary approval."

Scott Meserve is a freelance writer and filmmaker based in New York.

Films for Breakfast

Kudzu's got a caffeinated buzz

BY JULIE PHILLIPS JORDAN

Kudzu founders Todd Campbell (left) and Nic Holt.

IT'S SATURDAY MORNING IN EARLY October, nearing the end of Athens, Georgia's weeklong Kudzu Film Festival. Festival co-producers/directors Todd Campbell and Nic Holt make their way, bleary-eyed and caffeine-buzzed, into a small favorite downtown Athens coffee house to talk film with visitors and locals.

One of the most popular elements of the 4-year-old festival, which takes place in October each year, is the daily morning coffee, during which filmmakers, judges, and featured guests are invited to talk about what they do and why they do it. The setting is intimate, the conversations relaxed.

"They've often gone off in really bizarre directions," notes Campbell, adding that in previous years, some morning coffees have resulted in impromptu screenings at people's houses or in local bars. "And any of the production and distribution deals that have been made have all gone down at the morning coffees. For it being as early as it is, they're always lively and provide a good opportunity for people to meet one-on-one and really talk."

This morning, the featured guest is filmmaker and acclaimed video director W.I.Z., who traveled to this small southern town of less than 100,000 from London. W.I.Z., also a judge at this year's festival, discusses his work with Chemical Brothers, Marilyn Manson, and others, providing insight on the ins and outs of videomaking and his more recent foray into filmmaking. His new short film, *Baby*, debuted at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival.

A TV is set up to view W.I.Z.'s work, questions are asked, comments are made. Following the hour-or-so-long discussion, Holt thanks W.I.Z. and invites guests to stick around. They do. In fact, guests stick around a lot, and it's one of the prevailing elements about the festival that visitors hold dear.

Little Roger Mead jams in *The Ballad of Little Roger Mead*.

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"I've made some good friends," says W.I.Z., following his Q&A. "This is a community of very hospitable people who have a real interest in film, and seem to me to have a desire to provide a format for films that wouldn't normally get seen. Too many festivals out there are about selling films, which is, of course, important as well. But Kudzu obviously operates on a smaller, more intimate scale that's more about filmmaking and seeing films."

Kudzu's competitive screenings don't adhere to any particular theme. Films shown during the nightly five-hour screenings run the gamut from documentaries to feature-length dramas, with a mix of shorts—comedies, simple animated films, and sophisticated computer generated work—in between two feature-length films. Holt and Campbell allow the judges to choose prize categories during the viewing process. This year awards were given to Best Documentary, *Revolution OS* (feature-length); Best Narrative, *Dog Days* (a B&W short); and Best Animation, *f8* (computer generated animated short). The big prize, the Seattle Post Affiliates Award, which provides a package valued at more than $12,000, went to *The Man With the Empty Room*, a black-and-white short by Todd Korgan.

Each year the festival also gives an audience choice award, which went this year to the feature *The American Astronaut*, by Cory McAbee. Other awards were given in separate categories for student films—a new addition to the festival this year. Though Holt and Campbell say they'd like to add venues as well as films, visitors say the formula works.

"It's interesting—definitely different than other festivals I've been to," says Mark Carter, director of the short film *The Ballad of Little Roger Mead*, who has already visited five other festivals this year. "It's just a big block of film. I was a little scared to see everyone pouring out of the theater during intermission and was wondering if people would come back, but it surprised me, because they did. The screenings were well-attended, which is really nice. With other festivals you have screenings throughout the day, and that can thin out interest, especially if your film is shown at 11 a.m. on a weekday."

Mark Wynns, festival consultant with the Savannah Film & Video Festival and also a judge for this year's Kudzu Film Festival, agrees. "It's really nice for the filmmakers, because they don't have to spend all day running around passing out flyers, hoping to get people to come out and see their films. At any moment, the festival is all about the one film that's on the screen right now; two or three aren't all being screened at the same time. And though that's often the necessity, I think (Holt and Campbell) have a good idea about the size and mood of their festival and what works best."

Todd Korgan's *The Man with the Empty Room* won the top money prize.

Wynns adds that during one of the screenings there was a technical problem, but projectionists worked to correct it and explained the situation to the audience. Instead of walking out, as usually happens, "The audience trusted them enough to wait a few minutes. And in the end, [organizers] made sure every effort was made to represent that film as it should be seen and that's a great thing for filmmakers to be able to depend on that."

"What's great about Kudzu," says judge Margret RR Echiverria, "is that it's very open. There's no reason you couldn't speak to every filmmaker who makes it down. My director (who attended the festival last year) said it best—that it's run by two guys who really love film, and that permeates everything that goes on with the festival...and really, that's what it should be about."

Julie Phillips Jordan (jphillips@onlineathens.com) is the film critic and arts and entertainment editor of the Athens Banner-Herald *in Athens, Georgia.*

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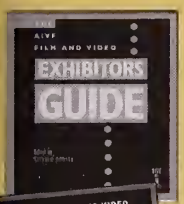

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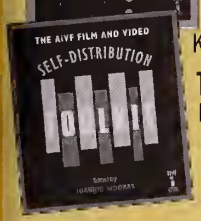

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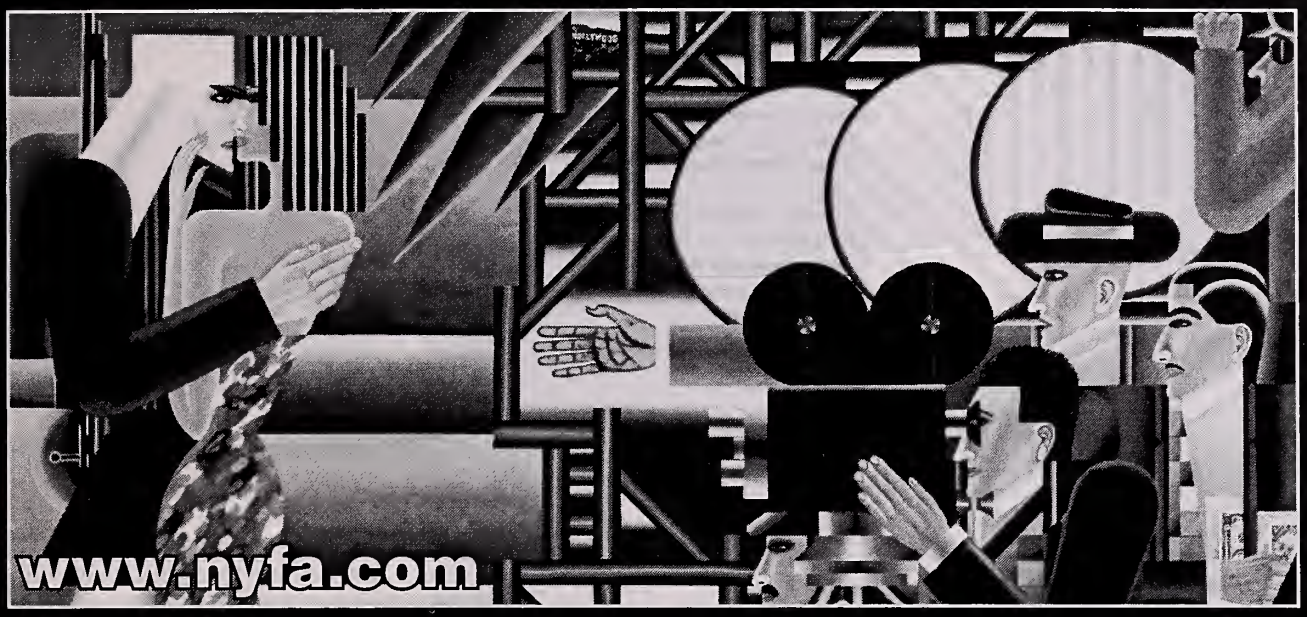

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Boiling Over with Films

Hot Springs Celebrates a Decade of Documentaries

BY LARRY AULT

Former U.N. weapons inspector Scott Ritter, now a first-time filmmaker.

FORMER PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON'S HOMEtown of Hot Springs, Arkansas has evolved in recent years from an old resort town famous for casinos and thermal baths into a cutting edge filmmakers' haven. This was in great evidence at the 10th annual Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, held Oct. 12-21, which demonstrated its growth from a showcase for black-and-white documentaries and color travelogues featuring the Amazons into a tour of cinema verite, digital cinema, and all the latest films.

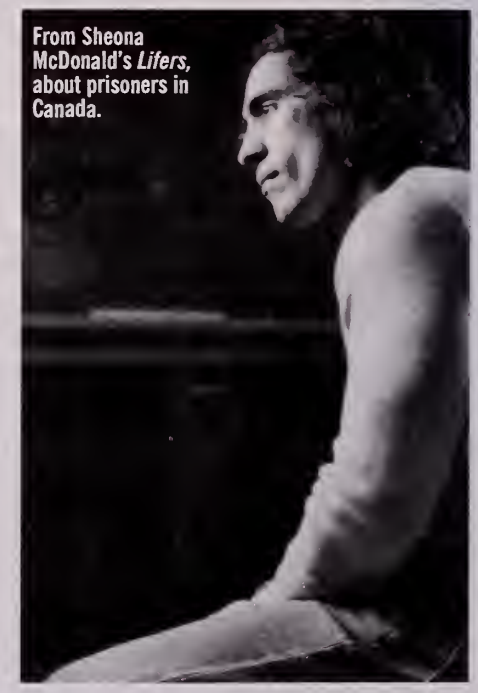
This year, the 80 films screened provided opportunities for a closer examination of work by both new and established filmmakers, like Al Maysles, who showed *Lalee's Kin*, which he co-directed. Or David Sutherland, who with his filmmaker wife, Nancy, hosted a day-long showing of *The Farmer's Wife*, which aired at 6 1/2 hours on *Frontline* in 1998, in addition to screening *Out of Sight* (1995), a close-up look at infidelity. A new festival feature included two days of screening works in progress and highlighting emerging filmmakers from the high school level.

One world premiere was Canadian director Sheona McDonald's *Lifers: Stories from Prison*, a film five years in the making. The Toronto-based filmmaker was 22 when she embarked on her trip into a Vancouver prison where six men told her their stories.

"I spent so long on the project it really did become my story as well," McDonald said during a question and answer session, explaining her reason for using her personal narration to anchor the story. "I was curious. I had no idea I was in for a five-year trip. I felt fairly safe when I was at the institution." Asked if she intends to shoot a follow-up film, McDonald said "I am so done…I am done with those guys."

Scott Ritter, a former United Nations weapons inspector in Iraq, closed the festival with a world premiere of his documentary, *In Shifting Sands*. The first-time filmmaker decided to make the 92-minute documentary because he had written a book about his experiences that was ignored. The piece deals with the deaths of more than 1.2 million Iraqis that Ritter blames on United Nations economic sanctions. As a filmmaker, he was permitted access to areas in Iraq that were off limits to him as a weapon's inspector. He describes his film as one that nobody wanted to see made—it was eventually funded by an Iraqi American. "I felt this movie had to be made," Ritter says. "It's difficult for a guy with no backing. I'm just a simple Marine."

Starwoids, by Los Angeles filmmaker



From Sheona McDonald's *Lifers*, about prisoners in Canada.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY FILMMAKERS

Dennis Przywara, is an example of the type of oddball film that often surfaces at the festival. It tells the story of the six weeks *Star Wars* fans spent waiting in line to see *Star Wars, Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* on opening day. The crew stood in line with fans for 42 days, and at one

David and Nancy Sutherland hosted an all-day screening of *The Farmer's Wife*.

point Przywara was working several jobs while standing in line at two theaters. The 82-minute documentary was edited from almost 90 hours of video. An example of the oddness: Przywara accidentally filmed a murder suspect hiding in the line who was later caught by the police.

As much as Hot Springs focuses directly on filmmakers, it also pays attention to the audience. The festival's director of film, Melanie Masino, points out that this is not a venue for flashy awards or the kind of networking events designed to hook up filmmakers with distributors.

"We're not a market festival," she says. "We like to focus on the filmmakers and their works. We are providing a venue for the audience to interact one on one with the filmmakers."

To accomplish this, one of the key events of the festival was a day-long seminar, "Old Fashioned Filmmaking Meets 21st Century Technology." Masino says the day provided "a chance for people to get a complete overview of the filmmaking process and information on cutting-edge technology in one day. There aren't many opportunities for that. I want to make that an annual event."

Larry Ault is currently a senior Radio, TV and Film major at The University of Arkansas at Little Rock, after having spent 30 years in the newspaper business. His film on Conrad Brooks screened as a work-in-progress at Hot Springs.

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ON View

BY JASON GUERRASIO

(Above) The dapper Haines is the subject of *Out of the Closet*.

(Left) The dapper professor (Robert Wisdom) in *Storytelling*.

THEATRICAL

The Farewell (New Yorker Films, Jan 16, dir.: Jan Schutte). Taking place in a single summer day, the film revolves around the playwright, poet, theatrical producer, and lover of many mistresses, Bertolt Brecht (Josef Bierbichler). Brecht is at his lakeside home preparing for the fall theater season, and he thinks he has the world on a string. Then he finds himself in the middle of a situation that could end his relationship with everyone there.

Storytelling (Fine Line, Jan. 25, dir.: Todd Solondz). Solondz fans don't have to wait any longer; the director is finally ready to unveil his first new film since 1998. And it promises to be as controversial and boundary-breaking as his previous films. There are actually two disctinct stories here: the first is a snapshot of college campus life; the second is about a dissolute teen who lets a man film a documentary about him. The film's overall statement about sexual politics and racial identity is heightened by Solondz's overt challenge of authority halfway throgh the film: He places a big red box over a brutal sex scene that the MPAA wanted him to cut to avoid an NC-17 rating.

Frailty (Lions Gate Films, Feb. 1, dir.: Bill Paxton). Paxton stars and also directs for the first time in this thriller about a father who thinks his family has been chosen by God to destroy the demons of the world. The story is weirdly complicated, with the father going through years of killings before the oldest (played as an adult by Matthew McConaughey) finally can't live with the guilt anymore.

Scotland, PA (Lot 47, Feb. 8, dir.: Billy Morrissette). A 70s version of Macbeth set in a small town, this black comedy follows Pat (Maura Tierney) and Joe McBeth (James LeGros) on their troublesome journey through unsuccessful careers in the fast food industry. Consumed with their need for money and power, they will do anything to obtain it, even double-cross each other.

Monsoon Wedding (USA Films, February 15, dir.: Mira Nair). Nair's comedy, which won top honors at the Venice Film Festival, takes place during the frenzied days leading up to a family wedding in Delhi. The film has many subplots but never goes into a tail-spin thanks to Nair's ability to keep the farce balanced with keen social insights. (For more about Nair, see p. 30.)

TELEVISION

Monday Night Mayhem (TNT, Jan. 14, dir.: Ernest Dickerson). The year is 1970 and ABC is down in prime-time ratings. Thus Monday Night Football was born. ABC wanted to throw three broadcasters in the booth and show the game with more cameras and more insights than ever before. The one thing they where missing was someone to keep viewers captivated while watching the game. So out of the boxing scene came Howard Cosell (played flawlessly by John Tuturro).

The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It (PBS, Jan. 15, dir.: Judith Ehrlich & Rick Tejada-Flores). This documentary tells one of the untold stories of World War II: American conscientious objectors. It focuses on five men who, because of their religious beliefs and moral standards, did not support the war. The film carefully explains that this did not mean that they where traitors to their country. They found other ways to help in the war effort. Some served in non-combatant positions in the armed services, others worked in civilian public service camps by helping to fight fires, become medical guinea pigs, or help in mental institutions. But some in America felt that these men were "un-American" and many were imprisoned because of their beliefs. The story is told through first-person testimonials and historical footage that brings back to life a time that was not only hard overseas, but in America as well.

Out of the Closet, Off the Screen: The Life of William Haines (AMC, Feb. 5, dir.: Randy Barbato & Fenton Bailey). No, this isn't a new episode of *E! True Hollywood Story* but a one-hour documentary based on the acclaimed book by William Mann on the life and times of the first openly gay star in Hollywood, William Haines. Haines was a roaring 20s leading man who played the handsome character who always wins the heart of the young dame by the end of the movie. By the 30s he was one of the highest box office draws in American cinema. But his being openly gay made many in the business uncomfortable, including legendary MGM owner Louis B. Mayer, who forced Haines out of Hollywood. The story does not end there though. What Haines did-next surprises many who wrote him off and made him even more famous than he ever was as an actor.

PHOTO (RIGHT) COURTESY AMERICAN MOVIE CLASSICS, (LEFT) COURTESY FINE LINE

Funder FAQ

BY MICHELLE COE

Mixed Greens

What is Mixed Greens?
Mixed Greens promotes and supports visual artists and documentary filmmakers by selling and exhibiting art, producing films, and cultivating new collector bases. Through our website, we exhibit and sell curated artwork online, show short web-based documentaries, and provide information and articles about art, collecting, and contemporary culture. We're dedicated to helping emerging documentary filmmakers see their vision to completion, and beyond.

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New York, NY 10001
Phone: 212-331-8887
Email: docs@mixedgreens.com
Web: http://www.mixedgreens.com

Filmmaker Contact: Devorah DeVries
Staff: Paige West, Executive Producer (above left); Selina Lewis Davidson, Supervising Producer (above right); Nancy Roth, Producer

Projects funded: *Art & Racing: The Life and Work of Salvatore Scarpitta, Worst Possible Illusion: The Curiosity Cabinet of Vik Muniz, Caesar's Park, Hell House, Questioning Faith, Boomtown, Escuela, Slumming It: Myth and History on the Bowery,* and *156 Rivington*

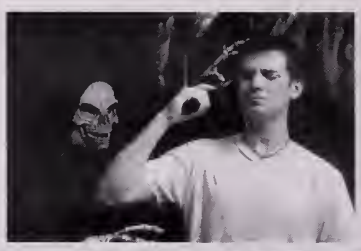
How did Mixed Greens start?
Paige West and her brother Palmer West started Sibling Entertainment, a documentary and dramatic feature film production company, in 1998. Then a year later, Paige's passion for emerging art and documentaries, coupled with her frustration at the way in which young artists are so often marginalized and co-opted, inspired her to start Mixed Greens. She wanted to build a company with a unique mission: to discover, support, and promote emerging artists and filmmakers in a variety of ways, and through a variety of media.

The driving philosophy behind Mixed Greens is ...?
"Art is for everyone." We recognize that emerging artists and documentary filmmakers are undervalued, and that public access to emerging art and documentary films is limited We want art to be a part of people's lives, period.

At what stage does Mixed Greens get involved in film/video projects?
We get involved at all stages. We produce some of our projects completely in-house, from development through distribution. We have also co-produced projects based on our interest in a filmmaker's proposal. Then there have been projects that we only got involved with at the post-production phase. The degree or extent of our involvement varies, from hands-on to more as consultants, depending upon the nature of the agreement and the stage at which we get involved with the project.

Explain funding cycles and deadlines.
There are no fixed deadlines. At the very least, we will take on one new documentary every year and one new director every year.

Are there time frame restrictions within which the funds must be used?
This is different with each project. All parties must sign off on a production schedule before funds are disbursed.



Mixed Green projects include: (clockwise from left) *Hell House, Questioning Faith,* and *Ceasars Park.*

PHOTOS COURTESY MIXED GREENS

Tell us about the review process.
Our development department collects resumes, past work samples, current proposals, and trailers. After narrowing them down, we have two rounds of interviews. The final decision is made by the consensus of two or three people on the Mixed Greens staff.

What distinguishes Mixed Greens from other production companies?
Our emphasis is on fostering relationships with directors who are committed to and passionate about documentary filmmaking. One of the greatest assets we possess is our cultural brain trust: the company, including our advisory board, is packed with people who have made art and film not only part of their lives, but integral to their lives.

How do filmmakers submit to you?
We will be accepting proposals and works in progress in early 2002. We usually ask for a resume, past work samples, project proposals, and a trailer. Please check our website for further details.

What advice do you have for putting together a strong proposal?
It should demonstrate that the director has access to a unique story, and plans to tell it in a unique way. The director should also show passion and commitment to the proposed project and to documentary filmmaking.

St. Louis: Film in the Center of America

BY SHELLEY GABERT

ST. LOUIS IS KNOWN FOR THE ARCH, THE CARDINALS, AND BUDWEISER beer, but for a local newsman, it's a murder that has been holding his attention on the city for the past seven years.

When Matt McBride, a paranoid schizophrenic, stabbed his parents to death on Sept 19, 1994, it was just another news story. But over the next several years as Art Holliday, a reporter and anchor at NBC affiliate KSDK, watched the case change state law, he wanted to get deeper into the story. And so three years ago, he set out to make a full-length documentary that would take viewers to the front lines of mental illness and beyond.

Matt McBride (left) and his older brother Mark.
PHOTO COURTESY FILMMAKER

Before They Fall Off the Cliff also tells of the enormous ripple effects of such events, as well as the changes the case brought to other severely mentally ill people.

"The reason I got into journalism in the first place was to work with a camera. Still photography had been a hobby for years and I've always enjoyed writing. Everything I've done in my 25-year career has led to this point," Holliday says.

Holliday initially worked on the project with a former co-worker and with archived footage. He also borrowed a camera to shoot some on his own. Eventually, though, he became frustrated with working around other people's schedules.

"Here I was making this documentary, which I really believed in, but I didn't have control of it," he says. "I decided to take the plunge financially and emotionally and make the investment into equipment that would allow me to truly be in charge of making this documentary happen."

A year ago, Holliday bought a Canon XL1 and shot more than 60 percent of the documentary himself. Jon King, an award-winning editor at KSDK, who had edited some promotional trailers of the documentary, became a partner in the project. They bought a Mac G4 with an editing system, and the project took on its own momentum.

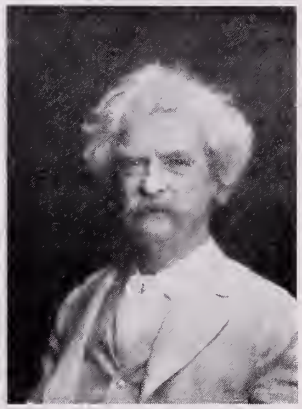
The third partner was Matt's older brother, Mark McBride, who spearheaded the effort to pass what is now called the McBride Law, a statute that allows police to involuntarily commit a severely mentally ill person for up to 180 days.

Mark not only offered unlimited access to his family's story, but he also secured a rare opportunity for Holliday to film inside the hospital where Matt is confined. Holliday was the first broadcast journalist to interview Matt, and his two-part series on KSDK won an award from the Missouri Department of Mental Health.

"Mark was the catalyst for this project," Holliday says. "He wanted to tell his family's story to help other people. This isn't just a documentary for him, it's his life."

Shelley Gabert is a freelance writer based in St. Louis.

On the Mississippi



WHAT BETTER PLACE TO DEBUT Ken Burns' new documentary, *Mark Twain*, than at the 10th anniversary of the St. Louis Film Festival? The filmmaker was honored with a lifetime achievement award, and the film was discussed during several special events over the course of the 10-day event in early November.

The local flavor continued wtih the Cinema St. Louis Award for Bob Gale, who grew up in University City, and was writer/producer of *Used Cars*, *I Wanna Hold Your Hand*, and the *Back to the Future* series. His directorial debut, *Interstate 60*, was also screened.

This year the St. Louis Film office sponsored the first-ever St. Louis Filmmaker's showcase, which featured 60 films by local filmmakers. The event included the premiere of *Free City*, a documentary on the St. Lunatics, the internationally acclaimed hip-hop group featuring Nelly; *Defiance*, a full-length Western; and five short films made by high school students. —SG

The Buzz in Town

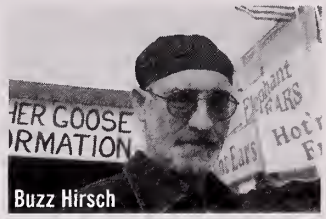
LIVING IN ST. LOUIS IS GETTING *Silkwood* producer Arthur "Buzz" Hirsch back to active filmmaking after a seven-year hiatus.

Hirsch has been teaching creative producing, screenwriting and film appreciation courses for six years as a full-time professor and advisor at Washington University, and he finds that being outside the bubble of Hollywood is an opportunity to find new voices.

"I read tons of screenplays, but they all seem alike because they adhere to the studio formula," he says. "But here, I am privileged to work with the crème de la crème of talented young writers who write wonderfully original screenplays."

Hirsch was so excited about one of those screenplays, written by a young MFA student from New York, that he plans to produce it. He's currently raising the funds.

"Obviously, there are advantages to being in New York or L.A. when you're looking for a distribution deal, but there's no reason to be there when you're doing an independent," he says.



Buzz Hirsch
PHOTO COURTESY FILMMAKER

He adds, "Working out of St. Louis is no problem. There are even certain advantages to being in the Midwest. It's fertile territory, it's not yet been mined. It's also a central base of operations. Being smack in the center of the country, it's very easy to travel to either coast." —SG

Profiles

Mai Masri

Frontiers of Dreams and Fears

BY HOLLY HUDSON-GROVES

MAI MASRI'S NEW DOCUMENTARY, *FRONTIERS of Dreams and Fears*, opens by focusing on a 13-year-old Palestinian girl named Mona who lives in a refugee camp in Lebanon. She tells the camera that she always wanted to be a butterfly, but, after realizing that people catch them and put them in books, she decided she would rather be a bird so she can fly to her country.

Shot in 2000, the film unfolds against the backdrop of the Israeli pull-out from southern Lebanon after 20 years of occupation and the start of renewed clashes between Palestinians and Israelis. The film goes on to explore the relationship among memory, dreams, and identity through the eyes of two teens living in refugee camps—Mona in Shatila near Beirut and Manar, a 14-year-old living in the Dheisha camp in Bethlehem, Israel. They develop a relationship through e-mail and letters and eventually meet at a fenced border crossing.

Masri has garnered wide audiences internationally and has been funded many times by England's BBC and Channel 4 for films like *Children of Shatila* and *Suspended Dreams*. But her films are not well-known in the United States because they seldom air on television. "On the other hand," Masri points out, "my films are shown as part of the curriculum in many universities across the U.S. where I am invited on lecture tours every year."

Frontiers was produced by ITVS and so should have a better chance of making it at least to PBS. But that remains to be seen. The film didn't make it onto the national PBS schedule for spring, so ITVS is offering it on a station-by-station basis in February. Given the world situation, the film could be a hard sell.

What keeps Masri's films off the air in America is a complicated mix of international politics and American television priorities. Two of her earlier films, *Suspended Dreams* and *War Generation: Beirut* were broadcast in the U.S. but, as she explains, "I think the reason they ended up being shown is because they don't deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. None of my films that do deal with the conflict—even the ones on children—ever got broadcast in the States."

Masri, 42, is based in Lebanon and comes at the topic from the point of view of an "insider." Though not from a refugee camp, she was raised in Beirut in a large Palestinian-American family and she has spent her 20-year filmmaking career documenting the lives and struggles of Palestinians.

She is so much an "insider" that during the filming of *Frontiers* she was shot in the leg with a rubber-coated steel bullet by an Israeli soldier. She was in harm's way because she wanted to catch the daily ritual of kids returning home from school and stopping to throw stones at an Israeli army check post on occupied territory. "I couldn't resist filming a little 10-year-old boy carrying a slingshot and a little yellow water gun—he looked so childish in this dangerous game," she says.

She could use this kind of detail in an inflammatory way—especially her views on why she, in particular, was shot—but Masri explains that her main interest is in exploring the effect of war on children and not in political statements. That's why her films focus directly on a few characters and don't use any talking heads or voiceovers to explain the situations. "My films all focus on ordinary people living through extraordinary times and how they are able to cope and survive without losing their humanity," Masri says by phone from Beirut. "My relationship with the kids I'm filming is based on mutual trust. I am careful not to abuse that or take advantage of them or manipulate their words or images. It's harder to make films without narration but I feel it's important not to interfere." Masri has actually turned down many funding propositions by TV channels that want to push her further. "They are interested in the sensational scoops they could score through an insider Palestinian director," she says.

That's not a game she wants to play, but nevertheless her films have a point of view. And Masri does believe that the American media's portrayal of Palestinians skews the reality of the lives of the vast majority, and that her films can help to right that image. She cites the recent example of CNN footage of Palestinians celebrating after the attacks on Sept. 11. "It was shown repeatedly by CNN and several other western news stations even though the Palestinians had nothing to do with the attacks," she says, adding that she believes this form of journalism contributes to the ongoing dehumanization of Palestinians. "We were not shown the images that were taken on the same day of Palestinians lining up to donate blood or marching in support of American victims."

Masri will continue to screen *Frontiers* internationally throughout the year. She especially hopes she will reach audiences in America who will get a chance to see Palestinian children telling their own stories. "These are just ordinary kids living in a very difficult situation," she says. "What is unique is that they manage to laugh and love, that they haven't lost their humanity."

Holly Hudson-Groves is a freelance writer living in London.

PHOTOS COURTESY FILMMAKER

Zacharias Kunuk

Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner

BY BETH PINSKER

LIKE MANY FILMMAKERS OF HIS BABY Boomer generation, Zacharias Kunuk grew up with an obsession for the movies. He sold wood carvings to earn enough for tickets to John Wayne westerns and Spencer Tracy romantic comedies, and he decided that he wanted to spend his life with a camera in his hand.

That Kunuk grew up in a Canadian province that is actually north of the Arctic Circle—and that he was born in a sod house and lived a nomadic life with his family out on the ice until he was nine—only changes this story a little bit. He's just like any other low-budget filmmaker. But yes, Kunuk must have been a little warmer than past recipients when his first feature, *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, won the Camera d'Or in Cannes. And he had a few unusual challenges while shooting his film during the previous summer, such as not being able to remove his 16mm camera from its snug blankets for more than a few minutes or the gears would freeze up.

Kunuk describes *Atanarjuat* to "southerners" as sort of like *Star Trek*, when the crew of the Enterprise lands on some remote planet not knowing what to expect and is often mystified by what it finds. The film is set in some unspecific time before the advent of Europeans, and the story comes from an Inuit legend about a community that is ripped apart by jealousy. The actors are all Inuit, some professional, some newcomers. And the landscape is thoroughly white—white, endless in scope, and beautiful. Kunuk's power lies in the simplicity of the elements. His characters never overwhelm their surroundings, and he doesn't lose the thread of the tension over the three hours of the movie. Most of all, Kunuk keeps the film dramatic and far from an anthropological study.

Atanarjuat has had a powerful effect on audiences at film festivals, is Canada's entry into the foreign Oscar race, and will get a worldwide theatrical release. But none of that was Kunuk's intent.

"When we went from the land to the settlement, all our culture was being lost, and storytelling is not practiced since TV came," Kunuk says, noting that his hometown of Igloolik voted to keep out TV until 1983 and now has cable with 42 channels. "Everyone just wants to be glued to the TV, they are hardly visiting each other. That's when we said to ourselves, let's put our work on the screen. Profit didn't even come to our minds."

Throughout his career, the 44-year-old has always been dedicated to building the media infrastructure in his community. And he had a lot to build before he could realize his dream of making the first all-Inuit feature, starting with bringing the first video camera home in 1981.

"I bought a complete set—camera, Portopak, VCR, and 26-inch TV—and I had them shipped up here and put in my little house," he says from his home in Igloolik, in the Nunavut province, which is around 1,000 miles north of Toronto. He started out by making home movies, editing them in a primitive way with the VCR. "Every time you point a camera at somebody, it tells the truth. I started working with Paul [Apak Angilirq, who died in 1998] and Norman [Cohn] and my buddies in the broadcasting corporation at the time, and we experimented with the camera and a technique where you don't have to be still with the camera to get your point across."

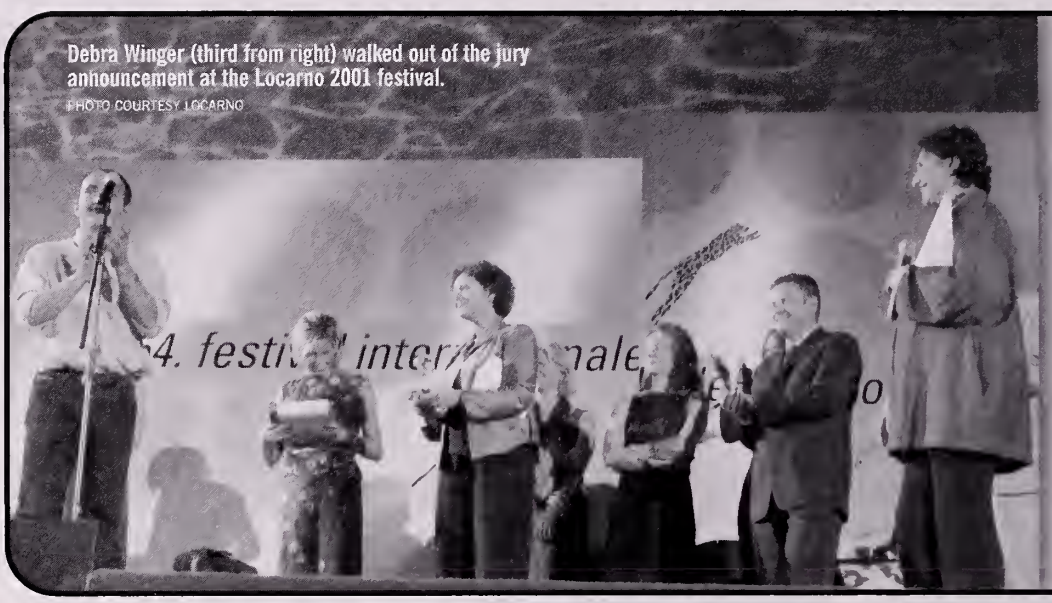
The first efforts of the company those men formed, called Igloolik Isuma, were short documentaries for Canadian public television. Later, they did a 13-part dramatic series called *Nunavut* that was almost like a documentary. They decided it was time to do a feature.

"We'd been working with TV for 15 years, but it was hard for us at that time, in 1995. When we went through the funding process it was the first time we saw the problems with having aboriginal status," he says. He explains that Canadian public funding is divided into three categories—English, French, and aboriginal—and that the money is divided up according to population. "There was $1 million [Canadian] in our envelope, and the worst thing was, each project was capped at $100,000."

To handle the production in Igloolik required way more than that—the final budget was almost $2 million (about $1.25 million U.S.).

"We went for the English envelope. And yes, we got it. We fought like hell. It was dirty. It was the ugly side of trying to get your money. We're Canadian, we're taxpayers, we should be treated the same," he says.

Kunuk's next project, a feature about missionaries coming to the northern territories and what effect that had on the native shamanism, is going to have to wait a little while. Kunuk wants to follow *Atanarjuat* through to its end, and that means traveling to film festivals, doing interviews, and making appearances. And even though all he wants to do is spend the winter hunting, if he gets an Oscar nomination, come March, he'll trade riding his Ski-doo across the tundra for cruising in a convertible down Santa Monica Boulevard.



Debra Winger (third from right) walked out of the jury announcement at the Locarno 2001 festival.

PHOTO COURTESY LOCARNO

The inexact science of

IF YOU READ ENOUGH ABOUT COMPETITIVE FILM festivals and year-end critics awards, you'd think that the prizes were devised to cause controversy rather than to award excellence.

Of the 300 or so influential American and international festivals each year, about two-thirds of them are competitive in some way. Juries are drawn from a pool of film professionals that range from directors and actors to academics and journalists and are pulled together—often at the last moment for the smallest of festivals—and usually given little instruction. Sometimes they're offered travel, more often just a soda and a snack, and then they're asked to concur on the accomplishment of the films the festival has managed to attract.

The critics awards emerge from the dozens of associations—international, national, regional, statewide, citywide, media genre—that sometimes just exist to hand out citations at the end of the year. Most of these groups consist of the same people who hand out festival awards.

There's always a big fuss when schisms occur. (Look for the color photos with the tight smiles in the front section of *Entertainment Weekly*!) In its 50-plus years, Cannes has been the cause of much critical hullabaloo, consternation, and second-guessing. The festival itself, which began in 1946, was a response to alleged fixed judging at the 1934 Venice Film Festival. In the ensuing years, many of the Palmes d'Or prizes have gone to complex, yet almost universally recognized classics like *Blowup*, *The Conversation*, *Taxi Driver*, and *Paris, Texas*. Yet there are awards, say, to David Lynch's *Lost Highway* in 1997, that lead to booing and bitterness.

Crash director David Cronenberg was jury president of 1999's Cannes Film Festival, and after that experience, he doubted he'd do it again. Like many filmmakers, he's reluctant to offer his opinion on the work of fellow professionals. While the Palme d'Or at that 1999 festival could have gone to any of 22 finalists, such as Lynch for *The Straight Story* or Atom Egoyan for *Felicia's Journey*, the Cronenberg jury went instead for the small, resolutely European *Rosetta*, an uncompromisingly political drama about unemployment and economic exploitation by the Belgian brothers Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne.

While Cronenberg encouraged his jury to forget about making a statement, he was happy that the final choices did seem to make a statement. On several occasions, asked why he thought critics in certain countries were so up in arms over the elevation of a small, possibly timeless film, he would answer, "Because they all have friends in the business, they all have enemies in the business, and they all have national pride."

At the Locarno International Film Festival in August 2001, juror Debra Winger walked out halfway through the awards press conference when journalists kept asking her what the phrase "not unanimously" meant in the official press release in reference to a particularly motley assembly of honorees, which included Maurizio Sciarra's *Alla Rivoluzione Sulla Due Cavalli*, Peter Sehr's *Love the Hard Way*, and John Singleton's *Bad Boy*.

According to the Reuters wire service, Winger said her first time as a member of a six-woman, one-man jury—along with the likes of Janet Maslin—would likely be her last, after a marathon of bickering and compromise. While such terms of disendearment make for good journalistic copy, journalists seldom know the true tick-tock of what goes on behind closed doors. It's not that participants are bound by vows of secrecy or that they don't have interesting tales to tell. What happens behind the scenes on festival juries is a real story, but it's one that almost no one *wants* to talk about—in case they ever want to be invited to serve again.

What does this mean to the filmmaker in competition or vying for attention? While festival and critics awards have a great impact on a film's success and a filmmaker's career, they're impossible to control or predict because voting isn't exactly a science. Winning something largely depends on the jury and the politics of the moment.

By the time a jury convenes, the first, more frightening level of judgment has already taken place: getting past festival screeners and, in some cases, into distribution. With the affordability of

THE IZE ROL

BY RAY PRIDE

stival juries and critics awards

Frank Novak awarding Monteith McCullum the Slamadance 2001 Grand Jury Prize for *Hybrid*. PHOTO COURTESY SLAMDANCE

digital video, even smaller festivals are being inundated with entrants. For instance, Slamdance, with fewer slots, receives a substantially higher number of entrants than Sundance. And Chicago Underground Film Festival director Bryan Wendorf reports a 30 percent increase in submissions in 2001; he confesses to nightmares of suffocation under cascades of VHS tapes.

While fees may help some festivals break even, the pool of screeners is as woefully finite as that of jurors. A female filmmaker with several notable finished works, who has been on three juries and a couple of grants panels, elaborates on that fear. "I've profited very significantly from festivals, and have had very good times at them," she says, but concedes she "has extreme love-hate feelings for them. I think they're a racket, but a useful, potentially enjoyable one."

While refusing to pass on several entertaining jury anecdotes, even not-for-attribution, she says, "I can relate though the strangeness of being at the house of someone who was a screener for a major international festival. He was watching tapes while making phone calls, writing emails, shutting some off in the first couple of minutes, and so on, and I was horrified—but knew I'd probably do the same thing. Of course I'd also arrogantly assume that a lot of people doing that task have shitty taste. And that's what sucks about festivals. I suspect that a lot of good work slips through the cracks."

Her theories are elaborate, but she sums it up by saying, "The awarding process, however easy it is to make an argument against competition, has, in my experience, seemed generally more fair and logical than the programming process."

But her theories assume a best-case scenario for the selection of jurors—and then the best possible behavior from those jurors on the scene of the film festival. Because there is a limited pool of truly qualified people, however, often festivals can't do any more than assemble a random mix of individuals and wait to see what happens. The juries must be filled; there are statues to be given out and checks to be written. So when all else fails, they cross their fingers and rely on the unwritten code of jurors to silence any juicy stories.

AN UNSCIENTIFIC SURVEY I TOOK IN CONVERSATION with almost 60 journalists and filmmakers revealed several repeated basics on the festival jury circuit: "I can't go on the record. I can't go on the record *at all*"; "I was drunk"; "We were drunk"; "She must have been drunk"; "There was no disagreement"; "We only agreed on what (and whom) we hated, not anything we liked." A veteran Canadian programmer concedes, "I have been on a few juries. Mostly it's all an alcohol-tinged blur."

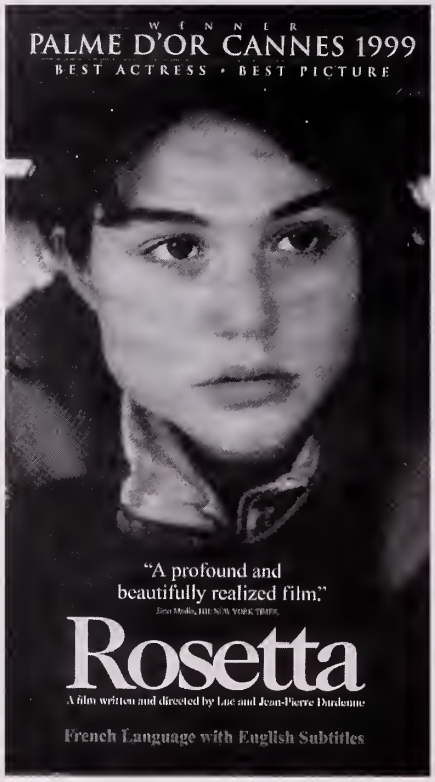
One of the most telling of specific anecdotes I was offered comes from Jonathan Rosenbaum, critic of the *Chicago Reader*, festival regular, and jury member of more than a dozen stints, as well author of the recent prickly critic-critique, *Movies Wars: How Hollywood and the Media Conspire to Limit What Films We Can See*. While an incessant commentator on the politics and economics of all forms of film distribution, Rosenbaum recalls pulling a fast one on his friend, the Hungarian film director Bela Tarr, at the February 2001 Fajr film festival in Iran.

"[Bela] tends to dislike almost everything on celluloid, and this made for a very long final jury session in which most nominations by other jurors were objected to at length by him. Even though I agreed with many of his criticisms, I feared that we'd never end the meeting in time to do other things. I was especially keen to see the rough cut of Abbas Kiarostami's *ABC Africa* early that evening, and since I was coauthoring a book about Kiarostami at the time, it seemed like an urgent matter to me. So when Bela had to leave momentarily to go to the men's room, I proposed a kind of compromise package to the remainder of the jury while Bela was out of the room, and the proposal passed."

Could the dyspeptic Hungarian forgive the American's cunning? "To Bela's credit, he forgave me for taking this extreme measure afterwards."

I've had similar experiences myself as a festival juror. While working as a writer-producer of corporate video, I was invited by a competitive, international festival to judge an afternoon's worth of high-end, glossy, brain-dead promotional pieces for car

companies, airlines and food service companies, each twice as long and half as smart as they ought to be. We were encouraged to fill out detailed comment forms, and, emboldened by free cola, we did so with great relish. Everything stank. It's not that we were power-mad, nor envious of their higher budgets. The films and videos were, plain and simple, rotten to the last.



Rosetta **was the surprise winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1999, but the film made good use of the award.**

When we handed in our forms and our reluctant choices and the categories we chose not to salute, the organizer rolled her eyes and said, "Huh." The festival, she explained later, patiently, as if to a small child, was able to subsidize its regular competition by running a concurrent contest. This is also what's done in the advertising business, where a $100 entry free pretty much guarantees you some sort of nod or mention or attractive faux-papyrus scroll.

My most enjoyable jury experience came when I was put together with a producer and a magazine editor on a jury, and we were asked to choose the best of a handful of films. Three of the six held no interest, to put it blandly, and I had concerns how the remaining three suited the prize we were giving. Our instructions consisted solely of the name of the prize: pick the best out of this category. After a weekend of movies and gorgeous weather, we gathered at a bar. The producer spoke my mind before I could: Can we just not even mention these three names again? We nodded, the first round came, and we started to evaluate the merits of the remaining three. By the time we turned to Cosmopolitans, we had a winner, and a toast to the winner.

ALMOST ANY OF THE OTHER STORIES that come out of jury deliberations sound like bad television movies about quiet killers: "I didn't know he was a madman until we were married!" Fellow jurors who seem kind, cool and collected often turn out otherwise. Most jurors recount a simple mission: pick the best of the litter. And remember, as Rosenbaum points out, "As a rule, discussion changes very few people's minds."

Stephen Garrett, film editor of *Time Out New York*, makes his handful of experiences sound like a dream: "Everything went very smoothly and politely—no controversy or politics, just honest talk about what we felt were the best and most worthy films." Others who would comment seem just as disingenuous. Larry Fessenden, the New York-based director of *Habit* and the upcoming *Wendigo*, which premiered at Slamdance 2001, jokes, "The mere process of getting into festivals is mysterious to me, and filled with deep and sinister implications."

David Gordon Green, whose *George Washington* received worldwide festival notice in 2000, won, among other nods, a Stockholm notice for Tim Orr's cinematography, a cash prize in Torino, and a Discovery Award in Toronto. Had he bothered to find out more about the awards? "I don't know how they pony it up. Really no insight or anything," he says, continuing, "I know that it feels cool to be recognized and liked. Maybe I'll be on a jury someday," he deadpans.

Marina Zenovich's first documentary, *Independent's Day*, tracing the struggles and egos of Sundance and Slamdance entrants in 1996 and 1997, went to over 20 festivals. "It was never in any competition and I was never quite sure why. I guess because it was about filmmakers and their struggles at film festivals, so that somehow disqualified me from being in competition." Like many directors, she claims she doesn't believe in competition between filmmakers, but she concedes that "it was very exciting to be part of the competition with my second film, *Who is Bernard Tapie?*, at a festival in Oldenburg, Germany. Exciting because the thought of winning something after so much hard work is alluring. Then you lose and it's back to paying your bills and trying to raise money for the next one." So should we by cynical about juries? "Like a lot of things in life, film festival prizes are completely subjective and up to the whim of whoever is in charge. I realized this when I was on the Slamdance selection committee and wanted to fight for a film I really liked. No one else really sparked to it and I realized that a film had to have a champion. No little videotape sitting there in a pile of videotapes is going to go anywhere unless one person picks it up, responds to it, and tries to talk other people into either seeing it and/or loving it."

David Gordon Green's *George Washington* won a slew of festival awards, but he doesn't know why.

But, she continues, "Prizes help a lot in terms of marketing a film but they are not everything."

Mark Ebner, a freelance journalist known for enjoying a battle, relates this story: "I was a juror for the second Slamdance festival in 1996, representing *Spy* magazine. Film critic Paul Cullum was on board from *Film Threat*, and we were joined by a guy whose name and credentials escape me and a woman from the Utah Arts Council whom I never met. At the time Slamdance was housed and presented entirely in the cramped Yarrow hotel in Park City, and I remember the accommodations they provided consisted of floor space between two beds occupied by a gang of foreign documentary filmmakers and their equipment.

"When we realized we needed a fifth juror in case of a tie vote, we drafted the projectionist because he was the only other person we knew of who might have seen all the films. Though favored to win, Marc Forster's *Loungers* was defeated by Greg Mottola's crowd-pleasing *The Daytrippers* for the Grand Jury Prize, and another contender, Daniel J. Harris' *The Bible and Gun Club*, was disqualified because the director got pissed off about something and ran home with his video screener before any of us got to see his film. The projectionist juror pissed us all off because his vote for a film about agoraphobia skewed the results and gave that study in ennui an Honorable Mention, or runner-up prize."

Scott Saunders, a New York-based independent filmmaker with two features and over 20 shorts to his credit, is also familiar with the festival circuit. His last feature, *The Headhunter's Sister*, enabled him, as it does many other filmmakers who are eventually unable to secure North American distribution, the good fortune to spend several months making the Hospitality Death March across Europe, while jobs and future projects languish back home. He's served on a number of juries as well.

"Once, I was on a jury with an American curator from a major American museum," Saunders recalls. "She and I became friends and hung out for the festival, and we generally were in agreement about the films we were seeing. Our third member, from France, stayed by himself for the most part, so we had no idea how he was reacting to the films. When it came time to deliberate, the French guy announced that he had hated all the films. They were all American, so, of course he hated them.

"Strangely, he decided that the best film was a frivolous little romantic fantasy that was about nothing and went nowhere. He said it was 'inventive,' but the curator and I thought that the only thing that could be said for it was that it was fairly well shot. The film I championed was distinctively and elegantly shot, was a well-told and unusual story, was strange and provocative, funny and disturbing. It was far and away the best film and the curator and I were in total agreement. The French guy hated the film, though, so we ended up getting into a protracted and frustrating deadlock. Finally, the curator and I simply decided that the majority would carry the day, so we had our way. The French guy was very unhappy, so we gave his film an honorable mention. He was hardly pacified."

Because there is a limited pool of truly qualified people, often festivals can't do any more than assemble a random mix of individuals and wait and see what happens. The juries must be filled; there are statues to be given out and checks to be written. So when all else fails, they cross their fingers and rely on the unwritten code of jurors to silence any juicy stories.

Ben Berkowitz, whose verité-style 16mm feature debut, *Straightman*, premiered at the 2000 Chicago Underground Film Festival, was invited to sit on its jury in 2001. As with most festivals, Berkowitz said there were few rules. "One jury member kept saying he knew all the filmmakers and he couldn't judge. I wanted to ask him why the fuck are you here then?"

But overall, he says, "The choices reflected the taste of the people and were very different so what happens is the films that get picked are the films you agree on. It's strange how most people's favorite film is someone else's least favorite, the things that make people love or hate films being the same. So you vote for middle-of-the-road, safe films like political candidates." Did he know this going in? "I didn't belong there, because I am a bitter filmmaker who didn't win anything last year. It was like a horror movie where the kid they picked on gets revenge on his peers."

So is he a changed man, a chastened critic, a better filmmaker now? "I now realize all my fantasies about juries being incompetent losers are true, because I was on one."

Ray Pride is film editor of Chicago's weekly Newcity *and a regular contributor on movies to indieWIRE and over a dozen other publications.*

Mira Nair talks about the coming *Monsoon*

filmer of the bride

BY BETH PINSKER

GIVEN INDIA'S BUSTLING COMMERCIAL FILM industry, it's not surprising to hear of an Indian film that's like a cross between *Father of the Bride* and *The Wedding Planner*. And based on past experience, it's also not earth shattering to learn that Mira Nair's new film is likely to cause some controversy with its depiction of sexual mores and Indian class structure. But how did Nair's *Monsoon Wedding* manage to be both of these things at once?

On the surface, the film, which won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, is a lively tale of a family wedding. The bride has jitters, the father is worried about spending too much money, the mother wants everything to be perfect, the younger brother feels left out, the extended family is loud and meddlesome, and the wedding planner is a flamboyant schemer with a good heart.

Of course, Nair is making a social statement here, too, as she does in all of her work whether feature or documentary, Indian or American. The 44-year-old filmmaker, who splits her time between Manhattan and India, has always been interested in the relationship between individuals and society, especially across cultures and classes. Her first major film, *Salaam Bombay*, was so real in its depiction of street life that it was almost a documentary. Her work in the early 1990s, *Mississippi Masala* and *The Perez Family*, dealt with American attitudes toward race and ethnicity. *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* jumped deep into the fray of Indian sexual politics—enough so the film was banned there. Nair says the film she's shooting now—in lovely Bayonne, N.J.—will mix Bollywood bleakness with American nostalgia for the 1980s and will premiere at Sundance. *Hysterical Blindness*, an HBO original with Uma Thurman, Juliette Lewis, and Gena Rowlands, is, as she puts it, "good down-and-dirty stuff."

But first there's *Monsoon Wedding*. It has been six years since Nair's last theatrical feature, *Kama Sutra*, and for her return she decided to go back to India for what she thought would be a low-key, low-budget production. The story, however, turned out differently.

THE INDEPENDENT: You filmed most of *Monsoon Wedding* in a friend's home in India. Did your friend know what to expect?
NAIR: I really, genuinely conceived of it as a family flick. Nothing big. But it was not. It was ridiculous—68 actors—and we just picked 30 days out of a hat to shoot it in. While I was casting and seeing hundreds of actors, I realized that this is just like any other thing. Except for some reason, I picked a low budget and a very lean way of working.

Did you ever decide why you did that?
I like the liberation of it. It was not goal-oriented. It was a fairly egoless journey of trying to make film that was free, that had discovery at the heart of it. When you tell yourself the stakes are nothing—low, or whatever, just personal—beauty can emerge.

Did you have time for rehearsals with such a large cast?
It was highly organized on our part because we had to do a lot in very little time. We did two weeks of workshops with all the actors before shootings The third week, I took all the actors to the set, which was dressed, and we blocked and choreographed everything. We often had to do eight scenes a day. We had to know exactly what we were doing both in front of and behind the camera. It enabled us to approach everything in a disciplined way, but also in a spirit of freedom. We knew what we were going to do, but within that parameter, we could be free.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY USA FILMS

But even though you were keeping to a low budget, you didn't shoot in digital...
It was entirely handheld 16mm that we then blew up to 35mm. It was initially conceived as digital. When I was doing research with a digital camera in real weddings, I discovered that the stock did not really capture the opulence and darkness of the jewels and saris and nightlife. It's just not ready yet for that. Because it was such a big set-up, I didn't want to do all this work and then have an image that didn't do it justice. Lastly, the post-production process with digital is just a mess in itself. It's almost more expensive than film.

How exact was the film in depicting Indian weddings and the famly tumult?
Indian weddings—Punjabi and upper middle class weddings—these things are very bourgeois in an opulent way. With our budget, the way to do this was to cast real people, to use real saris, jewelry, paintings, everything from the family and friends of the family, from the cars that they drove, even to the boxer shorts. My brother is a garment exporter just like the father of the bride, Lalit (Naseeruddin Shah), in the movie, and he makes boxers for J. Crew and Gap.

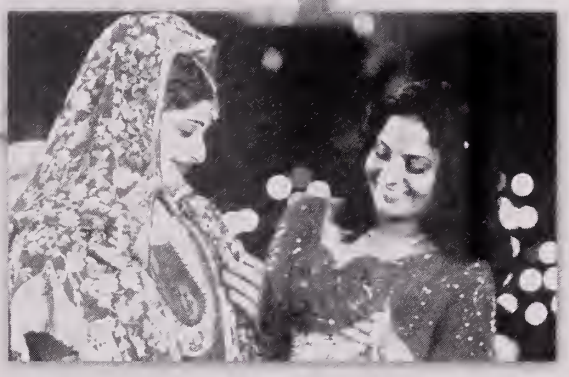
Was your family worried that you were looking at their lives and making a social statement?
No. I'm from within. They were very much with me on it. My brother would come into my bedroom in the morning and give me a few good lines or choice curses, which we would rapidly put in the script. There were some hilarious things. It was very much about osmosis. The best idea was always going to win. It was quite extraordinary and also extraordinarily difficult at the same time, just on the logistic level of shooting in the heat and the monsoon alone.

It seems like it's pouring throughout the movie. How did you deal with all of that rain?
I really wanted to capture the city in the rain. In our initial budget, we only had the [natural] rain that we shot in. The only rain that we bought was for the climax, the big wedding scene. But when we returned to New York after shooting, we discovered that we lost 300 minutes of exposed film to x-ray damage. It was an absolute tragedy. It happens once in a freaky million times. We filed an insurance claim that was bigger than the budget of film, because the film was so lean.

One of the scenes was the biggest scene, on the night before the wedding when there is a dance with 300 extras. That we couldn't reshoot; it had to be digitally restored—at a cost close to shooting the entire picture.

The other three scenes that were damaged, we had to go back to India to reshoot. The good news was that when we got back, after many sagas, we could afford to buy rain, and I put rain in those scenes. So it now looks like we were in a real monsoon, rather than an independent feature that could only afford one day of rain. It's one of those arduous journeys that does have happy endings.

While most people know you for your feature films, you have a long history in documentary. Your film before *Monsoon Wedding* was a documentary for HBO, *The Laughing Club of India*. What made you want to do that?
It's not a careerist thought at all, it's just where the heart takes me. *Laughing Club* I made after 15 years of not making docs. There's no hard-and-fast rule of "I'm closed to this or open to that." It's just if there's some subject that grabs me, like laughter did. The point was to make an absurdist film on the power of laughter. I responded to that and it didn't let me go. That's a good principle of making any film.



The bride in all her glory (below) and the parents of the bride in all their worry (left).

We took three weeks out and made that film. It was exactly like I wanted to do, but I didn't know if it was possible. As life is, it was hugely influential in leading me to *Monsoon Wedding*. Just the shooting of that film, the cutting of it—the montage aspect, going into characters and then songs and then the city and then back to the character—inspires a lot of *Monsoon Wedding*. It's not about career or stepping stones or anything like that. If you follow your heart, one thing will lead to another thing. Otherwise I would never have made *Monsoon Wedding*.

Has documentary influenced your other fiction work?
Not in as literal a way, but in other, deeper ways. It influences me in the fact that making documentaries really inspired me in trying to capture the extraordinariness of ordinary life and in respecting the texture of life and the inexplicability of life. When you are lucky enough to capture that in documentary, it really taught me what is meant when they say truth is stranger than fiction. I like to preserve that aspect of inexplicability in fiction films. It's harder to do, obviously, when you're setting up the whole thing. But it's possible to do in certain kinds of fiction. Also with documentary, respecting and having a sort of humility about people is a great foundation for keeping one humble.

It's often reported that you worked with Richard Leacock and D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus in your early career. What exactly was your interaction with them?
I took a course with Ricky at MIT, when I was at Harvard. It was basic cinema verité production. Pennebaker never taught there. I did this summer course with him at Hampshire College. Finally I met him properly after I graduated in 1979, and very soon after I ended up renting an editing room from him where I cut my first two docs—*So Far from India* and *India Cabaret*. I ended up being in their family space for almost two years. He's like a talisman of truth and reality for me. When you make fiction in and out of Hollywood, it's nice to see them again, and go back to what it really is, why you are making movies. The minute I finished *Laughing Club*, I showed it to them. They showed me their dot-com movie [*Startup.com*], and I remember feeling that day that all was right with the world. It's really amazing that these people exist, and it's great to aspire for things that don't necessarily get into magazines and all that stuff. They are good people.

For *Monsoon Wedding*, the family is happy, at least in the pictures.

It seems like you've incorporated some of their philosophy into your work.
I'm very into that. There is a kind of company aspect that I really love. There's a sense of community, too, which God knows we should have, and long to have, but it's hard to have in film.

How do you think Indian audiences will respond to that sort of underlying message in *Monsoon Wedding*?
We don't know. It's a very unusual film for Indian mainstream audiences. On one level it is conventional, given the emotions in it, and the family is extremely identifiable. It does what Indian movies do, which is make you laugh, cry, and dance. But it was made very unconventionally. There is enormous national pride in the Golden Lion [which the film won at the 2001 Venice Film Festival in August], and there's been an enormous, unstoppable media blitz since then. So there's a lot of expectation, and we have very great distributors and they are kind of mainstreaming the advertisements. They are very hopeful.

You're used to getting a lot of attention in India.
This is a different sort of attention.

Will the depiction of class cause controversy?
What this is, is a real portrait of right-now India. For the first time you can transcend class with money. Only since India has gone global, can a guy like Dubai [the film's wedding planner], who is a working class lackey, become a minor merchant—an event manager as he calls himself. These are kind of newfangled notions, but they are real in that he can actually make the money, have the cell phones, and all the gadgets. This is the new India that we wanted to show.

The other part that is quintessentially Indian—which I don't think is just Indian—is the unbelievably seamless coexistence of classes. This is how we live. It's really amazing. This is what's different from living, say, in South Africa, where I also lived. There, the mansion is in one neighborhood, and the slum is in the township. In India, the slum would be right outside the mansion. You have to negotiate that or close your eyes to it, or whatever you want to do with it. I grew up that way, where it is totally coexistent. I've really been affected by that all my life.

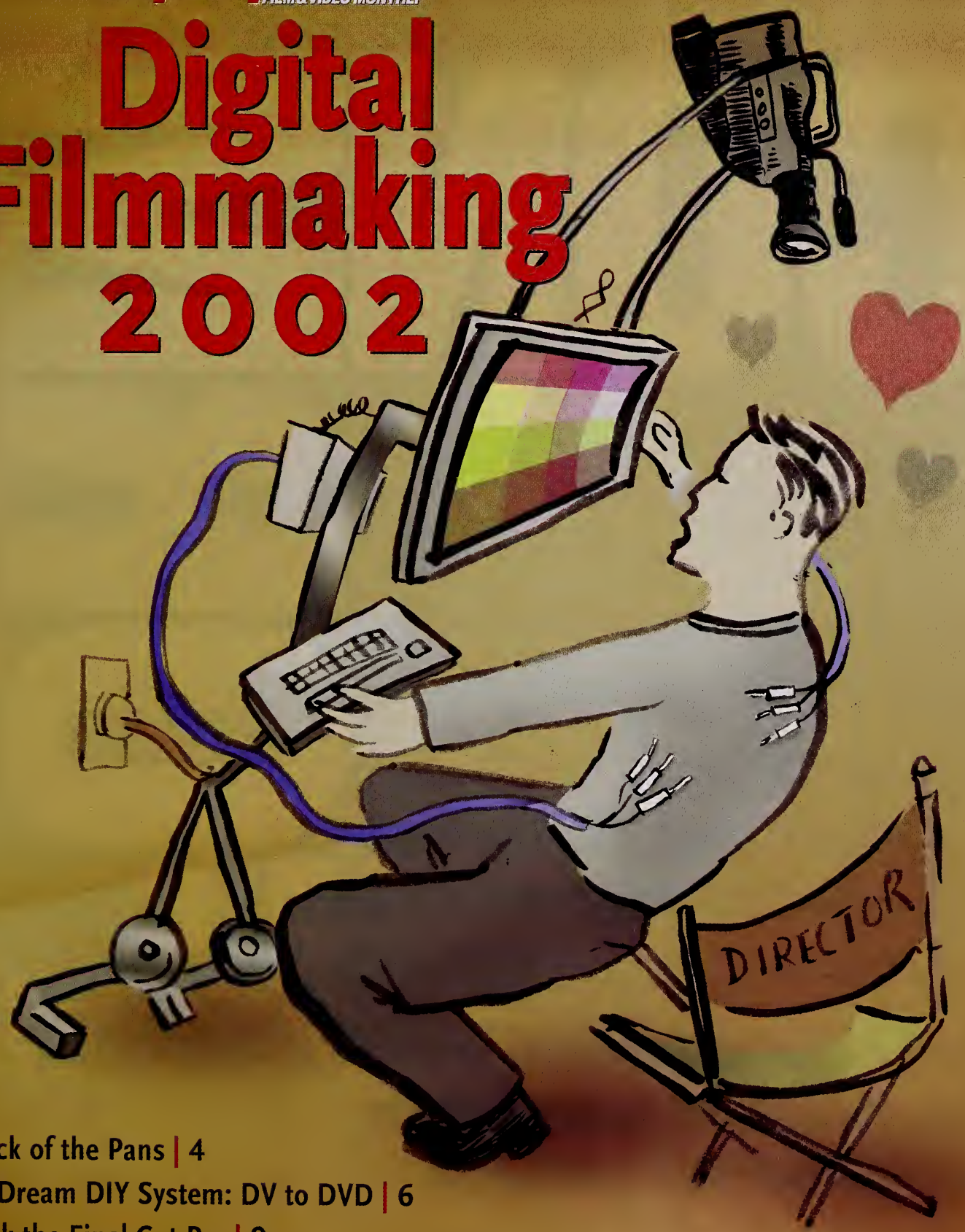
Another interesting thing is the amorality that's going down. That part was even startling to me. The girl sleeping with her lover the night before the wedding. It's totally normal; it's what's happening. But just to actually speak of a well-brought up, fairly traditional bourgeois girl who has this life? Sabrina Dhawan, the writer, is 10 years younger than me and is more in touch with this crowd than I am. She really knew what that single-woman world was like. I remember when we first started uncovering all of this, she told me normal stories and I was pretty shocked myself. I didn't realize that we'd gone Gucci and Prada on the outside, and there was also something going on in the inside.

A lot of journalists at the Toronto Film Festival were watching *Monsoon Wedding* on Sept. 11 right at the moment the plane hit. Then your premiere party that day was cancelled. What were you thinking?
It's a strange coincidence. Ebert said it was my last moment of happiness. We had elephants and horses, live drummers from Punjab, and 70 dancers. I didn't even blink an eyelid; there was no question of having the premiere party. We did everything the next day.

Everything has a new context now. When *Monsoon Wedding* comes out in the U.S. in the late winter, are you worried that news events might reflect in some way on your release?
I take everything one step at a time. We just have to do our best, and the rest will take over. If we must push that point, then I think the way the film is working on people is that everybody tells me it's just like their family. And these are people who come from Iceland and Israel and Southern California. Just for that fact alone, if it was linked with the news inextricably in January or February, then it probably would help. With its universality it could help neutralize what America is very good at doing—demonizing the other.

the Independent
FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Digital Filmmaking 2002



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Digitally Essential

by Greg Lindsay

THERE'S A CONSENSUS among digital filmmakers that the obsession with gadgetry is over. It's okay now to drop the "digital" when describing "digital films" and go back to simply working. Our timing is perfect, then, for a practical guide to digital filmmaking, filled out with advice and all the things a filmmaker needs to master the digital world.

As more and more filmmakers have experimented with and acquired a better feel for digital technologies and their quirks, the digital vs. celluloid religious debates have faded into the background. Digital tools are seen as just that—another set of options for filmmakers that in this case contain inherent advantages of cost and speed and size, and usually a solid disadvantage when comparing digital images with 35mm film. I say "usually" because the technical wizards at Sony and Panavision have managed to surmount even that obstacle with their "24p" high-definition cameras. These capture images at 24 frames per second (unlike any other digital cameras) and approximate the fidelity of film.

Mostly, these cameras have been used by the likes of George Lucas and Wim Wenders, and their size—both physically and in terms of the image data they produce—wipe out many of the advantages that are so appealing to low-budget filmmakers and documentarians. But that's all changing now. Still, it's not 24p or even Digibeta that most filmmakers are after (both require the post-production resources of film) but the semi-miraculous camcorders that use the miniDV or DV CAM formats and that are likely the reason you're skimming this guide in the first place.

"Prosumer" cameras like Sony's PD-150 and VX-2000 and Canon's XL1 have fired the imaginations of filmmakers and have become something everyone starting a new production has to consider. While each weighs less than 10 pounds, records to tapes 40 to 60 minutes long, and includes manual exposure control and professional microphone outputs, they also cost less than $5,000 each. The result is that low-budget films suddenly have versatile cameras in their price range, while those with larger budgets can stock up on them like candy. Which is what Dogme 95 auteur Lars Von Trier did with Bjork in his Cannes Palme d'Or-winning *Dancer in the Dark*. He recorded her musical numbers with a hundred Sony PD-100s hidden on the set, yielding angles and footage otherwise impossible with a single camera of any type.

Hidden cameras also played into the documentary-like feature *Fuckland*, in which Argentinian filmmaker Jose Luis Marques smuggled a digital camera and an actress into the British-controlled Falkland Islands. Attaching a wide-angle lens to the camera and then attaching the camera to himself, Marques cast himself as a man out to nurture a new generation of Argentines in the Falklands—by impregnating local women. The camera he used, a SonyTRV-900, was easily concealed, but is still large compared to tiny cameras like the Sony PC-5 (which weighs less than a pound) or Canon Elura2, both of which can capture crisp video and still fit in a jacket pocket.

As exhilarating as this has been for converted directors, by all accounts the actors love it too. In *Sam the Man*, a low-budget digital feature directed by InDigEnt founder Gary Winick, the lightweight camera made it possible for Winick to film in a hotel room (without management's knowledge) and shoot an intimate scene of two actors sitting at a table with just room lighting and very little crew. Thanks to 60 minute DV tapes, he was able to shoot in long takes that let his actors improvise, stop and start over, and otherwise explore characterization without him having to break off takes to tweak the camera. He was also able to pack up and quietly leave afterward.

The sudden impact of this mobility has been felt perhaps more acutely among editors, who, thanks to the computer input/output format IEEE-1394 (a.k.a. FireWire or i.Link), can now import and start playing with footage immediately after a wrap if they choose. And thanks to a new generation of desktop editing and compositing programs like Apple's Final Cut Pro or Adobe's After Effects, they can execute the kinds of edits and special effects on a laptop that 10 years ago would have required proprietary systems like an Avid or Flame.

Journalists and documentarians are using their newfound freedom to edit and file footage while still on location, even in the most remote locales. MSNBC.com reporter Preston Mendenhall began regularly filing reports from the capital of Pakistan after the tragic events of Sept. 11, shooting with a Panasonic camera, editing and compressing footage for the Web on his laptop, and uploading it to servers across the globe using a satellite phone. He was also able to fit all of this equipment into a single bag that weighed just 15 pounds.

These are just the technical possibilities. What can be done artistically largely remains to be seen—filmmakers have been so worried about nailing the nuts and bolts that explorations in color or narrative have been virtually nonexistent. But that's already started changing thanks to films like *Dancer in the Dark* or *Timecode*, Mike Figgis' experiment with shooting an entire movie in one take. Figgis shot with four cameras, using 90-minute tapes, and eventually put the four images on the screen simultaneously, using sound cues to guide the audience's eyes. His new movie, *Hotel*, mixes digital footage with film and again uses some split-screen storytelling, but Figgis is applying digital solutions to his production as well. He created the stills book for his film himself, exporting frames straight from the footage into Photoshop, where he proceeded to tweak his movie color palette at his convenience and to his delight.

That's just the beginning, and Figgis, Wenders, and their ilk know it. Wenders in particular is militant about harnessing these tools as soon as possible, or else, he fears, they will use you. "We can feed film into computers so that it becomes immaterial information, of which every bit, every single atom, can be worked at, manipulated, changed, and replaced," he told a conference of college-aged filmmakers last winter. "Then we can output the result back to film, as if nothing ever happened. But we have not changed all the storytelling tools around. We're still toying around with a new nuclear technology of images without a clue, really, where it is taking us."

This guide is meant to be the compass for that trip.

Greg Lindsay is a freelance writer covering technology and business.

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Pick of the Pans

by Beth Pinsker

IN THOSE OLD-FASHIONED DAYS of 35mm film, the names of the movie cameras—the Ariflex, Panavision, or even the Krasnogorsk—had a ring to them, and could bring forth lush associations. Today's digital camera model names have all the lilt of bar codes.

From the HDW-F900 to the AJ-PD900A to the GY-DV500 to even the reasonable-sounding PD-150 or the XL1, it's almost impossible to bring some sort of non-binary image to mind. To add to the confusion, the technology is developing so rapidly that most of the cameras on the market 18 months ago are now obsolete—like the Sony PD-100 or the Canon XL1—so it's hard for filmmakers and cinematographers to bond with their machinery the way their counterparts have done for the past century.

Yet the filmmakers who have braved the array of today's digital camera models were able to make a selection—although sometimes they worked with several different cameras at once because the costs were low enough. How did they make the decisions? How do they rate their experiences? *The Independent* tracked down several to go through the thought process.

Lovely and Amazing, on the Sony HDW-F900

Digital video, especially the gold-standard of shooting on the high definition Sony CineAlta system at 24 frames per second, was not at all on the mind of director Nicole Holofcener when she was developing her second feature, *Lovely and Amazing*, which will be released by Lions Gate in the spring. The film was supposed to stand out as a sharp family drama starring Catherine Keener and Brenda Blethyn, like her *Walking and Talking* stood out as a witty romantic comedy in 1996.

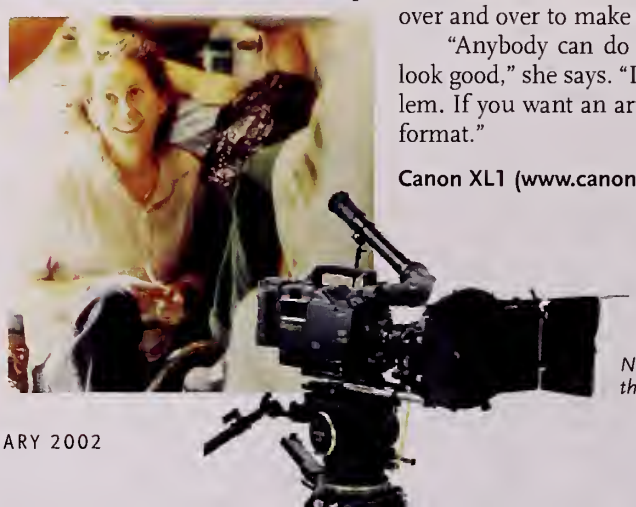
But, she says, "I had no choice. The financers said we'll give you money to shoot your film if you shoot it on digital video." Blow-up Pictures, the digital arm of Open City Films, produced the film in association with Good Machine, and digital was their hook to getting the million dollars to proceed.

The decision to go with the Sony high-def system was made because it was suddenly affordable and available, and because Holofcener's main goal was to make the experience as close to shooting on film as she could.

"I watched a lot of films and tests at the beginning. I interviewed a lot of DPs. All we wanted to do is see how much we could make it look like film," she says. "Some shots look more like video than others, but I think we pretty much accomplished that."

On the other hand, she says that although there were some advantages to HD on the post-production side in terms of color correction, it took just as long to light and required the same size crew as a 35mm production. So Holofcener doesn't think they experienced any cost savings, and if she had the choice down the road, she'd go back to shooting on 35mm. If she didn't have the choice, however, she wouldn't complain about any digital format. "I'd do it again in a second," she says. "I'd take any medium if I could get it."

Sony HDW-F900
(www.sony.com) | $99,500



Nicole Holofcener (left) and the Sony HDW-F900

Edgeplay: A Film About the Runaways, on the Canon XL1

Victory Tischler-Blue, known as Vicki Blue when she was a teenage girl rocker in the Runaways with Joan Jett and Lita Ford, didn't know anything about digital video two years ago when she started to work on a documentary about the strange, sad days of her band. In fact, while she had directed for television and edited, she had never handled a film camera herself. But now she's her own cinematographer and editor, and she's special-ordering lenses and beta testing cameras for Canon.

"When you're doing a low- to no-budget production, people don't show up, or they show up stoned, or they claim they own the footage. Every weird thing that could happen, did happen," she says. "I learned how to do everything myself."

Vicki Blue being filmed, and the Canon XL1

Tischler-Blue says she would never have been able to teach herself the basics of a standard 35mm camera—shutter speeds, irises, and so forth—so being able to point and shoot with the XL1 was her savior for getting the film off the ground, especially when nobody would take her seriously enough to finance the project. Even her former bandmates had a little trouble with seeing Tischler-Blue in the director's chair, since she had not been in a power position in her days with the Runaways.

"I joined the band as a replacement. And now it's 25 years later and it was a really weird power shift," she says, adding, "It was the ultimate power shift. It was fun."

The particular advantage of XL1, she says, was its handheld ease. Although she was shooting mostly interviews—interspersed with old 8mm footage of the band—they weren't all traditional talking head spots. She used a Sony DSR-200 on a tripod and moved around with the XL1. Of the lenses she had built for the camera, her favorite was a wide-angle fisheye adapter. Her other innovation was to run generations of the tape over and over to make it look more grainy.

"Anybody can do this, anybody can make footage look good," she says. "If you like a grungy look, no problem. If you want an arty thing, you can manipulate the format."

Canon XL1 (www.canon.com) | $4,500 (for XL1s)

Raw Deal, on the JVC GY-DV500

Billy Corben and Alfred Spellman (top); the JVC DV-500 (above)

Price was definitely an object when producer Alfred Spellman and director Billy Corben were wondering what kind of camera to use for *Raw Deal: A Question of Consent*, a documentary about the alleged rape of an exotic dancer at a frat house in Florida.

For shooting a documentary, they thought Super 16 was too pricey. "But we were still questioning: Digibeta or DV?" Spellman says. "We tested a bunch and what we found was that between the quality and the price, the JVC camera was the top of the mid-range selection, what they call prosumer."

Spellman also says that it was important that they got to own a piece of equipment and could amortize it over the course of several projects. Although by the time they get *Raw Deal* to theaters in February through Artisan and start working on another project, the camera could well be out of date.

The biggest problem they faced at first was the urge to take the camera out of the box and start shooting. They hired a cinematographer, Lawrence Janus, and set out a plan to light and compose shots. They ended up spending as much time in preparation as they would have shooting on film.

But the savings on film stock alone, says Spellman, added up to several thousand dollars. They bought a Final Cut Pro package upfront, and he says shooting on DV allowed them to segue into the editing process with ease. Plus they saved more money by not renting out an Avid suite and working on a ticking meter.

"We went from the camera through FireWire to the Mac, then back out. We projected on HD at Sundance. So this whole time, the film hasn't left the digital realm," he says.

JVC GY-DV500 (www.jvc.com) | $7,600

Tortilla Soup's cinematographer Xavier Perez Grobet with the AJ-PD900WA

Tortilla Soup, on a Panasonic AJ-PD900WA

The camera choice for *Tortilla Soup*, which is a remake of Ang Lee's *Eat Drink Man Woman* from a Hispanic perspective, was all about food.

"We wanted it to be really intimate, human, with a strong food element that was sensual and colorful," says producer John Manulis. The Panasonic AJ-PD900WA camera his team chose is a 480p, which is a progressive scan system that falls between HD and regular DV. While that's all very technical, the shorthand that Manulis has is: "It's very warm and friendly. There are no hard edges and you don't get that crystal effect that you get with HD."

While Manulis' Los Angeles-based company, Vision Box, is ostensibly a production house that specializes in digital features and post-production services, this particular film originated from within. Manulis was formerly the head of filmed entertainment at Goldwyn, which owns the rights to *Eat Drink Man Woman* and brought him on to produce the remake (with Spanish director Maria Ripoll). Manulis and his crew did the camera tests and the other preparation work for the production, and supervised the postproduction.

Manulis doesn't use the Panasonic 480p camera for all of Visionbox's clients. On the contrary, his goal is to use the best system for each film. Some projects benefit from the handheld aesthetic of the Canon XL1, some from the intimacy of the Sony PD-150. Overall, he sees the benefit of DV as getting exactly what you need, seeing immediately what you have, and allowing more interaction between the actors and director. But he says that none of that comes from any particular camera or manufacturer.

"When the technology settles down a little and becomes more regular, then maybe people will develop an allegiance," he says. "But for now, the cool thing is that there's a whole new tool in the kit. And the camera is part of the story, because it gives you this whole other permutation."

Panasonic AJ-PD900WA (www.panasonic.com) | $40,000

Tape, on a Sony PD-150

On the set of Tape *with the Sony PD-150*

Most people don't think of Richard Linklater as a traditionalist. But he has never been very interested in DV, even after shooting his last two features with a Sony PD-150. "I can't wait to have an Ari or Panavision again. I'm just not one of those people who think everything can be shot digital," he says.

The first of these digital films, *Waking Life*, was more an experiment for the artists who turned his footage into animation than it was for him. "It was a momentary tool," he says.

For *Tape*, which stars Robert Sean Leonard and Ethan Hawke, his choice was more deliberate. "I went to B&H photo [in New York]; I listened to some advice," he says. "I was interested in the 24p camera, but I was six months ahead of the curve. I liked the way *The Cruise* looked, but that was in black and white and I wasn't sure of the color look."

Tape takes place in one hotel room over the course of a couple of hours, but Linklater's challenge was still about action. "Moving a film camera is probably a bigger deal in terms of lighting and the weight of it. [Cinematographer Maryse Alberti] and I each had a camera," says Linklater. "Even during a take, when one actor speaks and the other doesn't, I could move in and get a new composition. I wanted to not return to the same angle. I wanted it to be this David Hockney-type collage. It sounds crazy, but that was the image I had in mind. I said, the actors were well-rehearsed, and here's the space, let's wrap ourselves around that and try to attack it physically. We were like little piranhas nipping at it with our cameras."

Sony PD-150 (www.sony.com) | $4,400

A Dream DIY System: DV to DVD

by Greg Gilpatrick

As a filmmaker and professional computer geek I often find myself dreaming about the myriad ways I can increase my productivity and creativity through the addition of computer hardware and software. While incredibly creative and resourceful film and videomakers make amazing work with the lowest of the low-end of technology, I usually blame my own unsuccessful ventures on my lack of high-end and even higher priced digital media creation tools (a.k.a. "toys").

While I wait to hear back from American Express about a higher credit limit, I've been spending my time going to online shopping sites putting together the ultimate computer video system. My current system isn't shabby by any means, but in the worlds of computers and digital video there's always something newer, better, and more expensive that promises to work faster, allow you more creativity, and make you an all-around better person.

Although I perform quite a few tasks that involve film, video, and computers, my main activity is taking video from tape, editing it, adding effects and graphics, and turning it into a DVD. All of these tasks rely upon specialized software and hardware that can vary in price—ranging from free to up to a $1 million. I could have just filled my wish list with an Avid|DS HD and Discreet Inferno and filled these pages with just the pricetags of their respective versions. But instead here's a list of items that can be added to many people's existing set-ups to put them on par with (or make them even better than) more expensive "turnkey" systems that you can find in a post house.

INTERESTING HARDWARE

Apple PowerMac G4 A

The dual 800 G4 is Apple's top of the line workstation that provides the backbone of the dream system. Out of the box, it comes with the DVD-R superdrive to burn CDs and DVDs. That alone is a great tool. But it also includes built-in FireWire ports, and in my configuration also includes a Zip 250 drive for backing up and swapping documents as well as the Nvidia GeForce3 video card—currently the best computer video card available on any platform. The two 800 Mhz G4 chips inside should give enough processing power for all of the dream tasks we'll be using it for.

Apple Cinema Display B

The Cinema Display is the most gorgeous computer monitor available for any computer. While some video pros prefer two separate displays, my opinion is that the Cinema Display is easier on the eyes and the hands—the less distance you have to move the mouse, the less repetitive stress on your hand.

Pinnacle Cinewave RT

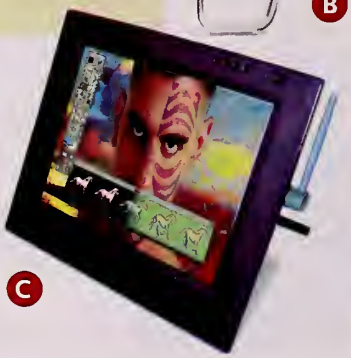
Picking a video card to digitize from your analog video source is a very personal decision. While there are many cards to choose from, only three are suitable for our dream system—the Aurora Igniter, Digital Voodoo's D1 Desktop, and the CineWave. I chose the Cinewave RT because it supports the new real-time effects in Final Cut Pro 2 and it offers a clear upgrade path to High-Definition video if we were to choose to do that in the future.

Wacom Cintiq C

Most of you have probably seen a graphics tablet—it's a flat-surface device that translates what you draw on it to the computer screen. The Cintiq takes this one step further and puts the computer screen in the tablet so that you are drawing directly on the screen. While this may not seem immediately applicable to video editing, this could be useful in the creation of graphic elements for DVD menus, titles, and visual effects.

Sonic SD-1000

This is a card that converts video into MPEG2, the video format for DVDs in real-time. DVD Studio Pro, which is significantly cheaper at $999 versus $10,000, includes an MPEG2 software encoder, but it doesn't work in real time. So if you have a lot of video to encode, this device could save you time, and time is money. Sonic has certified the product to work with DVD Studio Pro.



BORING HARDWARE

Two 512MB RAM DIMMs

Having a huge amount of RAM is essential for creating the fastest and most powerful video system. Luckily, RAM prices are incredibly low right now so adding over a gigabyte of RAM to the 256 MB that came installed with the G4 shouldn't be too much of a problem.

ATTO dual-channel Ultra3 SCSI card

Almost as important as the processor speed of the computer is how fast data can move from the hard drive to the rest of the computer. Ultra3 SCSI is about as fast as you can get for a desktop computer. It can send and receive data up to 160 megabytes per second. Since this type of connection is not built into the computer, we'll have to add this card to the computer in order to connect our high-performance hard drives. I selected the dual-channel version so we can connect other SCSI devices (like the DLT drive) without slowing down the connection to the hard drives.

Medea VideoRaid RT 6/450 D

In order to get the best video performance from your hard drives, it's best to use a set-up called a RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks) that spreads the data transfer among several disks. This product packages six high-performance hard drives into one box that gives you 450 gigabytes of storage—enough to hold several hours of the highest quality uncompressed video. Even if the dream system were only for DV video over FireWire, I would still choose this product for its reliability and speed compared to FireWire hard drives (which Apple officially discourages for the use of video editing).

LaCie DLT1 Drive E

DLT (Digital Linear Tape) is a form of media used to store up to 80 gigabytes of data onto relatively inexpensive tapes. While mostly used to backup data on corporate computers and servers, DLT has become important in the video world because it's the standard for sending DVD files to a manufacturing facility. If you intend to create DVDs that will be mass-produced, especially the longer DVD-9 format, a DLT drive is a necessity.

ATI Radeon PCI video card

This is simply another video card so you have something to connect to the Wacom Cintiq.

SOFTWARE

Apple Final Cut Pro 2

Final Cut Pro has proven itself as a versatile product for beginners and seasoned professionals and is the cornerstone of the Dream System.

Apple DVD Studio Pro

Apple's professional DVD authoring environment provides an intuitive and powerful tool that allows users to create full-featured DVDs.

Discreet Combustion *(below)*

Although Adobe's After Effects is most people's compositing tool of choice on desktop systems, I find Combustion to be a more powerful and more intuitive application from the company that makes the workstation systems used on many big-budget films and TV programs.

Electric Image Universe 3D

I chose Universe 3D over the more well known and respected Maya or Lightwave because I'm already familiar with it. Universe 3D is more than enough for the simple animations I'll use this Dream System to create.

Electric Image Amorphium Pro

Amorphium's tool section is useful at beating, scratching, and denting your 3-D models to give them a higher sense of realism. In conjunction with the Cintiq, you could do some pretty cool stuff.

Adobe Photoshop *(right)*

Photoshop is necessary for creating menus for DVDs and is useful for a host of graphics, design, and effects work. Combustion, Final Cut Pro, and DVD Studio Pro all open Photoshop natively.

Adobe Illustrator

Illustrator really becomes useful when used in conjunction with Combustion, as the program automatically opens Illustrator files and allows you to animate them over time.

THE SHOPPING CART

Hardware

Apple PowerMac G4—with dual 800 Mhz processor with DVD-R "SuperDrive," Nvidia GeForce 3 video card, and Zip 250 drive (www.apple.com/powermac)	$3,849
Apple 22" Cinema Display (www.apple.com/displays)	$2,499
Pinnacle CineWave RT analog video card (www.pinnaclesys.com)	$4,960
Wacom Cintiq 15" display/tablet (www.wacom.com)	$1,899
Sonic SD-1000 MPEG2 video encoder (www.sonic.com)	$10,000
2 512 MB PC133 RAM DIMMs	$140
ATTO Ultra3 SCSI PCI Card (www.attotech.com)	$549
Medea 6/450 GB VideoRaid RT (www.medea.com)	$4,999
LaCie DLT1 drive (www.lacie.com)	$1,699
ATI Radeon PCI video card (www.ati.com)	$229

Software

Apple Final Cut Pro 2 (www.apple.com/finalcutpro)	$999
Apple DVD Studio Pro (www.apple.com/dvdstudiopro/)	$999
Discreet Combustion (www.discreet.com)	$3499
Electric Image Universe 3D (www.universe3d.com)	$1,999
Electric Image Amorphium Pro (www.electricimage.com)	$379
Adobe Photoshop (www.adobe.com)	$609
Adobe Illustrator (www.adobe.com)	$199
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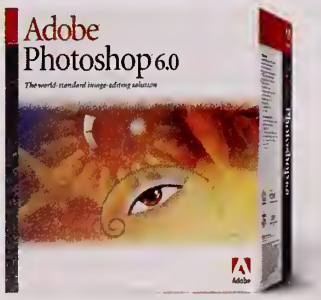

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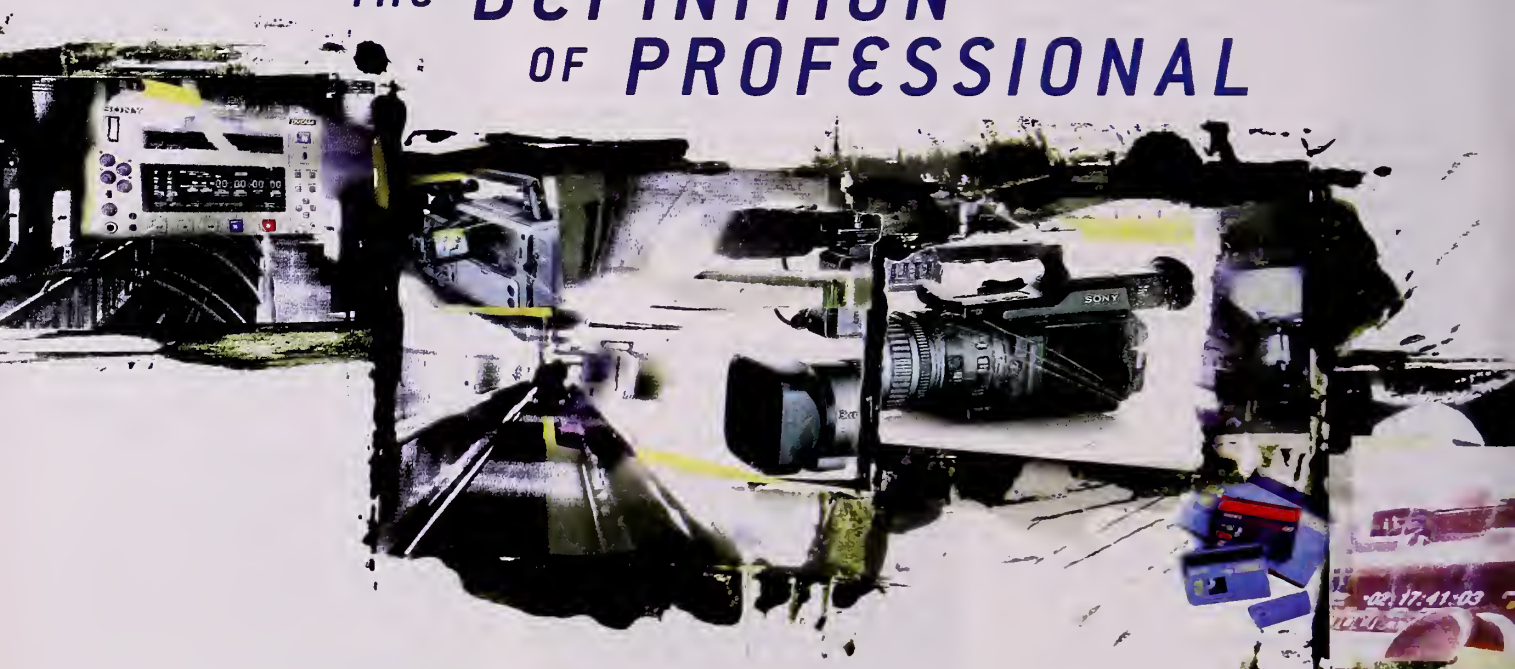

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Ask the Final Cut Pro

Bart Weiss

Dear Pro,

In editing a program on Final Cut Pro that's shot partly in DV-Cam and partly in Beta-SP, do you have suggestions for the best way to input the Beta-SP material? *(NewDealFilms)*

There are two ways to approach this situation. You could use a board to digitize your Beta footage, like a Targa board or an RT Mac. Then you have to get a box for deck control (you do have a deck don't you?). The other choice is to make DV dubs of your Betas and work from them. How you go will depend on how much Beta you have. I think there are fewer problems when you work with Final Cut Pro with FireWire through the DV systems rather than going with digitizing with a board because you get into drive speed issues and other problems. If you go with the RT Mac solution realize that it has an S input not RYBY, so make sure your Beta deck has an S outlet (and not all do!).

Dear Pro,

Will upgrading to Final Cut Pro 2.0 affect my current project files? Does the directory to linking current media with browser files remain intact after an upgrade? What are common issues or complaints following upgrades? *(Jan Gero/Jenn Garrison)*

Yes, hold off on upgrading until you finish your project, if that is what you are asking. Final Cut will upgrade your files, but you would be wise to wait. There is a good article on Ken Stone's Web site (www.kenstone.net) about upgrading to 2.0. I can tell you that for some reason 2.0 has more problems dropping frames than version 1.25, but it has better file management, audio meters, scrolling text, and a real usable manual that make up for it. The book in itself is worth it. Note: you also have to upgrade to QuickTime 5, which comes with it.

Dear Pro,

What is best for Final Cut Pro: internal hard drives or external hard drives? Which hard drives work best with the program? *(Cruz Angeles)*

The question is not really internal or external, I use both. The key is data management and mismanagement. If you use an internal drive you should partition it (again a good how-to on Ken Stone's site) and have your system file and other programs like word processing, Internet, and e-mail separate from all your video editing stuff. When you mix on the same drive you are asking for capture problems. As to what drives are good, there are many. The best speed is 7200 rpm. FireWire drives work well, but make sure that the one you get has the Oxford 911 chip set. And newer FireWire drives are better than ones from a year ago. One of the nice things about working the FireWire/Mini-DV direction is that you are transferring digital data rather than converting it on the fly, so really fast drives are not as important as in other systems (like Avid). And to figure out how much you need, figure that one gig gives you 4.5 minutes of picture and sound. That does not include what you might need to render files, so you can do the math and see what your data needs are. Remember that drives are getting cheap and you saved so much by not buying that Avid that you can spend on drive space. And while you're at it, buy some more RAM.

Dear Pro,

There's an easy feature on Avid with dissolves that seems to have no equivalent on Final Cut...or am I wrong? On the Avid, when I'm sound editing, I often go through each sound edit and add a little dissolve, say three or five frames, over and over and over. This is easy because the Avid always remembers my last dissolve length and where the dissolve should be placed (whether it should end at, start at, or center the cut). Moreover, if I want to change the length it's automatically highlighted so there's no extra clicking—I just type in the dissolve length and hit return before the dissolve ever gets laid down. Final Cut seems so much more complicated. Is there some easy way to determine the lengths of dissolves (i.e., one that involves less than six mouse clicks plus typing) and the position of the dissolve on the cut (i.e., without this ridiculous dragging of both edges of the dissolve icon)? This would be a great time saver in sound editing. *(Joshua Marston)*

There is a way to do what you want, sort of. But before we go there, there is a mantra that you need to learn: Final Cut Pro is a great program for what it costs, it does a lot, but it is not an Avid. We forget this often because it does so many wonderful Avid-like things. Repeat: Avid equals $30,000, Final Cut Pro equals $999 (and it's much less—as in $250—if you can muster a student I.D.).

Having said that, let's get to your problem. You need to make the length of dissolves you want (3 or 4 frames) as your default transition. You can do this in the browser by dragging the cross dissolve for picture and sound, or the cross fade for sound only, into the favorites folder (both of these can be found in the effects tab of the browser). Then change the length of the dissolver. In the length column in the browser, clip the default length and type in what you want. Then when you get to the transition you want, click on it, you can use the up and down arrows that move edit to edit to make sure you are on the transition, then control-click. The middle option should be your custom dissolve. If you didn't set the length, the default would be one second. You could then control-click again and type in the length of the dissolve you like.

Dear Pro,

If I want to work on an Avid system to finish my documentary after roughing it out on Final Cut Pro, is there any compatibility in terms of the lists? *(Raney Aronson)*

This is easy. You just export your EDL list in the Export command. Select "CMX 3600" and save it on whatever media you have (Zip disc, CD burner) then import it in the Avid EDL manager and convert it into an Avid sequence. That should work. To be on the safe side, keep it simple and do one video track and a few audio ones to do a quick test before you go very far. To be fair, I have not done this myself, but others have with ease. By the way, you can transfer the other way too.

Bart Weiss is the founder of the Dallas Video Festival (www.videofest.org). He is also co-chairman of the board of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers.

For more Final Cut Pro help, pose a question on the AIVF Web site message board at www.aivf.org. Also see www.2pop.com and www.kenstone.net.

Cool "Clothes" for Your Camera

by Robert Goodman

Filters and Matte Boxes

Using graduated neutral density filters to reduce the brightness of the sky without changing the rest of the scene is probably the best investment anyone shooting mini-DV can make, even if it means getting a matte box to position them properly in front of the lens. Here are some options for kits that include both:

The Van Dieman "Mosquito" matte box system ($945) is beautifully finished in every way and an excellent matte box for handheld use, though it is expensive. The modular system mounts on lenses with diameters under 100mm using clamp adapters ($65), attaches with a standard 15mm mini-rod or bridge plate system, or with Cinetech's XL1 Mini-Rod Plate ($440). Rod systems are best suited for tripod use or short handheld stints. The "Mosquito" box has two filter stages; both rotate and accept 4" x 4" glass or resin filters. You'll need a french flag ($275) to complement the fixed wide angle lens hood.

Birns & Sawyer's Image 2000-95 matte box ($495) is extremely light and clamps on Century Precision Optics, wide angle adapters, or Canon lenses with an 89mm ring adapter that's included in the price. It has a fixed hood with two non-rotating stages that accept 4" x 4" or 4 x 6" glass or resin filters. The Image 2000-80 ($395) includes a 58mm reducing ring to mount the hood on a Sony PD-150 or Canon GL1. However, you must buy it for a specific camera.

An assortment of filters from Formatt

B&S also sells two optical resin filter kits ($150): Diffusion Effects and Graduated Filter. The near weightlessness of resin is a plus, but resin filters are prone to scratching. If you're buying for the long haul, glass is a better value despite higher costs.

Formatt's FM500 is a feather-weight, dual-stage matte box with a fixed wide angle hood and attached french flag. Formatt, a UK manufacturer of glass filters, packages the FM500 with three 4" x 4" filters of your choice and a screw-in or clamp-on adapter for $599 in its Hollywood Pro-Pack.

The set-up for Formatt's Hollywood Pro-Pack

The FM500's hood and french flag are made of plastic with machined aluminum mounting hardware and filter stages. Careful attention was paid to the smallest details. The stages have locks to secure the filters in place. The rotating stage has ergonomic finger grips and a smooth action. The adapter rings are secured to the matte box with a knurled screw. A hinged lid prevents light, from above, from striking the filters. The wide angle lens hood can be swapped with a deeper, narrower version ($99) by loosening four screws. A thumb knob locks the large attached french flag in position. There isn't a bellows version but this matte box comes close to getting everything right.

A major bonus is the cost. Formatt's 4" x 4" glass filters sell for $125 to $165 each. Do the math and you'll note the matte box costs less than $225 even though it's clearly worth far more.

Remote Controls

LANC remote zoom and focus controls can offer more precise control over the lens operations than the rocker switch on camcorder lenses. Some features may not work with every model of camcorder.

Canon's Remote Controller ZR-1000

Canon's Remote Controller ZR-1000 ($249) has a rocker switch for zooming, buttons for focusing, record search, start/stop, standby, on-screen information display, and a dial to set zoom speed. The ZR-1000 has five speeds and a pressure-sensitive variable setting. Small brackets on the back of this plastic remote will only fit pan handles up to three-eighths of an inch in diameter and the cable, which is only 12 inches, isn't long enough to reach from a tripod's pan handle to the camera.

B&S's CooLzoom "L" remote control ($395), a tiny, brightly-colored square box, is designed to be mounted on a pan or jib handle. It also fits on the Image 2000 shoulder support. An LED indicates whether the camera is in record, pause, or stop mode. Zoom speed is controlled by pressure on a small switch that offers the same sensitivity as the camcorder's rocker switch. The rubber tip on the CooLzoom has a tendency to come off if you press too hard, though losing it doesn't matter.

The compact size and light weight is a big plus, though the CooLzoom got confused at times and lost control of the camera. The remote can be reset by unplugging it. If size is your primary consideration, the CooLzoom is a better choice than Canon's remote. If accurate zoom speed is more important, consider the remote controls manufactured by Varizoom, reviewed in October 1999.

CooLzoom "L" remote control

Quick Release Plate

Videosmith's Mightywondercam Rover-Snap quick release plate ($69.95) is designed for cameras that weigh less than 10 pounds. The Rover-Snap is a two-piece unit consisting of a camera platform and a base plate that mounts on a tripod. An anti-twist pin prevents the platform section from rotating. You can release the camera with one hand by pressing on the lever and lifting it away. Remounting the camera is just as easy. The Rover-Snap is beautifully made. It worked flawlessly in extensive field tests and is sized for mini-DV camcorders.

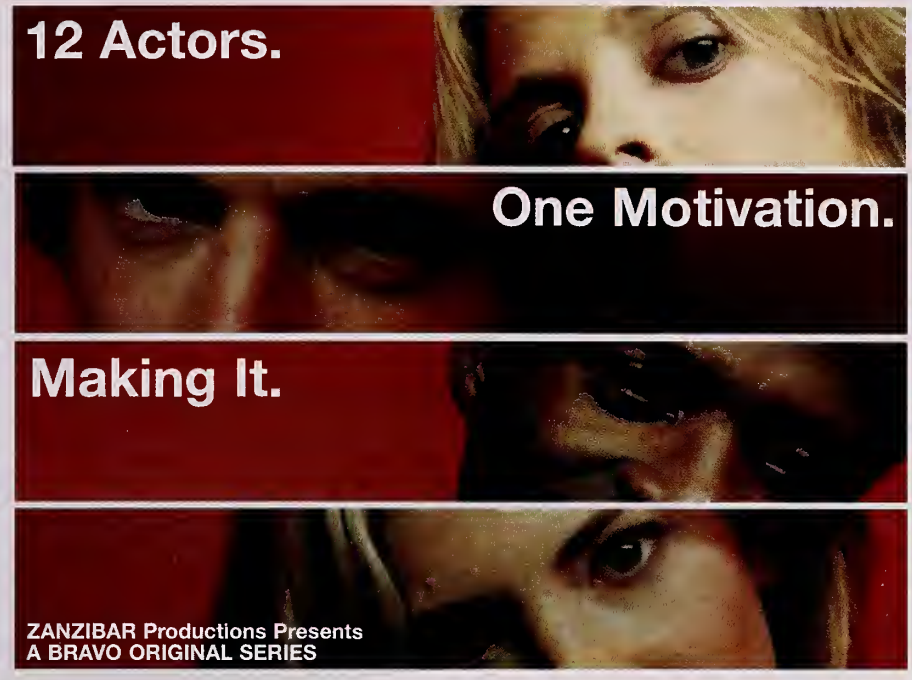
Videosmith's Mightywondercam Rover-Snap quick release plate

Field Monitor

Panasonic's TC-7WMS1 ($795) is a 7" color LCD battery-powered (12V) widescreen monitor with a built-in speaker that offers four display modes: 4:3 letterboxed, 4:3 expanded to fill the frame, 16:9, or zoom mode. The zoom feature may help some people with focus, but I didn't like it. The monitor has two video inputs, though the supplied cable only has one video and audio input and an Anton-Bauer gold battery connector. The monitor has a 1/4-20 socket for mounting. Birns & Sawyer offers a Dog Bone adapter kit ($275) that includes a Panavise swivel adapter, hot shoe adapter, and dog bone bracket. This lets you mount the monitor in the camcorder's hot shoe and position it to avoid glare.

Robert Goodman (wd24p@hotmail.com) is an independent filmmaker and one of the authors of the American Society of Cinematographers Video Manual. Damon Sinclair contributed to this article.

Panasonic's TC-7WMS1



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Cheap Treats

The Name of This Book Is Dogme95

by Richard Kelly
(Faber and Faber Ltd) $15.

Dogme95: marketing stunt or a solemn call for more truthful films? British writer Richard Kelly gets to the heart of the back-to-basics new wave with this collection of interviews and personal ruminations. Kelly journeys around the world to track down the Dogme brethren, including cinematographer Anthony Dod Mantle and Dogme converts Harmony Korine, Jean-Marc Barr, and Lone Scherfig. These lively conversations offer insight into the filmmaking process and how the movement reevaluated production practices at a pivotal moment in digital technology's evolution. *–Daniel Steinhart*

StudioAction

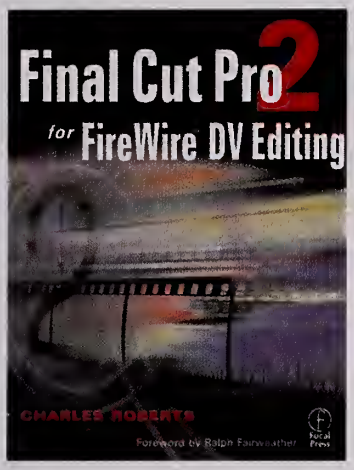
Pinnacle Systems
$67.53

If Final Cut Pro is too hard for you to handle, try this kids' version of editing software. With the help of the software, you can arrange your best shots and liven them up with titles, transitions, sound effects, and music. If that's still too hard, head down to your local elementary school and ask for some help. . . . *—Jason Guerrasio*

Mini DV Storage Rack

Bryco Products $19.95

Now is not the time to be disorganized. Keep your tapes in order and in place with this basic storage unit. It stores up to 24 tapes. *—Farrin Jacobs*



Final Cut Pro 2 for FireWire DV Editing

by Charles Roberts (Focal Press) $49.99

Charles Roberts, assistant professor of video and digital media at Fitchburg State University, offers an easy-to-understand overview of the FireWire-based system. *Final Cut Pro 2* also introduces the reader to Apple's Final Cut Pro editing system and to the digital video format in general. What's best about the book is that its information on formatting the proper configuration of basic editing systems is pretty much jargon-free. *–JG*

Cybertool 29

Victorinox $57

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TealMovie

TealPoint Software $19.95

Is that a video player in your pocket...? It can be with TealMovie, which turns your Palm OS(R) into a portable screening room. So the next time someone asks you what you're working on, you can pull out your Palm and show them a few scenes, with synchronized sound and in color. The system enables up to 25 frames-per-second playback. *—FJ*

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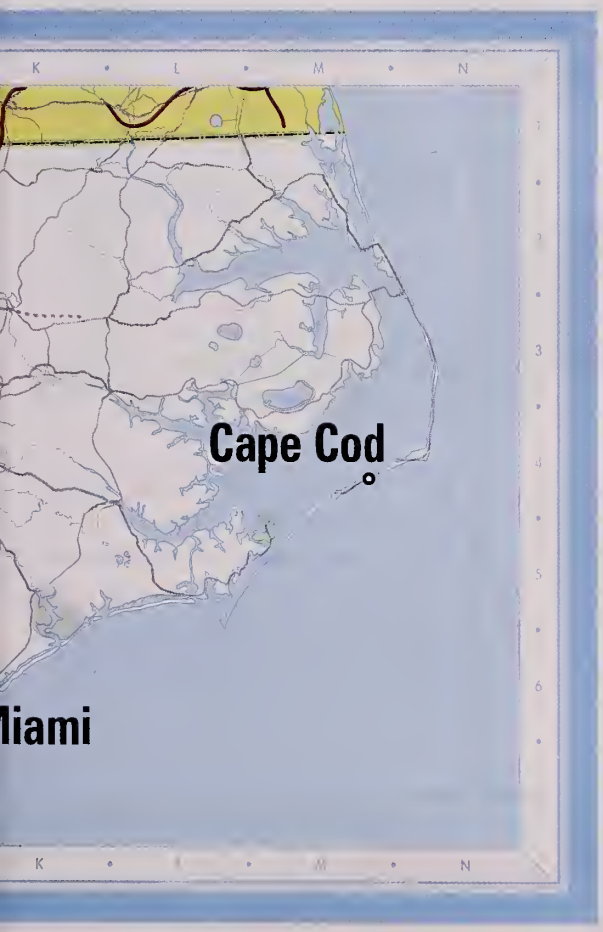

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Second Generation Shots

The Canon XL1s takes over for its obsolete cousin

BY ROBERT M. GOODMAN

IF YOU'RE IN THE MARKET FOR A REASONABLY priced digital filmmaking camcorder, the Canon XL1s ($4495 list, street $3700) should be on your short list. The XL1s looks, at first glance, like its older relative. Its eye-catching design is as fresh today as it was in 1997 when Canon introduced the XL1. What's best is that although numerous improvements have been made, making the XL1s far easier to use for digital filmmaking, the price hasn't changed. In 2002, the XL1s is still the only mini-DV camcorder with interchangeable lenses that lists for under $5000.

Our tests of the camera started with evaluating the new features. Canon added more imaging controls, important to filmmakers, and modified how those settings and other camera functions are accessed. A "menu" button activates a list that appears in the viewfinder. The iris wheel, normally used to adjust the lens aperture, allows you to scroll up or down and highlight choices. Push the wheel in to select a menu choice. It's fast and easy to use because you can change settings with one finger. The approach is identical to how camera functions are set on Canon's GL1.

Custom Imaging Controls

Canon's realization that professionals rather than consumers were the principal market for the XL1 prompted the addition of "DSP controls" in higher-end cameras and selectable levels for zebra patterns. The digital signal processor (DSP) controls every aspect of the signal from the CCDs . The XL1s provides control over sharpness (detail), color gain (saturation), color phase (hue), and setup level (black levels) in six steps, plus or minus from the default setting.

Zebra settings indicate which portions of the picture are over a certain level as measured with a waveform monitor. Skin is typically exposed to a value of 70 IRE, which is approximately a 70 percent gray value in photographic terms. Professionals use the zebras on high-end cameras as a light meter, pegging skin tones and the zebras to 70 IRE. Canon had the right idea—the zebra pattern level on the XL1s can be set—though the range is only from 80 IRE to 100 IRE. In practice, the best approach to achieve maximum image quality is to set the zebras for 95 IRE and then stop down until all the zebras disappear except for any on specular highlights in the picture.

The new Canon XL1s

Canon's choice to move the menu navigation to the iris wheel freed up three buttons on the body of the XL1s. Higher capacity memory chips allow you to store three custom presets and assign them to what were the navigation buttons. To test this feature we created three looks: a low-

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contrast mode with black level compression, higher color saturation, and reduced detail; a high-contrast mode with less black level compression, low color saturation, and reduced detail; and a skin tone mode with minimal detail, warmer hues, black level compression, and slightly lower color saturation.

You can switch between these settings by pressing the custom preset button and cycling through the four possible choices —three presets and factory default. The changes are instantly apparent as you adjust the settings under the function menu. Unfortunately, after you've stored the settings, and then go to select them using the button on the body of the camera, the setting doesn't take effect until after you've selected it. In practice, this means you'll need to make a cheat sheet to remember what you stored in CP1, CP2, and CP3 or go through the process several times if you choose the wrong one. Despite this minor annoyance, having three presets to cope with varying conditions is a godsend.

The higher memory capacity also allows for three custom white balance settings to be stored in addition to the automatic, daylight, and tungsten settings. This feature is handy when you want to store subtle adjustments to color balance or must work under fluorescent or mercury vapor lights.

You'll appreciate the new clear scan feature if you've ever had to shoot with computer or television monitors in the frame. Switch on clear scan and you can adjust the sync frequency from 61.9 to 201.5 MHz in 117 steps, one of which will hide the rolling black bar that appears on the monitors in your image. Interestingly, during our brief test, the normal frequency setting was the best choice for the monitor we shot. However, from past experience, I know clear scan can be a life saver when shooting in a room filled with monitors.

Additional Enhancements

An intervolometer function provides time-lapse capabilities. The length of time the camera will record can be preset and the moment at which recording begins can be set at intervals of 30 seconds or one, five, or ten minutes.

One of the most disconcerting things about the old Canon XL1 was the auto shut-off feature. After five minutes of inactivity the camera automatically powered down. The XL1s now offers a choice. A VCR stop option will power down just the recorder so you can continue to work on lighting, exposure, or framing without having to leave the tape door open to prevent the camera from shutting off.

Other useful functions in the menus are zoom speed settings for the handle mounted zoom control and the pistol grip control. The controls on the handle typically come into use for low angle shooting and the doggie cam view. The pistol grip control offers pressure sensitive zoom speed control but the rocker switch on the handle grip had only one speed. The new XL1s provides low, medium, and fast speed options for both rocker switches.

It was a quasi-secret that the XL1 could generate what looked like color bars when you pressed a certain sequence of buttons. Unfortunately, the bars weren't calibrated, so they had no practical use. The XL1s corrected this oversight by adding calibrated SMPTE split-field color bars and made them readily available on the digital-effects selection menu. This allows users to set up a monitor in the field and record bars on the head of a tape though there's no 1KHz tone generator for audio calibration.

An index write feature allows you to record a six-second index signal at any point during recording. The purpose is to make searching easier to do because the word "INDEX" appears in the viewfinder of the XL1s. The button that records this non-erasable signal is a custom key button.

The two custom keys are separate from the custom preset buttons. You can assign index write, zebra on or off, VCR stop or camera shutoff, a zoom speed, audio one or two input options, or whether to display viewfinder information on a connected monitor to either of these two buttons in camera mode. When the camera is VCR mode for dubbing or playback, the custom keys can be used to select whether to display the viewfinder information on an external monitor, turn the time code display on or off, or change the audio input options.

The EVF display button, which used to turn off and on some but not all of the information in the viewfinder, has been

enhanced. The new XL1s allows you to turn off everything without using the remote control. When the camera is first powered up the date, time, time zone, camera mode, and audio setting appear in the viewfinder for a few seconds. Of the new viewfinder display options, the most important one is the 16x9 guide because production is moving from 4:3 to 16:9 and even wider aspect ratios. Two thin white lines indicate the top and bottom of a 16:9 image so you can shoot in 4:3 mode and frame correctly for 16:9. It would be nice if Canon had gone all the way and added crosshairs but it's an enormous improvement nonetheless.

External changes on the camera include: +18 and +30 dB gain settings in addition to the -3, 0, +6, and +12 settings on the XL1; and video insert and audio dubbing buttons on the VCR controls because the XL1s can accept analog video and can convert it to miniDV. In our tests, the tape transport was significantly quieter while recording and when paused. The XL1s uses about 10 percent less power than the XL1 so battery life is slightly better. The signal-to-noise ratio of the camera was enhanced by +4dB. This may partly account for the 1/4 to _ stop increase in speed we noted during our exposure tests.

Enhancements made to the 16X lens may also account for the slight increase in speed. The autofocus feature reacts faster and hunts less. The zoom movement is better and back focus seems to be maintained throughout the range. The manual focus ring is stiffer and feels more responsive. Under working conditions, the new lens enabled us to get shots faster and improve our productivity.

Canon has made many valuable improvements though the imaging section of the camera hasn't undergone any radical changes. There are reasons to upgrade if you own the old version, but it could be a tough decision. Some documentary filmmakers may prefer a smaller, less obtrusive camera. However, new lens options for this camera may offer a compelling reason to think otherwise.

Robert Goodman is an Emmy nominated writer/director, based in Philadelphia, and one of the authors of the ASC's Video Manual. Send your comments to him at wd24p@hotmail.com.

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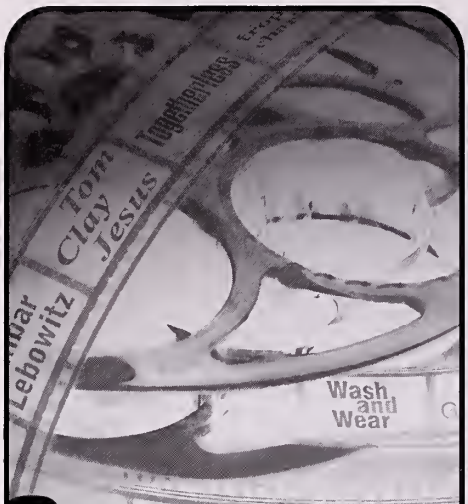

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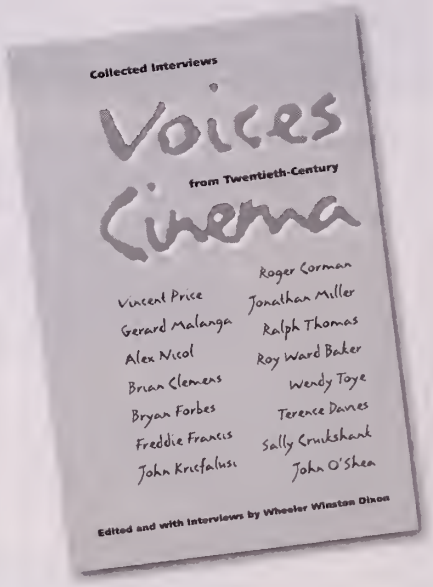


Voices from Twentieth Century Cinema
Wheeler Winston Dixon
Southern Illinois University Press, $19.95

With the 15 interviews included in this well thought-out collection, film scholar Winston Wheeler Dixon attempts to explore subjects that readers might not expect from each interview subject. So in the session with Vincent Price, Dixon talks with the actor about his work outside of the horror/B-movie world. In the book's first interview, with Gerard Malanga, Andy Warhol's "right-hand man," Dixon offers a glimpse into how exactly and why Warhol moved into filmmaking.

In his general introduction to the interviews, which span 20 years and have appeared (generally in truncated form) in the pages of *Cineaste*, *Classic Images*, and *Film Criticism*, among others, Dixon looks back on cinema's first century. That, he posits, could well be film's only century, since the advent of digital technology is leaving no room for the tradition of moving pictures. "We are now," he writes, "in the digital age where we were one hundred years ago in the era of the cinematograph: at the beginning."

Dixon offers a somewhat bleak view of the world of independent cinema. Arthouse and independent movies, he writes, are simply a way to a means. He says, "[T]heir makers hope to graduate immediately to large-scale Hollywood films, thus rendering the independent cinema nothing more than a potential proving ground for future masters of the dominant cinema." But in terms of the film world in general, he plays devil's advocate by at first suggesting that cinema is dead—laid to rest by the heavy hand of that prevalent evil, The Hollywood Blockbuster—only to come back again and pronounce that in truth, cinema "is constantly being reborn."

But as much as Dixon may sound like a highbrow aesthete with a case of the too-intellectual leanings, he's got a taste for pop culture as well. Students or fans of the B film can read about Roger Corman's work as a producer and distributor and get glimpses of him working with such underlings as Francis Ford Coppola and Joe Dante. *Ren & Stimpy* loyalists can learn about how the cartoon came to life, literally. Dixon talked with the series' creator, John Kricfalusi, in 1992, just before he was fired by Nickelodeon (which had bought the rights to the characters).

Cinematgrapher Freddie Francis shares some tales of working with Martin Scorses on *Cape Fear*, a shoot that much to Francis' dismay, got off to a rocky start. "Here I am working with one of the greatest filmmakers of the present-day," he recalls, "and I'm not having a good time." Eventually he got around Scorsese's "protectors" and became close with the director.

In addition to the general introduction, Dixon includes a brief preface to each interview, setting the scene and providing context, so even if you know only the bare minimum about the history of film, you'll understand the greater relevance of each interview.

–Farrin Jacobs

DVD & Videos

Kill Me Later
Director: Dana Lustig
(Studio Home Entertainment, $24.99)

Kill Me Later has all the ingredients to be another mediocre indie black comedy—two on-the-verge stars, the requisite indie-rock soundtrack, that jump-cut editing/music video feel—yet manages to be much more satisfying.

Shawn (Selma Blair), an acid-tongued loan officer, is bent on self-destruction and after a particularly rough morning, decides to end it all by jumping off of the roof of her bank's building. A chance encounter with Charlie (Max Beesley), after his botched robbery, changes the course of both of their lives when they strike a bargain—she'll help him out now by pretending to be his hostage if he promises to kill her later.

Although Blair is in danger of becoming too omnipresent for her own good, her brooding pout is used to good effect here, and the vibe between her and Beesley, who has that Ewan MacGregor-style energy and haphazard charm, is a fun one to watch. There is rarely a dull moment in the movie, which clocks in at a lean 89 minutes and takes place in 24 hours in the lives of its characters, starting at the end before jumping back to the beginning. Time, in a way, is its own character, as it runs both backward and forward. In one extended scene, the clock runs in reverse as Shawn and Charlie, who have been in motion for the most of the movie until this point, are finally able to catch their breath and rest for a few hours.

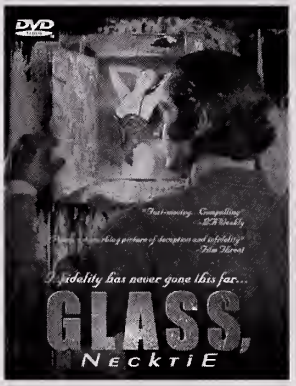
After premiering at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival last year, the film was picked up by Lions Gate and had only a brief New York/Los Angeles run. But with all its potential for cult appeal, *Kill Me Later*, the second effort from Dana Lustig and Annette Goliti-Gutierrez (the director/ writer team behind *Wedding Bell Blues*), is bound to have a successful video/DVD life.

—Farrin Jacobs

Glass, Necktie
Writer/director: Paul Bojack
(EI Cinema, $19.98)

Marital infidelity gets an inconclusive shoulder rub in Paul Bojack's *Glass, Necktie*. The film is sort of about immorality, and it's sort of about conjugal immaturity, but Bojack doesn't make this clear until beyond the halfway mark, at which point there's nothing left to do but wonder when the real duplicity kicks off. The writer-director has come up with a handful of characters whose relationships to each other are kept vague enough to stay interesting. But in the interest of synopsis: Steve (Eric Cadora) is an underemployed but astonishing middle-class narcissist who's cheating on his pharmacist wife, Lourdes (Dorothy Gallagher). Incidentally, Steve's mistress, Selina (Nancye Ferguson), has a husband, Mike (Eugene Buica), who happens to be forging a friendship with Steve. Steve, meanwhile, also happens to be part-timing with Mike's reticent, but apparently psychotic brother Alan (Kirk Stricker) at a copy shop so anonymous and suspect it must be a front for something less legal. The store's cluttered but profoundly actionless surroundings give its blase owner Alex (Jeff Bergquist) plenty of downtime to wax wise about the deception afoot on either side of his counter.

Shot in flat black and white and ornamented with a score from the indie-movie music warehouse by the ordinarily insouciant Mark Mothersbaugh, *Necktie* is tame and undermotivated where it should be creepy and kinky. Bojack is clever enough to devise a group of characters operating in a sort of Pinterian cat's cradle of self-indulgence and deception, but this isn't designer betrayal. You want menace; you get corny R-rated banter instead. At some point, Allen and Steve wind up sitting around with Serena and Mike in the couple's living room, and rather than mine the scene for the uncomfortable menace drifting beneath it, Bojack ends up with an occasion that suggests he's lost his grip on his dialogue. Serena: "Fuck You." Mike: "What position?" The film's astute thesis about the moral codes and their attendant behavioral dictates gets away from its makers, and callow exchanges predominate.



Constructed bonds, the movie says, come with constructed moralities whose codes are understood only by their architects. But as juicy as that suggestion is, *Glass, Necktie* simply isn't the place to see it come to life. The potential for psychosexual transgression isn't explored—as in the most attractive line in the film in which Steve tells the omniscient Alex, "The more I get to know Mike the more I want to fuck his wife." That's the sort of revelatory id-speak that got Laura San Giacomo and Peter Gallagher in a world of hurt in the iconically depraved *sex, lies and videotape*, on which *Necktie* has more than a little crush.

—Wesley Morris

BY BO MEHRAD

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DOMESTIC

ANTELOPE VALLEY INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, May 3-5, CA. Deadline: Feb. 1 (early); March 1 (final). Antelope Valley Independent Film Fetival eagerly seeks short & feature films of all genres & formats for its 5th annual fest. Experimental Films are encouraged. All films will be screen in their original formats. Cats: short, doc, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $40 (Final). Contact: Festival, 3041 West Avenue K, Lancaster, CA 93536; (661) 722-6478; fax: (661) 943-5573; info@aviff.com; www.aviff.com

ARIZONA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 11-21, AZ. Deadline: Feb. 4. Festival's mission is to showcase independent work (preferably not in distribution) from around the world to Arizona audiences. Works are screened in local movie theatres, community sites, & schools & on television in order to develop new audiences for independent work. Works participate in "The Reel Frontier" Film & Video Competition or are invited to non-competitive programs. Founded: 1990. Cats: incl. narrative features & shorts, doc features & shorts, experimental, animation shorts, feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Best of Category; Best of Arizona. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DV, DVD, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30 (under 45 min.); $50 (45 min. & over). Contact: Guilio Scalinger, Box 431, Tucson, AZ 85702; (520) 623-4567; fax: 628-1737; reelfrontier@yahoo.com; www.azfilmfest.com

ARIZONA STATE ART MUSEUM SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Late Apr., AZ. Deadline: Feb. 15. A one night outdoor fest. Entries should be no longer than 10 min. All entries become a part of the Museum's video library. For the return of your tape, submit self addressed stamped package. Founded: 1997. Cats: short, experimental. Awards: Juror's Choice (2), LeBlanc Audience Choice, & AZ award (Arizona artists only). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: John D. Spiak, Curatorial Museum Specialist, ASU Art Museum, Tenth St. & Mill Ave., Tempe, AZ 85287-2911; (480) 965-2787; fax: (480) 965-5254; spiak@asu.edu or asuartmuseum.asu.edu/filmfest/

ART IN MOTION, CA. Deadline: Jan. 15. An annual int'l fest of time-based media which is organized around a central theme, rather than a specific media or genre. Biennially the fest sends out a world-wide call for entries that result in a series of exhibitions, screenings, symposia & an education outreach program. In the intervening yr. the AIM fest consists of a series of lectures, symposia, on-line discourse & curated events. Founded: 1999. Cats: Interactive/New Media, any style or genre. Formats: Any "time-based" media. Preview on VHS/DVD/CD-Rom. Entry Fee: free. Contact: Janet Owen, USC School of Fine Arts, University Park Campus, Watt Hall, Rm. 103, Los Angeles, CA 90089; (213) 740-ARTS; fax: 740-8938 ; aim@usc.edu; www.usc.edu/aim

Short and Sweet in Aspen

Widely recognized as one of North America's premiere showcases for short film and video, Aspen Shortsfest, in the Rocky Mountain resort community of Aspen, Colorado, offers an intimate international forum for emerging artists, established film professionals and film-loving audiences alike. The 11-year-old festival welcomes productions around the world—animated, live action, or documentaries—and in 2002 will select approximately 60 entries as competition finalists. An esteemed jury will award $20,000 in cash in several categories. Last year's festival highlights included a Closing Night with John Waters, a spotlight on animation visionaries Bob Sabiston and Tommy Pallotta (*Waking Life*), a day-long symposium with acclaimed cinematographers Allen Daviau (*E.T.*), Richard Crudo (*American Pie*), Dean Cundey (*Apollo 13*) and Amy Vincent (*Eve's Bayou*), a retrospective of influential French shorts; and much more. See listing.

ARTWALLAH, FESTIVAL OF SOUTH ASIAN ARTS, May 10-12, CA. Deadline: Feb. 15. Annual fest seeks innovative films & videos by or about South Asians that express personal, political, & cultural struggles of the South Asian diaspora. Cats: any style or genre. VHS- NTSC only. Contact: Senain Kheshgi, PO Box 891, Culver City, CA 90232; senain@hotmail.com; www.artwallah.org

ATHENS INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 26-May 4, OH. Deadline: Feb. 14. Annual fest acknowledging current technical possibilities in film/video production. Each entry is pre-screened by a committee of artists. Works w/ high regard for artistic innovation, sensitivity to content & personal involvement w/ the medium are welcomed. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, experimental, animation, installation, any style or genre. Awards: Cash prizes & production services awarded to competition winners in each category, incl. narrative, doc, experimental & animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS (NTSC), 3/4", 16mm. Entry Fee: $35, plus s.a.s.e./insurance. Contact: Festival, Athens Center for Film & Video, Box 388, Rm. 407, 75 W. Union St., Athens, OH 45701; (740) 593-1330; fax: 597-2560; bradley@ohiou.edu; www.athensfest.org

BIG MUDDY FILM FESTIVAL, February 22 - March 3, IL. Deadline: Jan. 14. One of the oldest student/community-run film fests in the US, the Big Muddy is one of the premier independent short film fests in the country. Films are shown on the SIUC campus as well as the greater Southern Illinois & Western Kentucky region. Big Muddy places emphasis on the experimental & doc filmmaker. Founded: 1979. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, any style or genre. Awards: Cash awards. Also: the John Michaels Memorial Film Award, presented to best work that promotes human rights, peace & justice topics or enviromental issues. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", U-matic, DV, DVD. Preview formats same as screening formats. Entry Fee: $35 (under 20 min); $40 (20-50 min.); $45 (over 50 min.). Contact: Phil Hastings, Dept. of Cinema & Photography, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-6610; (618) 453-1482; fax: 453-2264; bigmuddy@siu.edu; www.bigmuddyfilm.com

CINESOL LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, June 14- July 14, TX. Deadline: March 15. Fest showcases the best of Latino Film & Video in a traveling four week fest that literally makes its way through South Texas. Held in the Magic Rio Grande Valley of Texas, CineSol begins w/ a Premiere Weekend Splash on beautiful South Padre Island on the Gulf of Mexico, where filmmakers converge & interact w/ the audience. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, Beta. Entry Fee: $20; $10 (Student). Contact: CineSol C/O Galan Inc., 5524 Bee Caves Rd. Ste B-5, Austin, TX 78746; (512) 327-1333 ext.10; fax: (512) 327-1547; info@cinesol.com; www.cinesol.com

DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 15-19, TX. Deadline: Jan. 8; Jan. 22 (late). 15th annual festival is one of the largest & most diversified video fests in the U.S., providing a showcase for new works by nat'l, int'l, & regional ind. video artists. No thematic or content restrictions. Fest also accepts multimedia entries for the interActive Zone (CD-ROM, CD-I, 3DO, hypertext, etc.) & short digital videos to run on its Web site. Cats: Any style or genre, experimental, doc, animation, music video, feature, multimedia. Rental fees paid to participants. Formats: Beta SP preferred; will accept 3/4", 1/2", CD-ROM, digital video, S-VHS, Hi-8, Web, for extra $5. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (members of the Video Assoc. of Dallas); $30 (non-members). Contact: DVF, Bart Weiss, director, 1405 Woodlawn Ave., Dallas, TX 75208; (214) 999-8999; fax: 999-8998; info@videofest.org; www.video fest.org.

DANCING FOR THE CAMERA: INT'L FESTIVAL OF FILM & VIDEO DANCE, Jun. 6 - Jul. 20, NC. Deadline: Early March. Fest solicits dance-related work for juried public

screenings at the American Dance Festival in Durham, NC. Cats: choreography for the camera, doc, experimental. Preview on VHS. Founded: 1996. Cats: doc, short, experimental. Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, 1697 Broadway, Rm. 900, New York, NY 10019; (212) 586-1925; fax: (212) 397-1196; adfny@americandancefest.org; www.americandancefest.org

FAIRFAX DOC FILM FESTIVAL, March 31-April 1, CA. Deadline: Feb. 1. Doc shorts & features are accepted. Festival seeks works by filmmakers working in Northern California. No entry form required. Founded: 1999. Cats: doc. Awards: Award for Best of Fest selected by audience. Formats: Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No fee. Contact: David Weinsoff, Festival Director, 138 Ridgeway Ave. , Fairfax, CA 94930; 415-460-9760; fax: 460-9762; Weinsoff@ix.netcom.com

FILMFEST DC FOR KIDS, April 24-May 5, DC. Deadline: Febrary 30. Animation where pictures tell the story. Live action that takes kids to another place & experience. More exotic the place, the better. Founded: 1986. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, music video, student, family, children. Awards: Jury Award, Audience Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Entry Fee: $15 short; $25 feature. Contact: Festival, 3831 Fulton Street, NW, Washington DC, DC 20007; (202) 338-4493; fax: (202) 338-4493; film4kids@aol.com; www.filmfestdc.org

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, June 6-17, FL. Deadline: Feb. 22 (early); March 22 (late). 10-day event features foreign & U.S. indie films (narrative, doc, animation), seminars, midnight movies, Florida student competition, celebrations & special guests. Entries for American competition must have at least 51% U.S. funding. Features must be 41 min. or more. Festival also sponsors several curated sidebars, special events, panels & receptions. Founded: 1992. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation. Awards: incl. Special Jury Awards, Audience Awards, Forever Florida Award, Perrier Bubbling Under Award & Grand Jury Awards (incl. $100,000 goods & services package for Best Narrative Feature). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, HD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (short); $35 (features). Contact: Matthew Curtis, Program Dir., 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32571; (407) 629-1088; fax: 629-6870; filmfest@enzian.org; www.enzian.org

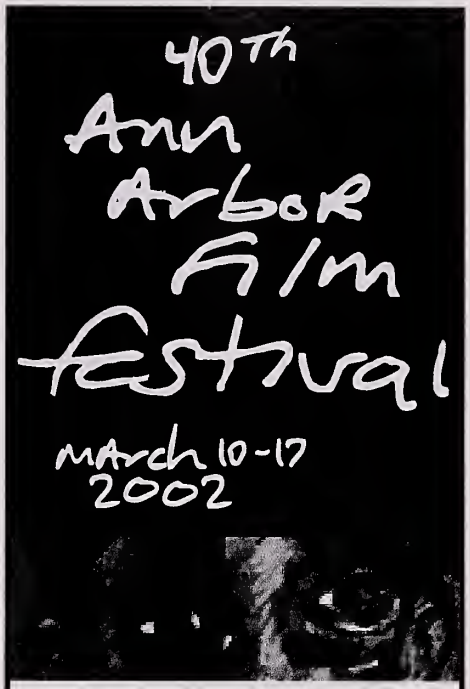
HI MOM! FILM FESTIVAL, April 11-13, NC. Deadline: Jan. 1 (early); Jan. 31 (final). Festival is accepting short shorts & not-so-short shorts w/ deep thoughts & shallow pockets. Three days of music, movies, & yes again: pancakes in the shape of your initials. Formats: all formats accepted. Awards: Cash & non-cash prizes awarded. Formats: All Formats accepted. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee: none (early); $15 (final). Contact: HMFF, 401 Pritchard Ave., Chapel Hill, NC 27516; himomfilmfest@yahoo.com; www.himomfilmfest.org

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 14-27, NY. Deadline: Jan. 20. Fest takes place at the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center & is co-presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center. Fest was created to advance public education on human rights issues & concerns. Highlights from the fest are presented in a growing number of cities around the world. Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Awards: Nestor Almendros Award for $5,000 given to a one filmmaker in the fest for courage in filmmaking. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP. Preview on VHS (preview tapes are not returned, they are recycled). Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: John Anderson, 350 Fifth Ave., 34th Fl. , New York, NY 10118; (212) 216-1263; fax: 736-1300; andersj@hrw.org; www.hrw.org/iff

HUMBOLDT INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, April 3-7, CA. Deadline: Jan. 25. Since its inception in 1967, the Fest continues to support & celebrate filmmakers working in experimental & non-traditional ways. Whether you are a first-time filmmaker in the process of developing your unique visual style, or an established independent continuing to push the limits of the medium, the Festival invites you to submit your 16mm or Super 8 short film. Nestled between the redwood forests & the Pacific ocean, the Humboldt Int'l Film Festival has the distinction of being one of the oldest student run film fests in the world. Films must be under than 60 min. in length & completed in the last three years. Selected entries must be avail. for projection in film print format. The fest takes place in Arcata, Calafornia, home to Humboldt State Universtiy. Founded: 1967. Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, & the "you call it" category, short, any style or genre. Awards: Last years fest awarded over $3,000 worth of cash prizes, film stock editing services & magazine subscriptions. Formats: 16mm, super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (under 9 min.); $20 (10-29 min.); $30 (30-60 min); $10 additional for Int'l entries . Contact: Jordan Packer, Dept. of Theater, Film, & Dance, Humboldt State Univ., Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-4113; fax: 826-4112; filmfest@humboldt.edu; www.humboldt.edu/~filmfest

INT'L ELECTRONIC CINEMA FESTIVAL, May 15-19, OR. Deadline: March 16. The oldest & most presitigious forum for recognizing outstanding achievements in high definition production. The Int'l Electronic Cinema Festival provides a forum to promote & explore the creative synergy between cinema & television, afforded by the use of digital high definition television & computer imagery, & it extends its scope to new forms of expression such as interactive digital programs. It aims also to provide a venue & opportunity to negotiate int'l co-productions that use those advanced program production technologies. Programs must have been produced in Hi-Def & been completed as of 1998. Founded: 1987. Cats: TV, music video, feature, doc, short, experimental, commercial ads, industrials, sports. Formats: hi def. Preview on VHS. Contact: c/o DownStream, 1650 Naito Parkway, Portland, OR 97209; (503) 697-4901; fax: (503) 697-7231; info@iecf.org; www.iecf.org

JOHNS HOPKINS FILM FESTIVAL, April 15-18, MD. Deadline: Jan. 5 (early); Jan. 28 (final). Annual fest presented by Johns Hopkins Film Society, is a 4-day, 3-venue extravaganza, taking place on the Hopkins Homewood Campus during the legendary Spring Fair. Previous fests have drawn over 2,200 attendants, shown over 100 films, received a Mayor's Proclamation, was voted Baltimore Magazine's Best Film Event & received unprecedented East Coast coverage. Fest features panels, speakers, independent distributors & lots of parties. Founded: 1998. Cats: Feature, Short, Experimental, Comedy, doc, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DV, All video & DV. Preview on VHS.



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Via HD-SDI / Firewire
Time Code Burn-in
High Def / Digital Cameras
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212.868.0028

Entry Fee: Entry fees: $25 (early); $35 (final). Contact: Jason Shahinfar, 325 East University Parkway, Baltimore, MD 21218; (410) 889-8324; fax: (410) 516-5048; seether@jhu.edu; www.jhu.edu/~jhufilm/fest/

LAKE ARROWHEAD FILM FESTIVAL, May 2-5, CA. Deadline: March 17. Lake Arrowhead is also known as Hollywood's original playground. Also, the area incls. a beautiful four-screen theater, the Blue Jay Cinema, & many other possible screening sites, also a first class resort. Being only 90 min. from LA is a great asset for workshops as well as increase the attendance of Film Makers, Studio Executives & Distributors. Cats: Feature, Animation, Doc, Short. Awards: Awards will be given in each category. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, 1/2", 8mm. Preview on VHS. Contact: Leonard Marcel, 16630 Center Way, Guerneville, CA 95446; (707) 869-8264; filmfest@pe.net; www.arrowheadfilmfest.com

LAKE PLACID FILM FORUM, Jun. 5-9, NY. Deadline: Feb. 15. The Lake Placid Film Forum is an intimate setting for filmmakers & film lovers to see films & discuss issues fo content & the medium. The Forum screens over 60 films, presents forums, workshops, master classes & readings of screenplays, honors the lifetime achievement of a distinguished filmmaker, & provides an array of opportunities for teen filmmakers. Founded: 2000. Cats: Feature, Short, student, doc, animation. Awards: Silver Deer Audience Awards: Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc.; Adirondack Film Society Awards: Best Teen, Courage in Filmmaking. Formats: DV, DVD, 35mm, Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (shorts only). Contact: Naj Wikoff, Director, P.O. Box 489, Lake Placid, NY 12946; (518) 523-3456; fax: 523-4746; adkfilm@adolphia.net; www.lakeplacid-filmforum.org

LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 16-23, CA. Deadline: Dec. 14 (early); Jan. 11 (final). Fest established in 1983 to promote & present best in Asian Pacific cinema & has grown into a a major showcase presenting nearly 100 productions by Asian Pacific American & Asian Int'l media makers. Works by Asian & Pacific Americans w/ themes involving, but not limited to, Asian Pacific American culture, history & experiences are encouraged. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 35mm, 3/4", Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: U.S. $30 (final); Int'l $40 (final). Contact: Fest Dir., c/o Visual Communications, 120 Judge John Aiso St., Basement Level, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462 x. 68; fax: 687-4848; viscom@apanet.org; www.vconline.org/filmfest

LOS ANGELES ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL, April 23-27, CA. Deadline: Jan 31. Fourth annual fest is a unique full week of the best new films & film makers from Italy leading the Italian Cinema into the new millennium. LAIFA's mission is to introduce & promote new Italian movies to the Hollywood film community & to the general public, while celebrating the classical Italian Cinema as well. Fest consists of competitions of the best Italian films of 2000-2001 in several cats in addition to special tributes & retrospective. Founded: 1998. Awards: The festival will present the LAIFA Award for Best Picture (Italian & Italian-American), Awards & Certificates for various placements & the People's Choice Award for the most popular film short & feature. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50. Contact: Festival, 7270 Franklin Ave., #102, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (323) 850-7245; fax: 436-2928; info@italfilmfest.com; www.italfilmfest.com/

MAGNOLIA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 7-9, MS. Deadline: Jan. 18. Mag Fest keeps the independent spirit of cinema alive & well & moving forward in Mississippi. The first film fest in the state, the Magnolia Film Festival goes out of its way to present the best of independent films of all lengths & genres, also to treat participating filmmakers to a fabulous time. Founded: 1997. Cats: Feature, Short, Doc, youth media, experimental, animation. Awards: Cash prizes plus "Mags" will be presented incl. three Grand Jury awards, Audience Award, Elena Zastawnik Memorial award for Best written Film & Festival Director's Award. Filmmakers who attend stay free. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, video, Beta, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10. Contact: Ron Tibbett, Fest Dir. , 2269 Waverly Dr. , West Point, MS 39773; (662) 494-5836; fax: (662) 494-9900; ron@magfilmfest.com; www.magfilmfest.com

MALIBU INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, August 16-23, CA. Deadline: March 15. The Malibu Film Foundation, a California non-profit organization was founded to create, develop, & produce the Malibu Int'l Film Festival. The eight-day competitive fest is made possible through local support, corporate sponsorship & the blood, sweat, & tears of independent filmmakers. The fest screens over forty independent feature, short & doc films from around the world. Events incl. an Opening Night Party & Fashion Show, auctions, raffles, film screenings, Q&A's, seminars, luncheons, dinners, test drives & Awards Gala Dinner Party. A portion of the proceeds from all events will benefit the local Mailbu Santa Monica Unified school district. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, doc. Awards: Grand Prize (jury ballot); Directing Award (jury ballot); Audience Award (popular ballot); Cinematography Award (jury ballot); Screenwriter Award (jury ballot); Emerging Director Award (jury). Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50 (fee is waived w/ valid student ID). Contact: Skye Wilson, 1501 S. Main St. #205, Venice, CA 90291; (310) 317-9111; fax: (310) 581-8366; info@malibufilmfest.org; www.malibufilmfest.org

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 6-20, MN. Deadline: Feb. 1. Annual event is the largest event in the Upper Midwest, bringing in more foreign & American ind. films to MN than any other film org. or event. Program is predominantly foreign, focusing on Scandanavian & Eastern Europe films, especially those w/ politically relevant themes. Emerging filmmakers section isshowcase for self-distributed, ind. filmmakers; entries are selected by a jury in cats: short fiction, short doc & feature doc. Founded: 1982. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental, student, family, children. Awards: Emerging Filmmaker awards & Audience "Best of the Fest" Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (shorts, under 40 min); $50 (features). Contact: Univ. Film Society, 2331 University Ave SE, Ste. 130B , Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4431; fax: 627-4111; filmsoc@tc.umn.edu; www.ufilm.org

NEWPORT BEACH INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 11-19, CA. Deadline: Jan. 15. Approximately 75 feature length & 25 short films chosen to compete for one of 10 awards. If preferred, films may be excluded from competition &/or exhibited in the "special screening" section of the

program. All films must have optical (not magnetic) sound. Films must be in English or w/ English subtitles. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50 (feature); $40 (short). Contact: Joseph Mahoney, 4540 Campus Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660; 949-253-2880; fax: 949-253-2881; nbff@pacbell.net; www.newportbeachfilmfest.com

NEWPORT INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 4-9, RI. Deadline: Feb. 15. Founded: 1998. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Entry Fee: $30 (shorts); $40 (features & docs) . Contact: Nancy Donahoe, Festival director, PO Box 1229, Old Chelsea Satation, New York, NY 101113; (401) 261-1054; fax: (401) 245-5011; newportff@aol.com; www.newportfilmfest.com/

ONE SHOW INTERACTIVE, NY. Deadline: Jan. 31. Fest seeks works that set a new standard in using your media to communicate an advertising message or build a brand. A panel of judges, made up of 35 creative heads of top Interactive agencies from 10 countries look at concept, copy, art, design, functionality & innovation. All work must have gone live between January 1 of previous yr. & January 21 of current year. Download entry forms at website. Cats: Banners, Beyond the Banner, Promotional Advertising, Corporate Image—Consumer, Corporate Image - Business to Business, E-Commerce, Integrated Branding Campaign, Broadband Web sites or portals, Self-Promotion, Nonprofit Organizations, College Competition. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $100, $40 Student. Contact: The One Club, 32 East 21st St. , New York, NY 10010; 212-979-1900; fax: 212-979-5006; interactive@oneclub.com; www.oneclub.com

OUTFEST: THE LOS ANGELES GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, July 11-22, CA. Deadline: Jan. 31 (early); March 31 (late). The mission of OUTFEST is to build bridges among audiences, filmmakers & the entertainment industry through the exhibition of high-quality gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender themed films & videos, highlighted by an annual fest, that enlighten, educate & entertain the diverse communities of Southern California. Outfest also offers a weekly screening series yr. round, as well as a screenwriting competition. Founded: 1982. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Gay/Lesbian, Animation, Experimental. Awards: Fourteen awards ranging from $500 to $2,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Features (over 60 min.): $20 by Jan. 31; $25 by Mar.31. Shorts: $10 by Jan.31; $15 by Mar.31. Contact: Festival, 1125 McCadden Place, Ste. 235, Los Angeles, CA 90038; (323) 960-9200; fax: (323) 960 2397; outfest@outfest.org; www.outfest.org

REELING: CHICAGO LESBIAN & GAY INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Summer, IL. Deadline: Jan. 18. Annual fest seeks wide variety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgendered films & videos for second oldest fest of its kind in the world. All genres & lengths accepted. Founded: 1981. Cats: Any style or genre, Feature, Experimental, Animation, Short, doc. Awards: Cash prizes, awarded by category, totalling $3000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 for first entry, $10 for each additional entry. Contact: c/o Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 North Clark, Chicago, IL, USA 60640; (773) 293-1447; fax: 293-0575; reeling@chicagofilmmakers.org; www.chicagofilmmakers.org

ROCHESTER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 2-4, NY. Deadline: Nov. 30, 2001 (early); Feb. 15 (final). Annnual fest is the longest-running film event dedicated to the art of short film & video. Each fest incls. a wide variety of original & imaginative works by film students, advanced amateurs, & professional filmmakers from all over the world. Open to all films & videos completed since Jan. 1 of previous yr. & under 30 min. in length. Founded: 1959. Cats: any style or genre, short, No music videos or installations. Awards: hand-made Shoestring Trophies. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", 35mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $30 (final). Contact: Movies on a Shoestring, Box 17746, Rochester, NY 14617; (716) 243-7411; President@RochesterFilmFest.org; www.RochesterFilmFest.org

ROSEBUD FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 23-24, Awards Ceremony in April, DC. Deadline: Jan. 20. Rosebud was formed in 1990 to promote independent film & video in the Washington, DC area. The goal is to honor the "innovative, experimental, unusual or deeply personal" in creative film & video making. This competition accepts works completed or first released from January of previous yr. & January of current year. Eligible entrants are producers or directors who are current residents of Washington, DC, Maryland, or Virginia (exceptions are made for students temporarily living out of the area or those away on work assignment). Works accepted in all cats, any style or genre. Works-in-progress/trailers/promos are also welcome if they stand on their own. Twenty nominees & five winners, incl. a Best of Show are chosen by an independent panel of judges. Awards incl. a trophy, cash, multiple area theatrical & television screenings, & equipment & supplies. Founded: 1990. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Awards incl. cash & tape stock.. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Entry fee incls. a one-yr. membership to Arlington Community Television, the sponsoring organization). Contact: Chris Griffin or Jackie Steven, Festival Directors, 2701-C Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201; (703) 524-2388; fax: (703) 908-9239; Chris@Channel33.org; rosebudwdc@aol.com; www.rosebudact.org

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 14-24, CA. Deadline: Jan. 4, Jan. 24 (late). The SFILGFF is committed to screening the best in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Film. Many works premiered in fest go on to be programmed or distributed nat'lly & int'lly. Rough cuts accepted for preview if submitted on 1/2". Founded: 1976. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Frameline Award, Audience Award, Dockers Khakis 1st Feature Aaward ($10,000). Fest produced by Frameline, nonprofit arts organization dedicated to gay & lesbian media arts. Formats: 35mm, 16mm (w/ Optical Track ONLY), 1/2", Beta. VHS- NTSC/PAL. Entry Fee: $15-25. Contact: Jennifer Morris, Co-Director, Frameline, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 703-8650; fax: 861-1404; info@frameline.org; www.frameline.org

SANTA CLARITA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, March 7-15, CA. Deadline: Screenplay: Jan. 12; Film: Jan. 19; Student: Feb. 9. SCIFF is rapidly becoming Southern California's premier showcase for independently-produced socially-responsible film entertainment. Founded: 1994. Cats: script, feature, doc, short, animation, student, youth media, family, children, educational. Awards: Awards,

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SUPER SUPER 8 FILM TOURS, touring fest, CA. Deadline: Feb. 28. Fest takes your film on a world tour, w/ live musical accompaniment for silent films. Cats: experimental, feature, doc, animation, travelogue, garage sale find. Awards: Honorarium & prizes awarded. Formats: 16mm, super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Paolo Davanzo, Fest Dir., 15 Mann, Irvine, CA 92612; (213) 413-8783; fax: (949) 551-9068; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.polyesterprince.com

TAOS TALKING PICTURE FESTIVAL, April 11-14, NM. Deadline: Jan. 15. Established as an artists' colony more than a century ago, Taos is known for its eclectic mixture of cultures, traditions & philosophies. It is in this light that fest organizers program over 150 new indie films & videos, incl. features, documentaries, videos & shorts during its four-day event. Highlights include: Tributes; Latino & Native American programs, as well as comprehensive Media Literacy Forum w/ panel discussions, workshops & demonstrations focusing on the state of media. Entries should have been completed w/in 18 months of fest & should be New Mexico premieres. Fest features Teen Media Conference. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation, music video, any style or genre, student. Awards: Melies Short Film Award; Land Grant award: 5 acres to one film (over 70 Min.)that applies a fresh approach to storytelling and/or cinematic medium. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15-$40 (no fee for int'l entries). Contact: Kelly Clement, Dir. of Programming, 7217 NDCBU, 1337 Gusdorf Rd. Ste. B, Taos, NM 87571; (505) 751-0637; fax: 751-7385; ttpix@ttpix.org; www.ttpix.org

UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM & DIGITAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, February 15-17, NJ. Deadline: Jan. 18. Annual fest encourages any genre, but work must have predominantly originated on Super 8 film or hi-8 or digital video. Festival mandate is to spread the 8mm & digital word. Toward that end the Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC has sponsored seven touring programs, culled from fest winners for the past several years, which have travelled extensively & seen new audiences. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: $2,500 in cash & prizes; selected winners go on Best of Fest Int'l Tour. Formats: Hi8, super 8, 16mm, 8mm, 1/2", 3/4", DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (check or money order payable to Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC. Do not send cash). Contact: Al Nigrin, Rutgers Film Co-op/New Jersey Media Arts Center, 131 George St., 108 Ruth Adams Bldg-Douglass Campus, Program in Cinema Studies, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (732) 932-8482; fax: 932-1935; njmac@aol.com; www.njfilmfest.com

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IRVINE HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL, March 2-3, CA. Deadline: Feb. 28. annual fest is seeking films dealing w/ human rights or int'l relations issues Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Awards: Honorarium Awarded. Formats: Beta, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fees. Contact: UCI Human Rights Film Festival, 15 Mann St., Irvine, CA 92612; (949) 786-6387; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.polyesterprince.com

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA TELEVISION & FILM FESTIVAL, April 18-20, AL. Deadline: Jan. 15 (regular); March 18 (ages 9-12). Annual Fest established by George Lindsey who has had a long, illustrious career on the Broadway stage & in television & film in New York & Hollywood. Fest has a special category dedicated to childeren ages 9-12 (the Lion Club category), plus the regular competition for college & high school students, faculty members & professionals. Only works completed in the previous two years are eligable. Cats: feature, short, Short Doc, music video, student. Awards: Cash prizes awarded in each category. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50; $25 (Student); $10 (Lion Club). Contact: Lisa Darnell / UNA TV & Film Festival, UNA Box 5151, Florence, AL 35632; (256) 765-4592; filmfest@unanov.una.edu; www2.una.edu/univ.relations/filmfest/festindex.htm

USA FILM FESTIVAL / NAT'L SHORT FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, April 25-May 2, TX. Deadline: March 1. Noncompetitive fest showcases new US & int'l features & shorts, tributes & world premieres. Incorporates the Nat'l Short Film & Video Competition, a competitive component, which offers cash prizes. Founded: 1969. Cats: short, feature. Awards: Incl. $1,000 prizes for narrative, nonfiction, animation & exp. plus $250 Jury Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Ann Alexander, Managing Director, 6116 N. Central Expressway Ste. 105, Dallas, TX 75206; (214) 821-6300; fax: 821-6364; info@usafilmfest.com; www.usafilmfest.com

Foreign

ALGARVE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 17-27, Portugal. Deadline: March 15. Competitive, shorts-only fest seeks works under 30 min. Founded: 1972. Cats: doc, animation, fiction, short. Awards: prizes totaling $20,000. Formats: 35mm only, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Carlos Manuel, General Dir., Box 8091, Lisbon Codex, Portugal; 011 351 21 851 36 15; fax:351 21 852 11 50; algarvefilmfest@mail.telepac.pt; www.algarvefilmfest.com

INSIDE OUT: TORONTO LESBIAN AND GAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 16-26, Canada. Deadline: Jan. 15. Fest is an exciting & important venue for queer filmmakers from around the world. It hosts the largest lesbian & gay fest in Canada & one of the largest in the world. Previous years fests screened 300 plus films & videos in 84 programs w/ sold out screenings. Fest has assisted in securing theatrical & broadcast distribution for several films & videos through relationships w/ Canadian film & TV entities. Fest is not only a highly anticipated cultural event renowned for its hospitality & integrity in programming, but an excellent opportunity to network w/ other independent film & video makers & interested industry representatives. Founded: 1991. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media, family, children, TV. Awards: Awards are given for both local & int'l work. The Bulloch Award for Best Canadien Work, the Akau Award for Best Lesbian Short, the Cruiseline Award for Best gay Male Short, & the Charles St. Video Award for Best Emerging Toronto Artist. Audience Awards incl. the Showcase

Award for Best Feature, the Ellen Flanders Award for Best Doc & the Mikey Award for Best Short. In all, more than $5,000 in cash & prizes is awarded annually. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Inside Out, 401 Richmond St. West, Ste. 219, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 3A8; (416) 977-6847; fax: 977-8025; programmer@insideout.on.ca; www.insideout.on.ca/

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL INNSBRUK, May 29-June 2, Austria. Deadline: March 31. IFFI presents over films from & about Africa, South America, & Asia. Submitted films must be Austrian premiere, w/ no screenings anywhere prior to May 29, 2002. Founded: 1992. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation. Awards: Tyrol Award (5,000 E); Cine Tirol Distributor's Prize (3,000 E); Audience Award (1,000 E); French Cultural Institute's Francophone Award (1,000 E). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS PAL. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Raimund Obkircher, Otto Preminger Institute, Museumstrasse 31, Box 704, Innsbruck, Austria A-6020; 011 43 512 57 85 00-14; fax: 011 43 512 57 85 00-13; ffi.cinematograph@tirolkultur.at; www.a2on.com/iffi

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL OF FINE ARTS, October 4-9, Hungary. Deadline: March 31. This fest presents film & video works that interpret pieces of art by means of cinematographic methods or deal w/ the lives of artists or artist groups. Also welcome works that explore tendencies or periods of fine arts or their social context. All films use artistic methods or instruments. Held simultaneously w/ the Film Market, which gets Hungarian, Central & Eastern European films to distributors & exhibitors in foreign markets. Festival provides free accommodations for accepted filmmakers. Cats: doc, short, experimental, animation. Preview on VHS PAL (not returned). Entry Fee: no fee. Contact: Istvan Demeter, Managing Director, Tisza Mozi, Ltd., Templom u. 4., Szolnok, Hungary 5000; 36 56 511 270; fax: 36 56 420 038; tiszamozi@mail.externet.hu; www.tiszamozi.hu

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL OF KERALA, March 29-April 5, India. Deadline: January 31. This annual fest is produced by the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Kerala. Chalachitra literally means motion picture, & the Academy is devoted to promoting the best in the visual medium. IFFK is a celebration of the best the medium has to offer.'To see, to feel, & to feel to think', is the motto of IFFK. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, student. Awards: Suvarna Chakoram Awards for Best Feature; Best Director; Special Jury Award for Cinematic Art; & Audience Prize for Best Film. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic. VHS (PAL/NTSC/SECAM). Entry Fee: none. Contact: AV Alikoya Exec. Dir., Kerala State Chalachitra Academy, Elankom Gardens, Vellayambalam, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India 695010; 011 91 471 310 323; fax: 91 471 310 322; chitram@md3.vsnl.net.in; www.keralafilm.com

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL OF URUGUAY, Mar. 23 - Apr. 27, Uruguay. Deadline: Jan. 31. Annual fest devoted to short & feature length, doc, fiction, experimental, Latin American & int'l films, w/ purpose of promoting film quality & human & conceptual values. Ind. fest aims at being frame for meetings & discussions of regional projects & of mutual interest. Fest has 4 sections: Int'l Full Length Film

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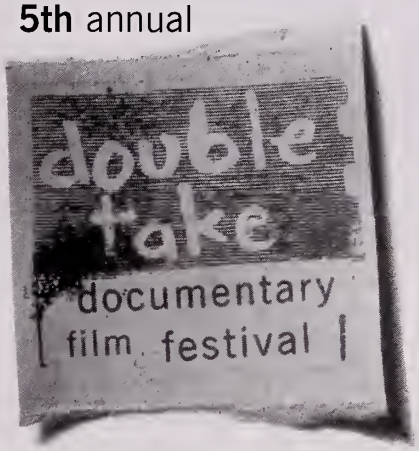

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IT'S ALL TRUE INT'L DOC FILM FESTIVAL, April 11-21, Brazil. Deadline: Jan. 15. A leading forum for non fictional productions in Latin America. Fest aims to promote the doc film & video form & to increase the int'l debate & cooperation on the genre. Founded: 1996. Cats: doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Amir Labaki, Festival Dir., Associacao Cultural Kinoforum, Rua Simao Alvares, 784/2, Sao Paolo – SP, Brasil 05417.020; 011 55 11 3062 9601; fax: 55 11 3062 9601; itsalltrue@kinoforum.org; www.itsalltrue.com.br

MONTREAL INT'L FESTIVAL OF CINEMA & NEW MEDIA, June 5-15, Canada. Deadline: March 14. This fest replaces two events well known in the Cinema World: The Int'l Festival of New Cinema, & the Int'l Short Film Festival. It aims to support & promote bold & innovative film & media projects. Cats: Short, Installation, TV, Doc, Animation, Experimental, Discovery, Exploration, Metropolis, Retrospectives, Multimedia. Awards: Festival is non-competitive, but prizes in cash will be awarded by the public & the press for selected films in the Discovery section. In addition, there will be three competitive sections: Short, Animation, & Video. Formats: CD-ROM, 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 Feature, $20 Short. Contact: Festival, 3668 Boulevard Saint-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2V4; 514.843.4725; fax: 514.843.4631; montrealfest@fcmm.com; www.fcmm.com

MONTREAL JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, May 9-16, Canada. Deadline: February 15. Annual fest showcases Jewish films from around the world. Founded: 1995. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, children. Formats: 1/2", 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, VHS (Beta SP). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Susan Alper, Dir., 352 Emery St. 3rd Fl., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 1J1; (514) 987-9795; fax: 987-9736; fest@mjff.qc.ca; www.mjff.qc.ca

OBERHAUSEN INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, May 2-7, Germany. Deadline: Jan. 15. The world's oldest short film fest offers a forum for aesthetic & technological innovation & reflection. There are no limits as to form or genre but films in the Int'l & Children's & Youth Competitions must not exceed 35 min. & have been made after Jan. 1 of the previous year. All submitted works must be viewed by an independent selection committee appointed by the fest. Approx. 70 titles will be selected by the Int'l Competition. Founded: 1954. Cats: Short, Any style or genre, Children, Music Video. Awards: incl. Grand Prize, Jury of Int'l Film Critics award. Works will compete for prizes worth a total of 75,000 DEM (approx. $20,000). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, S-VHS, Beta SP/PAL, U-

matic (PAL, SECAM, NTSC). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Melanie Piguel, Coordinator, Grillostr. 34, Oberhausen, Germany D-46045; 011 49 208 825 2652; fax: 49 208 825 5413; info@kurzfilmtage.de; www.kurzfilmtage.de

QUEER CITY CINEMA, May (biannual), Canada. Deadline: Jan.15. Queer City Cinema is the largest & oldest ongoing lesbian & gay film & video fest between British Columbia & Ontario. Since 1996, the Fest has curated a biannual lesbian & gay film & video fest which programs works by independent queer artists that are conceptual, playful, innovative & provocative & which ultimately propose the idea that identity is not fixed but fluid, multiple & contradictory. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, script, music video, student, youth media, family, children, TV, installation, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, super 8, 8mm. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Gary Varro, 2236 Osler Street, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada S4P 1W8; 306-757-6637; fax: 306-757-6632; queercitycinema@sk.sympatico.ca

SINGAPORE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 11-27, Singapore. Deadline: Jan. 31. FIAPF-recognized invitational fest offers non-competitive & competitive section for Asian cinema, w/ award for best Asian feature. Open to features completed after Jan. 1 of preceding yr. Entries must be Singapore premieres. About 120 features shown each yr, along w/ 60 shorts & videos from 35 countries. Main section shows 35mm; all other formats accepted in fringe programs. Several US ind films have been featured in past editions. Cats: Short, Feature, Doc, Animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Philip Cheah, Festival Director, 45A Keong Saik Rd., Singapore, Singapore 089136; 011 65 738 7567; fax: 011 65 738 7578; filmfest@pacific.net.sg; www.filmfest.org.sg

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL, June 7-21, Australia. Deadline: Feb. 18. This major FIAPF-recognized event is one of world's oldest (over 45 years old) & leading int'l showcase for new work screening around 200 films. Noncompetitive int'l program incls. features & documentariess; experimental works; retrospective; competition for Australian shorts; late shows & forums w/ visiting directors. All Australian distributors & TV buyers attend. Fest has enthusiastic & loyal audience & is an excellent opportunity for publicity & access to Australian markets. Fest conducts audience survey, w/ results provided to participating filmmakers; results have good deal of influence w/ Australian distributors. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 18 months & be Australian premieres. Entry open to features, docs, shorts (under 30 min.) & videos from around the world. Cats: short, experimental, doc, feature, retro, . Awards: Awards for Australian-produced short films (under 60 min.), docs & best European feature only. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP (PAL). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Filmmakers wishing their tapes returned must pay a fee of $20 (Aus) to cover the cost of return postage; use int'l bank draft, personal checks not accepted. Contact: Jenny Neighbour, Box 950/405 Glebe Point Road, Glebe NSW 2037, Australia; 011 61 2 9660 3844; fax: 61 2 9692 8793; info@sydfilm-fest.com.au; www.sydfilm-fest.com.au

TOKYO INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, July 18-22, Japan. Deadline: March 1. Annual event is the largest lesbian & gay film fest in Asia. Festival is major event in Tokyo cultural scene & receives nat'l & int'l media coverage. Founded: 1991. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, TV. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Sarah Teasley, 5-24-16 #601 Nakano, Nakano-ku, Tokyo, Japan 164-0001; 011 81 3 5380 5760 ; fax: 011 81 3 5380 5767; efaison@ucla.edu, lgff@tokyo.office.ne.jp; www.gender.ne.jp/L-GFF/

TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, April 20-28, Canada. Deadline: Feb. 1. Second largest Jewish film fest in North America. Fest is devoted to chronicling the diversity of Jewish life & experiences from around the world. Well-supported by the Toronto Jewish community, fest had attendance of 15,000 last year. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: Beta SP, 16mm, 35mm, VHS (Secam, PAL). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Shlomo Schwartzberg, Dir. of Programming, 17 Madison Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R 2S2; (416) 324-8226; fax: 324-8668; tjff@interlog.com; www.tjff.com

TURIN INT'L FESTIVAL OF LESBIAN & GAY FILMS, April 24-May1, Italy. Deadline: Jan. 31. One of the longest-running int'l gay & lesbian events. Entries should be by lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender filmmakers or address related themes & issues. Competition section divided between 3 juries: doc, long feature & short feature. Panorama section features new int'l productions. Founded: 1986. Cats: doc, feature, short, TV, experimental, animation. Awards: Ottavio Mai Award presented to Best Feature in competition worth $1500.. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Angelo Acerbi, Head programmer, Piazza San Carlo 161, 10123 Torino, Italy; 390 11 534 888; fax: 390 11 535 796; glfilmfest@assioma.com; www.turinglfilmfest.com

VUES D'AFRIQUE, April 19 - 27, Canada. Deadline: Mid-February. Fest, founded in 1983, is an important showcase for films from Africa & diaspora. Intended to familiarize Canadian & North American audiences w/ African & Creole productions & promote audiovisual industries in developing countries. Over 55,000 attendees. Categories include: African Panorama, Creole Images, Canadian Views, Ecrans Nord-Sud, & Videoclips. Expositions, info kiosks, music, dance, literature. Fest also travels to various cities in Canada. Founded: 1983. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, African/diaspora, animation, TV. Awards: Various Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $6 (Canadian). Contact: Gerard Le Chene, 67 rue St. Catherine Ouest, 5eme étage, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 1Z7; (514) 284-3322; fax: (514) 845-0631; info@vuesdafrique.org; www.vuesdafrique.org

YORKTON SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 11-14, Canada. Deadline: Feb. 10 (postmark). Longest running fest of its kind in Canada. Awards avail. in 18 genre cats, 9 craft cats & 4 int'l cats. Festival incls. public screenings, mini cinema, workshops & activities. Cats: Doc, Children, short. Formats: 1/2", 16mm, Beta SP, Beta. VHS. Entry Fee: CAN $75. Contact: Festival, 49 Smith St. E., Yorkton, SK, Canada S3N DH4; (306) 782-7077; fax: (306) 782-1550; info@yorktonshortfilm.org; www.yorktonshortfilm.org

NOTICES OF RELEVANCE TO AIVF MEMBERS ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE AS SPACE PERMITS. THE INDEPENDENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH AND MAKES NO GUARANTEES ABOUT REPETITIONS OF A GIVEN NOTICE. LIMIT SUBMISSIONS TO 60 WORDS & INDICATE HOW LONG INFO WILL BE CURRENT. DEADLINE: 1ST OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G., FEB. 1 FOR APR. ISSUE). COMPLETE CONTACT INFO (NAME, ADDRESS & PHONE) MUST ACCOMPANY ALL NOTICES. SEND TO: NOTICES@AIVF.ORG. WE TRY TO BE AS CURRENT AS POSSIBLE, BUT DOUBLE-CHECK BEFORE SUBMITTING TAPES OR APPLICATIONS. AIVF MEMBERS CAN SEARCH THESE AND OTHER NOTICES AT VIA AN INTERACTIVE RESOURCE DIRECTORY AT WWW.AIVF.ORG.

COMPETITIONS

AMERICAN CINEMA FOUNDATION'S EIGHT ANNUAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Founded to nurture and reward television and freature film projects which address fundamental social values, support and strangthen the concepts of the common good and common culture, and promote democratic pluralism. This themed, juried competition is designed to elicit scripts which are suitable for either theatrical or television production and which tell a positive story. First place winner receives $5,000 cash reward. Theme for 2002 is THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE. Soliciting character driven scripts that deal with the human pursuit of excellence. Deadline is March 31, 2002. For more information and entry form for the Eight Annual Screenwriting Competition, visit website www.cinemafoundation.com or contact office: (310) 286-9420, fax, (310) 286-7914 or e-mail acinema@cinemafoundation.com

AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL PRIME TIME COMPETITION: Call for entries. Two cats: sitcom & drama (based on a pre-existing show). Awards: $1,500 for each category winner. Airfare compensation up to $500, hotel compensation up to $500, VIP pass to Heart of Film Screenwriters Conference (October 11-18), & AFF bronze typewriter award for each category winner. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: April 15 (postmark). Contact: (512) 478-4795

CINEMARENO: March, NV. Deadline: Feb 1. A year-round festival of independent films and videos, showcasing narrative feature films and shorts with high artistic and entertainment values. Special quarterly screenings focus on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: $20. Contact: CinemaReno, P.O. Box 5372, Reno, NV 89531. E-mail: cinemareno@excite.com. Entry form and guidelines at: www.cinemareno.org

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: To bridge gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: first place $2,000; second place $1,000; third place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses, conferences & software. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax: 475-0193; awards@HollywoodNetwork.com; www.HollywoodNetwork.com

HOLLYWOOD SCREENPLAY CONSULTANTS SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: To find quality screenplays for Hagan Productions, Inc. to produce & Cine-Vision 2000 to distribute. Seeking low budget (less than $1.5 million), character or story driven, feature film screenplays. Should be live action, 1 or 2 locations ideal, 10 or less characters, 90-120 pages. Any genre considered. Cats: feature, short, animation, TV movie, TV mini-series, TV series (currently in production or not). Each entry must not have been sold, optioned, in turnaround, in preproduction or have been produced at time of submitted deadline. Prizes: 1st. place, $2,000; 2nd place, $1,000; 3rd place, $500; a prominent agent, a WGA signatory agency, will consider winners for representation to production companies & the major studios. Top 3 winners will receive FREE copy of Screen & Stage Play Marketing Secrets by James Russell. Each entry will receive 2-page critique & coverage of their screenplay from HSC. Entry fee: $75 per screenplay. Deadlines: Mar. 1, Sept. 1 & Dec. 1. Contact:17216 Saticoy Street, #303, Van Nuys, CA, 91406, (818) 994-5977; www.swiftsite.com/cine-vision2000

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: To provide new valuable outlet for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films (no TV dramas or sitcoms) in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, btwn 90 & 130 pages. Rules & Requirement in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies found in the Hollywood Creative Directory for one year, which includes all major studios seeking new screenplays. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; (800) SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com

MONTEREY COUNTY FILM COMMISSION 2002 SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Awards $2,002 top prize and valuable Hollywood contacts. Includes free tuition to the American Screenwriters Association's "Selling to Hollywood Screenwriters Conference." Top 3 winners also receive free tuition and personal one-to-one consultations with industry professionals at Screenwriting Day in Monterey on April 20, 2002. New $1,000 "On Location Award" will be given in recognition of an outstanding screenplay that includes at least 50% Monterey County settings. Deadline: Jan 31, 2002. Screenplays must not have been optioned or sold at the time of submission. Full length film or TV (90-130 pgs). Entry fee: $35, if postmarked by Oct. 31, 2001l $45 postmarked by Nov. 30, 2001, $55 afterwards. Discounts for submission of 2 or more scripts. Submit early—contest limited to first 500 screenplays received. Contact: (831) 646-0910; www.filmmonterey.org.

SCRIPTAPALOOZA 4th ANNUAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Grand prize $10,000. Deadlines: postmarked by April 16 (late entry, $50). Contact: 7775 Sunset Blvd. PMB #200, Hollywood, CA 90046; (323) 654-5809; info@scriptapalooza.com; www.scriptapalooza.com

SET IN PHILADELPHIA: screenwriting competition is open to all screenwriters in the Greater Philadelphia area. All genres accepted. Scripts will be judged on overall quality and genuine Philadelphia story. Grand prize: $10,000 cash, foot in the door LA package, notes from high profile judges & more. Additional prize package include the runner-up, and the Parisi Award ($1,000) for the best screenplay by an author under 21 years old (see website for complete prize lists). Entry fee $45, deadline 1/4/02.

HELPING WRITERS GET NOTICED

Tired of getting your script rejected just because you don't know the right people? The Scriptapalooza Screenwriting Competition has made it their mission to discover new talent and show them the path to a promising career. The perks aren't only for the first place winner though; second and third place also have the chance to make it in the business as they, too, get the support and nurturing of the Scriptapalooza team. Since the competition began in 1998, past winners have been able to land interviews with agents and get meetings with production companies and directors. One success story is the 1999 runner-up, Andrea Bailey, who sold her script to Universal Studios. See listing

Contact: The Greater Philadelphia Film Office, 100 South Broad St., Suite 600, Philadelphia, PA 19110, (215) 686-2668, www.film.org/filmmakers/sip.html, or email sip@film.org

TEXAS FILM INSTITUTE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: To promote, develop & seek production of new talented screenwriters within the studio and independent film market. Our sponsors expect to read solid dramatic scripts from our winners that reflect our high standards of writing for which we are known in the industry. Awards: Cash, possible option, entrants placing in semifinals and up receive free evaluation of script, admission to the Santa Fe Screenwriters Conference. Entry fee: $40. Deadline: April 15. Contact: Lisa Matter, Creative Assistant, TFI 2002, The Ranch of Dos Cerros, 409 Mountain Spring, Boerne, Tx 78006; (830)-537-5906; 537-5906; txflix @aol.com; www.texasfilminstitute.com

Conferences • Workshops

GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT & MEDIA SUMMIT: Two days of high energy where the film, music and media worlds will meet to discuss networking, information, new product announcements and promotional opportunities. March 2nd & 3rd New Yorker Hotel Ballrooms and Conference Center, New York City. Contact Steve Zuckerman for more info, steve@globalentertainmentnetwork.com

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Summer seminars & institutes for college & univ. teachers. Seminars incl. 15 participants working in collaboration w/ 1 or 2 leading scholars. Institutes provide intensive collaborative study of texts, historical periods & ideas for teachers of undergrad humanities. Info & appl. materials are avail. from project directors. Contact: (202) 606-8463; sem-inst@neh.gov; www.neh.gov

REEL ALTERNATIVE FILM SALON AND REEL WRITERS WORKSHOP: respectively accept completed film and screenplay submissions year round. Black, Latino, Asian and Native American filmmakers (directors, screenwriters, producers, and DPs) of Color are encouraged to submit their VHS tape or script. Yes! We are interested in your mainstream projects, also. Submit your tape or script with a synopsis, your bio and a $10.00 submission fee (check or money order) to: IGH MULTIMEDIA, LLC 655 Fulton Street, Suite 139 Brooklyn, NY 11217. For more details, call 718-670-3616 or e-mail: ighmultimedia @excite.com

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL 2001 FILM & VIDEO PRODUCTION WORKSHOP: Workshop emphasizes training & support of people of color who have limited resourses & access to mainstream educational institutions & traditional training programs within film/video industry. Intensive 5-month program focuses on preproduction, production & post production. Primary objective to have each member produce, write, direct & edit 2 projects. Workshop begins April. Prior film/video experience recommended but not required. Cost of workshop is $500. Deadline: Jan. 12. Contact: Third World Newsreel, 545 8th Ave., 10 Fl., New York, NY 10018; (212) 947-9277; fax 594-6417; twn@twn.org; www.twn.org

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AXLEGREASE: Buffalo, NY cable access program of ind. film & video, accepting all genres under 28 min. on 1/2", 3/4", 8mm, Hi-8. Send labeled w/ name, address, title, length, additional info & s.a.s.e. for tape return to: Squeaky Wheel, 175 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201; (716) 884-7172; squeaky@pce.net

BIJOU MATINEE: is a showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35 leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat at 2:30 PM. Submissions should be 25 min. or less. VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY, 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: offers the excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features, of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail hour to showcase local organizations and allow for a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 401 W. Ontario, Suite 208, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 863-3451; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com

CIN(E)-POETRY FESTIVAL: accepting short poetry or literary films, videos, docs & multimedia pieces for catalog & upcoming poetry video film festival. Request entry form: Cin(E)-Poetry, 934 Brannan St., 2 fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-9261; fax: 552-9261; poetry@nationalpoetry.org

DOBOY'S DOZENS: Monthly showcase w/ up to 350 industry attendees seeks short films for highlighting works by up & coming filmmakers. Contact: Eugene Williams, Doboy's Dozens, 1525 N. Cahuonga Blvd. #39, Hollywood, CA 90028; (323) 293-6544; doboydozen@aol.com

FILMS/VIDEOS WANTED: for weekly art program on Time Warner (public access TV) in Manhattan & Brooklyn enitled: SNACK-ON-ARTS. Artists please submit your work. 15 mins. max. Contact: Box 050050, Brooklyn, NY 11205; snacontt@hotmail.com

FINISHING PICTURES: accepting shorts, feature works-in-progress & web films seeking distribution or exposure to financial resources for CLIPS, a quarterly showcase presented to invited audience of industry professionals. All productions should be digital. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Tommaso Fiacchino, (212) 971-5846; www.finishingpictures.com

FOOTAGE WANTED: Tigress Productions seeking 8mm or S-8 footage of 42nd St./Times Square area from 1960s & 70s for doc. All film returned, some paid, film credit. Contact: June Lang (212) 977-2634.

MAKOR: continues its on-going Reel Jews Film Series that showcases the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs and/or works-in-progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration and network building. For more info, call Ken Sherman at (212) 601-1021 or e-mail kensherman@makor.org.

NEW DAY FILMS: premier distribution cooperative for social issue media, seeks energetic independent film & videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatrical markets. Now accepting appl. for new membership. Contact: On the East Coast: 617-338-4969. West and Midwest: (415) 383-8999. www.newday.com

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: accepts proposals from programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS Web page from producer guidlines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Senior Director, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295. Email: cjones@pbs.org. Web: www.pbs.org/producers/

REAL TV: looking for dynamic videos: news, weather, sports, bloopers, busts, "caught in the act." Real TV, syndicated, daily video magazine, will showcase compelling videos from around the world—from professionals as well as amateurs who capture video snapshots of life in the 90s. Tapes will not be returned. Contact: Real TV, Hollywood Center Studios, Stage 2, 1040 N. Las Palmas, Los Angeles, CA 90038; (213) 860-0100.

ROGUE VALLEY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: seeks video shows. VHS & S-VHS OK, any length or genre. For return, incl. sufficient SASE. Send w/ description & release to: Suzi Aufderheide, Southern Oregon Univ., RVTV, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, OR 97520; (541) 552-6898.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: is a quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are saught. Incl. synopsis of work, artist's bio & contact info. Deadline ongoing. Tapes are unable to be returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a non-profit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, please visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

THE VIDEO PROJECT: a leading educational distributor of videos, seeks environment and educational films and videos to aggressively market to the educational market. Contact us with finished projects or rough cuts. The Video Project, 45 Lusk Alley, San Francisco, CA, 94107. www.videoproject.net; video@videoproject.net

UNQUOTE TV: Weekly nonprofit program dedicated to exposing innovative work of all genres. Produced at DUTV-Cable 54 & cablecast nat'ly, Unquote Television is now in its 10th year. Send to: Unquote TV c/o DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St. 9B/4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.libertynet.org/dutv

VIDEO LOUNGE: seeks short anim., exper., or doc videos for on-going screening series. No narrative or works made on film. Currently searching for int'l videos for upcoming

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

To succeed as an independent you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. Whether through our service and education programs, the pages of our magazine, our web resource, or through the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while reminding you you're not alone.

About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

AIVF Online

Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

Insurance & Discounts

Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports over 20 member-organized, member-run regional salons across the country, to strengthen local media arts communities.

Advocacy

AIVF has been consistently outspoken about preserving the resources and rights of independent mediamakers. Members receive information on current issues and public policy, and the opportunity to add their voice to collective actions.

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series in spring. Send non-returnable VHS tape w/ brief bio & $1 to: Video Lounge, Box 1220, NY, NY 10013; info@videolounge.org; www.videolounge.org

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: wanted for local television. Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to: Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

WORKSCREENING/WORKS PRODUCTIONS: is currently accepting submissions of feature and short documentaries and fiction films for programming of its upcoming inagural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include a SASE. contact: Julian Rad, Works Productions/WorkScreening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com

ZOIE FILMS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL—ONLINE: ZoieFest Annual festival will present approx. 30-50 films during year & showcases more than 60 filmmakers. New domestic & foreign films, fiction films, film shorts & docs, animation, experimental, children's programs, Music Videos and TV Commercials will be included in festival. Awards incl. Zoie Star Award for Best Picture (domestic & foreign), People's Choice Awards & Certificates for various placements. Cash Prizes for top winners! Deadline: Feb. 2. Contact: Zoie Films, 539 Salem Woods Dr., Marietta, GA 30067; (404) 816-0602; fax: 560-6777; www.zoiefilms.com/filmfestxprt.htm

Publications

8x10GLOSSY.COM: Online artists' co-op offers free listing for all actors, technicians & organizations in directory & searchable database, free email address (can even be forwarded by fax or letter), free use of bulletin board. Send s.a.s.e. to: Jim Lawter, 37 Greenwich Ave, #1-6, Stamford, CT 06902; www.8x10glossy.com

CREATIVE COMMUNITY: THE ART OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: is a new publication commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation. The report traces the history, theoretical underpinnings, values & methods of community cultural development practice, empasizing its effectiveness as a response to social & economic forces that weaken cultural ties. The report also offers recommendations to strengthen & support the field. For more information, visit website or write in for printed copies of the report. Contact: Rockefeller Foundation, Job #3186 "Creative Community," Box 545, Mahwah, NJ 07430; www.rockfound.org

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO: organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & U.S. Latino ind. producers. To send work or for info: Karen Ranucci, LAVA, 124 Washington Pl., NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

2002 Call for Entries

LONG ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL

19th Annual Film/Video Festival

Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center
May 2nd-5th, 2002

Call or Write for Entry Forms (Due 4/1/02)
Christopher Cooke, Director
Long Island Film Festival
c/o P.O. Box 13243
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New! An interactive guide to grassroots distribution!

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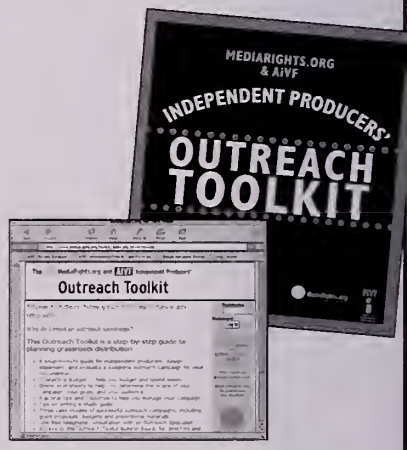

Show funders how your film will have an impact! Your documentary can move audiences to take action for social change. What's your plan? Use this interactive resource to design, implement, and evaluate an effective outreach campaign. The Outreach Toolkit also downloads to your PDA and includes interactive worksheets; budgeting tools; a print resource binder; individualized consultation with outreach experts; case studies including funded proposals; an online producers' forum; and much more!

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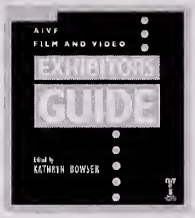

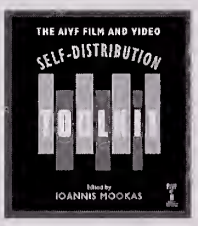

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DIGITAL MEDIA TRAINING SERIES: (DMTS) is a video & DVD-based training series for film, television & web developers. The series provides high-end training tools that improve productivity & creativity for the end-user. DMTS training episodes feature the latest topics & technology, giving viewers access to working professionals & experts that they would not have in a traditional classroom setting, at a fraction of the cost. Contact: Rafael, (877) 606-5012; info@magnetmediafilms.com; www.digitalmediatraining.com

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: is a new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. Sanctuary is devoted exclusively to creative work -- thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

THE SQUEALER: quarterly journal produced by Squeaky Wheel puts upstate NY spin on media-related subjects. Once a year, The Squealer publishes "State of the State," a comprehensive resource issue w/ detailed info on upstate media arts organizations, access centers, schools & coalitions. Subscriptions $15/ year. Contact: Andrea Mancuso, Squeaky Wheel, 175 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201

Resources • Funds

ALLIANCE OF CANADIAN CINEMA TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS: (ACTRA) announces new, innovative program that supports indigenous Canadian productions & aims to increase volume of Canadian-made films. ACTRA represents over 16,000 film, TV and commercial performers across Canada and wishes to bring these performers to independent film. Contact: Indra Escobar, (877) 913-2278.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS: provide grants to support educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact: Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202-4921; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis/

ARTSLINK: provides support to U.S. arts professionals & nonprofit arts organizations to work w/ their counterparts in 27 countries in Central & Eastern Europe & Newly Independent States. Projects should be designed to benefit participants or audiences in both countries. Applications must be postmarked by Jan 15. Contact: ArtsLink, CEC International Partners, 12 West 31 Street, NY, NY 10001, (212) 643-1985 x.22, artslink@cecip.org, www.cecip.org.

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ETA

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The Pasadena Center

Entertainment Technology Alliance

register online at: www.etaexpo.com
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Magnolia Independent Film Festival

Feb. 7,8,& 9, 2002 • Starkville, MS

Our 5th Annual "Mag" welcomes all lengths, all genres. Cash awards and "Mags" given in eight categories. Entries screened in 35mm, 16mm, Beta, VHS. $10 entry fee. If you attend we house you for free. Congrats to last year's winners: Irene Turner's "The Girl's Room; Patricia Chica's "The Promise"; Ace Allgood's "The Chromium Hook"; Anne Dodge's "In Mound Bayou"; John Kozak's "The Eulogy"; Sadia Shepard's "Eminent Domain".

Entry Forms: Download at www.magfilmfest.com or write to: Ron Tibbett, Festival Director 2269 Waverly Drive West Point, MS 39773
Phone: (662) 494-5836 Fax: (662) 494-9900 email: ronchar@ebicom.net

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NOTICES

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FUND: 4th year awarding $500-$2,000 postproduction completion grant for any length & genre on super 8, 16mm or 35mm. Emphasis placed on works that fit CUFF's mission to promote films & videos that innovate in form or content. Deadline: Feb. 5. Contact: CUFF, 3109, N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (773) 327-FILM; info@cuff.org; www.cuff.org

CULTURAL FUNDING: FEDERAL OPPORTUNITIES: Designed by the National Endowment for the Arts to help nonprofit arts organizations identify potential sources of federal support for cultural programs, this online resource includes listings of federal agencies w/ history of funding art-related projects, descriptions of projects, links, reference tools & tips on navigating specific funding sources. Listings include over 100 federal programs & 170 project examples, showing various arts programs supported by federal dollars at national, regional & state levels. Access: www.arts.gov/federal.html

FREE SOUNDTRACK SONGS: if you credit song in your film credits. Professionally produced & mastered CD with 22 punk, rock, alternative, dance, love songs. Call John at Road Rash Music (ASCAP publisher), (703) 481-9113.

FUNDING AVAILABLE: Private individual willing to participate financially in production of low-budget independent films. Send informal outline of project with emphasis on script. Filmmakers will be contacted via snail mail, email, or telephone. Contact: Indies, 1923 35th Pl., N.W. Apt. #1, Washington, D.C. 20007.

ITVS'S LINCS 2002 FUNDING INITIATIVE: The Independent Television Services (ITVS) announces LinCS 2002 (Local Independent Collaborating with Stations), a funding initiative that gives independent producers and local public stations the opportunity to work together. LinCS provides incentive or matching monies to collaborations between public television stations and independent producers. Funding amounts will range from $10,000 - $75,000. LinCS 2002 seeks regionally and culturally diverse projects. Programs should stimulate civic discourse and break traditional molds of exploring regional, cultural, political, social and economic issues. Deadline: April 30.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the Foundation's 2 major programs (Human & Community Development; Global Security & Sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact: John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES': Division of Public Programs provides grants to media projects that use broadcast & related companion digital media to present high-quality programs that explore the humanities to public audiences. Grants are offered for the planning, scripting & production of film, television & digital media projects that address humanities themes. NEH also offers consultation grants to help conceive of new projects. Projects should focus on humanities programming for the general public. Visit website for applications and guidelines. Deadlines: Sept 11 (consultation grants), Nov. 1 (planning grants), Feb. 1 (planning, scripting & pro-

duction grants). Contact: Media Programs, Division of Public Programs, Room 426, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20506; (202) 606-8269; publicpgms@neh.gov; www.neh.gov

NATIONAL LATINO COMMUNICATIONS CENTER: is a media arts production resource center that supports, produces & syndicates Latino programming for public television. Purpose is to empower Latinos in U.S. throughout the broadcast communications media. To that end, its mission is to: provide to the nation quality programming which illuminates the diversity of nat'l Latino ethos through expressions of its arts, cultures & histories; provide a sustained institutional framework for expressing Latino voice in the nat'l, Int'l film & communications industry; provide training & related assistance to develop & support Latino media talent whose creative visions will transform the Latino experience into compelling images of a people. Write: NLCC, 3171 Los Feliz Blvd., Ste 200, LA, CA 90039; (213) 663-5606; www.nlcc.com/

NEW VOICES, NEW MEDIA FUND: Corporation for Public Broadcasting has allocated up to $2 million this year to create the New Voices, New Media Fund. The objectives of this Fund are to harness the new media by supporting the creation of mission-driven, diverse new media content; and providing opportunities for diverse content creators working in public broadcasting to develop the skills that the new media demand. Project applications will be accepted throughout the year until the available fund is exhausted. Be aware that this call may be terminated at any time by CPB. Contact:New Voices, New Media Fund, c/o Program Operations, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 401 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20004; lbarbash@cpb.org; www.cpb.org/tv/funding

NEXT WAVE FILMS: funded by the Independent Film Channel, was established to provide finishing funds & other vital support to emerging filmmakers w/ low-budget, English-lang. features from U.S. & abroad. Selected films receive assistance w/ postproduction, implementing a festival strategy & securing distribution. Through Agenda 2000 - the production arm of Next Wave Films - filmmakers w/ an established body of work can receive production financing & assistance for features shot on DV and intended for theatrical release. Both fiction & non-fiction films considered for finishing funds and Agenda 2000. Contact: Next Wave Films, 2510 7th St., Ste. E, Santa Monica, CA 90405. (310) 392-1720; fax: 399-3455; launch @nextwavefilms.com; www.nextwavefilms.com

OPEN CALL 2002, ROUND 1: The Independent Television Service (ITVS) seeks provacative, compelling stories from diverse points of view and diverse communities. No finished works. Projects in any genre (animation, drama, documentary, experimental) or in any stage of production will be considered. Programs should tell a great story, break traditional molds of exploring cultural, political, social or economic issues, take creative risks, or give voice to those not usually heard. Download applications and guidelines at www.itvs.org. For queries email Marlene_Velasco@itvs.org or call (415) 356-8383 x232. Deadline: February 15.

OPEN DOOR COMPLETION FUND: Funding is available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants with public TV projects in final post-production phase. Full-length rough cut must be submitted. Awards average $20,000 & NAATA funds must be the last monies needed to finish project. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Review process takes approximately 1-3 months. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428; mediafind @naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org

PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA: solicits projects addressing critical social & political issues w/ goal of creating social change. Funding for radio projects in all stages of production; film & video projects in preproduction or distribution stages only. Grants range from $3,000-$8,000. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Trinh Duong, The Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

PEN WRITER'S FUND & PEN FUND: for writers & editors w/ AIDS. Emergency funds, in form of small grants given each year to over 200 professional literary writers, incl. screenwriters, facing financial crisis. PEN's emergency funds are not intended to subsidize writing projects or professional development. Contact: PEN American Center, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; (212) 334-1660.

THOUSAND WORDS FINISHING FUND: considers projects by first or second time feature filmmakers looking to create intelligent, innovative, and challenging films. The $500,000 fund is available in varied amounts for editing, sound mixing, music rights, and other post-production costs. Selected films will also receive assistance in film festival planning and distribution. Narratives, documentaries, animation and works-in-progress may be submitted. Application forms can be downloaded at Thousand Words' website: www.thousand-words.com. Contact: finishingfund@thousand-words.com or Thousand Words, 9100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 404E, Los Angeles, CA 90212. (310) 859-8330, fax, (310) 859-8333.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: offer seminars on "Copyright Basics," "Nonprofit Incorporation & Tax Exemption" & more. Reservations must be made. Contact: (212) 319-2910 x. 9.

WRITER'S FILM PROJECT: offers fiction, theatre & film writers the opportunity to begin a career in screenwriting. Up to 5 writers will be chosen to participate & each will receive a $20,000 stipend to cover his or her living expenses. Applications must be sent by mail only. Contact: Chesterfield Film Company - WFP, 1158 26th St., Box 544, Santa Monica, CA 90403; (213) 683-3977; www.chesterfield-co.com

ART ON FILM DATABASE: offers free listings. Have you produced films, videos, CD-ROMs on art or architecture? Send info for inclusion in database of over 25,000 productions on visual arts topics. Productions about artists of color & multicultural arts projects welcomed. Send info to: Program for Art on Film, Inc., c/o Pratt SILS, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11205; (718) 399-4506; fax: 399-4507; artfilm@sils.pratt.edu; www.artfilm.org

Statement of Ownership
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7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. Contact person: Sandy Spencer. Telephone: (212) 807-1400 x. 234.

8. Complete mailing address of headquarters or general business office of publisher: 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015.

9. Full names and complete mailing addresses of the publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher: Elizabeth Peters, AIVF/FIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. Editor: Beth Pinsker, FIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. Managing Editor: Farrin Jacobs, FIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015.

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15. Extent and nature of circulation: **a.** Total No. Copies (*net press run*): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,216; actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,685. **b.** Paid and/or requested circulation: (**1**) Paid/requested outside-county mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 2,467; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 2,542; (**2**) Paid in-county subscriptions stated on Form 3541: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,855; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1,855; (**3**) Sales through dealers, carriers, street vendors, counter sales & other non-USPS paid distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 5,974; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 5,117; (**4**) Other classes mailed through the USPS: N/A. **c.** Total paid and/or requested circulation: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 10,296; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 9,914. **d.** Free distribution by mail: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 174; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 168. **e.** Free distribution outside the mail (*carriers or other means*): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,256; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 2,820. **f.** Total free distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,430; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 2,988. **g.** Total distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 11,726; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 12,902. **h.** Copies not distributed: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,490; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 783. **i.** Total: (sum of 15 g, h(1) and h(2) Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,216; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,685. **j.** Percent paid and/or requested circulation: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 87.8%; actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 76.8%.

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: Publication required. Will be published in the Jan/Feb 2002 issue of this publication.

17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.

(*Signed*)
Farrin Jacobs, Managing Editor. 5th November, 2001.

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THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational & animation programs for distribution. Send videocassettes or discs for evaluation to: The Cinema Guild, 130 Madison Ave., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 685-6242; GCROWDUS@CINEMAGUILD.COM; Ask for our Distribution Services brochure.

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ACCOUNTANT/BOOKKEEPER/CONTROLLER: Experience in both corporate & nonprofit sectors. Hold MBA in Marketing & Accounting. Freelance work sought. Sam Sagenkahn (917) 374-2464.

ANDREW DUNN, Director of Photography/camera operator Arri35 BL3, Aaton XTRprod S16, Sony DVCAM. Experience in features, docs, TV & industrials. Credits: Dog Run, Strays, Working Space/Working Light. (212) 477-0172; AndrewD158@aol.com

AVID EDITOR W/ SYMPHONY, recently relocated to Burbank. excellent rates, both off- and online. Looking to form long-term relationships with independents. Call Charlene for info and reel at (818) 563-1426 or email PeregrineFilms@aol.com.

AWARD-WINNING EDITOR, w/ Avid and Beta SP facility. Features, shorts, docs, music videos, educational, industrials, demos. Trilingual: Spanish, English, Catalan. Nuria Olive-Belles (212) 228-4724.

BRENDAN C. FLYNT: Director of Photography w/ many feature & short film credits. Owns 35 Arri BL3, Super 16/16 Aaton, HMIs, Dolly, and Tulip Crane. Awards at Sundance & Raindance. Call for quotes & reel at (212) 208-0968; www.dpFlynt.com

CAMERAMAN/ STEADICAM OPERATOR: 35BL, 16SR, Beta SP, Stereo TC Nagra4, TC FostexPD-4 DAT, feature lite pkg. to shoot features, music videos, commercials, etc. Call Mik Cribben for info & reel, (212) 929-7728 or (800) 592-3350.

CINEMATOGRAPHER, documentary/fiction. Numerous film awards incl. Cannes 2001 Palme d'Or for shorts, student Oscar, student Emmys, more. DSR-300 DVCAM package, doc lights, radio mike, etc. Will travel. Bldonnell@aol.com; (213) 483-5252.

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ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in The Independent & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from

development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

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Unless otherwise noted, all AIVF events take place at our offices (see below). RSVP required for all events. (212) 807-1400 x301 or info@aivf.org.

Meet & Greet:
ARTISTIC LICENSE FILMS

When: Thurs., Jan. 24th, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Cost: $5 members; $20 general public

Artistic License Films is a full service theatrical distributor that works collaboratively with filmmakers on all creative aspects of distribution. As a booking agent, Artistic provides filmmakers, producers, and distribution companies with individualized services to ensure the successful theatrical release of a film. Current films include: *American Astronaut*, *The Taste of Others*, and *Sound & Fury*. Sande Zeig will attend.

Documentary Dialogues:
DOCUMENTARY DISASTERS

When: Tues., Jan. 29th 6:30-8:30.
Wine & Goldfish reception til 9:30.
Cost: $5 members; $20 general public

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY
HOURS: TUES.-FRI. 11-6; WED. 11-9
The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.-Fri. 2-5p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

Share your horror stories from the documentary world and learn in a fun way from your peers all those "Thou shall not" and "You should always" that will make your filmmaking life much easier.

AIVF at:
The House of Docs
2002 Sundance Film Festival

When: January 11-19
Where: Park City, UT
FFI: www.sundance.org

The House of Docs is a community space designed to increase awareness of documentary film and provide support to filmmakers. It cultivates dialogue among filmmakers, documentary participants, industry leaders, and the public. The House includes opportunities for filmmakers to network with each other and meet both formally and informally with resource advisors, members of the press, and international representatives. Roundtable discussions, special presentations, and one-on-one meetings take place all day long on topics ranging from the creative process, ethics, and current nonfiction trends to development, finance, distribution, and exhibition.

AIVF's co-presented events take place at The Gateway Center, 136 Heber Avenue, Suite 102 in Park City and are open to all festivalgoers.

AIVF's Pitching to the Pros:
THE ART OF VERBALLY SELLING YOUR PROJECT

When: Sunday, January 13, 2-4 p.m.

Part panel discussion, part practice-pitch session, AIVF's Pitching to the Pros takes an in-depth look at how to perfect your pitch, illustrating how producers can put their best feet forward when orally presenting concepts to commissioning editors and acquisitions executives.

Audience members will learn the do's and don'ts of delivering their own project ideas from advice offered by industry representatives and by also hearing their peers publicly pitch their projects for critique and discussion. Presented to sold-out crowds in New York and Philadelphia, AIVF is very pleased to present this program with Sundance's House of Docs.

Open house with media arts organizations:
AIVF, FILM ARTS FOUNDATION, AND IDA

When: Sunday, 5-6:30 p.m.

Meet the executive directors of three national media arts organizations that have served independent producers for over 25 years.

Individually, AIVF, Film Arts Foundation, and The International Documentary Association each offer varied resources and programs for filmmakers. Collectively, these organizations preserve the cultural space that ensures the voices of independent artists will be heard. Find out how these media arts organizations work for you and the greater documentary community.

AIVF Co-Sponsors:
The Slamdance Film Festival

Slamdance FILM FESTIVAL

When: January 11-19
Where: Park City, UT
For more information: www.slamdance.com

Slamdance is a year-round organization dedicated to new filmmakers and their visions. Now in its eighth year, Slamdance has expanded to include On The Road Screenings, a very active website, Anarchy Online, a thriving screenplay competition and a "$99 Special" short film production wing.

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AIVF will co-present the "Fireside Chat: Alternative Distribution" during the 2002 Slamdance Festival. Details posted at www.aivf.org.

Meet & Greet:
DISCOVERY HEALTH CHANNEL

When: Tues., Feb. 12th, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Cost: $5 members; $10 general public
For more info: www.discoveryhealth.com

From the people who bring you the Discovery Channel, Discovery Health Channel takes you inside the world of health and medicine with inspiring real life stories of individuals and medical triumphs.

Donald Thoms, VP of Production, will attend. Prior to his position with Discovery Health, Mr. Thoms was Vice President of program management at PBS where he was responsible for the packaging and delivery of PBS's programming services. In addition, Thoms evaluated and developed programming projects as well as helped to develop on-air promotional initiatives for key programs. Don't miss this opportunity to talk with Donald about independents on cable and broadcast.

IN BRIEF: TAXES FOR INDEPENDENTS

When: Tues., Feb 5th, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Cost: $10 AIVF members;
$20 nonmembers

Join CPAs Martin Bell (Bell & Co) and Steve Cooperberg (Todres & Rubin) in a discussion about filing your taxes as a sole proprietor, a corporation, or as a limited liability company. Members are encouraged to bring their specific concerns. Both CPAs are participants in the AIVF Trade Discount Program and offer discounts to members on a year-round basis. Here is your chance to forge new relationships!

AIVF Co-Sponsors:
BLACK MARIA FILM FESTIVAL

When: Launches Jan. 25 to tour the U.S.

The Black Maria Film Festival presents inventive & provocative work of any style or genre, with featured works screened at venues throughout U.S. and Canada. The 2001 Tour cities included: Washington, DC, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston. For more information: www.blackmariafilmfestival.com; (201) 200-2043

AIVF Co-Sponsors:
UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM AND DIGITAL VIDEO FESTIVAL

When: February 15-17
Where: New Brunswick, N.J.

This festival spreads the small gauge and digital word by celebrating work originating on Super 8 film, hi-8, or digital video. Toward that end, the Rutgers Film Co-op/New Jersey Media Arts Center has sponsored seven touring programs, culled from past festival winners, which have traveled extensively and seen new audiences. Don't miss this collection of eclectic work in all shapes and genres. For more information: (732) 932-8482; www.njfilmfest.com.

FILMS AT
THE WALTER READE THEATER

AIVF members receive discounted admission to selected programs.

Walter Reade 10th Anniversary Celebration: January 2-10

30th Dance on Camera Festival: January 11-12, 18-19

11th New York Jewish Film Festival: January 13-26

Andrzej Munk Retrospective: January 25-29

Film Comment Selects the Best of 2001: February (Date TBA)

TOOTING THE AIVF HORN

University of Texas at Austin student Quan Tran created a 20 sec. PSA which is available for festival screenings and broadcasts. The PSA contains the message: "You Matter. We Matter. Join. www.AIVF.org" If you would like to screen the PSA please contact Paul Marchant for a copy (members@aivf.org).

Quan Tran is a Pre-Med and RTF major. He accidentally found his talent for editing in Ellen Spiro's Digital Documentary course. Contact: quanm25@yahoo.com.

The AIVF Regional Salons provide opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons section at www.aivf.org for more details.

Be sure to contact your local Salon Leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: Capital District Arts Ctr., Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 283-7378
jeff_burns23@yahoo.com
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday of the month, 7 pm
Contact: Anne del Castillo, (512) 507-8105
labc@att.net, www.austinfilm.org

Birmingham, AL:
When: First Tuesday of the month
Where: Production Plus, 2910 Crescent Ave., Homewood, AL
Contact: Clay Keith, ckeith1000@yahoo.com
Karen Scott, WScott9268@aol.com,
(205) 663-3802

Boston, MA:
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
FSimon@aol.com

Boulder, CO: "Films for Change" Screenings When: First Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
patricia@freespeech.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday of the month, 6:30pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun St.
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841;
Peter Wentworth, filmsalon@aol.com

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315,
OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com
www.ohiofilms.com

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700,
bart@videofest.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
allen@passionriver.com,
www.passionriver.com

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: (713) 522-8592,
swamp@swamp.org

Huntsville, AL:
When: Call for schedule
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite,
charles.white@tdsi.com

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary,
mediaarts33@yahoo.com
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday of the month, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
mmasucci@aol.com

Milwaukee, WI: Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
betuccia@aol.com

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm (Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Kate Kressmann-Kehoe,
(716) 244-8629, ksk@netacc.net

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
aivf@mediaartscenter.org

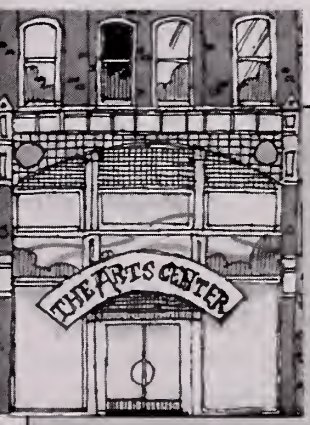
Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
mybluesun@hotmail.com; Jane Selle Morgan
(206) 915-6263, jane@heropictures.com

South Florida:
Contact: Dominic Giannetti, (561) 313-0330
themoviebiz@hotmail.com
www.moviebiz.info

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday of the month, 6pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno,
yourdestiny@mindspring.com

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, jatvelez@hotmail.com
DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x 4,
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!



THE STATE OF UPSTATE

Upstate Independents (UI), the Albany, NY Salon of AIVF, will have a grand opening at its new home, The Arts Center of the Capital Region (Troy, NY), on February 5. UI is comprised of over 100 independent media artists and is among the more active regional networks in the country.

A special presentation of the inaugural VN Spirit Award will be given in honor of UI member Vicki Ngirailemesang, a longtime member of UI who served as a major volunteer and contributed greatly to the success of UI since 1996.

The VN Spirit Award is given in recognition of a Capital Region artist who embodies Vicki's courageous independent spirit, freedom of self-expression, generous volunteerism, and determination to champion the best, serving as mentor to many colleagues and collaborators. The first ever recipient of the award is producer Terry J. Field (member of AIVF and UI).

Following the award presentation, there will be a panel discussion on "The State of Upstate Independent Media Makers." Speakers include Elizabeth Peters, Executive Director of AIVF; Steve Greenwald, President of Audrey Cohen College; and representatives from the New York State Film Office and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). See listing.

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This information was last updated 11/01 and is subject to change without notice.

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One Art (New York, NY)
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Public Interest Video Network (Washington, DC)
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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

Business/Industry Members: **CA**: Action/Cut Directed By Seminars; Attaboc LLC; Busk Entertainment, LLC; Calliope Films, Inc.; Eastman Kodak Co.; Film Society of Ventura County; Forest Creatures Entertainment Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; HBO; Moonshadow Production & Research; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; Somford Entertainment; **CO**: The Crew Connection; Inferno Film Productions; **FL**: Bakus Internatinal, Inc/ Odysseas Entertainment, Inc.; Burn Productions; **IL**: Rock Valley College; Wiggle Puppy Productions; Wonderdog Media; **MA**: CS Associates; Glidecam Industries; **MD**: The Learning Channel; U.S. Independents, Inc.; **MI**: Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Kingberry Productions, Inc.; **MN**: Allies; Media/Art; **NJ**: DIVA Communications, Inc.; **NY**: AKQ Communications, Ltd.; American Montage; Analog Digital Intl., Inc.; Asset Pictures; Black Bird Post; Bluestocking Films, Inc.; Bravo Film and Video; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cineblast! Prods.; Corra Films; Cypress Films; Dependable Delivery, Inc.; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Earth Video; Guerilla News Network; Highdrama Productions Inc.; Historic Films Archive; Human Relations Media; Hypnotic; Inkling Prods.; Jalapeno Media; KL Lighting; Mad Mad Judy; Mercer Street Sound; Metropolis Film Lab Inc.; Mixed Greens; New Rican Filmmaker; New York Independent Film School; One Kilohertz; The Outpost; Partisan Pictures; Paul Dinatale Post, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Seahorse Films; Son Vida Pictures, LLC; Suitcase Productions; Swete Studios; Tribune Pictures; Wolfen Prods.; **OR**: Angel Station Corp.; **PA**: Cubist Post & Effects; Smithtown Creek Prods.; **TX**: Upstairs Media Inc.; **UT**: KBYU-TV; Rapid Video, LLC; **VA**: Bono Film & Video; Dorst MediaWorks; Roland House, Inc.; **WV**: Harpers Ferry Center Library.

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IN Production

BY JASON GUERRASIO

A guy down on his luck tries to figure out where he belongs in ***Draftdodging***. After getting fired from his crappy job, Berg decides to go back to his hometown in New Hampshire to find his own path in life. Along for the ride are his cousins, who are also in the same soul-searching mode. "Basically they are trying to find a place that is better than where they are in now," explains Garen Wiesen, the director/producer of the film. Wiesen and friend Hugh Easton took on the project when it was at a standstill in development. After a test screening in Boston last August the movie has gotten nothing but praise. Wiesen is currently looking for a distributor. Contact: Allen Bush at (617) 357-6997; allen@stratocomm.com.

Randy Credico has had an interesting life. First a stand-up comedian, then a coordinator of campaign benefit parties, now an activist fighting the Rockefeller drug laws (prison sentences for anyone convicted of a drug crime, no matter how small), he definitely has a story to tell. Close friend and comedian Laura Kightlinger thought so when she decided to do a documentary about Credico called ***Sixty Spins Around the Sun***, which follows his mission to fight the Rockefeller law. But Kightlinger never expected it to be so tough when she started the project five years ago. "I was telling this friend I feel that I could write the jackass's guide to how to make a documentary," she says. After making a few "expensive mistakes," Kightlinger is close to finishing a rough-cut of the film. And then it'll be on to the festival circuit. Contact: Cascade Pass, Inc. (310) 305-0210.

Showcasing the beautiful landscape of Washington D.C., ***North of DuPont*** is a romantic comedy that follows two friends trying to make ends meet and find love in the rural area of DuPont Circle.

PHOTOS COURTESY FILMMAKER

On the set of the ground breaking show *Crossroads*.

Writer/director Quentin Kelly penned the script six years ago, but with no experience under his belt he had to put his dream of making the movie on hold. "I really wanted to do it but I didn't have any experience so I wrote, directed, and edited three shorts all with the theme of *North of DuPont* in mind," Kelly says. After the third short, Kelly felt prepared to start production on the feature. His main goal was to show a city that was more than just the White House and historic memorials. "Most people don't see D.C. as a neighborhood town, they think of the mall area, they think politics; but I wanted to tell a story about people in a neighborhood, a D.C. that people outside of Washington don't know about." Contact: Quentin Kelly at (202) 986-3127; check out the trailer at www.northofdupont.com.

***The Letter Writer* focuses on war.**

The purpose of the show ***Crossroads*** is to highlight some of today's great musicians who have not been commercially recognized. Last September producer/director Bradley Latham finished the pilot episode, which showcased "Texas" Johnny Brown, Chris Duarte, Bugs Henderson, and Chris Thomas King (you may remember him in ***O' Brother Where Art Thou?*** as the guitarist in The Soggy Bottom Boys). What distinguishes this from other music shows is that it was done through fiber optic transmissions. Latham worked in a control room in Dallas, Texas, while the performers and crew were taping simultaneously in a studio in Houston. "I did the art direction over monitors and everything was sent back to Dallas where I mixed it live to tape," Latham says. "All the major media people were there. They all wanted to see if we could pull off real-time remote transmissions in broadcast quality." It was a success. Now with the first episode finished, Latham is pitching the show. Contact: Bradley Latham at (917) 596-4621.

The horrors of World War II and the mission of one man to capture the images on film is at the center of ***The Letter Writer***, the first attempt at directing for veteran special effects artist Jeffery A. Cox. "The story's about the individual soldier and the struggles of being an individual," Cox says. To show the struggle Cox thought of no one better to be the main focus point but the ones who had to film the war. "The combat photographer's job is to find war and record it, he can't become numb to it, he can't just pass death without seeing it, he must show it." Hundreds of World War II veterans and re-enactors are donating materials such as tanks, flame throwers, machine guns, tents, and uniforms for the project. "I have equipment to rival *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Thin Red Line*," Cox boasts. He plans to start shooting in the spring and is currently looking for funding. Contact: No Joke Productions Inc., (610) 338-0412; nojoke@bellatlantic.net.

Rushes

BY BETH PINSKER

"ACTION," CALLS RODNEY Evans—one little word he must have been waiting to say for a long time. His crew rolls picture and sound, the actors say their lines, and *Brother to Brother* begins to take shape on celluloid.

The day is beautiful, crisp enough for jackets, with the sun casting wonderful shadows against the building on 2nd St. in the East Village where 20 people are congregated with equipment. In this scene on day three of the shoot, Perry (Anthony Mackie) is lounging on a stoop talking to his friend Marcus (Larry Gilliard Jr.) when the Harlem Renaissance poet Richard Bruce Nugent (Earle Hyman) ambles along on shaky legs to recite a bit of his work.

On the set of *Brother to Brother* in the East Village.

The whole sequence only takes a few minutes, but Evans wants coverage so they're out in the street for about four hours altogether, until 2 p.m. This is after having shot another scene in the morning and on the way to spending the afternoon at the Nuyorican Poets Café, where they have to be out by 4:30 p.m.

Cars stream down the street. A plane flies overhead. A construction crew across the way runs a buzz saw while building scaffolding. Pedestrians stop to gawk. A man comes out of his office at the base of the stoop, opening the gate and almost running into Hyman as he approaches his mark. Life goes on in New York.

"We didn't lock down the street, that's been a real issue," Evans says wearily when he gets up from his field monitor between takes to stretch his legs.

There's not much to do about it at this point, though, other than have the boom operator lean in close and keep things as quiet as they can close up to the action.

And that's where assistant director Patrick Gibbons comes in, pacing the 15 feet of "set," calling commands into his headset to the guy up the street directing traffic, and keeping things moving along. There is a lot of repetition going on to get the coverage, but there isn't any of that endless wasted time—at least not for the primary crew. The extras for the Nuyorican had an 11:30 call for what turns out to be an actual 2:30 start time, but that's hardly anything in movie time.

For that scene, Marcus is up on stage performing a poem, and Perry, sitting in the audience, catches a glimpse of Nugent at the bar out of a corner of his eye. A small crew rushes around to dress the set when the crew finally shows up from the other location. They don't have that much to do, since the Nuyorican is just going to be shot as is, with its exposed brick walls and dusty stage happily authentic.

It's not exactly toasty inside, but the crew is content because, finally, there's a craft services table, and the hungry group descends upon the chocolate covered pretzels and goldfish. But they aren't allowed to touch the ginger ale, apple juice, and cranberry juice that are doubling for drinks.

There's a minor flap when Gibbons figures out that the P.A. took the van to get the bulk lunch order, and there's still a camera at the other location that needs to be picked up before cinematographer Harlan Bosmajian (*Lovely and Amazing*) can finish setting up. The extra 20 minutes is killing him.

Evans, sitting on a crate on the sidewalk eating a slice of pizza, keeps himself blissfully calm.

The crew is moving along swiftly because they only have a week to shoot. When they didn't get all the money in by deadline, Evans and his producers made the decision to just go ahead and get done what they could. The break actually might have had to happen anyway, since Mackie got a part in Curtis Hanson's new movie, which has an ensemble cast including Eminem, Mekhi Phifer, and Kim Basinger.

Over six days, they ended up shooting 12 hours of film, including two of the period scenes, which works out to roughly 25 percent of the film. Evans will edit together a tape and send it out to potential funders, one being the national Black Programming Consortium, which funds African-American projects through PBS.

"What happens now?" Evans asks later, when he's sitting at a borrowed Avid late on a Friday evening logging tape and beginning to edit. "I sit here for a week or two and edit. It's going to be a long haul for this baby."

For more information contact the filmmaker at rodneyevans@earthlink.net.

It's like a **great dream.** You're at this **intimate film festival** that just happens to be in **beautiful Bermuda.** You're wearing a **surfer shirt,** drinking **rum** and **chatting** with a hot indie director, when... **BEEP!** Your **cell** goes and the **dream** is lost forever...

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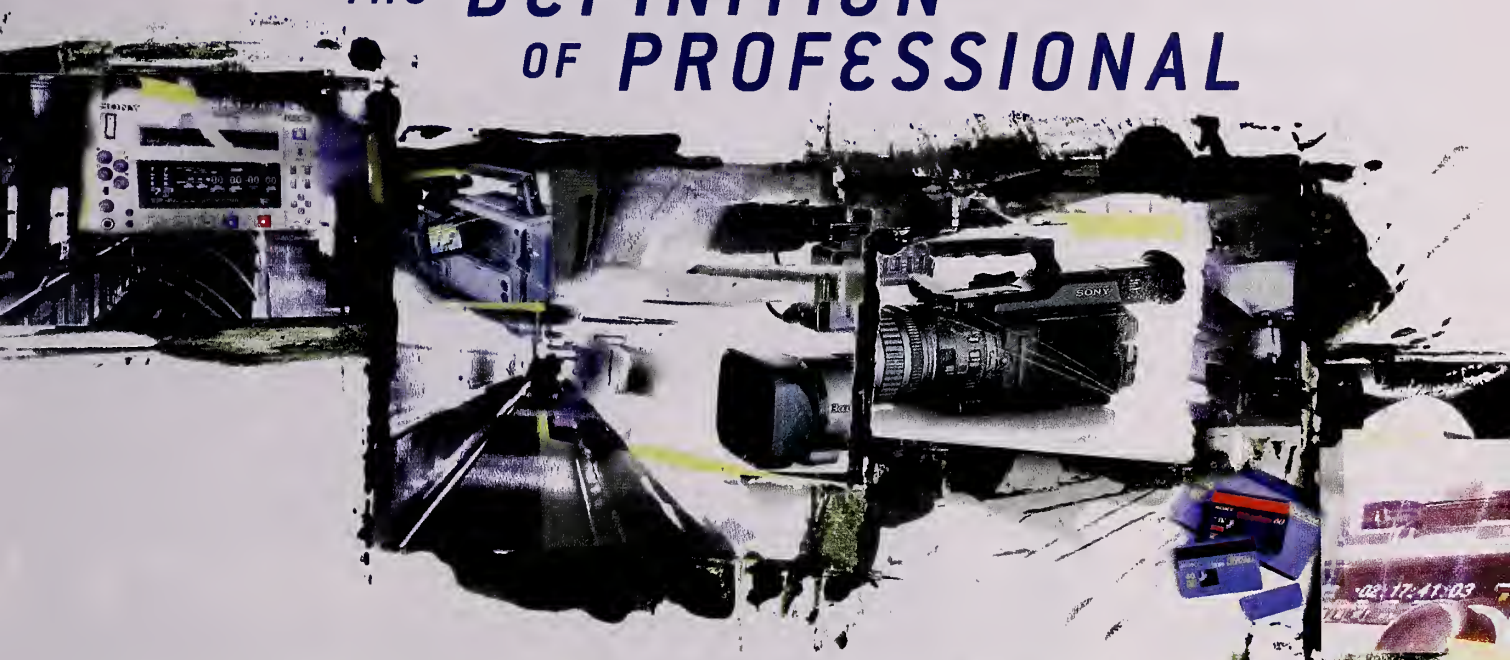

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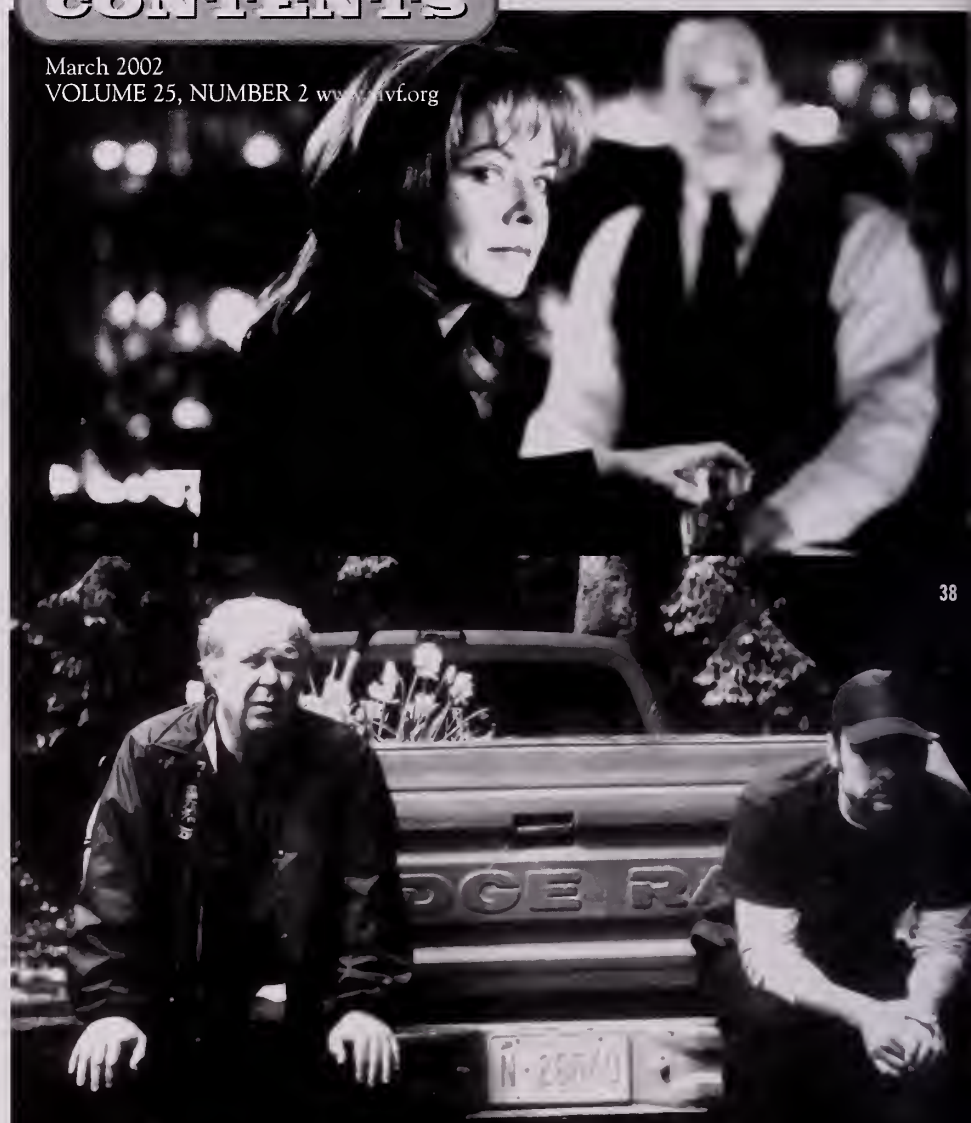

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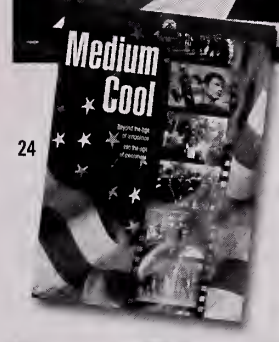

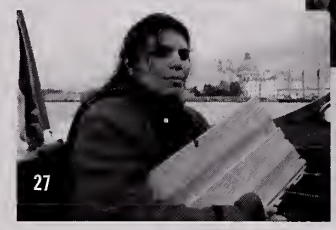

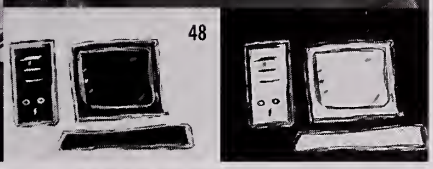

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It's like a great **dream.** You're at this **intimate film festival** that just happens to be in **beautiful Bermuda.** You're wearing a **surfer shirt,** drinking **rum** and **chatting** with a hot indie director, when... **BEEP!** Your **cell** goes and the **dream** is lost forever...

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Dear Readers,

Music can be an integral component of moving image media. Insidiously suasive, it can bring images to new planes of meaning...or simply overpower them. It is likely to be one of the most expensive elements of a low budget production, and incorrect clearances can keep a program from every being seen.

How should indies work with music? This issue provides inspiration and information, from Richard Baimbridge's profile of director/composer relationships to Tamara Krinsky's assemblage of advice from experts. Boston's "Field Report" gives center stage to repertory composers Alloy Orchestra, and Farrin Jacobs describes the behind the scenes look at larger budget recording sessions from Trio Cable's *The Score*.

On the festival circuit, Pat Thomson reports on the Sundance Institute's expanded support of documentaries, and highlights a few standouts from this year's festival. Henry Lewes describes the tenor of Amsterdam's International Documentary Forum and the program's focus on world issues, and Macauley Peterson brings us into the hallowed corridors of The Ivy Film Festival.

If you're a filmmaker grappling with a new form, you'll relate to our profiles: accomplished filmmaker Stanley Nelson tries on DV for a personal project, and Chuck Workman (you know him from those soaring Academy Awards montages) embarks on a dramatic feature.

On the practical side, Mark Litwak, Esq. helps elucidate the rights of individuals, while Greg Gilpatrick reviews Macintosh and PC operating systems to see which provides the best platform for DV editors. Robert Goodman field tests a number of new accessories for the XL1/XL1s.

I've been publisher of *The Independent* for the past three years (and a reader for 12), but this is my first go round as editor (Beth Pinsker stepped down after assigning this issue in December). I'm happy to welcome Cleo Cacoulidis as managing editor; we'll be putting out the next few issues together while AIVF hires a new editor. As always, we welcome your input!

Elizabeth Peters
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December 7, 2001

Dear AIVF members and board:

As videomakers working in forms other than traditional feature length narrative and documentary, we feel a great sense of disappointment in the direction *The Independent* has taken over the past few years. The organization, and the publication in particular have increasingly pushed the needs and concerns of artists working in experimental documentary and narrative forms, political and activist media, short form, installation, video art, and new media to the sidelines. It seems there is a blatant preference for serving the needs of those who aspire to work commercially in television and in Hollywood. Of course everyone should be supported in pursuing their aspirations, but isn't this type of work represented in many publications on the newsstand already?

Those of us who truly work independently go largely unrepresented, without a single publication that addresses our need for information on technology, news about others working in similar forms, or reviews of festivals that feature this type of work. Little of relevance to this community can be found in today's *The Independent*. Even the festival section overlooks many of the media art festivals that are important to us. AIVF's continuing marginalization of this community represents a disturbing trend in a time when so much independent media is being compromised by corporate interests.

There is entirely too much attention being focused on those working on calling card projects, using the "Indie Feature" as a stepping stone to gain access to the commercial world. It appears that AIVF's opinion is that the so-called world of independent mediamaking is just one degree removed from Hollywood. We fear that the reason the organization has taken this turn is the quest for money. We realize that is something artists working in independent media don't have much of, but we have been part of AIVF's core constituency from its inception.

Please give us a truly independent *Independent* back.

Sincerely,
Studio One:
an informal group of video artists

Dear AIVF members and Studio One:

Certainly it is AIVF's mission to support the independent community in its desire to make work, often labored on outside traditional funding or distribution systems, that is personal, often political, and wonderfully difficult to define. While there is no organization that could not be improved—AIVF emphatically included—I do not agree that the organization and the magazine have buckled under financial pressure to give inordinate attention to the so-called calling card film. Looking at the magazine over the past several years one sees numerous articles on telecommunications policy, the emergence of digital technologies, self-distribution, social issue outreach, experimental and underground film festivals, and portraits of a wide array of film artists. Even when widely seen films such as Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon *appear in* The Independent, *they are used as a jumping off point to explore subjects more relevant to independents; in this case, the inner workings of the small production-house-that-could,* Good Machine. *Against our financial interests, but to maintain the integrity of the organization, the board has repeatedly and forcefully rejected seeking corporate support for the magazine outside of paid advertising. We agree that corporate interests compromise the construction of media that is truly independent.*

This brings us to a central dilemma continually facing AIVF: how to be responsive to a membership as gloriously broad and diverse as ours. We are aware that focusing on one part of our constituency inevitably means overlooking others. We ask that you look at the organization as a whole over a period of years to see our commitment to the independent community.

Your letter is generating conversation within the organization and this is a good thing. You say that the magazine is overlooking festivals that feature the independent work you describe; let us know which festivals so we may include them. Your description of what you hope for from AIVF is deeply consistent with the board's vision for the organization. From where I sit, we are in the same boat.

Robb Moss
President, AIVF

For the texts of these letters and a complete list of signatories, as well as the opportunity to weigh in with your own thoughts, visit www.aivf.org.

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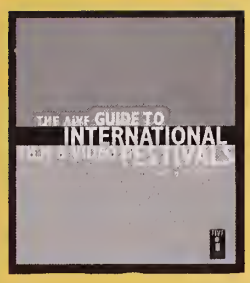

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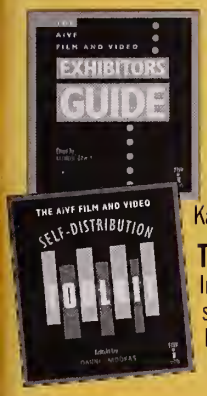

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The Dialectic of Digital Dialogues

Flaherty Does Digital

BY KATHY BREW

SINCE 1995 INTERNATIONAL FILM SEMINARS, which presents the annual Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, has included digital and web-based media in their seven-day intensive seminar designed to foster exploration, dialogue, and introspection into the art of the moving image. Artists like Shu Lea Cheang, Kevin and Jennifer McCoy, Zoe Beloff, and Philip Mallory Jones have presented their works at past film seminars. Additionally, over the past few years IFS has organized intermittent programming with a digital focus in collaboration with other media presenters.

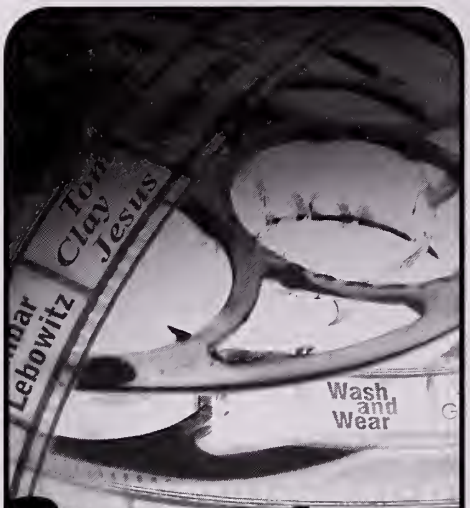
But IFS director Somi Roy began to recognize that there was a real need in the field for artists working with new technologies to benefit more deeply from the Flaherty tradition. And so the first Digital Flaherty took place from November 16-18, a pilot program presented in cooperation with Integrated Electronic Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), with funding support from the Rockefeller Foundation. Digital Flaherty comprised a weekend-long, intensive mini seminar with the presentation of media by artists for their peers and other interested professionals.

Initially scheduled for the first weekend in October, the program was postponed to November after the tragic events of September 11th. Besides the fact that the IFS office is located two blocks from where the World Trade Center used to stand, and was displaced for two weeks following the terrorist attacks, the planning committee also felt that the seminar would take place too soon to engage people in a digital dialogue.

Modeled on the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, Digital Flaherty featured screenings, group discussions, and interactive presentations. The programs were selected by input from a committee comprised of media arts aficionados: Sally Berger, Kathy Rae Huffman, Branda Miller, Neil Rolnick, Carol Stakenas, Mary Ellen Strom, Igor Vamos, Chris Cxikszentmilhayli, and myself, Kathy Brew.

Digital Flaherty provided a forum for artists, theorists, programmers, and engineers to examine the ideas, the aesthetics, and the politics of digital media. Like the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, Digital Flaherty offered participants the opportunity to meet emerging and established artists in an intimate environment, emphasizing the immediacy of personal interaction and the benefits of a collective group experience.

Digital Flaherty brought together ninety participants who joined some of the foremost artists and innovators in the field. Presenters included: Amy Goodman from Democracy Now!, DeeDee Halleck, Igor Vamos, Alex Rivera, Tirtza Even, Jennifer and Kevin McCoy, Toni Dove, Demetri Terzopoulous, a keynote address



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by Sandy Stone, performances by Paul Vanouse, Art Jones and Gabriel Cyr, Sissyfight, Graham Harwood from the UK, Julia Heyward, and Grahame Weinbren. Participants engaged in lively and spirited discussions on the artistic use of digital technology and its connections to activism, narrative, documentary, interactivity, and gaming applications.

According to Heyward, who presented her work in an interactive context where participants were able to drive the work while she "conducted" from the front of the room, "Digital Flaherty was a great beta test for my DVD prototype, Miracles in Reverse. Having a room full of new media professionals and students driving my interactive work was hyper informative and fun. I thought overall the featured work was strong, especially in regards to content. I felt honored to be included in the festival and in the communion of such strongly committed artists, curators, thinkers, and new media supporters."

It is this kind of cross-pollination that Digital Flaherty hopes to foster, as well as new partnerships that may become the fabric of future Digital Flahertys. Inspired by the success of Digital Flaherty, International Film Seminars is planning to present some selections at Carnegie-Mellon University's Interface Conference in Pittsburgh in April 2002. According to Roy, "We would like to develop this as an annual event to provide a continuing forum for contemplation of new art forms as they are emerging." Stay tuned on all fronts....

For more info, see www.flahertyseminar.org.

Kathy Brew is an independent videomaker, curator, writer, and educator, and the former Director of Thundergulch (1997-2001).

U.S. PROTESTS RUNAWAY PRODUCTION

BY JASON GUERRASIO

CANADA HAS BECOME THE MECCA FOR filmmakers who don't have the budget to shoot a feature film in the middle of a busy city in America (i.e. New York or Boston), and for the past few years many films have taken their production to our neighbors in the north. But some in this country aren't too happy with what's been going on.

Feeling that the "rank and file" workers have been robbed by movies traveling to Canada to shoot, The Film & Television Action Committee (FTAC) last December brought a petition forward to the U.S. Department of Commerce in hopes of bringing film jobs back to the United States. The petition asked to investigate Canada's film incentives to see if they constitute an unfair trade practice.

FILM AMERICAN FTAC
FILM AND TELEVISION ACTION COMMITTEE

"We started FTAC about three to four years ago when it was around the time a lot of films were going north," says FTAC chairman Brent Swift, who is one of the close to 12,000 members in the film industry who signed the petition. "I'm a production designer; since '77 I had all the work I wanted until about two years ago when it just disappeared because it all went up north, and it's growing every year."

The petition was made up in the hopes that the Department of Commerce would consider putting tariffs on U.S. film and television productions that shoot in Canada and then re-enter the U.S. market. This would inevitably ruin studios in Canada that provide U.S. films with studio lots and services. Canada's largest studio, Toronto Film Studios, feels that what the FTAC is doing is unfair.

"We're expected to buy the product but we're not allowed to contribute to making it," says Toronto Film Studios president Ken Ferguson, who feels that the amount of money the United States, believes Canada is taking away from them is exaggerated. "This past year Canada took $1 billion out of the U.S. market. These groups that are going before Congress are throwing out figures of $10 billion and $15 billion and Canada's not doing anywhere near that."

Swift replied that $10 billion is adjusted from $2.9 billion in "real dollars" to factor in the blue-collar workers behind the scenes.

Jason Guerrasio is an intern at The Independent *and* Premiere *magazine.*

DOCS BRANCH OUT

AS THIS ISSUE GOES TO press, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is locking nominations for Academy Awards for Distinguished Achievement in 2001, and by the time you read this the Documentary Branch will have announced three to five nominees for Best Documentary Short and Feature—and perhaps the Academy has already conferred that little golden guy on the winning films.

Last January the Academy took the historic action of granting "branch" status to its documentary members. The move followed years of controversy that came to a head in 1995 when Kartemquin Film's commercially successful and critically acclaimed *Hoop Dreams* was not nominated for a Documentary Feature Oscar. (Neither, for that matter, was another excellent film of 1994, Terry Zwigoff's *Crumb*.) That year the nominations were selected by a 47-member documentary committee and voted upon by the full body of Academy members.

The newly established branch provides a home and a voice for the roughly 150 documentary filmmakers who were previously members-at-large, as well as members of other branches who elected to transfer their affiliation. In August the new branch elected filmmaker and former documentary committee chair Freida Lee Mock as governor, with a seat on the Academy's board of governors.

This year eligible documentaries were screened for committees made up of only members of the Documentary Branch. The committees followed an averaged point system to vote in the nominees. Only those members of the Academy who have seen all nominated docs in a theatrical setting will be eligible to participate in final voting.

Self-rule should make for a smoother process and more representative decisions. But documentary is still a bit of a poor relation: the 13 other branches each have three members seated on the board of governors, while documentary has just one. As this is the body that in 1999 voted to eliminate the Short Documentary Award—only restoring the category after substantial pressure from advocacy groups including AIVF and the IDA—a strong voice for the branch is certainly needed.

Elizabeth Peters is publisher of The Independent.

Poster image: courtesy of AMPAS

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NEWS BRIEFS

Staff photo

Cinema Resurrection

After more than 50 years of neglect and decay, the Sunshine Cinema in New York's Lower East Side is back in business. Landmark Theatres, the country's largest art house cinema chain, recently completed a three-year, $12 million renovation of the 19th century building, which by turns has been a church, an immigrant meeting hall, a boxing venue, a nickelodeon, a Yiddish vaudeville theater, and a hardware warehouse. The five new state-of-the-art screens are dedicated to diverse first-run independent and foreign films, and should prove a boon to cinephiles looking for movies that are beyond the mainstream fare offered in most theaters.

Since the Sunshine's opening in December 2001 business has been brisk, according to Keith Cowling, the theater's house manager. "People are glad to see [the theater] being used again," he says. Opening features included Czech filmmaker Jan Sverak's *Dark Blue* and Iranian director Mohsen Makmalbaf's *Kandahar*. And with amenities such as stadium seating, Dolby EX sound, gourmet refreshments, two Japanese rock gardens, and a walkway with panoramic neighborhood views, it certainly is the plushest cinema in New York, if not the nation.

—*Cleo Cacoulidis*

Ask the Expert

Looking for advice on character development in your script? Now you'll be able to "ask the expert" while you're writing. Final Draft's latest upgrade, Final Draft 6.0 (www.finaldraft.com), introduces many new features, including a component that allows writers to key into a series of exercises developed by scriptwriting guru, Syd Field. The new software is designed for Windows XP and Carbonized, and is compatible with Mac OS X. Most important, Final Draft 6.0 is integrated with the Writers Guild of America West's online script registration.

Film Music Resource

Film Music Media Group and Digital Economics have joined forces to create a new web portal, www.performingrights.com, an online information clearinghouse for U.S. and international performing rights. The portal is designed to give songwriters, composers, and publishers the latest data on the rules and procedures that govern ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC membership and affiliation agreements, among others. Details about royalties will also be available. The portal launches in March 2002.

ERRATA

In the December 2001 issue, Rory O'Connor was incorrectly identified on p. 7, in the article "Eye on the Rest of the World," as the founder of Globalvision. He is the cofounder, along with his partner Danny Schechter. Additionally, news sources can be found on Globalvision's web site, www.gvnews.net.

Also in December, on p. 9, in the article "From Cooking Lessons to Saving the NEA at Eidia House," *The NEA Tapes* was incorrectly identified as a two-hour documentary; it is one-hour long.

In the January/February 2002 issue, p. 25, in the profile on Zacharias Kunuk, the film *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* was shot on digital betacam and transferred to film; not shot on 16mm as implied.

On p. 29, in the article "The Prize Patrol," Mark Ebner misquoted himself. It was not Daniel J. Harris who was disqualified, but the director of the film *The Delicate Art of the Rifle*.

In the special digital section, conflicting statements about FireWire drives were made by Greg Gilpatrick (p. 7, "A Dream DIY System") and Bart Weiss (p. 9, "Ask the Final Cut Pro"). Both are true. Apple's official policy is that "FireWire drives...are not currently recommended for video capture or playback with Final Cut Pro." In practice, those who want to spend the least amount of money will find that FireWire HDs will meet the minimum requirements for DV video editing. (Gilpatrick recommends Ultra2 or Ultra3 SCSI hard drives for those with the budget.)

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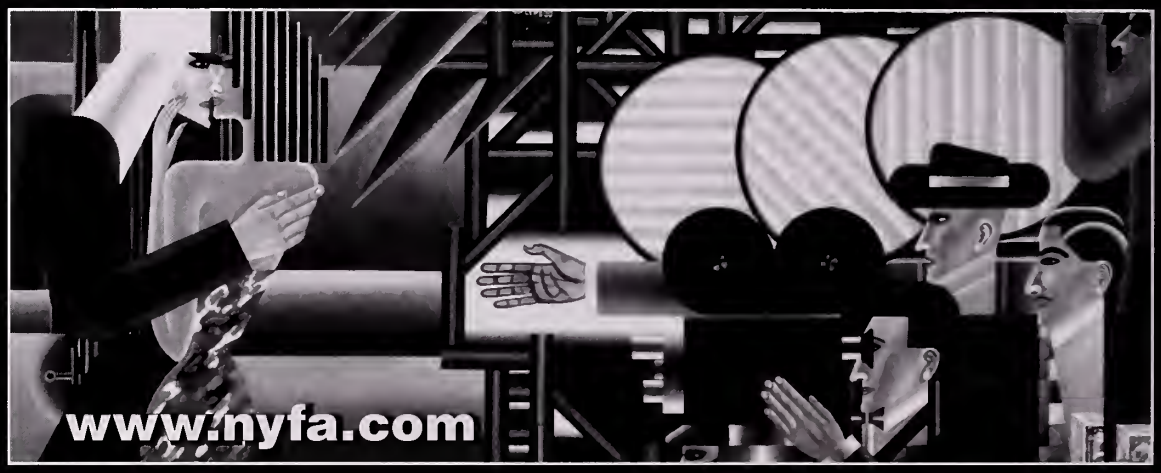

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BOSTON

Photo: Courtesy of Alloy Orchestra

Alloy Orchestra Sounds Off

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

WHEN BOSTON FILM PROGRAMMER DAVID Kleiler booked *Metropolis* in 1991, he couldn't bear the thought of screening Fritz Lang's silent classic with its 1984 score, a much-maligned concoction of rock tunes by Adam Ant, Pat Benatar, and the like. So he contacted a group of percussionists he'd seen at Boston's First Night and asked them to come up with something to perform live using their idiosyncratic hodgepodge of instruments—everything from traditional snare drums and xylophones to kazoos, bedpans, horseshoes, and junkyard debris.

The *Metropolis* score was an instant success, and Alloy Orchestra was officially born. At that time, only one other group was composing music for silent films. But in the years since, a lively cottage industry has sprung up. "In New York alone, there must be over a hundred musicians rescoring silent films," says Ken Winokur, who with Terry Donahue and Roger Miller make up Alloy Orchestra. What's more, when the Boston-based ensemble recently appeared at Walter Reade Theater in New York, they encountered a novel but telltale situation: competition from another silent film the same day.

Without doubt, silent films have undergone a revival, due in part to Alloy's performances. Normally, say Winokur, "to get 50 people to a silent show is very difficult. But if you add on a group that has a reputation of its own, you can get thousands." This revival also owes to the rise of home video and DVD—avenues Alloy has been quick to exploit. To date, their best-selling work has been *Nosferatu*. Successfully piggybacking on interest generated by Elias Merhige's *Shadow of the Vampire* two years ago, sales of the 1928 ghoulish classic tallied an impressive 12,000 units.

Alloy has also inserted more obscure titles into their repertoire, thanks to close ties with silent film experts at the Pordenone festival in Italy, Telluride, and the George Eastman House. These experts suggested *Lonesome*, for instance, by Hungarian director Paul Fejos, whom Charlie Chaplin once championed in Lillian Gish's little-known but much admired *The Wind*.

On occasion the orchestra works with living filmmakers, scoring fellow Bostonian Errol Morris's *Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control* and *Dragonflies, and the Baby Cries*, a short by Jane Gillooly, who is married to Winokur. They're open to future collaborations, though "we need the proper film," notes Winokur, something that marries well with clanging metal and energetic drumming. "We're ready for *Terminator IV*, or the equivalent of Vertov in the 21st century."

Patricia Thomson is a contributing editor to The Independent.

CID Shares 20th anniversary with Women in Film

BY RICHARD BAIMBRIDGE

THE HOME OF HUSBAND/WIFE DOCUMENTARY team Fred Simon and Suzie Walsch sits just off the highway in the rural outskirts of Boston. Aside from the fact that they live next to a movie theater, it seems to have little connection to the film world. In fact, the Center for Independent Documentary (CID) consists of little more than a home office and a small television in the kitchen, where Walsch watches video tapes sent to her by people from all over the country. But Walsh and Simon have kept CID going strong for 20 years, managing over 200 documentaries with budgets ranging from $75 up to $1.5 million.

In 1981, the couple made a documentary called *Frank, a Vietnam Veteran*. It was the first film ever to address the issue of post-traumatic stress disorder in Vietnam vets. With the help of the American Red Cross, Simon and Walsch established a network of phone banks manned by veterans in every city where the film was broadcast. In one night, they received over 12,000 calls.

"Fred and I knew that a lot of other filmmakers out there had powerful things to say, and that they needed help," Walsch says of the decision to establish CID after their success with *Frank*.

Some of CID's well-known success stories include Judith Helfand's *A Healthy Baby Girl* and *Blue Vinyl*, as well as Deann Borshay's *First Person Plural*. One of the organization's main services is managing film budgets, allowing filmmakers to focus more on their work, but Walsch also looks at rough cuts and grant proposals, and even assists in finding outlets and distribution. "I received 50 tapes in the past two months," Walsch says. "That's without advertising—all word of mouth. My only regret is that I have to turn so many projects away because we don't have the staff or resources to keep up."

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- John Anderson, *Newsday*

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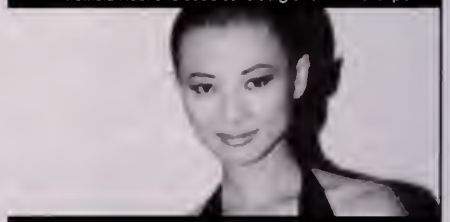
2001 Stony Brook Filmmaker Reception from l to r - Jena Malone, Stony Brook University President Dr. Shirley Strum Kenny, Mary Stuart Masterson, *The Book of Stars* Producer Marie Cantin and Director Michael Miner, Festival Director Alan Inkles.

Patricia Neal and Budd Schulberg at a Filmmaker panel.


Bai Ling at 1999 opening night party.

2000 Stony Brook Film Festival Filmmaker Reception L to r: Village Voice Critic, Michael Atkinson; Newsday Chief Film Critic, John Anderson; Lion's Gate *"Steal This Movie"* director, Robert Greenwald; Festival Director, Alan Inkles.

Rod Steiger receives Lifetime Achievement Award and is surrounded by the cast of *"The Headhunter's Sister."*

It's no small coincidence that another Boston organization—Women in Film—also celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. In fact, there's quite a bit of overlap between the two groups. For example, Lucia Small, former president of Women in Film, recently completed the documentary *My Father the Genius*, which was sponsored by CID, as was Beth Harrington's (also a former president of Women in Film) doc, *Welcome to the Club*.

To commemorate its anniversary, Women in Film organized a festival of works by New England women directors in a program called "Rewind/Fast Forward" that spanned more than 25 years. One of oldest films was Nancy Porter's groundbreaking 1975 doc, *A Woman's Place is in the House*—a portrait of lesbian activist Elaine Noble, the first openly gay person elected to the Massachusetts State Legislature. The festival was held at several venues, including Boston University and the Boston Museum of Fine Art, and was hosted by activist and actress/director Sarah Polley, who showed her own short film *I Shout Love*.

"I think a great way to see this festival is that it's a celebration of the rich history of Boston women's cinema, while also bringing it into the present," says Amy Geller, current president of Women in Film. Geller says she envisioned the festival as a way to connect the older and younger generations of Women in Film, bringing some older members back into the fold. "And from a personal perspective," 27-year-old Geller says, "it was also a way for me to educate myself about the organization."

Boston: Studio City?

FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR, THE Boston film community will open its doors to visitors next month. Originally conceived as part of the 25th anniversary celebration of the New England Film and Video Festival, Boston's "Open Studios" program drew over 1,000 visitors in its first year and involved 21 organizations. This year, the number of venues has risen to over 50, including Boston University, Roxbury's Film Shack, and the Boston Film and Video Foundation, and organizers say they anticipate several thousand guests.

"As far as I know, this is the only program of its kind in the country," says Bonnie Waltch, executive director of the Filmmakers Collaborative, which now oversees the event. "It allows the public to see the film and video inner-workings in Boston, and brings the [film] community together."

Open Studios has expanded this year to a two-day event held April 27-28, with the first half dedicated to Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville, and the second half focussed on Newton, Waltham, and Watertown. The program includes panel discussions, film screenings, and provides an introduction to editing, sound, and other areas of production to anyone interested. Some of Boston's leading filmmakers and studios are participating in the event, including director Robert Patton-Spruill (*Squeeze*); Emmy award-winning sound mixer Richard Bock; Sundance 2001 participant Northern Light Productions; and renowned experimental filmmakers and animators from Moody Station Studios.

Richard Baimbridge is a contributing editor.

"There are a large number of documentaries made in Boston," notes Michelle Meek, founder of Boston-based NewEnglandFilm.com and BuyIndies.com. "But the people working in feature film are doing what they love in the place that they love." Meek says that the area's strong reputation for docs comes from its academic presence, plus the fact that a third of PBS documentary programming is produced by Boston PBS affiliate WGBH. But recently, Meek says, films like Brad Anderson's *Next Stop Wonderland*, and people like David Mamet and the Farrelly brothers who have made a conscious decision to stay in Boston, are challenging the Beantown stereotype. If you're interested in doing the same, here are some vital contacts:

The Center for Independent Documentary (see story): www.documentaries.org

Boston Film and Video Foundation (BF/VF): Resource center for Boston film and video community, and founders of New England Film and Video Festival: www.bfvf.org

NewEnglandFilm.com: online resource for film and video in New England

BuyIndies.com: a platform for indie filmmakers to sell their work on VHS or DVD; film buyers purchase the films through the site.

Boston Filmmakers' Collaborative: association of Boston-based independent documentary filmmakers. For more information on **Boston's Open Studios**: www.filmmakerscollab.org/openstudios.htm

Local Sightings: screening series dedicated to local works, with a serious eye on getting distribution. Established by Boston producer David Kleiler: www.localsightings.com

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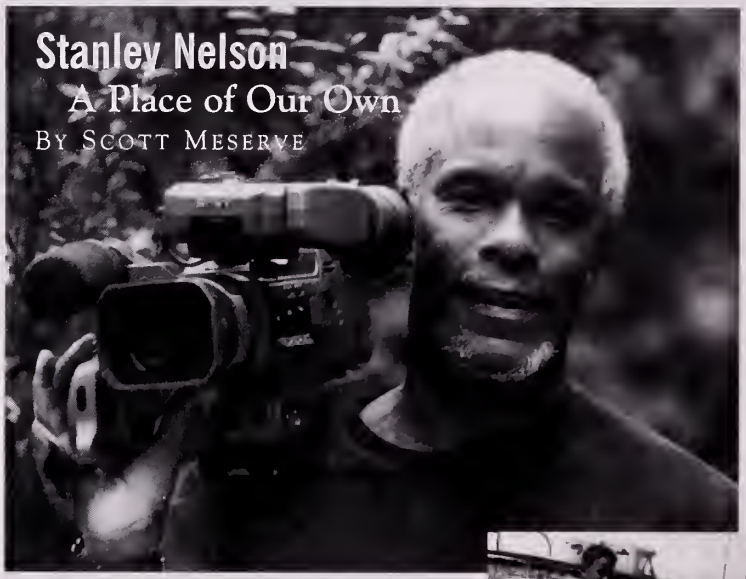
Profiles

Stanley Nelson
A Place of Our Own

By Scott Meserve



"African Americans don't go to the beach. We're from the inner city, and we're tense."

Prize-winning documentary filmmaker Stanley Nelson leans back and chuckles softly. Seated in his Harlem brownstone office, Nelson is anything but tense, even as he pauses from logging a flood of digital footage from three current television projects. Nelson is discussing the most intimate of those pieces, *A Place of Our Own*, his look inside the affluent African American summer community on Martha's Vineyard that is one hundred years strong and claims Nelson as a life-long member.

A filmmaker for over 20 years, Nelson is a creator of award-winning historical documentaries that use archival footage and on-camera experts to explore the African American experience. In 1999 Nelson's *The Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords* was nominated for an Emmy and won both a Sundance award and a duPont-Columbia baton. In 2001, *Marcus Garvey: Look for Me in the Whirlwind* screened at Sundance and aired on PBS' American Experience.

Now Nelson has changed his origination format of choice by turning a Sony PD150 DVCam on himself. *A Place of Our Own* is Nelson's first digital narrative and looks at Nelson, his family, and the black professionals who claim Martha's Vineyard each summer as a home away from home—and as a refuge from social and racial stereotyping. And as with *Black Press* and *Garvey*, Nelson offers a succinct rationale for his choice of subject matter.

"I'm interested in the black middle class because that's who I am, that's who I know, and I don't think we see it in the media."

Nelson is just as pointed about his audience of choice. "I don't want to be telling white folks about black people. I try to center on 'Are we telling black people something that they don't already know?' If the film tells black people something about themselves that they don't know, then it's definitely going to tell white people something that they don't know. I'm not opening a little window so we can all peek in at specimens under glass."

Nelson's company, Firelight Media, is headquartered in a handsome three-story brownstone in Harlem's historic Sugar Hill neighborhood. Two associate producers and an editor have been set up in three editing suites with Final Cut Pro systems. Downstairs an assistant, Nelson and Marcia Smith, Firelight's executive director and Nelson's wife, share a cluttered office. A few blocks south is the City University of New York's Davis Film School, where Nelson graduated in 1976.

It is no coincidence that Nelson has a presence in a neighborhood that was once, and is now again, a center of African American professional success, as his films focus on overlooked examples of black achievement. Smith sees the Vineyard project in the same light as Nelson's historical reclamation of Garvey and the black press.

"There is conflict in those films between a black identity and an American identity, and the Vineyard is about the struggle for identity within the black middle class. Up there everyone knows you are a lawyer not because they know you, but because they assume you are."

But Nelson is aware of the class and race contradictions. "People told me that they come to Martha's Vineyard because they can be themselves. The question that that raises is who are you the rest of the year? We're looking at why African American doctors and lawyers feel that need—what does it say about them and what does it say about America?"

"I've spent every summer of my life on Martha's Vineyard. There are some warts in the film, but it's a loving look at the African American community, one that you don't see on television."

The project is being produced through ITVS' short-lived 2001 "DV Initiative," a pilot program that provided up to $125,000 for one-hour digital work. [Funding through this initiative is no longer available.] Funded last spring, Nelson spent the summer of 2001 on the Vineyard interviewing neighbors, himself, and boldface regulars, such as Lani Guinier and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

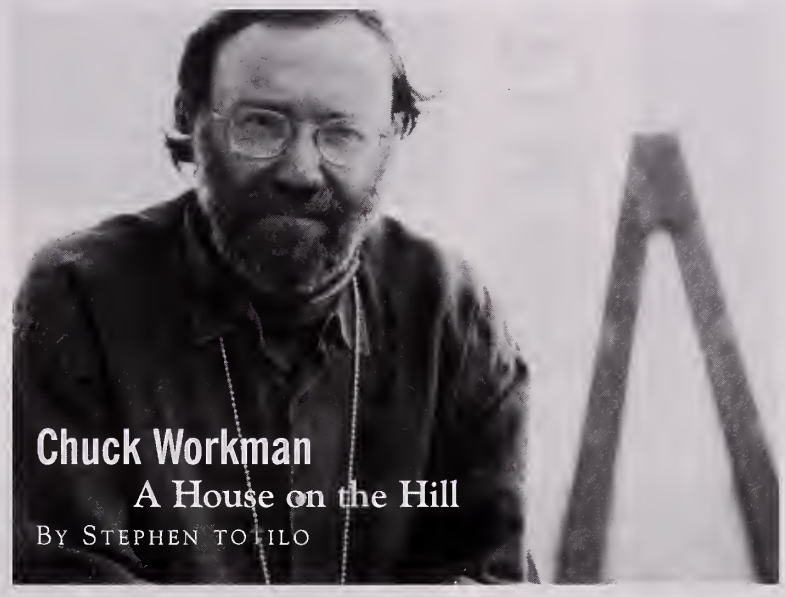
Nelson has two other digital projects under way. WNET-Channel 13 commissioned a look at New York City's 2001 city council elections, and Firelight followed three candidates through the autumn campaigns. And the Ford Foundation has funded a human rights project in which activists came to New York and were trained on and given DVCams by Firelight to record their struggles at home. The activists and Nelson also attended the UN World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa, and Nelson is hoping PBS will eventually air the work.

Nelson's past projects have featured the expensive archival footage, formal story structure, and larger budgets of public television projects shot on film. Now he is excited about the possibilities of more personal, more immediate, storytelling with fewer financial strings attached.

"We've bought three cameras and an editing system. Now it doesn't matter who the president is; it doesn't matter what happens at CPB; it doesn't matter who's the head of the NEH. You can get up there and tell a story."

Scott Meserve is a freelance writer and filmmaker based in New York.

Photos, this page and facing: courtesy of filmmakers



Chuck Workman
A House on the Hill

By Stephen Totilo

It's taken Chuck Workman a quarter century to make his second serious dramatic feature. The first was *The Money*, produced in 1976 when the then 32-year-old Workman was making low-end television commercials in New York City. The second is this spring's *A House on a Hill*, the story of an aged architect returning to an unfinished, personal project. In between Feature #1 and Feature #2, Workman moved to California, cut numerous trailers (the original *Star Wars*, for example), officially and unofficially edited or re-shot a slew of Hollywood movies, wrote a script that would become *Meatballs 3*, and unsuccessfully entered the running to direct *Revenge of the Nerds 3*. In his spare time he directed well-received art house documentaries on Andy Warhol, *Superstar*, and the Beat generation, *The Source*. The conflict between these two incongruous drives—to appeal to the festival circuit or to direct schlock, what he calls his "z-level" work—nearly caused him to abandon the movie business altogether.

"I think that that's why in my 50s I'm only just making what I feel is my second dramatic feature that is worth anything," he says. "Because I tried to work in the commercial world. I led a wonderful life. I won awards in Hollywood. I made money. Not a lot, but I made some. I was able to raise my family and all those wonderful things that people aspire to and yet I feel that my artistic life suffered somewhat from—at least in quantity—from pursuing both things."

Workman is probably best known in Hollywood as the man who compiles and edits those soaring montages of great cinematic moments that open most Oscar broadcasts. In 1986 he won his own Academy Award for a montage of American films entitled *Precious Images*. He completed the September 11th-inspired *The Spirit of America* in December, a montage of clips from American films.

But Workman's most personal project lately has been *A House on a Hill*, a movie that may be set upon a Beverly hill but is decidedly un-Hollywood and will probably only play to the art house and festival crowds. "I tell people in Hollywood, 'It's a movie you'll never see,'" Workman says.

Workman likes to think of himself as one of Hollywood's offbeat outsider/insiders, "A guy that does this kind of offbeat stuff, that goes to festivals and is available to do things for [Hollywood] within their context but also does his own thing."

Born in 1944, he grew up in Atlantic City, intent on being a writer. "It's not easy, especially if you grow up in a Jewish middle class world. I think my parents didn't really know what I did until I won an Oscar. Even until I was thirty they were suggesting I go to law school."

After college he joined the Air Force reserve, where he learned to use a still camera, taking pictures of generals and colonels. His thoughts began to drift toward filmmaking. He came to New York City and started making cheap commercials for books and toys and "two records for $5.99," as many as 50 a year. "The idea of going to Hollywood to make films was totally foreign to me," he says. "I was interested in making short films like Goddard or Truffaut might." He quickly realized he could use the commercials as training ground. "Maybe I'll do it all in dolly shots. Or I'll do it all with a 25mm lens. Or I'll do it all lit a certain way or I'll do it all silent. My clients didn't care as long as they were selling their products."

A client financed Workman's first feature, *The Money*. The next logical move was to Hollywood, where he built a reputation as an editor, and started getting called in to re-shoot the endings of studio films. Gradually art gave way to commerce. "I wasn't ready yet to breakaway and become an artist," he says. "To me one got a job and tried to learn the craft that way." But during the *Meatballs/Revenge of the Nerds* phase of his career, Workman realized he had gone astray.

He says his epiphany came a year before he won the Oscar. He had started dabbling with montages and making them as shorts. One of them won a Golden Eagle, an award he says is small but greatly affected his drive. "I suddenly realized, hey: you can make movies and win an award, and you don't have to sell anything," he says. "That's when I kind of devoted myself to definitely pushing myself toward those kind of projects that would have another life."

For some time the idea for *A House on a Hill* had been forming in Workman's mind. "I wanted to make a film about an older artist who had been overlooked," he says. He insists the film is not autobiographical, but the parallel is clear: he too has managed to return, if not to an unfinished work then to an unfinished learning process. Determined to discover his inner auteur and in an echo of what he was doing with cheap commercials in New York, he's been finding himself sneaking some experimental filmmaking into his Oscar montages. In fact, he first tried the continuous re-sizing of the frame that appears in *A House on a Hill* in the 2000 Academy Awards broadcast.

Unlike the film's protagonist, Workman has not lost a child or had his house burn down. But he concedes that at least one detail connects with his own life story. "It was an older artist who always could do something but didn't really care that much about it. This theme may have been Hollywood talking to me or my response to Hollywood."

Stephen Totilo is a freelance journalist whose work has appeared in Newsweek, Brill's Content, Inside.com, *and* Boxing Digest, *among others.*

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A Lasting Impression

Plan for your work's retirement.

BY RUTA ABOLINS

YOU'VE COME THIS FAR. YOU GOT TOGETHER the money to make your dream film or video. You sent it off to festivals and received good responses. Maybe it's going to be aired on PBS or you managed to find a distributor. Fantastic.

Now, before you move on to your next project have you thought about where and how your film or video is going to live over the long term? You've made it, you've nurtured it, but where do you store it?

And how do you store it? What about the workprint? The trims, the outs? Do you keep them?

What about all the edit versions you did and have on various tapes? Your production notes? Your scrapbooks? That's a lot of stuff piling up, am I right? Where is it right now? In the basement? An attic? A closet? Your parents' garage?

As a moving image archivist it's my job to think about all these possibilities. So hear me out, for the sake of your work of art; I'd like you to think about the preservation of your moving images.

I have had the great pleasure of asking two independent filmmakers—Idrissa Ouedraogo and Spike Lee—about the long-term storage of their works. And, being the geek that I am, I asked them in lecture halls where other people asked about their filmmaking. Both were able to tell me immediately where they keep their material. They were also surprised that someone asked them, because storage and preservation is not a topic that usually pops up in a filmmakers' forum.

My professional advice to you is to consider carefully the long-term storage of your moving images, whatever format they happen to be in. And I mean both the where (physical location) and the how (in what container, what temperature and humidity, and what format) of storage.

Storage is the most important thing you can do. If you can't keep your material cool and dry, at minimum, keep it at the same environment you live in. Fifty degrees Fahrenheit and 50% relative humidity is a starting point. After that,

keeping temperature and humidity as constant as possible is the next best thing you can do, because film and tape don't like fluctuating environments. Mold is only one of many problems that can strike your materials if the storage conditions are poor.

Examine your films and tapes periodically. How do they look physically? Are your tapes wound tight with an even pack? Are your films stored flat on a 2" core (in an archival plastic can) or on edge on a reel? Are your videotapes stored on edge in a case, not flat? Try to keep your storage environment relatively dust free.

Consider donating your films to an archive with moving image collections. They may or may not be interested but you should check anyway. Most archives are more than happy to work out a donor agreement that is reasonable for both parties. And archivists like having the paper material associated with your production as well, since it helps tell the story behind your story.

Archives also make your material available to in-house researchers, so if you donate to a university with a film school, other future independents can study your films. And another plug for archives, as far as I know, we all store donated material for free (at least I do). All we ask is that researchers be able to view it (or a copy of it). Such a deal! If you don't want to donate your materials now, consider setting up a future donation.

Now if you think digital "storage" is the answer, think again. All the big guns, meaning the major Hollywood studios, don't believe in storing everything in digital, at least not yet. Check out the November 2001 issue of *American Cinematographer* and the section on preservation where you can find out what the big dogs do for preservation and restoration. And let me set you straight on the terminology: "preservation" means keeping the object in as good a condition as possible over the long term; "restoration" means the object has been physically damaged (by dye fading, breakage, unauthorized cuts, etc.) and something needs to be repaired for it to look the way it was when originally released or created. Logic and experience dictate that preservation is much cheaper than restoration.

Archivists are paid to be conservative in terms of what we do with collections. So putting everything on a DVD and throwing out the original is NOT THE WAY TO GO!

For quick and easy access, DVD is fine, but keep your films in analog format for now. One of the reasons is that there is a

There is a whole group of people like myself out there dedicated to preserving moving images called, coincidentally enough, The Association of Moving Image Archivists. Check out the website http://www.amianet.org for more information.

The Image Permanence Institute at the Rochester Institute of Technology constantly researches the preservation of still and moving images. Check them out at http://www.rit.edu/~661www1. They have some great information and publications for sale.

Another source of information is the Conservation OnLine website or "CoOL" at http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/. They have articles on a wide variety of topics, all related to conservation and preservation of archival materials.

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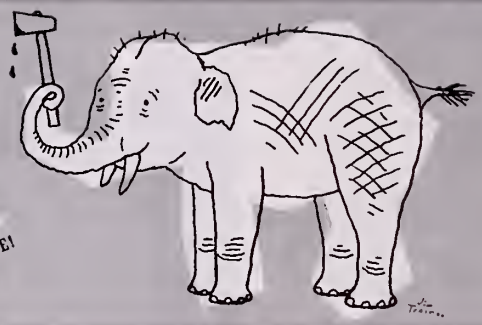

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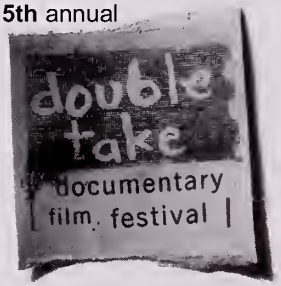

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dramatic loss of information with digital image compression. You can't bring back what isn't there or what didn't get transferred. You know what that one scratch does to your music CD—imagine what it would do to your film. The big studios are still shooting on film for a reason: the images are richer and the long-term preservation needs of film are understood. The big boys have money on the line—they won't mess with an asset's future potential. Neither should you.

Think for a moment about the footage from September 11th. Have you thought about the preservation of that footage? Where is it right now? I have. Because it is an important historical artifact.

Do you know what archivists call films and videos which have no caretaker? They call them "orphans," because there are no resources, no "big money" tied to them for preservation or restoration. I'm sure you don't want your films to end up as orphans.

So what chance does an independent have to save his or her film and video? Personal action. Just like getting your project completed and seen, you must think about the long-term preservation of your material, and you need to think about it immediately. Document where you keep all the elements. Think about donating your films to an archive. Look into professional storage companies which, for a price, will keep your film and video at appropriate temperature and relative humidity levels.

At the very least, check with a professional moving image archivist before making any rash decision about your collection and where to keep it. You worked very hard on it...why not try to make it last?

Ruta Abolins is a former filmmaker and currently the director of the Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection at the University of Georgia. She has been a moving image archivist for the past 10 years.

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Books

The Garden in the Machine: A Field Guide to Independent Films About Place
By Scott MacDonald
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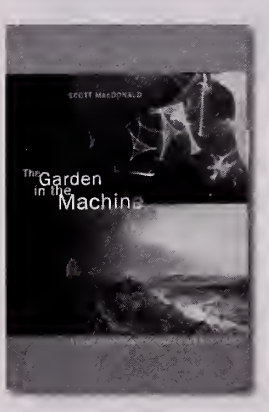
Written by Scott MacDonald, one of the American independent cinema's most devoted and prolific scholars, *The Garden in the Machine: A Field Guide to Independent Films about Place* explores the evocation of "place" in American independent and avant-garde cinema. While MacDonald is perhaps best known for his four-part book series of interviews with independent filmmakers (*A Critical Cinema*), here MacDonald focuses on the films themselves, and he does so with a passion and eye for detail generally reserved for filmmakers discussing their own films. What's more, MacDonald contextualizes his film analyses within the history of American literature, painting, and photography since the eighteenth century, making *The Garden in the Machine* a wide-reaching, original, and invaluable resource for anyone interested in independent cinema.



MacDonald's discussion of the American independent cinema's love affair with pastoral landscapes, "place," and the organic in general builds on "The Machine in the Garden," Leo Marx's famous 1963 study of early American literature. Marx examined how early American literature, like Henry David Thoreau's Walden (1854), merged an idealized view of American landscape with the machine age, thereby making "the machine in the garden" the predominant literary metaphor of the time. MacDonald considers this metaphor in relation to post-war to contemporary independent cinema, and finds that experimental film artists grapple with this same conjunction, only from the inside out: the garden perceived through the eye of the camera obscura. As Jonas Mekas says in his film *Walden* (1969), over shaky, handheld images of Central Park in the fall, "And now, the viewer, as you sit and watch. And as the life outside in the streets rushes.... Just watch, nothing much happens. This is Walden."

The Garden in the Machine argues that the metaphor driving much of what we consider to be independent American cinema is that of the garden in the machine, and to be sure, many of the great American independent filmmakers, like Kenneth Anger, Marie Menken, Stan Brakhage, and James Benning, to name just a few, do capture the transcendental qualities ascribed to nature for the viewer to meditate upon. As MacDonald argues, it's as if they're giving us a post-industrial view of Walden, where "there's no drama, no tragedy, no suspense," as Mekas put it, and none of the fake fanfare associated with big budget studio moviemaking. In other words, "This is Walden," not Hollywood.

Considering how difficult it is to write about experimental cinema without destroying that something which makes it so powerful and real, *The Garden in the Machine* is a marvel of a book. Not only does it do justice to its subject, but more than that, it breathes new life into the films discussed, offering a fresh and insightful perspective on some of the most provocative American-made independent cinema.

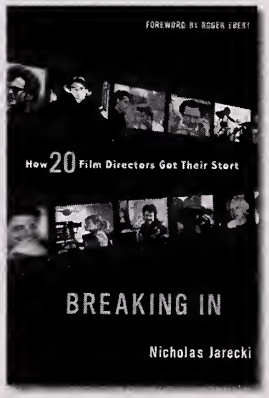
Belinda Baldwin is a freelance writer in Los Angeles. She is currently writing a book on American independent cinema.

Breaking In: How 20 Film Directors Got Their Start
By Nicholas Jarecki
©2001 Broadway Books
www.broadwaybooks.com

Filmmakers love to talk about themselves. This is the notion which author Nicholas Jarecki capitalized on when writing *Breaking In*. Jarecki is completely forthcoming with his intentions: he is a recent NYU film school grad with his own dreams of becoming a filmmaker and he wanted to find out how to break in. He went straight to the source by interviewing 20 filmmakers who are making a living as directors and have been able, one way or another, to make that leap.

With that, the concept behind *Breaking In* is an interesting one: find out how these directors got their start. But in this case, as it is with some films, the premise is sometimes much better than the final result.

The upside is that Jarecki has chosen a great cross section of directors to interview. They range from horror and sci-fi master John Carpenter to recent Indie darlings Ben Younger (*Boiler Room*), Kimberly Peirce (*Boys Don't Cry*) and Neil LaBute (*In the Company of Men*) to Hollywood directors like Brett Ratner (*Rush Hour*) and Peter Farrelly (*Dumb & Dumber*).



The interviews are roughly made up of the same basic questions ("When did you start getting into movies in a serious way?" and "How were you supporting yourself when you were writing the script?") with each person adding their own unique anecdotes and tales from back-in-the-day.

There are also some interesting choices in terms of the directors interviewed, ones that aren't always given the spotlight or recognition, like Tamra Davis (*Guncrazy*) and James Foley (*After Dark, My Sweet*). Discovering how they got their start, where they went, and where they are now is quite engaging at times.

Unfortunately, where *Breaking In* ultimately falters is in perpetuating the notion that by knowing these interesting histories the reader can somehow walk away with the key to unlock the door and "break in" on their own

The point to remember is what Roger Ebert lays out in the foreword: filmmaking "is a career you have to make for yourself."

Bo Mehrad is an Information Services Associate at AIVF and edits the AIVF festival listings. He's also a writer/ director.

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DVD&Videos

Medium Cool, 110 min.
Written, directed, and photographed by Haskell Wexler; 1969
widescreen version DVD with commentary by Wexler, editorial consultant Paul Golding and actress Marianna Hill.
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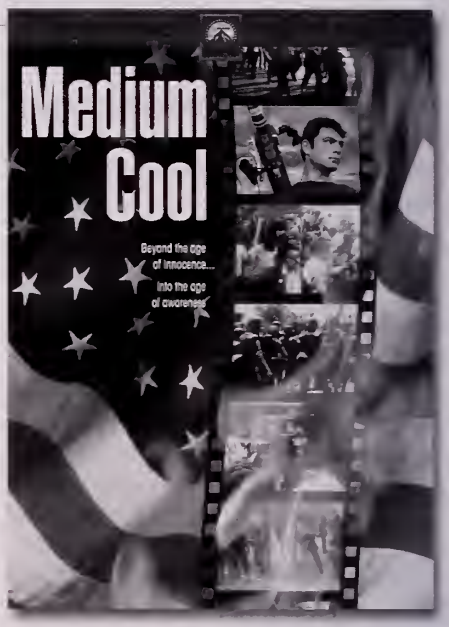

MADE 32 YEARS AGO, HASKELL WEXLER'S *Medium Cool* is perhaps even more relevant today than it was at the time of release. Brooding on issues such as violence in the media, class differences, racial conflict, politics, and revolution, the film is highly political and arty at the same time, yet is surprisingly less chaotic than either its reputation might suggest or the times that forged it are remembered as being. An unusual film to find backing and release by a major studio (Paramount), the film now enjoys well-timed DVD publication.

Medium Cool focuses on John (Robert Forster), a news cameraman for a Chicago television station. A cynical, somewhat unpleasant person, John falls into a tentative relationship with Eileen (Verna Bloom), a former teacher who has just moved to the city from West Virginia with her son, the dirt-coated Harold (Harold Blankenship). Their unromantic romance is set against the backdrop of the political turmoil surrounding the Democratic party's national convention of 1968, as John encounters numerous strata of Chicago society.

From its McLuhan-inspired title to its semi-documentary style, from its Mothers of Invention soundtrack to its quasi-arbitrary Godardian ending, *Medium Cool* is very much a movie of its time. Yet the fact that for all our computers and FAXes, society has not really changed that much is made obvious by the contemporary relevance of the film, which raises many questions but answers few.

Students of films and filmmaking will particularly enjoy the disc's audio commentary track by Haskell Wexler, editor Paul Golding (who gets Robert Forster's name wrong the first time he appears), and actress Marianna Hill. The trio had just come from a festival screening of the film and were primed to make interesting comment. Among other things, the viewer learns how much Wexler fully thought out the film: its large-scale parts were planned by Wexler to comment on each other. Wexler's second of eight films as a director, *Medium Cool* shows the admitted inspiration of Jean-Luc Godard, but the cinematographer-turned-director was ostensibly making an adaptation of a book called *The Concrete Jungle*, a scenario that was thrown out as Wexler was carried away by contemporary events.

Paramount Home Video has done a fine job with its disc of *Medium Cool*. It doesn't have much in the way of supplements, but what's there (the commentary, the trailer) is helpful. A valuable addition, however, might have been Paul Cronin's hour long documentary, *Look Out Haskell, It's Real: The Making of Medium Cool*, done for television in 2001.

D. K. Holm is co-host of the television show Film at Eleven, and contributes to the web sites DVDJournal.com and Cinemonkey.com.

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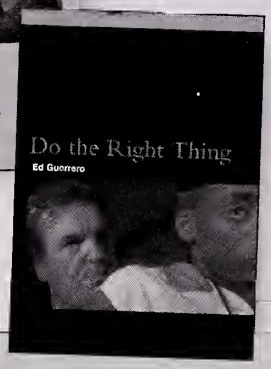

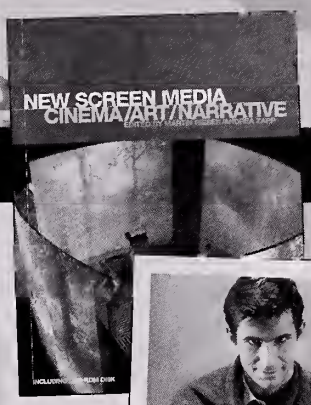

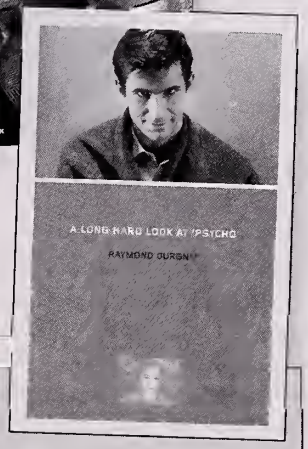

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Two Giant Steps

Sundance Documentary Film Program Expands

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

ONCE UPON A TIME, THE SUNDANCE FILM Festival was a place where nonfiction filmmakers could feel lost and ignored, like second-class citizens amidst glittering royalty. Those days are behind us now. With each passing year, the Sundance Institute has added more programs and perks, more services and status to the documentary flank of its festival, as well as to its overarching Documentary Film Program. Like a snowball gathering mass, it's now a sizable piece.

A House of Docs Filmmaker to Filmmaker session.

First came House of Docs. The original idea, says Nicole Guillemet, festival co-director and director of the Documentary Film Program, was to have a café at the festival where documentarians could meet, talk, and learn. "Not just 'Here's my card,' but real dialogue that goes deeper," she says. The cushy leather couches, cappuccinos, and constant swirl of people from the documentary world certainly encourage people to linger awhile. But it's the twice-daily panel discussions that deepen these conversations. Energizing and informative, the panels range from bread-and-butter issues to more abstract ethical quandaries. High-caliber panelists spill the beans—revealing dollar earnings, mistakes in the field, negotiation strategies, and all sorts of details that are often hush-hush but speak to core issues of documentary filmmaking.

For panel discussions, these are as good as they get. But to move beyond the scattershot approach that's intrinsic to panels, one must progress to a more intense, structured set-up. The institute began doing so in a quiet way two summers ago with a documentary producers workshop at Robert Redford's scenic mountain resort. Now they're ready to take this to the next stage, and this summer Guillemet expects to launch a Documentary Producers Lab. This is a significant step. The documentary lab will be comparable to the institute's labs for directors, screenwriters, producers, and composers, where fellows focus on works-in-progress during a very intensive week, teaming up with top professionals in the field. Innumerable dramatic filmmakers and writers have benefited from these labs, which in effect are America's post-graduate training ground. Both the creative input and the fat rolodex that lab fellows gain have been an enormous boost for these individuals. Now documentary producers can get the same benefits.

Meanwhile, the Sundance Institute has gathered into its fold one of the field's most important sources of funding. During the festival, Redford officially announced that the Soros Documentary Fund and its director, Diane Weyermann, will move under the mantle of the Sundance Institute, forming the new Sundance International Documentary Fund. To this end, Soros's parent organization, the New York-based Open Society Institute, has provided a $4.6-million grant, with the understanding that Sundance will need to begin raising additional funds in 2003. Applicants may request funding for all stages of production, from seed money to production to outreach and subtitling.

Even with this, the plate's not full. A second announcement during the festival heaped on yet another dish: a new all-documentary cable network. Details are still sketchy for what is currently being called the Sundance Documentary Film Channel, but word has it that it will launch later this year as a 24-hour channel, separate but complementary to the Sundance Channel, which is now in 55 million homes. "At the heart of the decision," Redford explained,"is a belief that these films not only deserve a broader audience, but will attract a broader audience if we put them out there."

All this adds up to an impressive package. Funding, professional networking, intensive creative workshops, festival exhibition, television cablecast—it's a soup-to-nuts buffet for documentary filmmakers, and all of it carries the powerful Sundance imprimatur.

Fortunately, Sundance is also acknowledging that there are other institutions out there that have worked long and hard for documentary filmmakers. Appropriately, it's now joining hands with them in simple but meaningful ways. "So many different organizations wanted to do something with House of Docs, and we wanted to do something with them," says Meredith Lavitt, senior manager of the Documentary Film Program.

This prompted them to host several Open Houses at House of Docs, which are informal receptions that feature peer organizations. One packed reception was with AIVF (publisher of this magazine), Film Arts Foundation, and the International Documentary Association, all bedrock organizations in the nonprofit media arts field. Another introduced a new player, the Center for Social Media at American University, which scholar Pat Aufderheide is spearheading. Still another featured the White House Project, a DC-based organization that's trying to elevate women into leadership positions, from the entertainment industry to Pennsylvania Avenue.

House of Docs also invited AIVF to hold one of its popular workshops "Pitching to the Pros: The Verbal Art of Selling Your Project." This allowed five documentary producers to make a five-minute pitch to a panel of television executives, who then critique the pitch (not the project). The response was tremendous. "We were busting at the seams," says Lavitt. "It's absolutely got to become a mainstay."

Now 20 years old, the Sundance Institute continues to evolve, like all healthy institutions should. But the rapid steps it has taken in the documentary arena are its most dramatic move. "We wanted documentary filmmakers to feel on equal footing with feature filmmakers," says Lavitt. They're clearly serious about that. All eyes are watching to see if they'll be successful, as well.

Photo this page: By Jill Gibbons; facing page: Photos courtesy offilmmakers

Sundance Standouts

For those who missed the festival, there will be ample opportunity to catch many Sundance documentaries on television. That's because an unprecedented number of nonfiction films arrived at Park City with TV rights already sewn up. Out of the 16 competition entries, five had ties with HBO/Cinemax and another six with public television. Others will no doubt find their way onto public venues. Here are some standouts to watch for in the coming months:

Amandla!

The festival's most uplifting film and winner of an Audience Award, *Amandla! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony* traces the history of Apartheid's rise and fall in South Africa as reflected through its music. And, oh, what music. Buoyant and inspirational, soulful and soaring, laced with anger or dignity, each song carries within it a whole world of emotion and social history. Director Lee Hirsch skillfully teases out both threads in interviews with singers and activists, demonstrating the role music played during each phase of the prolonged struggle. During the nine years Hirsch worked on *Amandla!*, he recorded hundreds of hours of songs, many of which were on the verge of being lost. These recordings were donated to the South African national archives, creating a vital oral history of the struggle against Apartheid. Americans will be able to catch the beat on Cinemax Reel Life.

South African Youth in a scene from Amanda!

The Two Towns of Jasper

Divisions between the races still run thick and deep in Jasper, Texas, where James Byrd was dragged to his death in 1998. While three defendants went on trial during the year that followed, filmmakers Marco Williams and Whitney Dow interviewed local townsfolk about the proceedings and their views on race. What's key in this film is the unfiltered honesty that leaps from the mouths of interviewees thanks in part to their sense of speaking to 'their own kind,' since Williams, who is black, and Dow, who is white, worked separately for the entire year with segregated crews. The result packs a powerful punch, which viewers can see on P.O.V.

James Byrd Jr.'s sister Clara Taylor outside the Jasper County Courthouse, in *Two Towns of Jasper*.

Ralph Ellison & Bob Evans Biopix

Two film biograhies stood out for completely different reasons. Avon Kirkland's *Ralph Ellison: An America Journey*, made for American Masters, breaks no new ground stylistically, but is well worth a look for the complexity of its content. This incisive film delves much more deeply than the norm into the creative struggles and cultural battles that surrounded the author of *Invisible Man*.

On the other end of the spectrum was Brett Morgen and Nanette Burstein's amusing biography of legendary Hollywood producer Robert Evans. Taking as its starting point the now-cult audiotape Evans made of his eponymous autobiography, *The Kid Stays in the Picture* is unabashedly from Evans's point of view, making it more "Bob-umentary" than documentary, as *Variety* put it. Beyond Evans's alternately bombastic and self-deprecating narration, the film offers visual style galore. Using everyday software like Abobe Aftereffects, the filmmakers create wonders with the requisite archival photographs. Add to this the glossy, floating cinematography of ASC board member John Bailey inside Evans's beloved Hollywood mansion, and you've got a stunning and original look. The documentary hits theaters this spring via USAFilms.

Robert Evans stays in the picture.

Personal docs persist

Personal documentary is still alive and well when in the hands of Thomas Allen Harris. *That's My Face* (*E minha cara*) skips between three generations in his family as they search for personal and spiritual identity in Christian America (his grandmother), Tanzania (his sixties-era parents), and Brazil (the thirtysomething filmmaker). Shooting in Super 8, just like his father, Harris creates the festival's other most stylish documentary, making wonderful use of freeze frames and inventive sound and picture editing.

Filmmaker Judith Helfand brings her blue vinyl to Venice.

In *Blue Vinyl*, Judith Helfand and Daniel Gold pick up where they left off in *A Healthy Baby Girl*: outside her parent's Long Island house as it gets new vinyl siding. The filmmakers then trace the life cycle of this product and the damage its production and eventual incineration wreak on health and the environment. Told with Helfand's inimitable humor, this compelling HBO film will no doubt go long and far in turning the tide against toxic PVC.

Patricia Thomson is a contributing editor and former editor in chief of The Independent.

Report From Amsterdam

The Last Word on Documentaries

BY HENRY LEWES

AMSTERDAM IS THE MOST REASSURING OF cities. Nothing seems to change. From the Central Station the trams always run like clockwork over the seemingly endless canals, to stop outside the Bali café, the Festival's central meeting point. Yet once inside the café a wisp of anxiety hovered. As old acquaintances met, the question of how documentarians should respond to September 11th touched many an opening conversation.

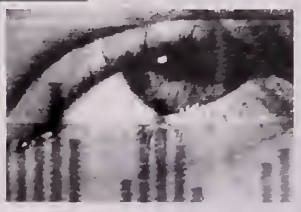
IDFA remains arguably Europe's premier documentary event for many reasons. Firstly, for its imaginative choice of more than 200 films from 50 countries; secondly for the Docs For Sale market, which offered prospective buyers 350 titles; and thirdly, for its brilliantly organized Forum, where 42 proposals were pitched in the hope of obtaining financing. Among special events were Master Classes, including one led by Frederick Wiseman; a Mediamatic Workshop concerned with the creation of non-linear stories; a Press Seminar provocatively entitled "Docs in the Dock," where film makers were confronted by press and TV critics.

New this year was an imaginative installation with access to 10 monitors, and numerous online experiments. The future of digital technology also formed the subject of several debates. Every evening there were Happy Hours, allowing guests the opportunity to chat informally or, alternatively, attempt to buttonhole buyers. Finally, at the weekend, for those with energy to spare, there was disco dancing until the small hours.

Are documentarians prescient, or is it that they are simply more aware than most people as to what threatens the world? Whatever the reason, IDFA's director Ally Derks was able to observe that this year's entries noticeably reflected present day concerns and anxieties. "Films about religion, the Middle East conflict, terrorism, and wars predominate. As a consequence, the task of documentary filmmakers in this rapidly changing world, in which objective news coverage is sometimes indistinguishable from outright propaganda, is becoming more important every day." Prominent among films which tackled these problems head on were *Aftermath: The Remnants of War*, *A Crisis of Faith/The American Dilemma*, *First Kill*, and *War Photographer*.

Aftermath (Daniel Sekulich, Canada), deals with the hazards remaining when the fighting is over. In France, sixty years after the First World War, teams are still daily involved in the dangerous business of digging up shells. In Bosnia the countryside is strewn with land mines; in Vietnam children are still being born mutilated as a result of herbicides used to destroy trees and ground cover. Questioned afterwards Sekulich felt, "the world did not change much on September 11th. It was dangerous before and it's dangerous now." Someone in the audience thought that such a straightforward report would be unattractive to telecasters. It says much for the Canadian Film Board that it ever got made.

A Crisis of Faith, (D.J. Kadagian, USA), searches for an answer to the question of what is wrong with American society. In 50 minutes seven themes are broached, including progress, secularization, oppression and commitment. The combination of talking heads and a collage of historical footage concludes, rather inevitably, that western man is predominantly driven by fear and greed. In the screening I attended the film's relentless pace, and its unremitting solemnity, combined to induce a noticeable restlessness in the audience.



Images of war and reflection from this year's IDFA.

Coco Shrijber who made *First Kill* (The Netherlands) and Christian Frei who made *War Photographer*, (Switzerland), both revealed how deeply they were affected by their subjects. In *First Kill* Shrijber investigates what is the attraction of legitimate killing. "Better than any drug," admits one former soldier. Shrijber was herself a conscript in Israel. "It was 1982 and the Israelis invaded camps like Sabra and Shatilla. I was totally shocked to see [that] my side, the good side, committed atrocities."

Photographer Frei filmed from just behind photographer James Natchtwey for two years, in Kosovo, Indonesia and Palestine, sharing both his dangerous life and his views of war. Questioned by Nic Fraser of the BBC, who chaired talk sessions, Frei said, "For me the strength of photography lies in its ability to evoke humanity. So the photographer places himself in the middle of the war to communicate what is happening, which is like trying to negotiate peace."

If lighthearted films were few, *Gosta AND Lennart* (Babak Najafi, Sweden) was

Photos: courtesy of the festival

outstanding. In 8 brief minutes it recounts the rollicking relationship of a lonely middle-aged gay man with his snuffling snoring pooch. Both touching and funny, its strength lies in its depiction of loneliness.

The films are divided into several categories, some like the Joris Ivens and the Silver Wolf being competitive with valuable cash prizes. Reflecting Images experiments with new forms; First Appearance is for young or first time filmmakers; there was a choice of 10 titles by feminist British director Kim Longinotto; a group of 10 films from China and Taiwan; and an extraordinary collection of silent 1890's pictures from Europe and the USA.

Meanwhile Docs For Sale continued in the Marriott Hotel nearby. Unlike some markets there are no buyer stands, and American Cortian McManus, a first timer, was concerned that there was no organized way to meet up with buyers, except for the 'Happy Hour.' Undeterred he planned to put a leaflet into every single buyer's pigeon hole, inviting them to view a two minute trailer of his film waiting ready on his computer.

The other major event, The Forum, takes place in a former church, known, perhaps optimistically, as the 'Paradiso.' The applicants, usually the producer and director, sit at one end of a vast horse shoe table, with 30 to 40 commissioning editors spread around the remaining space. Fifteen minutes is allowed for each proposal, the first half for describing it and the second for questioning the candidates. It is a tense atmosphere and if you are thinking of making an application it is wise to attend the year before as an observer. The Forum organizers will gladly help you towards pitching your project with both skill and confidence. There is, however, one other element that you must provide for yourself: good luck!

For further information please contact IDFA at:
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info@idfa.nl; www.idfa.nl

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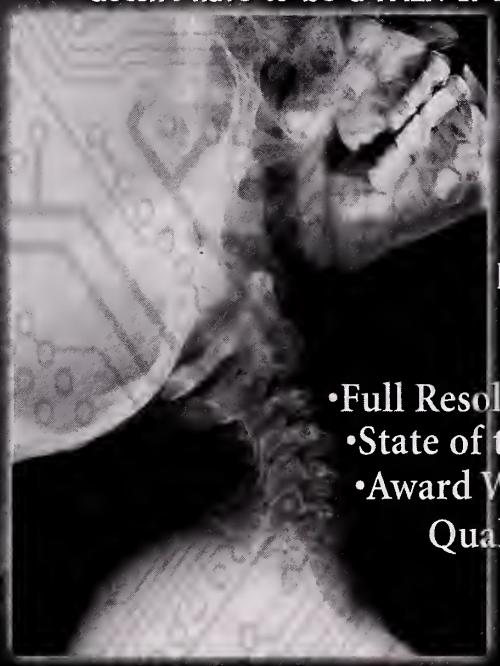

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Ivy Film Fest

BY MACAULEY PETERSON

WHEN YOU THINK OF THE IVY LEAGUE, THE first thing that comes to mind is probably not great cinema. Yet I was surprised to learn that among the eight Ivies, only two have neither a film major nor minor. Princeton is one, Brown the other (Penn has only a minor).

In the summer of 2001, a small group of students from Brown, ironically enough, decided that what the Ivy League really lacks is a film festival. Soon thereafter the Ivy Film Festival was born.

The inaugural festival (November 30–December 1) received 150 entries from liberal arts colleges throughout the United States. The festival was not limited to the Ivies, and included work by students from NYU and UCLA, two of the top film programs in the country.

The festival attracted several big name filmmakers who lent their expertise to the festival judging. Events included question and answer sessions with writer and director Oliver Stone and independent filmmaker James Toback. Toback's new film *Harvard Man* made its American debut at the festival, and was the first featured event.

Toback arrived late, limping slightly with an injured leg, and without the film print of *Harvard Man* in tow. Apparently, the print was destroyed by fire, in a case of arson, while in transit, and another print could not be secured in time. So the first American screening of *Harvard Man* was of an un-color-corrected VHS copy.

Despite the technical difficulties, *Harvard Man* packed Brown's Carmichael auditorium, the smaller of the two venues. The screening was originally slated for the Rhode Island School of Design's auditorium, and the last minute location change foreshadowed a weekend that showed just how hard it is to organize a film festival.

The film is ostensibly about a star Harvard basketball player who gets caught up in a mob scheme to fix a key game. Adrian Grenier, a relative newcomer who looks strikingly like a young Pete Sampras, stars as the hot-shot point guard, alongside Sarah "Buffy" Michelle Geller, and Joey Lauren Adams (*Chasing Amy*).

But *Harvard Man* is really a platform for an extended LSD tripping sequence, that, as the festival audience learned, was based on Toback's own experience. After the screening he detailed the 8-day LSD trip from his more youthful days as a Harvard undergrad that he still describes as the "seminal emotional, psychological, intellectual experience" of his life.

Photo: courtesy of the festival

The Hauser family's burdensome Grandmother is surprised to find a pistol lying on her bedroom floor, in Doug Imbruce's *Killing Nana*.

Hearing this biographical background made *Harvard Man* much more interesting in retrospect, but it also belies the ultimate problem that many in the audience had with the film: It is extremely self-indulgent.

To students interested in filmmaking careers, Toback had a few words of wisdom: "[With actors], go as far as you can go. Get as much as you can…You're getting gifts, take as many as you can get." Regarding production Toback added, "Use whoever you can use…. What do I need? Where can I go? What do I have to do? Be ruthless!"

Day two of the Ivy Film Festival got off to a fiery start with a Q&A by Oliver Stone. Despite being largely a press and Hollywood bashing session, Stone still had many interesting things to say about filmmaking. Stone originally became fascinated by writing as an escape from reality, and regards production students who are uninterested in screenwriting as "flawed." On the motives of a filmmaker, Stone surprised some by saying that "showing off is part of it,"—that, and "getting through the veil of reality." He finds Los Angeles' larger market to be more

"democratic" [than New York and elsewhere], allowing the talent to more easily float to the top.

On Hollywood itself, however, he had almost nothing good to say, calling it "the nature of the business to be a whore." "Eighty percent of the people in Hollywood are corruptible," Stone said. Like Toback, Stone makes movies largely for himself, insisting that he "never did a movie for money yet."

The festival's 46 student "films" were actually a mix of film and video, reflecting the modern reality of student filmmaking. Video is less expensive, faster to shoot with and enables complex editing on a PC without the need for costly film-to-video transfers.

Seeing real film presented alongside video, however, the weaknesses of video are readily apparent. Many students who have worked exclusively in video were awestruck by the difference in image quality. The festival entries varied in overall quality, but there were several that stood out.

Take Two is a clever ultra-short, done in black and white video in the vein of Chaplin's tramp by NYU senior Aaron Cohen.

Harvana, by Harvard's Nick Louvel, is a French noir thriller about the Cuba-Harvard drug trade. The story was very tight, and was one of the most polished video shorts screened.

One high quality film entry was *Gym Short* by Doug Schachtel of Princeton. Funny and beautifully shot on 16-millimeter color film, *Gym Short* narrowly missed the prize for best comedy, but did garner an award from the director of the festival, David Peck.

Killing Nana is an odd 8 minute comedy by Columbia freshman Doug Imbruce, that was an audience favorite and sports a killer reversal along the way.

The works of the festival's winners are slated to appear as streaming media, but the details have yet to be worked out at press time. See the festival's website (www.IvyFilmFestival.com) for more information.

Macauley C. S. Peterson is a recent graduate of Princeton University, and a columnist for the Daily Princetonian. He can be reached at macauley@alumni.princeton.edu.

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Settling the Score

Four Director/Composer Teams Share Their Stories of Putting Music to Film

BY RICHARD BAIMBRIDGE

"Music in American films these days has everything to do with marketing," says director Jimmy Bolton—not with the upbeat tone of an entertainment industry executive spouting off about profits, but rather with an air of disillusionment. "They try to stuff films full of hits. But I actually prefer films with little or no music." That might sound like an odd place to begin a discussion on the process of scoring films, yet music was very much at the heart of Bolton's debut feature, *Eban and Charley*. In fact, Bolton first considered making his controversial DV film about a sexual relationship between a 29-year-old man and a 15-year-old boy as a Dogma film, but couldn't go along with the no music rule.

"I always knew the 'no music' thing would never work because I love music so much, and because the lead character is a guitarist and a songwriter," Bolton explains. His decision to cast Brent Fellows (who had no previous acting experience) as the lead was partly based on Fellows's ability to play guitar. "I wanted the lead actor to be a musician because one of the things I wanted the two characters to share is a love of music. It would allow for the older character to be able to show the younger character, Charley, how to play the guitar as a way to get to know each other." The song that Eban plays for Charley in the film was a song Bolton wrote at the age of 19.

Actor Brent Fellows (right) plays guitar in his role for Jimmy Bolton's drama *Eban and Charley*.

Though he produced *Eban* on a micro-budget of $30,000, Bolton says he was committed from the start to finding someone to develop an original score for the film, rather than taking the easier route of using existing music. The reason, he says, is that in a film, particularly one as slow-paced as *Eban*, the music should complement the images, not saturate them. Or as R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe once put it: "The best score is one that you don't even know is there. When people depend too heavily on music to lift or float the dynamic of the scene, you have to question their abilities as a filmmmaker."

"I don't want to use a hit I've heard on the radio a million times and have already associated with other images and ideas," Bolton says. "Even if I need a pop song, for example, to use as background in a café, I want something we've never heard before, and I think it will be all the better if it's a piece of music inspired by the movie."

Despite having zero budget for music, Bolton not only managed to get the original score he desired, he even had it composed by Stephin Merritt of The Magnetic Fields—a band that just released *69 Love Songs*, one of the most critically acclaimed albums of the year. Though it helped that Bolton had contacts in the music industry and an award-winning short film to his credit, Merritt says he agreed to do the score mostly because he liked the film.

"What interested me about scoring this film was that it's a genuinely suspenseful story—you don't know how it's going to turn out in the end," Merritt says. "I was interested in doing music that wouldn't lead you to believe that a particular thing was going to happen in the end. This was either a sort of horror movie or a love story, depending on the way the movie is gonna come out. I didn't want to make music that would encourage one view or the other, so I ended up with atonal percussion music."

With Bolton in Portland, Oregon, and Merritt in New York City, the entire collaboration was conducted by mailing tapes back and forth. "I was perfectly happy not talking to [Bolton] all that much about what he wanted," says Merritt. "I felt like what I needed to do was provide a counter-perspective to his ideas." He says the artistic freedom he was given made up for the fact that he wasn't being paid. "I generally don't do anything for free, but in this case I thought it was a good playground for me. Especially since Jimmy wasn't demanding anything in particular. I didn't want to go out and buy a video-editing suite, so I figured that I could, with little expenditure of my own, see if I liked doing a film score."

Photo this page Marne Luca; facing page: courtesy Merge Records

The two reached an agreement that Merritt would keep all rights to the soundtrack (which was released shortly before the film's release in January). Bolton says the film definitely won extra mileage thanks to its connection to Merritt's music, both from critics, and people who were motivated to see the film because they're fans of The Magnetic Fields.

Musician Stephen Merritt of the popular Magnetic Fields wrote music to match the suspense of Bolton's story.

MUSIC AND FILM: A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN?

On rare occasion, a director's film and a composer's music seem like a match made in heaven: Godfrey Reggio and Philip Glass's collaborations on the Quatsi trilogy (*Koyaanisqatsi*, *Powaqquatsi* and *Naqoyqatsi*, which is currently in production) are a perfect example. Reggio's visual images are the ideal match for Glass's sounds, which form a delicate framework for the ideas and emotions that the films are trying to convey. More often than not, however, it's no simple task for a film director, who thinks and speaks in visual terms, to find his or her musical other half.

Composer Mark Northam says film directors and music composers often have a hard time understanding each other's needs, especially if the musician hasn't worked on films before. Northam has scored more than 15 indie features, in addition to a few television series. A classically trained jazz musician, he toured for years before settling in Los Angeles, where he studied film music composition at UCLA.

In 1997, he co-founded the Film Music Network, an organization that serves the film composer communities of L.A., San Francisco, and Boston. Recently, Northam authored a resource guide for filmmakers called *The Film Music Handbook*, and launched a companion web site, MusicForYourFilm.com, which offers downloadable contracts and information on music licensing. The site also pairs film projects with music composers and orchestras—all free of charge.

Northam complains that far too many film scores today lack originality, often because the director uses scratch music while editing the film, then gets stuck with a cliché idea of how film music should sound. "That's why you have so many films that all sound like *Braveheart*," he laments. "But I think if you're going to make a film that looks original, it should also sound original."

First time documentarian Sarah George, a native of Seattle, recently made a film called *Riding the Rails* about modern-day hobos. Among other difficulties, such as having to sneak her production crew onto moving trains while dodging police, George struggled with the issue of music. Since this was to be a story of modern hobos, she was patently against the idea of using traditional folk music. George wrote a letter to singer Ani DiFranco describing her film, with an advance apology that she had no money to pay for music. Though DiFranco declined, she made a generous offer to let George use any of her pre-existing material free of charge. Still, George felt strongly that she needed original music to convey the natural rhythm of trains and the personalities of her characters.

By chance, the film's editor Casey Chinn ran into Seattle singer/songwriter Pete Droge on a flight and told him about the project. After seeing a rough cut of the film, Droge agreed to do the score, with the understanding that George would only pay for his recording-related expenses. Droge has previously had his music featured in movies, including *Almost Famous* and *Dumb and Dumber*, but had never composed a film score. George, a self-described "music idiot," says that Droge would play instruments for her over the phone as she stumbled through explanations of what she wanted. At one point, she says, the collaboration nearly fell apart because she was unable to express what she was looking for. But after the two sat down together for a crash course in music vocabulary, it all started to come together.

"Basically, it had reached a crisis stage," George says. "So I got on a plane in L.A. [where she now lives] and flew to Seattle to spend a few days working with Pete in his studio."

Droge says he now understands a composer's role in developing a score as being like that of a band supporting a vocalist. "It's like what's happening on stage. A good band backs the singer and keeps the momentum going, but hopefully without drowning out the lyrics."

FICTION VS. NON-FICTION

"Someone gave me a CD by Belle & Sebastian and I thought it would be perfect for this dreamy, wistful Scooby character I had in mind," says director Todd Solondz of his decision to work with the quirky Glasgow band to score his new film *Storytelling*.

> "The best score is one that you don't even know is there."
> —*Michael Stipe*

Left, Tod Solonz's *Storytelling*; right, Michael Dominc's *Bowery Blues*.

Photos: courtesy of filmmakers

Actually, because *Storytelling* is divided into two distinct segments, "Fiction" and "Non-Fiction," Solondz had to deal with two entirely separate scores. The choice for the first segment was based on a tip from Solondz's music editor, who recommended Nathan Larson of the band Shudder to Think. Larson also scored *Boys Don't Cry*. He teamed-up with girlfriend Nina Persson of the Swedish pop band The Cardigans for some of the *Storytelling* tracks. The second segment was scored by Belle & Sebastian, who also composed the music for Sofia Coppola's *The Virgin Suicides*.

"Nathan hit the bull's eye the first time, then we just refined it a bit," says Solondz. "With Belle & Sebastian, it was more of a back and forth process. They had a lot more ideas, not all of which worked, often because there just wasn't a place for it. The way I write hasn't been appropriate for wall-to-wall music."

Though *Storytelling* is by far the most music oriented of Solondz's films, he says that music has always been an important aspect of his filmmaking, and that he strongly prefers using original scores over existing music. Like many directors, however, Solondz has struggled at times while working with music composers. "I actually hired a well-known composer for my first film, *Welcome to the Dollhouse*, and flew all the way to England to meet with him, but I ended up scrapping the entire score because it didn't work with the film," he says.

DOWN AND OUT: THE BOWERY BLUES

Michael Dominic knew he wanted original jazz music for his documentary *Sunshine Hotel*, about an infamous flophouse in New York's Bowery area. So to score part of the film, Dominic tried something unusual: he turned to the subjects themselves.

In the film we learn that Nathan Smith, the hotel's chain-smoking clerk and a live-in resident, was once a successful jazz musician. Dominic visits Smith in his cramped room, where a keyboard takes up half the space, and lets the camera roll on old photos of Smith while he improvises tunes. A haunting voice-over of Smith reading the Charles Bukowski poem "Flophouse" later accompanies images of the hotel. Dominic says he considers the poem to be as much a part of the film's score as the music itself.

"I didn't want recorded music to take away too much from the sounds of the hotel, which I thought were so important," Dominic says, noting that he first got the idea to do the film based on a National Public Radio documentary he heard. "All the background noise of radios and TVs and yelling form what I see as a sort of natural soundtrack."

Another segment captures several residents of the Sunshine holding a jazz jam session in a rehearsal space above the hotel. But in fact much of the film's music comes from Dominic's former roommate, Martin Krusche. A tenor sax player who has recorded with the likes of jazz star Nicholas Payton, Krusche happened to be recording his own album at the same time that Dominic was making his film. They decided that Dominic's film would be a good vehicle to promote Krusche's album, and in turn Dominic was able to use the music for free.

Krusche, who scored Dominic's first film *Soup and The Dead*, also volunteered as the documentary's general sound consultant, helping out with everything from placing music to boom operating.

Like everything else in the world of independent filmmaking, it helps to have friends who are willing to lend a hand for free. But as some of the stories described here have shown, you might be surprised by the willingness of musicians to try their hand at composing for film with little or no remuneration, especially if it's a film they believe in. "Especially on low budget or no-budget projects, a positive, working relationship with a talented filmmaker can mean a lot more in the long run to a composer or band than whatever financial compensation might be available."

Merritt jokes that he may well have spent more of his own money on exotic percussion instruments for *Eban & Charley* than the director spent making the entire film. But he doesn't regret it, and hopes to do another score again. "I'm sure glad I did this movie," he says, "because I can say for certain that I would've never bought a Vietnamese dan mo otherwise."

Richard Baimbridge is a contributing editor at The Independent. *He owns an electric guitar, a sitar and two Chinese flutes.*

NOTES TO PLAY BY
A PRIMER ON MUSIC AND INDEPENDENT FILM

BY TAMARA KRINSKY

THE PROCESS OF PUTTING MUSIC INTO A FILM, WHETHER ORIGINAL SCORE, NEW SONGS, OR PRE-EXISTING MUSIC, IS A COMPLICATED ONE INVOLVING COPYRIGHT MATTERS, TECHNICAL ISSUES, AND CREATIVE COLLABORATION AMONG ARTISTS. WHEN MARRYING MUSIC AND IMAGE, YOU ARE TAKING ONE PERSON'S CREATIVE VISION AND ADDING IT TO SOMEONE ELSE'S IN ORDER TO CREATE A WHOLE NEW IDEA.

There are a number of people involved in making this happen, all of whom have different priorities and opinions. In an effort to better understand the different pieces of the music puzzle, I've asked different members of the team for a few key suggestions. While some pieces of advice may conflict, it's important to know where each person is coming from. Ultimately, however, the goal for all is the same: to create the strongest film possible.

Almost everyone agreed on three things. First, don't get attached to your temp track! Songs may not be available or affordable, and asking a composer to score something "that sounds just like this other music" can be creatively limiting.

Second, hire a music supervisor, especially if you have a lot of music in your film. The money you spend will be worth it in the saved time and research energy, and in the avoidance of costly clearance headaches. Their awareness of where the expensive music bones are buried, and their relationships with labels, publishers and talent are worth their fees.

Lastly, as soon as you know what music you are interested in using, begin the clearance process. The more time you have, the more options you'll have. Plus, if you find out a song is out of your reach, you can begin looking for a new one before you become married to it, or worse yet, before you shoot music on film.

Steven C. Beer, Founding Partner, Rudolph & Beer, LLP

• Know the two types of music licenses typically used. A synchronization license grants the right to use the notes and lyrics of a song, also known as the underlying composition, without regard to who performs the song on your film. This license is needed when filming a band perform a cover song or when an actor sings a copyright song on film.

In contrast, a master use license grants the right to use a particular artist's recording of a song, known as a sound recording. A master use license would be used to obtain permission to play Paul Simon's "Graceland" or Britney Spears' "Slave For You" recording during your film. Because any sound recording will also necessarily include the underlying notes and lyrics, a synchronization license must also be obtained every time a master use license is secured.

• Plan to allocate between two percent and five percent of your production budget to music licenses, and know how you will be using music before obtaining them. If music is used during opening or closing credits or in advertising trailers, then the licensee will likely charge more than if the music is simply used in the background during the course of the film.

• Know how your film will be distributed before obtaining your licenses. If budgeting causes you to enter into a festival license, you should always obtain a price quote from the licensee for the synchronization and master use licenses needed for commercial release.

• Many licensees require that you pay them no less than what you pay other licensees for the musical rights for the film. This is called a Most Favored Nations (MFN) clause. Should all music licensees agree to accept uniform compensation except one, then you must choose to either walk away from that one license or break the MFN clause and pay all other licensees greater compensation.

Mary Ramos and Michelle Kuznetsky, Tri-Tone Music, Music Supervisors

Credits include: *Josie and the Pussycats, The Wedding Planner, Saving Silverman, Teaching Mrs. Tingle, Clay Pigeons*; as Music Coordinator: *Grace of My Heart, Pulp Fiction, Reality Bites*.

• You don't always need to use the songs of a major recording star. Be open to using friends who are musicians on independent labels.

• When working with a music supervisor, be able to articulate what it is that you like about a particular song. For example, if you want to use James Brown's "I Feel Good," know why. Is it because of the style of music? The words "I feel good?" The mood of the piece? The pace or rhythm? Knowing what element of a song you like will help your music supervisors find other choices if necessary.

• Consider musicians when you are casting. Sometimes you can find someone who will contribute musically to your film in return for the opportunity to be onscreen. When they score the film, sometimes they can then build in cues that will allow you to get around spending for individual song cues, thus saving you money.

• Budget appropriately. There is no standard figure, but definitely pay attention to the number of cues in your film. Generally, you can expect to spend $7,500-$15,000 per cue.

• Don't think that just because a song hasn't been played in 15 years it's not expensive to license. Always remember: a song is a musician's livelihood.

Harry Gregson-Williams, Composer

Credits include: *Spygame, Shrek, Chicken Run, Antz, Enemy of the State, Replacement Killers, Passionata, King of the Jungle, The Magic of Marciano*.

• Involve the composer as early as possible. Being on the set can really help a composer find the essence of what the director is trying to achieve. It gives the composer a three-dimensional reference, as opposed to a two-dimensional reference, thus allowing the composer to more easily get into the mind of the director.

• It's hard to talk about music. It's much better to have music to talk about. After reading the script, I will often write a 10-15 minute suite of music that is not specifically written to picture. The suite will serve as a template for me and the director, allowing us to talk about the element what works for various characters and scenes. Sometimes, this suite can be used as the temp track, thus avoiding the common problem of "temp love" with unusable music.

• Composers must make sure to check with the music supervisor that all songs have indeed been cleared and licensed. Otherwise, if

a song doesn't clear at the last moment, it can rebound on the composer and he or she can get stuck at the final hour having to write music for spots in the film thought to be covered by pre-recorded music. This causes creative, budgetary, and scheduling problems.

Seth Berg, Director of Film and Television Music, EMI-Capital Music, Special Markets

• Never assume you can or can't use a certain piece of music—always go to the label because you don't know what a label has planned for their artist.

• Be aware of union (American Federation of Musicians) issues. The agreement you sign with the label says that the filmmaker is responsible for all other costs involved in using the music beyond licensing. This means that the film, not the label, pays royalties to the musicians. Royalties for musicians work similarly to actors' SAG residuals. In a recording session, musicians are paid to make a certain configuration (tapes, LP's, CD's, etc.). The minute you change that configuration from audio-driven entertainment to video-driven, the musicians get paid again.

A temp score can be with a film for three to four months, so it can take time to readjust when the composer's music is added.

• If you can't use an artist's music, don't get caught using their posters, t-shirts and CD's as set dressing or props. Everything around music is copyrighted, and using such materials gets into name and likeness issues.

• Never assume that just because an artist is your friend, you can use his or her music. Even if the artist gives you the thumbs up, you still have to deal with the label.

• If you choose not to use a music supervisor, try to be as informed as possible before contacting a label. Read *The Big Book of Music Licensing*. Don't write incredibly long letters to the label explaining just how special and unique your project is, and why you should be able to use a particular piece of music. Instead, go with a generic, short letter with a good juicy synopsis of your project.

Richard Ford, Music Editor

Credits include: *Training Day, About Schmidt, The Cell, Election, American History X, Polish Wedding, Love Jones, Mary Jane's Last Dance*

• A common problem is when a director loves a piece of music that may not actually work in the film. When you love a song, you become subject to its nuances and flavors. But when it comes to placing it in a film, it may be like putting a square peg in a round hole.

• A temp score can be with a film for three to four months, so it can take time to readjust when the composer's music is added. Be aware that a composer brings a fresh set of values to a film and don't let this throw you. Give yourself time to get used to the new music before judging it.

Ron Broitman, Vice President, Film and Television Music for BMG Publishing

• Generally, if a piece originates in the United States, it can take 2-4 days to clear. If it originates in a foreign territory, however, it can take 2-3 weeks.

• Be realistic about time. Publishers usually process 100-150 requests per week for commercials, television, film and new media. If you send in a fax, don't expect to hear back from the publisher within the hour. Place a follow up call within the next day or two, but don't expect a yay or nay when you call.

• Be aware of the difference between a music label and a music publisher. A publisher owns the rights to the composition, and works with the writers. There is only one or one set of publishers for a piece. A label, however, owns the rights to a specific rendition of a song by a particular artist. There may be 20 different artists who have recorded the same song, and each may be on a different label.

• Do your homework before contacting the publisher. You should know the title and the writers of both the music and lyrics. These can be found by going to the BMI (www.bmi.com/licensing) or ASCAP (www.ascap.com/ace) web sites, which have tools to help you find the song's particulars as well as its publisher.

• Be realistic and flexible when determining what rights you need. It's not always best to get all rights ahead of time. For example, if you have a small distribution deal, it may not be worth it to fight for the video and new media windows. Chances are you won't be able to afford them. Festival rights generally have a window of one year, and most publishers charge a small fee which covers the administrative work. You may or may not be able to get the publisher to quote you commercial rights when you get your festival rights.

Theodore Shapiro, Composer

Credits include: *Wet Hot American Summer, Not Another Teen Movie, Heist, Bug, State and Main, Girlfight, Restaurant, Hurricane Streets.*

• Involve the composer at the beginning of the editing process. It's not useful to come in at an earlier point because a composer can't do that much with a script. It's more important to respond to visual rather than textual clues.

• At the beginning of the editing process, give the composer three key scenes that have been edited together. The composer can then start cobbling together sound and music and feed this to the editor, who can then use it as the temp track.

• The composer and the sound effects editor should work closely together. A common problem occurs when a composer scores a scene and the effects editor creates a sound design for a scene, and the two end up battling one another. There is limited time on the mixing stage, so use it wisely, and create a symbiotic relationship between the two elements.

• Don't try to save money by recreating the sound of an orchestra with synthesizers and samplers. It will always sound like a fake. If you are going to use a synthesizer, make it an aesthetic choice.

• Be careful about hiring rock bands to score your film. It can work, but just because someone can write good songs doesn't mean that they will be able to compose music to picture. It is a separate skill.

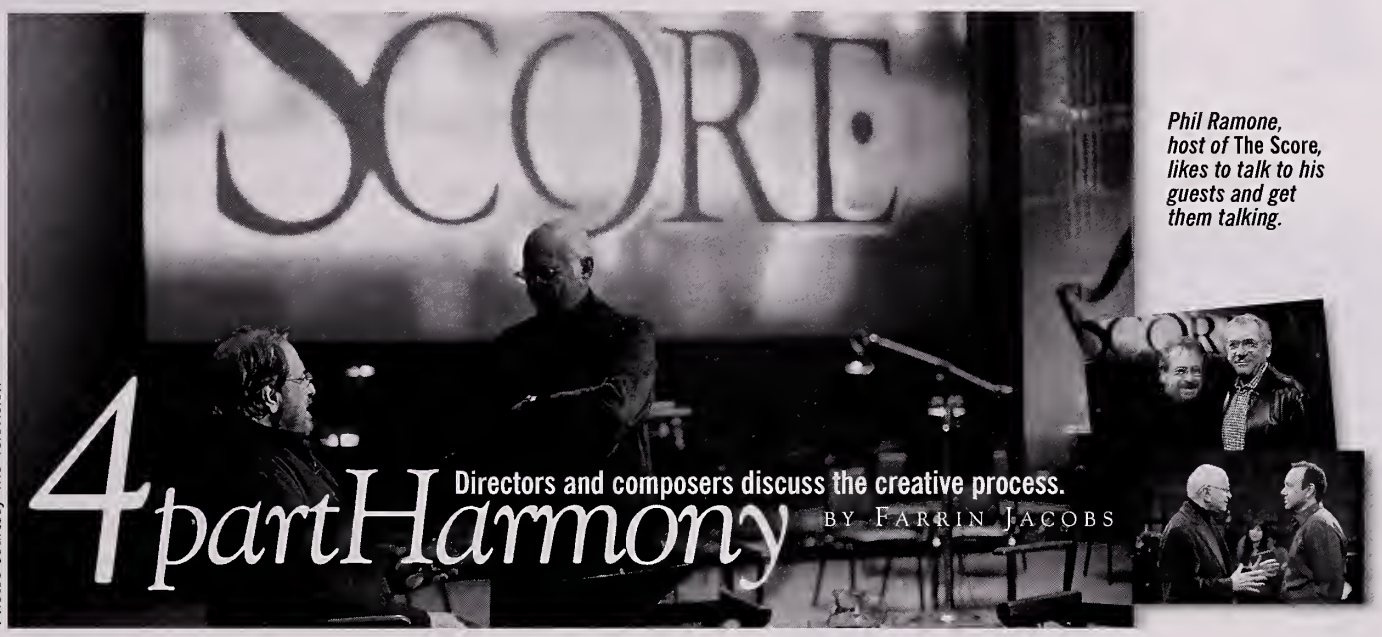
• The most helpful question for a composer to ask is, "What do you want music to do for this scene?" If a director can answer this question, then the composer can get his or her head out of the space of trying to match a particular sound or style. Instead, they can focus on making the music really do what the director wants, thus creating a stronger story.

Tamara Krinsky is the Associate Director of the Film Discovery Proogram at HBO's U.S. Comedy Arts Festival in Aspen, and is the Associate Editor of International Documentary *Magazine.*

4 part Harmony

Directors and composers discuss the creative process.

BY FARRIN JACOBS



Phil Ramone, host of The Score, *likes to talk to his guests and get them talking.*

Photos courtesy Trio Television

the people at Trio, the cable arts channel owned by USA Networks, know that there's more to a film score than meets the ear. And they're hoping that viewers will tune in to their upcoming original series *The Score* to get the inside scoop on the relationships between music and film and composer and director—and maybe even learn a little about the scoring process.

The show is produced for Trio by Sony's Automatic Productions, which specializes in music and variety programming. Each of the one-hour episodes, which will air on Sundays in March to coincide with Oscar month, pairs an acclaimed director with his musical partner on a particular project or variety of projects. The hour is filled with conversations, film clips, and musical performances. "It's both a talk show and a performance show," explains Andy Kadison, senior vice president, Sony Music Studios and Automatic Productions, "so it's entertaining and engrossing." It's the kind of behind-the-scenes peek that draws people to DVDs, he says. "We can go beyond the fourth wall and reveal to casual viewers and devotees alike information about favorite movies and music."

The concept for the show was brought to Trio by famed television producer Norman Lear and acclaimed music producer Phil Ramone. The idea, says Ramone, "came from nights in the studio after scoring, and the way we sit around and decompress afterward. Some of the most interesting discussions come at that time." And so, he decided he'd love to get a group of people together, "and get them in a not overly conscious state, not scripted, and fire the questions" to explore the connection between film and music. "The marriage of music and film is the most unbelievable process. It's hard to describe until you see it," he explains.

The way Andrew Cohen, vice president original programming at Trio, tells it, the show is just right for the channel. "Phil and Norman came to us with this idea about creating a show about the magic that occurs during the scoring stage—to have two people of this stature come and pitch you this idea.... For Trio this is exactly the way we like to go about programming. We like to create programming that's not seen on any other channel and to work with people who are passionate about their project."

The lineup for the series includes directors Taylor Hackford, Sydney Pollack, Rob Reiner, and the late Ted Demme, and composers Danny Elfman, Marc Shaiman, and James Newton Howard. Brian Wilson, Matthew Sweet, and Patti Austin are among the musicians who stopped by to perform during the filming.

Kadison notes that for Automatic, scheduling the director/musician teams was one of the hardest parts of putting the series together. "In any good creative effort, you want to strike a balance between the old and new," he explains, noting that they ended up with a good mix in terms of contemporary film history, from Sydney Pollack down to the MTV-generation director Brett Ratner. "It's hard when you're scheduling a multi-artist show," he adds. "One of the challenges is making sure the schedules all work."

But according to Cohen, once filming began, it all came together. "Phil [Ramone, who hosts the show] has personal relationships with all these people, so he's the guide of the hour." He talks to his guests and gets them talking about, for example, how the music for a certain scene came about. "It's as if the viewer is eavesdropping on a great director, who is sitting in the middle of a scoring stage talking to a great composer with whom he has collaborated or wanted to collaborate."

Cohen also mentions the DVD set when he considers the show's potential audience. "Anyone who loves all the special features about DVDs will love this show. This show is one big rocking DVD." But Kadison sees the show as more than just entertainment; it's education as well. "More and more consumers are interested in the process and how their favorite movies get made. This show in particular caters to that, goes to the next level." But, he adds, "One of the most daunting aspects of filmmaking is doing the score. And *The Score* is like a master in scoring."

For more information about The Score, go to www.triotv.com.

Farrin Jacobs is a book editor in New York.

IFC Films: The Business of Synergy

Sr. VP Bob Berney discusses distribution and the intermittent joys of success

By Patricia Thomson

In the independent film world, cable television was once the little guy, the milquetoast who was constantly muscled aside by powerful and sexy theatrical distributors as they led hot new directors to the negotiating table.

Bob Berney, senior vice president of IFC Films marketing and distribution.

But things have changed. Cable channels are investing in original productions—and not movies of the week, but top quality films. And now they're stepping into the theatrical distribution ring.

In September 2000, the Independent Film Channel launched IFC Films, thus becoming the first cable channel to create its own theatrical distribution company handling indie and foreign features. As part of IFC Entertainment, the new distributor is siblings with the cable channel and with IFC's production and financing units: IFC Productions, Next Wave Films, and InDigEnt.

Synergy is a word that carries the unpleasant residue of corporate-speak. But in the case of IFC Films, it's the very thing that gives them a leg-up in a tough, competitive environment. It was one of the elements that convinced writer/director Patrick Stettner, for one, to go with their offer for his film *The Business of Strangers*. When IFC Films opened Stettner's sharp character drama in over 20 markets in December, the director was delighted with the extras that surrounded it: Promotional spots on IFC and sister channel Bravo; co-star Stockard Channing featured on Bravo's Inside the Actors Studio; a profile on the IFC series At the Angelika; teaser previews on the IFCTV web site, plus junkets in L.A. and New York and an Academy Award campaign for Channing and co-star Julia Stiles.

"There has been synergy applied to my film," says Stettner, "but it's not synergy in a weird way. They're not selling Happy Meals." From his perspective, the marriage is working quite well. "I've felt really blessed."

Aiming to release 10 to 12 films per year, IFC Films will no doubt become a formidable new presence on the indie playing field. Heading up this enterprise is Bob Berney, senior vice president of marketing and distribution. In this interview, the former Texan talks with The Independent about his past as an arthouse owner, his marketing strategy behind the breakthrough hit *Memento*, and how the synergy of IFC really works.

The Independent: Your film career begins in Texas, where you studied film history and production at the University of Texas in Austin. Do you have family roots here as well?

Bob Berney: We're from Oklahoma, but I had all sorts of relatives in south Texas.

In college, you worked as a projectionist at an AMC theater. I've known people who've done this job, but none who subsequently bought a theater, as you did.

I got hooked on it. It was one of those things that you fall into, and I ended up loving the theater business. Not that the theaters I was working in were showing great films, but I fell in love with the audience and the put-on-a-show aspect of it.

What was the Inwood Theater like when you bought it?

It was the big theater in Dallas that had gone down the tubes because it was old. However, it was in a great location, right in front of everybody's eyes—a beautiful art moderne theater—but they'd forgotten about it. It was playing dollar-movies, like *Sound of Music*. Then there was a fire in the theater, and they just closed it. We restored it, and as soon as we did, people said, 'Oh! I'd forgotten about that.' There was a fairly immediate reaction.

It had a huge lobby with murals on the ceiling, and one of the things we did was put in a bar. This was before the coffee house craze, but it ended up being the same thing —a place where people would hang around and talk about the movies. We started doing film festivals there, and they used the bar as a meeting place. So it became more of a film center, which now theaters like Angelika do, but that was really the first one to have that kind of space.

When was this?

1981, 1982. I was in Dallas 10 years and had the theater probably four years.

According to filmmakers in Dallas, the Inwood's claim to fame was the degree to which it meshed with the local community. As you note, there was the 1940s martini lounge and the film festivals, but you also paid attention to details like air conditioning and projection. Now that most

Photos, this page and opposite: courtesy of IFC

independent theaters have been bought out by national chains, is it still possible to have that kind of T.L.C. and community ties?
I think it can be done, even within larger operations. You just have to have a corporate philosophy to have a film culture. You have to know your audience and really care about it. But mainly the trick is consistency of both product and atmosphere. That's where the larger circuits that have tried to play art films haven't succeeded, because they try it for two months then say, 'Well, we didn't have a hit,' and give up. But it's the consistency of product. You can't alternate action films and arthouse films. The ones that succeed understand that—the Landmarks or Angelikas or some of the regional independent houses that still work. And they're interwoven with community—with restaurants, with the media, with reporters—so they build support from the community at large.

What are the key changes in the exhibition realm since your days at the Inwood?
Incredible expansion; the whole change toward stadium-seating megaplexes. I believe it was AMC that put in the first one—in Dallas—and that literally changed the whole business.

How so?
If you put in one of these megaplex stadium theaters, any theater in the vicinity went out of business immediately, like the next week. Any company that did this would cannibalize even their own theaters. So everyone had to build, and there was a spiral of increased costs. It ended up bankrupting almost all U.S. exhibitors. But bankruptcy was also apparently a business strategy to shed the old and build the new. Now basically everyone's come out of bankruptcy and is starting to build again. And we're seeing more theaters that will play arthouse films, so I think we're actually coming into a better time. It was fairly bleak for awhile there.

Fast-forwarding through your resume, you moved from exhibition to distribution and marketing, working in L.A. with Triton Films, Orion Pictures, and Banner Entertainment. Then, most recently, you served as a consultant for Good Machine on Happiness and for Newmarket on Memento. Let's talk a bit about the distribution of *Memento*. This was a terrific film that almost didn't make it out of the gate.
The producers of *Memento*, who loved the film, found themselves with no acceptable U.S. offers. Not wanting to just let it go or give it away on a deal they didn't like, they decided to distribute it themselves.

I had seen the film, but I really didn't know the people at Newmarket; they worked with Good Machine a lot, so we had a mutual connection. We met and discussed the kind of budget it would take to open the film. I didn't know they didn't have an offer; I was like, 'Why am I even here? Just to tell you the film's great?' And they're saying, 'No, we need to figure out something to do, fast.' This was in July. Luckily, they had the money to do it themselves, and we discussed how it went with *Happiness* and what kind of risk it would take.

Why do you believe no one made a good offer on Memento?
I think distributors personally liked the film and thought it would get some reviews, but they thought the audience would not accept the film, that there would be a disconnect with the style and particularly with the end. Even the art audience, they felt, just wouldn't go for a backwards movie. But it turns out the audience accepted it. They loved to be fooled in a smart way. They loved the conceit of it. Plus, when you think about it, it has a really great cast and a really good look.

What was your marketing strategy for that film?
Number one, we had the luxury of time. I decided to wait until March to release it. Even though we knew it was going to be in Toronto and Venice, we decided to wait, so that we could do a long-lead web campaign. The marketing was really organic to the story. Jonah, who is Chris Nolan's brother, wrote the short story, and he had also had built the website and was

almost done. It was a site that wasn't about the film, but about the character, Leonard, looking for help in finding the murderer. I thought that we should just get going on that. I thought the Internet audience would respond to the puzzle nature of that.

Then how did you promote the website?
We did these Polaroid cards that showed Guy [Pearce] and the website address—'memento' spelled backwards—and started floating them around at festivals, beginning with Toronto and Venice. Then we did a wild posting in New York over Christmas. Again, nothing about the movie; just the website backwards, with an odd picture of Guy. And it just started to work. We also did a lot of email marketing, seeding the movie. We would start building lists and send out email from Leonard, the character, asking for help, and we also would do direct mails that would

give the website. Some people thought they were actually being stalked. People were calling the FBI. You could tell something was happening! Just the buzz; it started feeding on itself. The next thing was just solid, 100 percent reviews and audience reaction at Venice, Toronto, and finally Sundance. And it was just over the top.

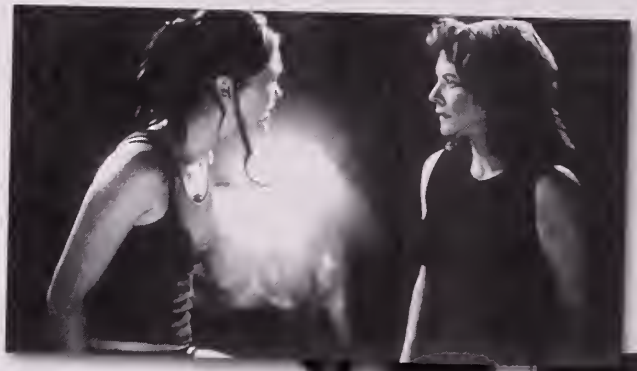
Let's move on to IFC Films. Spring Forward was the division's first release. The film had been financed in part by IFC Productions, then went on the festival circuit, including Toronto and Sundance, but no buyers bit. One year after Spring Forward's premiere at Toronto, IFC launched its own theatrical division. Was Spring Forward the catalyst for the formation of IFC Films?

Partly, but more important were the films that went on to success, like [IFC Productions'] *Boys Don't Cry*. Distributors usually have 'possession' of the film, so there was a certain feeling that *Boys Don't Cry* became a Fox film. The other motive is having films like Spring Forward that didn't have a home. That's not necessarily the reason to create a distribution company, but we were able to get some of those films out to the marketplace.

Where do you see IFC Films fitting into the current landscape of distributors?

It's in the middle, with a fairly aggressive plan. The larger companies—like Miramax and Fine Line, to some degree—have really wide releases and huge, huge marketing campaigns. Then there's Strand, Cowboy, and the really tiny companies, and there didn't seem to be much in the middle. Lions Gate and Sony Classics were there in this mid-range, but Sony, with *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, has gotten fairly big, and Lions Gate has also moved towards wider releases and video or ancillary-driven films. So there were a lot of sales agents and producers with nowhere to go.

IFC Films provides a niche for still-independent films and a mid-level distribution business that was lacking in the market. A lot of theater owners look at the distributors and find there's not a lot of publicity or ad support for small films once you get out of New York or L.A. You're really looking for a distributor that will promote the films across the country and in all the markets, doing ads or promotions just like you do in New York or L.A. So that's what we're really trying to do—be fairly persuasive and aggressive in releasing films.



Left: Julia Stiles confronts Stockard Channing in Patrick Stettner's *The Business of Strangers*.

Right: Tunde Adebimpe and Natalia Verbeke in Joel Hopkins's beguiling first feature, *Jump Tomorrow*.

Left: A member of the group of tourists trapped in an abandoned desert mining town in Kristian Levring's *The King is Alive*.

Right: Diego Luna and Gael Garcia Bernal in spring release *Y Tu Mama Tambien*, a more personal project for filmmakers Alfonso and Carlos Cuarón.

How might IFC Films survive where so many distributors have failed?

One advantage is being part of Bravo. There's a lot of ways the network can support our theatrical releases that do make a difference—not only promoting on air, but making tie-ins to shows like Inside the Actors Studio. Also, doing screenings and premieres in regional markets like Dallas, Denver, and Seattle helps boost the normal P&A budget. It's all part of a broader view towards branding; the publicity that theatrical distribution provides gives value to the whole company. That gives us a slightly different and longer view. That said, we still have to find the right films and have success with them.

What is the relationship between IFC Films and the projects made under IFC Productions, Next Wave, and InDigEnt? Do you get first crack at them?

Right now they're very separate, arms-length divisions. For example, with Next Wave, we acquired two of their films—the documentary *Keep the River on Your Right* and *Manic*—but we acquired them at festivals, making offers. It wasn't automatic. It's the same with IFC Productions. We have to negotiate offers, because often there are third-party investors or foreign sales already involved. IFC Productions has gotten offers from other distributors that have been really good, like for *Waking Life* and *Monsoon Wedding*. Although I like the films, the economics of it didn't make sense for us.

Photos, from top: *The Business of Strangers*: Jojo Whilden; *Jump Tomorrow*: Sophie Molins; *The King is Alive*, Anders Overgaard; *Y Tu Mama Tambien*, Daniel Daza

That said, I think there will be projects moving forward that we'll work together on. We just announced *Casa de los Babys*, a new John Sayles film. That's a case where we're going in together. Then we're committing to release some of the seventies-era docs acquired by the channel. So I see us moving toward doing things from the beginning together. This evolution is taking place only because of the way the distribution company started—after the fact. The production company had already been geared up to go to festivals and sell the films. So it's just going to take us awhile to feel out the right road, and I think it's going to be project by project rather than sweeping dramatic changes in either division.

IFC Films: The Slate to Date

2000:	
December	Spring Forward, dir. Tom Gilroy
2001:	
March	Keep the River on Your Right: A Modern Cannibal Tale, dir. David Shapiro and Lauren Gwen Shapiro (documentary)
April	The King Is Alive, dir. Kristian Levring
May	Our Song, dir. Jim McKay
July	Jump Tomorrow, dir. Joel Hopkins
August	Thomas in Love, dir. Pierre-Paul Renders
	Together, dir. Lukas Moodysson
	Happy Accidents, dir. Brad Anderson
September	Go Tigers!, dir. Kenneth A. Carlson (documentary)
December	The Business of Strangers, dir. Patrick Stettner
2002: (release schedule subject to change)	
March	Big Bad Love, dir. Arliss Howard
March	Y Tu Mama Tambien, dir. Alfonso Cuaron
April	John Sayles retrospective
April	Gangster No. 1, dir. Paul McGuigan
May	The Chateau, dir. Jesse Peretz
June	Manic, dir. Jordan Melamed
July	The Safety of Objects, dir. Rose Troche

Where does the digital film division InDigEnt fit in all of this? Their whole first slate of five films, including Rick Linklater's Tape, was picked up by Lions Gate.

Those are films we could pick up, but the deal with Lions Gate was made before we existed. So IFC Films could release a package or selected films from the next group, but it's the same thing: we're looking at arms-length deals on films that make sense for the distribution company to release.

Can filmmakers seeking distribution approach IFC Films directly, or do you prefer to either solicit work or see it at festivals or markets?

Sarah Lash, IFC Films' director of acquisitions, attends all the key festivals and markets, and that's where we see most of the work. Otherwise, filmmakers can go through agents, sales reps, or possibly someone in IFC they happen to know. But we're really not set up to deal with unsolicited submissions. We'd just get overwhelmed.

Which festivals do you and your staff attend?

Sundance, Toronto, and Cannes, but we also cover Berlin, Telluride, and Seattle.

Markets?

Not so much. AFM and MIFED we'll have some representation, but not much, and a little here at IFFM.

How do the theatrical and cable channel divisions interact when you're acquiring a film? Is a theatrical buy contingent on getting television rights?

When we buy something, it always includes all rights —specifically, basic cable rights.

So are you and the cable channel conferring back and forth about acquisitions?

We talk all the time, because we always go to the festivals together. But we're looking at films for the theatrical business first, because that's why we're buying films. Obviously any theatrical release benefits from a later play on the channel. The more publicity, the more awareness there is.

Let's talk a bit about the synergy within the overall company. What specifically do IFC and Bravo do to help promote IFC Films' releases?

IFC has run making-of shows, special interviews, and promotional spots. There have been times when Bravo also gets involved. Deborah Winger, who's in *Big Bad Love*, is going to be on Inside the Actors Studio. Bravo Profiles has profiled a lot of our films. So there's that, and it's also about running premieres in regional cities. The channel might invite cable affiliates to attend a premiere, which helps us make regional promotional events into bigger premiere events. And that helps bring in talent. All that's value-added to the normal P&A budget, which

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gives us a bigger focus and lift, particularly in the regional markets. There's even the hold music in the Cablevision companies [of which IFC and Bravo are part], which might say something about *The Business of Strangers*, for instance. We hope all this synergy ultimately has the effect of increasing awareness. We're just getting to the point where it's doing that, where we're pulling it together.

Does IFC Films benefit from a relationship with the theater chain Clearview, which is owned by parent corporation Rainbow Programming Holdings? What's their commitment or obligation, if any?

Clearview is part of the overall company, but it's very separate. I would say they've shown all our films in the locations that are appropriate. They have theaters in Chelsea, and on First and 62nd that play a lot of arthouse films. But they're not going to force anything. It's not like the [1,100-seat] Ziegfeld is going to play *Our Song*. But they've been pretty good supporters. They promote our films and give us a broader trailer coverage and promotional outlet in Manhattan and the boroughs. They have a pretty good string of theaters in the surrounding area, which do play arthouse and indie films.

Finally, what's the key to maintaining a sane and healthy life within the nail-biting world of film distribution?

Generally, it's an unhealthy and insane place to be (laughs). What's keeps me going are the intermittent joys of success, both big and small. There's a major success like *Memento*, which no one expected. There's the joy of being able to work in a company that releases a film like *Our Song*, which might otherwise have been overlooked. I was proud of that. There's joy to be found in working with someone like Patrick Stettner, who was making his first film; or with Carlos Cuaron, who has directed studio films but turned to a more personal film with *Y Tu Mama Tambien*; or Debra Winger, who is known for a whole different thing—acting—but now is an independent producer. Working with good people and projects makes up for all the craziness in between.

Patricia Thomson is a contributing editor to The Independent.

Self Defense for Screenwriters

By Mark Litwak, Esq.

As an entertainment attorney I am often called upon to assist writers who have gotten themselves into trouble because they don't understand how their work infringes the rights of others. A writer who learns the fine points of the law through trial and error is receiving an expensive education. Here is a brief explanation of how to protect yourself.

Purely fictional characters

If your script or film contains fictional characters—characters from your imagination—you generally do not need to obtain any permissions or releases. However, if there is a chance that the public could mistake your imaginary characters for real people, you could be liable if you have thereby infringed their rights.

You can protect yourself by making sure your fictional characters cannot be mistaken for real people. Check the phone book to see if any people with your character's name reside at the location portrayed in your story. If there is a person in that community with the same name or a similar one, consider changing the locale or setting the story in a fictional locale. Give characters unusual names that no living individual would have. Add a disclaimer at the beginning of the film stating that any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

If fictional characters are drawn from another's literary work, you might be infringing that author's copyright unless the work has gone into the public domain, or your use is considered a fair use. You may borrow personality traits, however, without infringing another's copyright. The first author to create a hard-boiled private eye, for example, cannot prevent other authors from creating their own hard-boiled private eyes.

Characters that have a visual component, such as comic book characters, are more likely to be protected under copyright law. Moreover, if you borrow the name of someone else's character you may be infringing trademark rights they may have in the character, and engaging in unfair competition.

Fictional characters based on real people

A writer's imagination necessarily draws upon one's life experiences and people the writer has met. If a fictional character is loosely based on a real life individual, and the public cannot identify the real life individual from the context in which the fictional character is portrayed, there is little risk of liability.

On the other hand, suppose you wrote a novel about the widow of a former American president assassinated in Dallas, and the widow character later marries a Greek shipping tycoon. Although you have labeled the book a "novel," have said that this is a work of fiction, and have given the characters fictitious names, readers may nevertheless believe you are writing about Jackie Kennedy. If you had defamed her while she was alive, or otherwise invaded her rights, she might have had a good cause of action against you. You can be liable for defaming an individual even if you do not name her.

An interesting case is *Leopold v. Levin*. The plaintiff pleaded guilty in 1924 to kidnapping and murdering a young boy. Because of the sensational nature of the crime, the case attracted international notoriety that did not wane over time.

In 1956, Levin, the defendant, wrote a novel entitled *Compulsion*. The case was the framework for the novel, although Leopold's name was not in it. The book was described as a fictionalized account of the Leopold murder case. The motion picture based on the book featured actors who resembled the actual persons from the case. The promotional materials referred to the crime but made it clear that the story was a work of fiction suggested by real life events. Leopold sued for invasion of privacy. After the novel was published, but before the movie was released, Leopold published his own autobiography.

The court found against Leopold, stating that books, magazines and motion pictures are forms of public expression protected by the First Amendment. The court noted that while the book and movie were "suggested" by Leopold's crime, they were evidently fictional works. The novel and film depicted portions of Leopold's life that he had caused to be placed in public view. The court did not consider the fictionalized aspects highly offensive, which is the standard for determining invasion of privacy.

The court also noted that a documentary account of the Leopold case would be constitutionally protected. Also, an entirely fictional work inspired by the case would be protected if matters such as locale were changed and the plaintiff was not identified.

> "Truth is an absolute privilege because our society values truth more than a person's reputation."

Portraying identifiable persons

A person's right to privacy has to be balanced against other people's rights under the First Amendment. If Kitty Kelly wants to write an unauthorized biography about Frank Sinatra, she can do so without his permission. Likewise, Mike Wallace and his "60 Minutes" camera crew can film others without their permission. However, journalists' rights are not absolute. If Wallace placed a hidden camera in a department store dressing room, he would be liable for damages for invading the privacy of customers.

Determining whether a filmmaker has infringed upon the rights of a subject who has not consented to be portrayed can be a complex matter. The status of the subject—whether he is a public figure or public official, and whether he is alive or deceased—may be important. Whether the activities portrayed are newsworthy may also be decisive. And the manner in which a person's likeness is used—whether in a film or on a coffee cup—is relevant as well.

Here are some guidelines you may follow to avoid liability from subjects portrayed in your script or film:

1) OBTAIN RELEASES
Obtain releases whenever possible. It never hurts to have a release even if it is not legally required. Do not forget to get releases from the immediate family and friends of a subject if those people appear in the story.

2) FICTIONALIZE THE STORY
Change the identity of the individu-als, the names of the characters and the location so that the public will not be able to identify any characters with any living individuals.

3) ADD A DISCLAIMER
If your characters are fictional, add an express disclaimer to that effect so viewers will not be confused.

4) PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS
Be especially careful about portraying living individuals who are not public officials or figures. Remember that deceased individuals cannot sue for defamation or invasion of privacy, and that public figures and officials have to prove actual malice in order to recover. Thus, a filmmaker is most vulnerable when portraying living private individuals.

5) ASSEMBLE EVIDENCE TO PROVE THE TRUTH
Make sure you can prove that any defamatory statements you make are true. Annotate your script with the sources of your information so that you can document its truth and show that you acted carefully and without actual malice.

6) CLEAR THE SCRIPT
Have an attorney closely review your script for potential liability before production. If you can change the names of subjects and the setting without detracting from the dramatic value of the story, do so.

7) OBTAIN INSURANCE
Make sure the production company obtains an Errors and Omissions (E & O) insurance policy and that it includes you as a named insured.

These are the most likely grounds upon which to sue for an unauthorized portrayal:

Defamation: Defamation is a communication that harms the reputation of another so as to lower him in the opinion of the community or to deter third persons from associating or dealing with him. For example, those communications that expose another to hatred, ridicule or contempt, or reflect unfavorably upon one's personal morality or integrity are defamatory. One who is defamed may suffer embarrassment and humiliation, as well as economic damages, such as the loss of a job or the ability to earn a living.

The law of defamation can be very confusing. That is because the common law rules that have developed over the centuries are subject to constitutional limitations. To determine the current law, one must read a state's defamation laws in light of various constitutional principles. For example, recent United States Supreme Court decisions have imposed significant limitations on the ability of public officials and public figures to win defamation actions. If a state's law is inconsistent with a constitutional principle, the law is invalid.

There are a number of defenses and privileges in defamation law. Therefore, in some circumstances a person can publish an otherwise defamatory remark with impunity. Why? Because protecting a person's reputation is not the only value we cherish in a democratic society. When the right to protect a reputation conflicts with a more important right, the defamed person may be denied a recovery for the harm suffered.

The most important privilege, from a filmmaker's point of view, is truth. If your remarks hurt someone's reputation, but your remarks are true, you are absolutely privileged. An absolute privilege cannot be lost through bad faith or abuse. So even if you maliciously defame another person, you will be privileged if the statement is true. Truth is an absolute privilege because our society values truth more than a person's reputation.

Keep in mind that while truth is an absolute defense, the burden of proving the truth may sometimes fall on you. So if you make a defamatory statement, you should be prepared to prove that it is true—which may not be an easy task.

Journalists are protected by the fair comment and criticism privilege, which applies to communications about a newsworthy person or event. Conditional privileges may be lost through bad faith or abuse. This privilege has been largely superseded, however, by a constitutional privilege applied in the context of statements about public officials or public figures.

Public figures, such as celebrities or senators, have a much higher burden to meet to prevail in a defamation action. They must prove that the defendant acted with "actual malice." Actual malice is a term of art meaning that the defendant intentionally defamed another or acted with reckless disregard of the truth.

Plaintiffs often find it difficult to prove this. That is why so few celebrities sue the *National Enquirer.*

Invasion of privacy: Like defamation, the right of privacy is subject to constitutional restrictions. The news media, for example, is not liable for newsworthy statements that portray another in a false light unless the statements are made with actual malice. Unlike defamation, a cause of action for invasion of privacy does not require an injury to one's reputation.

Many defenses to defamation also apply to invasion of privacy. (Truth, however, is not a defense.) Revealing matters of public record cannot be the basis for an invasion of privacy action. Express and implied consent are valid defenses. If you voluntarily reveal private facts to others you cannot recover for invasion of your privacy.

Privacy actions typically fall into four factual patterns: the intrusion into one's private affairs, which includes wiretapping, unreasonable surveillance and other acts that are highly offensive; the public disclosure of embarrassing private facts, ones of a kind that would be highly offensive to a reasonable person, if the matter is not of legitimate concern to the public; appropriation of another's name or likeness; publicity that places a plaintiff in a false light (unlike defamation, harm to reputation is not required), such as placing the name of a prominent Republican on a list of Democratic contributors.

Failing to Respect the Right of Publicity: The right of publicity is the right of individuals to control the use of their name and likeness in a commercial setting. You cannot put a picture of another person on your brand of pickles without

their permission. The right of publicity is typically exploited by celebrities who earn large fees by endorsing products.

Under either a publicity or privacy theory, subjects can recover for some unauthorized uses of their names and likenesses. A problem arises, however, when one person's publicity/privacy rights come in conflict with another person's rights under the First Amendment. Suppose a newspaper publisher wants to place a picture of Cher on the front page of its paper. Is her permission needed? The answer is no.

Although Cher's name and likeness is portrayed in the newspaper, this "product" is also a form of "protected expression." Products such as books, movies and plays are modes of expression protected by the First Amendment. The First Amendment also allows journalists to write about others without their consent. Otherwise, subjects could prevent any critical reporting of their activities. When one person's right of publicity conflicts with another person's rights under the First Amendment, the First Amendment rights are often, but not always, paramount.

When the likeness of Elvis Presley is used on an ashtray, however, there is no expression deserving protection. The seller of this product is not making a statement or expressing an opinion. He is simply trying to make money by exploiting the name and likeness of Elvis. Since there are no competing First Amendment concerns, the right of publicity in this instance should prevent the unauthorized use of Elvis's likeness. In summary, the law draws a distinction between products that contain protected expression and those that do not.

Courts have struggled with the issue of whether the right of publicity descends to a person's heirs. In other words, when a celebrity dies, does his estate inherit his right of publicity? Can the estate continue to control the use of the celebrity's name or likeness, or can anyone use it without permission?

Some courts have held that the right of publicity is a personal right that does not descend. These courts consider the right similar to the right of privacy and the right to protect one's reputation (defamation). When a person dies, heirs don't inherit these rights. Suppose, for instance, that you were a descendent of Abraham Lincoln. An unscrupulous writer publishes a defamatory biography claiming Abe was a child molester. You couldn't sue for defamation or invasion of privacy. Perhaps this is why many scandalous biographies are not published until the subject dies.

Unfair Competition: The law of unfair competition prevents a person, for instance, from establishing a movie studio and calling it "Paramount Pictures" if he/she is not affiliated with the well-known company. A person would also be barred from displaying the Paramount logo or using any other mark that might mislead or confuse consumers by leading them to believe that films are genuine Paramount movies when they are not.

The names of persons and businesses may become associated in the public mind with a supplier of products or services. The name can thus acquire a secondary meaning, and the supplier can acquire trademark rights even if he does not register the name as a trademark. In *Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders, Inc. v. Pussycat Cinema, Ltd.*, the defendant exhibited a pornographic movie, *Debbie Does Dallas*, which portrayed a "Texas Cowgirl" engaged in sex acts. The character wears a uniform strikingly similar to that worn by the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders. Ads for the movie showed the character in the uniform and included such captions as "Starring ExDallas Cowgirl Cheerleader Bambi Woods."

The Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders brought suit alleging that they had a trademark in the particular combination of colors and the design of their uniforms. The court agreed and issued an injunction against further distribution of the film. Filmmakers should take note that if they portray people or products in a way that is likely to confuse the public as to the origin of a product, they may be liable for unfair competition.

A basic understanding of the rights of individuals is especially important for independent producers who may not have the resources to investigate the finer points of the law. By using care when creating and depicting fictional characters, producers can greatly reduce their potential liability.

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Field Testing a New Generation of XL1 Accessories

BY ROBERT M. GOODMAN

THE STREAM OF ACCESSORIES ARRIVING ON the market for Canon XL1/XL1s camcorders flows on. Canon is marketing a new manual servo zoom lens. VariZoom is producing a tiny remote control unit called the StealthZoom and as improbable as it seems, not one but two companies are manufacturing adapters to mount 35mm motion picture lenses on this miniDV camcorder.

16X Manual Servo Lens

Canon's optional 16X Manual Servo Lens ($1799) has a range from 5.4mm to 86.4mm, a maximum aperture of f1.6, and a filter diameter of 72mm. The lens has a macro capability for a close focus distance of 50mm when the lens is full wide and adjustable back focus. Two neutral density filters are built-in. The 16X Manual Servo Lens has an equivalent angle of view to that of a 39mm to 624mm lens for a 35mm still camera. The physical dimensions are a diameter of 3 3/16", a length of 6 7/32", and a weight of just over two pounds. This makes this lens about five ounces heavier and an inch longer than the standard 16X lens. Mounted on the XL1, the difference in terms of balance and feel is imperceptible.

The slim servo motor, controlled with the camera's handle mounted rocker switch, has a smooth quiet action. Focus is manual only and relies on mechanical gearing. There is no image stabilization. The lens has somewhat more contrast than the standard lens but overall image quality is nearly identical. In use, the lens focused easily and maintained crisp focus throughout the zoom range. With the servo motor switched off, snap zooms were a breeze to do.

The StealthZoom Controller for all Sony and Canon Mini-DV and Hi8 Camcorders.

The built-in neutral density filters are labeled 2.7 and 5 rather than in a common format such as ND3 or ND6. After some research, it turns out these are the number of f-stops by which the light is reduced and translates into a ND8 and ND15. It's odd labeling to be sure.

Canon sells the XL1s in a variety of kit combinations so it's possible to buy a package with a manual servo zoom lens instead of the standard 16X zoom. The tradeoff is that the manual lens doesn't have image stabilization or auto focus but does offer precise manual focus and a back focus adjustment. If you need to do snap zooms, rack focuses or simply can't make the adjustment to concentric focusing, then this lens is the better choice. If you must keep fast moving subjects in focus, do a lot of moving shots, and have learned the rack focus workaround for concentric focus lenses, then the 16X IS II standard lens ($1699) is the better choice.

StealthZoom Remote

The StealthZoom ($229) from VariZoom (www.varizoom.com) is a tiny new remote control for any LANC capable camcorder which we tested on a Canon XL1. The remote has a camcorder wake-up button labeled "on" and a red LED light. A tiny "r" button triggers record and stop. A slim curved rocker switch controls focus whenever the camcorder is in its manual focus setting. A relatively large—three eights of an inch—brass handle in the middle of this 1.75" x 2" anodized black metal unit provides a pressure sensitive zoom control. Two screws and a plate allow users to mount this little box on a pan handle. The LANC cable is just over three feet long which should be sufficient in most situations.

The reason to purchase a remote is to be able control the zoom and focus without having to have your hands near the lens. In this regard, the StealthZoom performed admirably. It's small and light and handy. After a few minutes of practice, the zoom speed was easy to control. What you don't get with this "prosumer" version is a way of setting a repeatable zoom speed, a feature that is available on VariZoom's professional lens controllers.

Lens Adaptors

Optex's PL lens adapter ($495) (www.optex.com) for mounting 35mm motion picture prime lenses on an XL1 has no optics; it's a simple mechanical device.

Detail of the P&S Technik mini Digital 35 adaptor.

As a consequence, a multiplier of 7.2 applies to depth of field and field of view of the lenses. Put simply, a 25mm wide angle lens on a motion picture camera becomes a 180mm lens with seven times the depth of field. We tested the Optex adapter with a wide range of prime and zoom lenses from Camera Service Center's extensive rental stock in New York City. Evaluating the footage on a studio monitor, we noticed subtle differences in color reproduction and a slight increase in resolution. Unless you have ready access to PL mount lenses, there isn't much to be gained. However, it does look really cool to see a PL lens on an XL1. We attracted enormous attention at Camera Service Center with this setup especially from the Arri technicians.

P&S Technik's miniDigital 35 unit (www.pstechnik.de) is an entirely different story. This device maintains the original field of view and depth of field of the 35mm lenses mounted on it. Light passing through the lens is collimated on a spinning ground glass. The ground glass image passes through a series of lenses to trans-

Photos: courtesy of Robert Goodman and manufacturers

mit the image in the proper field size for the CCDs. There are two aperture adjustments—one on the motion picture lens and another on the adapter's lens assembly. The adapter's aperture is between the ground glass and the CCDs. There are two speed settings for the spinning mechanism so users can prevent the grain of the ground glass from being recorded at any T-stop.

The miniDigital 35mm unit is $7325. To that, add the cost of an adapter to mount the 35mm motion picture or still lenses of your choice. Mounts for 35mm motion picture lenses with Arri PL ($175) or Panavision ($180) style bayonet systems are available. For still lenses, there are Nikon ($330), Leica ($220), or Zeiss Contax ($210) adapters.

Performance

ZGC, (www.zgc.com) which distributes Optex and P&S Technik, supplied *The Independent* with a Cooke S4 25mm T2.0 lens for our test of the miniDigital 35 adapter. PL mount lenses are heavier than Canon's standard lenses so P&S Technik's lightweight support accessory ($225) is a necessity for additional reinforcement. The adapter weighs three pounds and the Cooke 25mm lens adds another three and a half pounds. A complete rig including the XL1, matte box, and follow focus unit would weigh over eleven pounds.

It took us about ten minutes to put the adapter on the XL1 the first time. The adapter's lens assembly, which fits into the Canon XL1, must be unscrewed before connecting it to the camera. The adapter is easier to install if the tripod plate and rails are removed though it's not absolutely necessary. A thumb screw attaches the movable bottom plate to the XL1's tripod mounting plate. Once the adapter has been attached, the lens assembly can screwed back on. It's more difficult to describe than to do. This adapter is beautifully machined to exacting standards. With practice, we removed it and put it back on in under six minutes. However, it's not something we'd want to do outdoors if conditions were the least bit adverse.

The adapter's PL mount was smooth and locked securely. The standard 19mm mounting rails will hold a follow focus mechanism and a matte box. A P&S adapter was available only on short notice so we didn't have a matte box and follow focus rig for our tests.

Nor did we have the opportunity to test the other mounts. How well still camera lenses will work is open to question. When we tested a still lens adapter for use with Sony's Cinealta HD camera (see *The Independent*, April 2001), we found it necessary to try dozens of lenses to find one sharp enough. The XL1 doesn't have the same tolerances as an HD camera but still lenses are designed for curved film surfaces and, in constrast, camcorder CCDs are perfectly flat.

P&S Technik mini Digital 35 adaptor is used to mount a zoom lens on a Canon XL1.

However, the proof is in the performance and the P&S Technik adapter sailed through with flying colors. The footage we shot had color, contrast, and depth of field characteristics normally associated with film. The resolution was markedly better. Motion picture lens have several advantages: the focus and aperture marks are well spaced and clearly marked; and focusing is precise.

There were issues. When the Cooke lens was stopped down beyond T4.5, the image was brighter in the center than at the edges on the ground glass. To control exposure during our tests, we relied on the adapter's aperture and the XL1's shutter. Ordinarily, we would use neutral density filters but we didn't have a matte box. ZGC stated that aperture vignetting hasn't been a problem with other lenses.

To confirm this, *The Independent* talked to Jonathan Appel, an indie filmmaker, who shoots improvisational comedy segments for television. He sold his Sony DSR-500 and replaced it with a PAL Canon XL1. Appel outfitted the XL1 with Canon's B&W viewfinder, the P&S Technik adapter, and a Cooke S2000 28-70mm zoom. He plans to shoot everything in frame mode. We spoke to Appel immediately after he completed his first shoot. "I'm really excited. The footage has the indefinable quality I was seeking. It doesn't look anything like video. It's something else entirely."

From our tests, I would concur. The footage has a different feel even when shot in the normal interlaced mode. Hollywood rental houses, which have been among the earliest purchasers, report this adapter is one of the hottest items in their inventories. P&S Technik is supposedly working on a version for Sony miniDV camcorders, though image quality is likely to suffer because those camcorder have fixed lenses.

All of this demonstrates that it's time for camera and lens manufacturers to re-evaluate their approach to lens design. MiniDV or HD will never have grain. However, there's no reason why something can't be done about the depth of field characteristics that are one of the hallmarks of motion picture photography.

Robert Goodman (wd24p@hotmail.com) is an award-winning writer/director based in Philadelphia, and author of the camera and lens chapters of the ASC's Video Manual.

Opting for the Optimum OS

How do Macintosh and PC platforms compare?

BY GREG GILPATRICK

FILMMAKERS INTERESTED IN DIGITAL FILMmaking regularly ask experts at festivals and conferences what type of computer they should use for postproduction. Although there are several options, the two practical choices for people creating digital video with a desktop computer are Windows-based PCs and Macintosh computers. A popular mythology has developed around these two types of computers concerning what each is good for and who should use what type of system. However, popular assumptions about Macs and PCs don't reflect the current state of technology and only work against artists who need to pick out the computer system that will be most effective for their work.

Above all others, one myth pervades nearly every conversation concerning the merits of Macs and PCs for creative professionals. The myth is that a Mac is inherently better than a Windows PC for anything concerning the creation or manipulation of graphics. The idea that Macs are better computers for creative people is not unfounded. Just a few years ago, Macs were arguably the only real choice for people who wanted to create illustrations, retouch photos, edit video, or design and publish magazines with a desktop computer. Macs took an early lead among desktop computer applications for creative pursuits with a more intuitive user interface than other operating systems and support of advanced printing, sound, graphics, and video capabilities through its integration of technologies like PostScript and QuickTime. While there may have been better technology for creative tasks 15 years ago, such as the now-defunct Amiga, Apple's market penetration and advertising skills made the Mac the common desktop computer with the capabilities for technically intensive creative work.

In the past few years Microsoft's Windows operating system has caught up and even surpassed the Mac in the technical areas that made Mac the choice for digital media artists in the first place. In terms of user interface design, Windows has improved to the point where, for some people, it may even be more intuitive to use than a Mac. If someone comes from a background using PCs, a Mac may not be easy for them to use at all. Some people still swear up and down that the Mac interface is better than a PC's, but the truth is that they are both about the same in terms of how intuitive they are to use.

Contributing to the assumption that Macs are better for creative tasks is that many of the most important applications for digital media production were originally only available for Macs. Photoshop, Quark Xpress, After Effects, Avid Media Composer, and Pro Tools were just a few of the applications that started life as Mac-only programs. People interested in creating media with computers probably came into contact with a Mac somewhere along the way and realized that, at the time, the Mac was the best choice for their creative work. Many of those people have not changed their opinion and still regard the Mac as the only computer that could be considered an artist's tool.

But today a major Mac-only application is as rare as a Hollywood film shot on Super 8 film. Not only have nearly all the early Mac-only creative applications been released for Windows but some major creative applications work only on Windows—especially in the area of 3D animation. A number of creative applications are available only for PCs—even video editing programs like Avid Symphony, Avid Xpress DV, and Discreet Edit.

While many of the reasons that Macs are the choice for creative work are now ancient history, practical reasons still exist why a digital filmmaker would choose a Mac over a Windows PC for their work. Steve Jobs, Apple Computer's CEO, once said that Apple was the only computer company that still made the "whole widget," meaning that Apple is the only company that makes both the operating system software and the computer hardware. With a PC, the operating system software is designed by Microsoft but the hardware is built by one of a myriad of computer manufacturers. The PC method typically provides a less costly product but it also introduces complexities in the setup and operation of the computer that Macs typically don't have. Apple's type of computer manufacturing is advantageous for creative professionals since it brings closer integration between the operating system and the computer hardware so that when engineers at Apple have a new idea for their computers, it is implemented at both the hardware and software level by the same company instead of by different companies with different objectives.

The drawback to Apple's method is that they are typically slower at adopting the latest technology. PCs take advantage of the latest advances in memory, graphics cards, and other components of the computer. So, while a Mac is more thoroughly tested and integrated for a smoother user experience, a PC usually has slightly newer technology at marginally lower prices.

Opening a Mac and putting it together for the first time is hardly as time consuming and confusing as setting up a Windows based PC. Day-to-day operation of a Windows system is usually just as trouble free and intuitive as a Mac but a Mac still has the PC beat during any activity that falls outside the everyday. When setting up the computer for the first time, installing a new operating sys-

For those going the Mac/Final Cut Pro route, some exciting news was announced shortly before press time. Version 3 of Final Cut Pro is now available with a number of enhancements that solidify its position as the dominant desktop video editing software fort the Mac. Apple has added or modified many things in Final Cut Pro 3, but the major news is about two features in particular: that Final Cut Pro 3 can operate in Apple's new Mac OS X and that it can create real-time previews of effects on certain G4 based computers. Final Cut Pro 3 is $999 or $299 if you are upgrading from a previous version.

tem, adding a new peripheral, or installing a new application a Mac consistently provides an experience that is quicker and easier than its Windows-based counterpart. Since digital video editing requires the use of several additional pieces of hardware and software, a Mac has an advantage since it will probably operate more smoothly than its Windows counterpart.

Illustration by Greg Gilpatrick

Another prominent reason why Macs are still prevalent in the area of video postproduction is Final Cut Pro. Final Cut Pro is made by Apple specifically for Macs, cutting off PC users from the revolutionary editing software. There are several comparable video editing applications available for PC users like Avid Xpress DV, Premiere, and Cinestream, but none of them has the community and buzz that Final Cut Pro has generated in the past few years. Apple has done well with Final Cut Pro, consistently adding features that rival software that costs several times as much (see sidebar on Final Cut Pro 3).

Those who are buying a computer to edit video and also perform more mundane business tasks should consider that the corollary to the myth that Macs are better for creative work is the common belief that Windows PCs are better for business purposes. While many people are aware that creative applications like Photoshop and Quark Xpress were originally available only for the Mac, most would be surprised to hear that major business oriented programs such as Microsoft Excel were actually created for the Mac before Windows was even for sale. Once again, the basis for the myth comes from the predominance of Microsoft's DOS and Windows-based computers in the business community. Most people who work in an office use a computer running Windows and they grow accustomed to it.

Especially for filmmakers, the idea that Macs are a disadvantage for business doesn't make much sense. Filmmakers have several choices among screenwriting, script breakdown, scheduling, and budgeting software to use on either Macs or Windows. In addition, popular business software like Microsoft Office, Filemaker Pro, Quicken, and Appleworks for the Mac should make it able to perform any business-oriented tasks you find necessary.

Seeing how either platform should serve you well should make it a little easier to pick the right type of computer. Above all else, pick the system that you will feel the most comfortable with. If all your experience with computers has been with PCs it would not make much sense for you to buy a Mac solely for video editing. If you are more comfortable using a Mac but are considering a PC because it costs a little less, remember that the costs of learning a new operating system will almost certainly outweigh any savings from buying the cheaper computer. Also consider what any friends or colleagues are using, because being able to approach them for advice instead of an expensive consultant or training course could save you more than the cost of the computer itself.

Greg Gilpatrick is an independent producer and director and technology consultant based in NYC. His email address is greg@randomroom.com.

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ON View

BY JASON GUERRASIO

THEATRICAL

Thirteen Conversations About One Thing, dir. Jill Sprecher
(Sony Pictures Classics, March 1)
With its crisscross narration and emphasis on fate *Thirteen Conversations* uses the powerful performances of its cast to figure out the question: what is happiness? The film shifts the viewer from the present to the past and back again, showing how the characters' lives have been changed after meeting one another. Alan Arkin gives a solid performance as a grumpy sales manager with family problems.

Trouble Every Day, dir. Claire Denis
(Lot 47, March 1)
After getting the dreaded NC-17 rating on their last film *L.I.E*, Lot 47 has pushed the envelope again with this highly graphic suspense/horror story. Flying to Paris, June (Tricia Vessey) and Shane (Vincent Gallo) look like any other couple on their honeymoon. What June doesn't know is that her fiancée has a hunger for unusual lovemaking that sends him into madness. Toward the end of the film he finally finds what he's been in search of and is changed, but for better or worse? Denis gives the viewer a horror story that at times may be confusing with its low amount of dialogue but impossible to forget.

Jennifer Westfeldt as Jessica Stein.

Kissing Jessica Stein, dir. Charles Herman-Wurmfeld
(Fox Searchlight, March 15)
Marking the feature directorial debut for Herman-Wurmfeld is this romantic comedy about a woman trying to find love in the big city of New York. The idea was originally created by Heather Juergensen and Jennifer Westfeldt (who along with having the lead roles also wrote and coproduced the film) while they attended a summer theater lab. The film follows the sensitive but neurotic journalist Jessica Stein (Westfeldt) through the dating scene and answering a "women seeking women" personal ad on a whim. There she finds that she and her date (played by Juergensen) actually click, and that's when the fun starts.

TELEVISION

Misunderstood Minds, dir. Michael Kirk
(PBS, March 27)
This heartfelt documentary follows five children who go through life as millions of other children do, struggling with difficulties in learning. Viewers can learn more about this issue and interact with others by logging on to www.pbs.org/misunderstoodminds. Parents, teachers, and students can address questions and research specific learning problems.

Bringing Down a Dictator, dir. Steve York (PBS, March 31)
For 10 years Slobodan Milosevic ruled the former Yugoslavia with an iron fist. Three devastating wars and the NATO bombing campaign of 1999 proved futile in dislodging him from power. Clearly, another method was needed. *Bringing Down a Dictator* records Milosevic's striking defeat in October 2000, not by guns, but rather by a strategy of nonviolent civil disobedience initiated by the student movement, Otpor! ("resistance" in Serbian). Dressed in their regulation black T-shirts featuring a clenched fist, Otpor! members fanned out into the countryside—where public discontent was widespread—seeking recruits for their cause: the removal of Milosevic and free elections.

Within a year, the students had succeeded in shaping a united political opposition, leading to a mass strike and the seizure on October 5 of the parliament. The documentary contains several interviews, including one with Vojislav Kostunica, the new president of Serbia.

Photo this page: courtesy of filmmaker; facing page photo: courtesy of San Francisco Black Film Festival

BY BO MEHRAD

LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL DIRECTLY BEFORE SENDING CASSETTES, AS DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS. DEADLINE: 1ST OF THE MONTH TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (APRIL 1 FOR JUNE ISSUE). INCLUDE FESTIVAL DATES, CATEGORIES, PRIZES, ENTRY FEES, DEADLINES, FORMATS & CONTACT INFO. SEND TO: FESTIVALS@AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

ADAM BARAN HONOLULU GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, May 30 - June 2. Deadline: March 31. The Fest was started in the memory of videomaker Adam Baran, who died of AIDS. The annual event takes place over four days in Honolulu, Hawaii. Founded: 1989. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Phred Love Award, Adam Baran Award, Audience Choice Award; Jury Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS. VHS. Entry Fee: $15 shorts; $25 Features. Contact: Festival, 1877 Kalakaua Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815; (808) 941-0424 x18; fax: (808) 943-1724

ASIAN AMERICAN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 19-28, NY. Deadline: March 1 (early); April 1 (late). Founded by the Asian CineVision in 1978, the fest is the oldest fest in the U.S. showcasing works by film & video makers of Asian decent. Founded: 1978. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10-$25 (early); $20-$35 (late). Entry fee depends on membership & length of work- see website. Contact: Risa Mormito, Festival Director, Asian CineVision, 133 W. 19th Street, 3rd Flr., New York, NY 10011; 212-989-1422; fax: 727-3584; info@asiancinevision.org; www.asiancinevision.org

AKA SHRIEKFEST FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12, CA. Deadline: March 22 (early); Aug. 9 (reg); Sept. 6 (late). Shriekfest, the annual Los Angeles Horror Film Festival is held at Raleigh Studios in Hollywood. The fest focuses on the horror film genre & the work of young filmmakers (18 & under). The fest "screens the best independent horror films of the year." Cats: feature, doc (about the horror genre), short, script. Awards: Best Young Filmmaker; Best Film; Fan Favorite; Scariest Film; Best Screenplay; Best Make-up; Best FX. Entry Fee: Early: $25(shorts), $35 (features); Reg: $35 (shorts), $45 (features); Late: $45 (shorts), $55 (features). Contact: Shriekfest Film Festival, PO Box 920444, Sylmar, CA 91392; email@shriekfest.com; www.shriekfest.com

CINESOL LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, June 14- July 14, TX. Deadline: March 15. Fest showcases the best of Latino Film & Video in a traveling four week fest that literally makes its way through South Texas. Held in the Magic Rio Grande Valley of Texas, CineSol begins w/ a Premiere Weekend Splash on beautiful South Padre Island on the Gulf of Mexico, where filmmakers converge & interact w/ the audience. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, Beta. Entry Fee: $20; $10 (Student). Contact: CineSol C/O Galan Inc., 5524 Bee Caves Rd. Ste B-5, Austin, TX 78746; (512) 327-1333 ext.10; fax: (512) 327-1547; info@cinesol.com; www.cinesol.com

CRESTED BUTTE REEL FEST, August 14-18, CO. Deadline: Regular: March 22; Student: May 10. Competitive Festival is a competitive short film fest focusing on films under 40 min. & doc films under 60 min.. The Festival is particularly interested in new works which are interpreted creatively, that have a clarity of vision & are of high production quality Founded: 1998. Cats: short, student, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: Gold winners in the five regular cats receive $350; Silver winners, $250; student awards, $200 (Gold) & $100 (Silver). Formats: 35mm, Beta, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. Entry Fee: $30 (student w/ proof of status); $35 (all other cats). Contact: Jessica Mervyns-Jones, Exec. Dir., Box 1733, Crested Butte, CO 81224; (970) 349-2600; fax: 349-1384; cbreelfest@webcom.com; www.crestedbuttereelfest.com

DEADCENTER FILM FESTIVAL, June 7-8, OK. Deadline: April 1. Fest is Oklahoma's premier Festival. Festival is an opportunity for filmakers in the Oklahoma, South Central & all parts of the United States to show their films to the audience they deserve. Founded: 2000. Cats: short, feature, any style or genre, doc. Formats: 16mm, Beta, 35mm. preview on VHS (NTSC); DVD. Entry Fee: shorts $20; Features $30 (under 90 min.); Features $40 (over 90 min.); Youth Films $5 (under 30 min.). Contact: Jayson Floyd, PO Box 850368, Yukon, OK 73085; (405)324-5305; www.deadcenterfilm.up.to; djfloyd@cpn-net.com

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, June 6-17, FL. Deadline: Feb. 22 (early); March 22 (late). 10-day event features foreign & U.S. indie films (narrative, doc, animation), seminars, midnight movies, Florida student competition, celebrations & special guests. Entries for American competition must have at least 51% U.S. funding. Features must be 41 min. or more. Festival also sponsors several curated sidebars, special events, panels & receptions. Founded: 1992. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation. Awards: incl. Special Jury Awards, Audience Awards, Forever Florida Award, Perrier Bubbling Under Award & Grand Jury Awards (incl. $100,000 goods & services package for Best Narrative Feature). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, HD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (short); $35 (features). Contact: Matthew Curtis, Program Dir., 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32571; (407) 629-1088; fax: 629-6870; filmfest@enzian.org; www.enzian.org

INT'L ELECTRONIC CINEMA FESTIVAL, May 15-19, OR. Deadline: March 16. The oldest & most presitigious forum for recognizing outstanding achievements in high definition production. The Int'l Electronic Cinema Festival provides a forum to promote & explore the creative synergy between cinema & television, afforded by the use of digital high definition television & computer imagery, & it extends its scope to new forms of expression such as interactive digital programs. It aims also to provide a venue & opportunity to negotiate int'l co-productions that use those advanced program production technologies. Programs must have been produced in Hi-Def & been completed as of 1998. Founded: 1987. Cats: TV, music video, feature, doc, short, experimental, commercial ads, industrials, sports. Formats: hi def. Preview on VHS. Contact: c/o DownStream, 1650 Naito Parkway, Portland, OR 97209; (503) 697-4901; fax: (503) 697-7231; info@iecf.org; www.iecf.org

L.A. FREEWAVES, November, CA. Deadline: March 15. Annual celebration of independent video & new media seeks Throughout the city of Los Angeles & beyond at sites incl. www,museums, art centers, universities, TV, galleries, theaters, electronic billboards, cafes, clubs, parks, online & wherever else we can think of Media art works incl. video & film (experimental, narrative, doc, art, animation, etc.), CD-ROMs, DVDs, audio art, web sites, multimedia performances & installations, public art media projects (especially works for electronic billboards), youth media works, proposals for video bus tours, community media activities. Founded: 1993. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Animation. Formats: Digital, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, Web, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10. Contact: Festival, 2151 Lake Shore Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90039; (323) 664-1510; fax: 664-1577; anne@freewaves.com; www.freewaves.org

LAKE ARROWHEAD FILM FESTIVAL, May 2-5, CA. Deadline: March 17. Lake Arrowhead is also known as Hollywood's original playground. Also, the area incls. a beautiful four screen theater, the Blue Jay Cinema, & many other possible screening sites, also a first class resort. Being only 90 min. from LA is a great asset for

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workshops as well as increase the attendance of Film Makers, Studio Executives & Distributors. Cats: Feature, Animation, Doc, Short. Awards: Awards will be given in each category. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, 1/2", 8mm. Preview on VHS. Contact: Leonard Marcel, 16630 Center Way, Guerneville, CA 95446; (707) 869-8264; filmfest@pe.net; www.arrowheadfilmfest.com

LOS ANGELES FILM FESTIVAL, June 21-29, CA. Deadline: March 22. The IFP/West Los Angeles Film Festival showcases the best of American & int'l independent cinema. Playing to huge crowds, the fest screens over 50 features & 40 shorts. LAFF has evolved into a world class event, uniting emerging filmmakers w/ critics, scholars, film masters, & the movie-loving public. Founded: 1995. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation, Music Video, Student. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $75 (features, 50 min. & over); $35 (shorts, under 50 min.). Contact: Richard Raddon, Festival Director, c/o IFP West, 8750 Wilshire Blvd. 2nd Floor, Los Angeles, CA, USA 90211; (323) 951-7090 ; fax: (310) 432-1203; lafilmfest@ifpwest.org; www.lafilmfest.com

MAINE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 12-21, ME. Deadline: March 15 (early); April 30 (final). A leading New England regional film fest w/ an exceptional emphasis on int'l productions. Festival seeks features & shorts "shot in Maine or w/ a significant Maine focus." The Festival also awards annual Lifetime Achievement Awards to high profile industry mebmers, incl. Sissy Spacek, & Terrence Malick. Founded: 1998. Cats: Feature, Short, doc. Awards: Audience Award (Best Feature). Formats: 35mm, 3/4", Beta SP, 16mm, S-VHS, 1/2", Beta, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30 (early); $40 (final). Entry form avail. on web site. Contact: Festival, 10 Railroad Sq., Waterville, ME 04901; (207) 861-8138; fax: 872-5502; info@miff.org; www.miff.org

NANTUCKET FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-23, MA. Deadline: April 13 (film); March 16 (screenplay competition). Fest focuses on screenwriters & their craft, presents feature films, short films, docs, staged readings, Q&A w/ filmmakers, panel discussions & the Morning Coffee With... series. Writers are encouraged to present their films & works-in-progress & get feedback from other screenwriters & filmmakers. Entry must not have had commercial distribution or U.S. broadcast. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Tony Cox Award for Screenwriting Competition, Best Writer/Director Award, Audience Awards for Best Feature & Short Film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (features); $25 (shorts, 35 min. or less); $15 (5 min or less). Contact: Jill Goode, Artistic Director, 1633 Broadway, Ste. 14-334, New York, NY 10019; (212) 708-1278; ackfest@aol.com; www.nantucketfilmfest.org

NEW JERSEY INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June & July, NJ. Deadline: April 5. Annual fest showcases the best in independent film & video, featuring premiere screenings of award-winning works, seminars, panels discussions & guest appearances. Max. film age is 24 months, no repeat entries. Founded: 1996. Cats: animation, short, experimental, feature, doc, any style or genre, children, family, youth media, student, music video. Awards: $3000 in cash & prizes. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 3/4", Beta SP, Hi8, 1/2", S-VHS, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 -$65. Contact: Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC, 72 Lipman Drive, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (732) 932-8482; fax: 932-1935; njmac@aol.com; www.njfilmfest.com

NEW YORK INT'L LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, June 26-30, NY. Deadline: March 1 (early); March 15 (Final). Fest is the first in NYC to showcase the works of nat'l Latino filmmakers alongside int'l Latin American films, while offering expansive images of the Latino experience. The fest will present works w/ an urban edge in the cats of Feature Film (in Spanish & English) & Vanguard Cinema. Contact Festival deadline extension. Founded: 2000. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Festival, PO Box 1041 , New York, NY 10023; 646-638-1493; fax: 727-0549; info@NYLatinoFilm.com; www.NYLatinoFilm.com

NOMAD VIDEOFILM FESTIVAL, June tour, WA, OR, CA. Deadline: March 15. Berkeley-based fest has been a Pacific Coast touring venue for alternative media since 1992, w/ stops in Port Townsend WA, Seattle, Portland, San Fran., Santa Monica & others. Fest seeks short video/films (15 min. max, any category) expressing audacity & strong visions. No theme this year; short docs & animation encouraged. Founded: 1991. Cats: short, doc, animation. Awards: No cash prizes, selected entries receive written audience responses. Works can originate in any video, film &/or media format. Formats: DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (no fee for int'l entries). Contact: Antero Alli c/o NVF, Box 7518, Berkeley, CA 94707; (510) 464-4640; anteros@speakeasy.net; www.verticalpool.com/nomad.html

OUTFEST: THE LOS ANGELES GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, July 11-22, CA. Deadline: Jan. 31 (early); March 29(late). The mission of OUTFEST is to build bridges among audiences, filmmakers & the entertainment industry through the exhibition of high-quality gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender themed films & videos, highlighted by an annual fest, that enlighten, educate & entertain the diverse communities of Southern California. Outfest also offers a weekly screening series yr. round, as well as a screenwriting competition. Founded: 1982. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Gay/Lesbian, Animation, Experimental. Awards: Fourteen awards ranging from $500 to $2,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Features (over 60 min.): $20 by Jan. 31; $25 by Mar.29. Shorts: $10 by Jan.31; $15 by Mar.29. Contact: Festival, 1125 McCadden Place, Ste. 235, Los Angeles, CA 90038; (323) 960-9200; fax: (323) 960 2397; outfest@outfest.org; www.outfest.org

PHILADELPHIA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 30-July 2, PA. Deadline: April 1. The 25th annual film fest & marketplace takes place in center city Philadelphia. The theme in 2002 is "The Independents' Quarter Century." Founded: 1976. Cats: TV series, super 8mm, music video. Awards: Gold, Silver, Honorable Mention, Best Cinematography (Trophies, Cash, Certificates). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, VHS, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (super 8, student); $50 (all films 84 min. & under); $100 (all films 85 min. & over). Contact: Int'l Assoc. of Motion Picture & TV Producers, 2623 Sorrento Dr., Suite A, Philadelphia, PA 19131; (215) 879-8209; fax: (215) 879-3026; 1smallwood@philafilm.org; www.philafilm.org

SAN FRANCISCO BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, June 12-16, CA. Deadline: March 22 (Films/shorts); March 29, (Screenplays). The San Francisco Black Film Festival offers an array of cutting edge films & videos from the most recent cinematic works from emerging & established filmmakers that highlight the beauty & complexity of the African & African American experience. Films must have been completed since January of previous yr. & one of the film's principals (director, writer producer) must be Black or of African heritage. Other activities incl. educational seminars, panels, youth events & an awards ceremony. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, short, narrative, doc, children, family, youth media, animation, script, music video , any style or genre. Awards: Melvin Van Peebles Maverick Award to overall winner; Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc, Jury Award for Best Screenplay. Formats: 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (films); $35 (screenplays). Contact: Ave Montague, director, Box 15490, San Francisco, CA 94115; (877) 467-1735; (415) 346-0199; fax: 775-1332; sfbff@hotmail.com; www.sfbff.org

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA TELEVISION & FILM FESTIVAL, April 18-20, AL. Deadline: Jan. 15 (regular); March 18 (ages 9-12). Annual Fest established by George Lindsey who has had a long, illustrious career on the Broadway stage & in television & film in New York & Hollywood. Fest has a special category dedicated to childeren ages 9-12 (the Lion Club category), plus the regular competition for college & high school students, faculty members & professionals. Only works completed in the previous two years are eligable. Cats: feature, short, Short Doc, music video, student. Awards: Cash prizes awarded in each category. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50; $25 (Student); $10 (Lion Club). Contact: Lisa Darnell / UNA TV & Film Festival, UNA Box 5151, Florence, AL 35632; (256) 765-4592; filmfest@unanov.una.edu; www2.una.edu/univ.relations/filmfest/festindex.htm

Foreign

ALGARVE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 17-27, Portugal. Deadline: March 15. Competitive, shorts-only fest seeks works under 30 min. Founded: 1972. Cats: doc, animation, fiction, short. Awards: prizes totaling $20,000. Formats: 35mm only, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Carlos Manuel, General Dir., Box 8091, Lisbon Codex, Portugal; 011 351 21 851 36 15; fax: 351 21 852 11 50; algarvefilmfest@mail.telepac.pt; www.algarvefilmfest.com

CANNES INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 15-26, France. Deadline: April 1. Largest int'l film fest, attended by over 30,000 professionnals. Films must have been made w/in prior 12 mo., released only in country of origin & not entered in other fests. Official component consists of: 1) In Competition, for features & shorts competing for major awards; 2) special Out of Competition accepts features ineligible for competition (e.g. by previous winners of Palme d'Or); 3) Un Certain Regard, noncompetitive section for films of int'l quality that do not qualify for Competition, films by new directors, etc; 4) Cinefondation, new competition (since '98) to present & promote short & medium-length fiction or animation films, final yr. student films or first productions that show artistic qualities that deserve to be encouraged. Film market administered separately, screens film in main venue & local theater. Parallel sections incl. Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Director's Fortnight, call the Independent Feature Project for guidelines & application. (212) 465-8200, fax: 465-8525; nahn@ifp.org.), main sidebar for new talent, (deadline mid April); La Semaine de la Critique (Int'l Critic's Week), 1st or 2nd features & docs chosen by French Film Critics Union (selections must be completed w/in 12 mos prior to fest). Awards: Top prizes incl. Official Competition's Palme d'Or (feature & short), Camera d'Or (best first film in any section) & Cinefondation (best final yr. student film. Formats: & preview:, 35mm, 16mm, VHS (NTSC, PAL, Secam), Beta (PAL). Entry Fee: no entry fee, screening fees may be incured. Contact: Cannes Int'l Film Festival, 99, boulevard Malesherbes, 75008 Paris, France; 011 33 1 45 61 66 07; fax: 33 1 45 61 45 88; RDF@fest-cannes.fr; www.fest-cannes.fr; Cannes Film Market, contact: Jerome Paillard, 99 Blvd. Malesherbes, 75008 Paris, France; 011 33 1 45 61 66 09, fax: 33 1 45 61 97 59. Add'l info: Quinzaine des Realisateurs, Societe des Realisateurs de Films, 14 rue Alexandre Parodi, 75010 Paris, France; 011 33 1 44 89 99 99, fax: 33 1 44 89 99 60. Semaine Int'le de la Critique, attn: Eva Roelens, 73, Rue de Lourmel, 75015 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 45 75 68 27; fax: 33 1 40 59 03 99.

COMEDIA, July 11-21, Canada. Deadline: March 31. Comedy feature programming as part of Just for Laughs, the Montreal Int'l Comedy Festival. With over 1,000 entertainment industry professionals in attendance, Just for Laughs has proven to be the place to be seen in the world of comedy. See also Eat My Shorts for comedy shorts. Founded: 1999. Cats: comedy feature films: incl. animation, mockumentary, spoof, experimental, live action, & more. Awards: Best Film, Special Jury Prize, Audience Award. Formats: 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Brent Schiess, Jean Guerin, Just for Laughs, 2101 St-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2T5; shorts@hahaha.com; www.hahaha.com

EAT MY SHORTS, July 11-21, Canada. Deadline: March 31. Comedy short programming as part of Just for Laughs, the Montreal Int'l Comedy Festival. With over 1,000 entertainment industry professionals in attendance, Just for Laughs has proven to be the place to be seen in the world of comedy. See also Comedia. Founded: 1997. Cats: comedy short films (funny, or funny + twisted). Awards: Best Film Jury Prize. Formats: Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Brent Schiess, Jean Guerin, Just for Laughs, 2101 St-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2T5; shorts@hahaha.com; www.hahaha.com

FUKUOKA ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, early July, Japan. Deadline: March 31. Most popular Asian film fest in Japan. Welcomes participation by any Asian directors, directors of Asian extraction, & directors of any nat'lity if they are working w/ Asian themes. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental, student, music video, any style or genre. Awards: non-cash prizes. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", 3/4", S-VHS, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Shu Maeda, Hirako bldg., 4th fl., 2-4-31, Chuo-ku, Fukukoa, Japan 810-0041; 011 81 92 733-0949; fax: 81 92 733-0948; faff@gol.com; www2.gol.com/users/faff/english.html

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HUESCA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 6-15, Spain. Deadline: April 1. Founded in 1973, competitive showcase for Spanish & foreign short films has aim of "the dissemination of image as a contribution to the better knowledge & fraternity among the nations of the world." No thematic restrictions except no films dealing w/ tourism or publicity. Entries must be unawarded in other fests in Spain, produced in in the last 2 years & be under 30 min. Of approx. 1000 entries received each year, about 200 shown. Founded: 1971. Cats: short. Awards: "Ciudad de Huesca" Golden Danzante (6,000 euro); Silver Danzante (3,000 euro); Iberoamerican Contest: Golden Danzante (6,000 euro) Award "Cacho Pallero" (3,000 euro) Award "Jinete Ibérico" of the Instituto de Estudios Altoaragoneses (3,000 euro) Award "Francisco Garcia De Paso" to short film that best emphasizes human values; Award "Casa de America" to best Latin American DP. "Sociedad General de Autores y Editores" for best script (3,000 euro). Award of the Youth (3,000 euro). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS, Beta or DVD (NTSC). Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Jose Maria Escriche, Director, Apartado 174, 22080 Huesca, Spain; 011 34 9 74 21 25 82; fax: 011 34 9 74 21 00 65; huescafest@tsai.es; www.huesca-filmfest.com

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL INNSBRUK, May 29-June 2, Austria. Deadline: March 31. IFFI presents over films from & about Africa, South America, & Asia. Submitted films must be Austrian premiere, w/ no screenings anywhere prior to May 29 of current year. Founded: 1992. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation. Awards: Tyrol Award (5,000 E); Cine Tirol Distributor's Prize (3,000 E); Audience Award (1,000 E); French Cultural Institute's Francophone Award (1,000 E). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS PAL. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Raimund Obkircher, Otto Preminger Institute, Museumstrasse 31, Box 704, Innsbruck, Austria A-6020; 011 43 512 57 85 00-14; fax: 011 43 512 57 85 00-13; ffi.cinematograph@tirolkultur.at; www.a2on.com/iffi

MELBOURNE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 18-Aug. 5, Australia. Deadline: April 6 . Established in 1952, the Melbourne Int'l Film Festival is the oldest established Film Festival in the Southern Hemishphere & one of Australia's oldest running arts events. Screened in some of Melbourne's most celebrated cinemas & theaters, the Festival comprises an eclectic mix of outstanding filmmaking from around the world. The Festival is a showcase for the latest developments in Australian & int'l filmmaking, offering audiences a wide range of features & shorts, encompassing fiction, documentaries, animation & experimental films w/ a program of more than 350 films from over 40 countries. Highlights incl. the Int'l Short Film Awards, spolights on filmmakers, genres & retros. Founded: 1952. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student shorts. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, , Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (Short Films Only). Contact: Tony Cronin, Program Chairman, 207 Johnston Street, Box 2206, Fitzroy 3065, Australia; 011 61 3 417 2011; fax: 61 3 417 3804; miff@vicnet.net.au; www.melbournefilmfest.com.au

PESARO FILM FESTIVAL, June 22-30, Italy. Deadline: March 31. Annual fest's "New Cinema" program. Production req. Italian premiere, completion after Jan. 1 of previous year. If not English or French spoken or subtitled, enclose dialogue list in either language. Founded: 1964. Cats: feature, short, doc, experimental, animation features, fiction, nonfiction. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, U-matic, Betacam. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Fondazione Pesaro Nuovo Cinema, Via Villafranca 20, Rome, 00185, Italy; 39 06 445 66 43; 49 11 56; fax: 39 06 49 11 63; pesarofilmfest@mclink.it; www.pesarofilmfest.it

SHANGHAI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 8-16, China. Deadline: March 30. Non-specialized competitive fest aims to enhance the mutual understanding & friendship among people in different countries & regions, to flourish cinematic art & to promote film industry development. Fest is composed of four main activities: Golden Cup Film Competition, Film Panorama, Film & TV Program Market & the Academic Seminar. Minimum running time: 70 min. Awards: "JinJue" Award for Best Film; Special Jury Award; Best Actor, Actress, Music, Technology, & Director. Formats: 70mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: SIFF, 11/F, STV Mansions, 298 Wei Hai Road, Shanghai 200041, China; 011 86 21 6253 7115; fax: 86 21 6255 2000; mickey@siff.com; www.siff.com

SPLICE THIS! The Toronto Annual Super8 Film Festival., June 21-23, Canada. Deadline: March 31. Non-competitive fest dedicated to the exhibition of small gauge films, showcasing a wide range of work by first- time filmmakers & seasoned super-eighters. All entries must be shot on Super 8. Video will be screened only if original print isn't avail. or if the film was edited on video. 16mm blow-ups of super 8 films are also considered. Formats: super 8, silent super 8, super 8 w/ live accomampaniment, super 8 w/ sound, super8 w/ audiocassette, . Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $5. Contact: Laura Cowell, 92 Borden St., Toronto, Ontario M5S2N1; (416) 856-2529; splicethis@yahoo.com; www.interlog.com/~coldsore

SUNNY SIDE OF THE DOC MARKET, June 27-29, France. Deadline: early March. Annual market brings together ind. producers, distributors, commissioning editors, heads of TV programming depts & buyers from all over the world. Attended by some 539 companies from 35 countries, 183 buyers & commissioning editors & 120 TV channels. Market provides opportunities for project development & meeting partners w/ Side-by-Side sessions (one-on-one meetings w/ commissioning editors for adce on projects). Founded: 1990. Cats: doc. Preview on VHS. Contact: SSD, 23 rue Francois Simon, 13003 Marseille, France; 011 33 4 95 04 44 80; fax: 33 4 91 84 38 34; contact@sunnysideofthedoc.com; www.sunnysideofthedoc.com

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or visit our websites: www.LongIslandFilm.com and www.Co.Nassau.NY.US/film/form2002.html

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Competitions

AMERICAN CINEMA FOUNDATION'S EIGHTH ANNUAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Founded to nurture and reward television and feature film projects which address fundamental social values, support and strangthen the concepts of the common good and common culture, and promote democratic pluralism. This themed, juried competition is designed to elicit scripts which are suitable for either theatrical or television production and which tell a positive story. Forst place winner receives $5,000 cash reward. Theme for 2002 is THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE. Soliciting character driven scripts that deal with the human pursuit of excellence. Deadline is March 31, 2002. For more information and entry form for the Eight Annual Screenwriting Competition, visit website www.cinemafoundation.com or contact office: (310) 286-9420, fax, (310) 286-7914 or e-mail acinema@cinemafoundation.com

AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL PRIME TIME COMPETITION: Call for entries. Two cats: sitcom & drama (based on a pre-existing show). Awards: $1,500 for each category winner. Airfare compensation up to $500, hotel compensation up to $500, VIP pass to Heart of Film Screenwriters Conference (October 11-18), & AFF bronze typewriter award for each category winner. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: April 15 (postmark). Contact: (512) 478-4795.

FILM IN ARIZONA SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Sixth year. To promote screenplays to film exec. that take place in Arizona. Nat'l competition for original feature-length screenplays (90 min., 120 max. pgs). Industry standard format req'd. Awards: $1,000 Cox Communications Award, guaranteed industry meetings, hotel accomodations, rental car, pro script notes; all finalists flown to LA for awards breakfast and will receive Scriptware software along with free exposure on Writers Script Network. Entry fees & deadlines: $30 (by April 13, 2002), $40 (by May 15). Wendy Carroll, "Film In Arizona" Screenwriting Competition, 3800 N. Central Ave., Bldg. D, Phoenix, AZ 85012; (602) 280-1380; hotline: 280-1384; wendy@azcommerce.com; www.azmmerce.com/azfilmcommission.htm

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: To provide new valuable outlets for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, btwn 90 & 130 pages. Rules & Requirement in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script loglines sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies by Writers Script Network for 6 months. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Winner's diploma posted on HSI website for 1 month. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; (800)-SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com

SCRIPTAPALOOZA 4th ANNUAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: First prize is $10,000 and screenwriting software for the 3 winners and 10 runner-ups. All thirteen winners will be considered by Scriptapalooza's outstanding participants; AMG, Samuel Goldwyn Films, Film Colony, Evolution, Phoenix Pictures and many more. Sponsors include Screenplay Systems and The Writer's Store. All entries must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2002. For further information or an application please visit www.scriptapalooza.com or call 323-654-5809.

TEXAS FILM INSTITUTE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: To promote, develop & seek production of new talented screenwriters within the studio and independent film market. Our sponsors expect to read solid dramatic scripts from our winners that reflect our high standards of writing for which we are known in the industry. Awards: Cash, possible option, entrants placing in semi-finals and up receive free evaluation of script, admission to the Santa Fe Screenwriters Conference. Entry fee: $40. Deadline: April 15. Contact: Lisa Matter, Creative Assistant, TFI 2002, The Ranch of Dos Cerros, 409 Mountain Spring, Boerne, Tx 78006; (830)-537-5906; 537-5906; txflix@aol.com; www.texasfilminstitute.com

THE GREAT LAKES FILM ASSOCIATION SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: Currently accepting submissions the screenplay competition is open to all genres. Must be feature length (80 pages or more). Prize will include cash, awards and the top 15 screenplays will be passed along to an industry professional agency. Critiques will be available. Deadline: March 1st (early), April 12th (final). Fees: $35 (early), $45 (final). Contact George V.Woods, 100 Nordmere Dr. #9, Edinboro, PA 16412, (814) 734-6759; screenplay@greatlakesfilmfest.com. Entry form and rules at: www.greatlakesfilmfest.com

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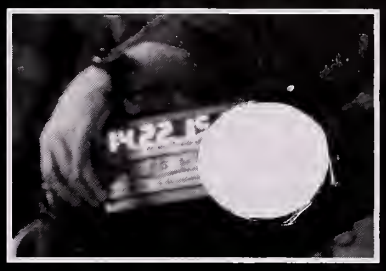
INSTITUTE OF VIDEOGRAPHY'S ANNUAL CONVENTION & TRADE EXHIBITION: April 24th & 25th 2002. Event showcases the latest technology & services in DV production. Event includes full schedule of seminars & workshops aimed at addressing the needs of today's video production community, including discussions on all key business topics. IOV welcomes non-members & offers free convention pre-registration service and convention info via web site. Contact: +44 (0) 20 8502 3817; www.iov.co.uk



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Films • Tapes Wanted

BIJOU MATINEE: Is a showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35 leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat at 2:30 PM. Submissions should be 25 min. or less. VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY, 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: Offers the excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features, of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail hour to showcase local organizations and allow for a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 401 W. Ontario, Suite 208, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 863-3451; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com

CINEMARENO: A year-round festival of films. Monthly screenings showcase new independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: $20. Contact: CINEMARENO, P.O. Box 5372, Reno NV 89513, e-mail: cinemareno@excite.com. Entry form and guidelines at www.cinemareno.org

DUTV: A progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia, seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & 3/4" accepted for possible cablecast & webcast. VHS for preview. Contact: Debbie Rudman, DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St., Bldg 9B, Rm 4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.dutv.org

MAKOR: Continues its on-going Reel Jews Film Series that showcases the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs and/or works-in-progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration and network building. For more info, call Ken Sherman at (212) 601-1021 or e-mail me at kensherman@makor.org.

MICROCINEMA, INC./ BLACKCHAIR PRODUCTIONS: Is accepting short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or less on an ongoing basis for the monthly screening program Independent Exposure. Artists qualify for a non-exclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Works selected may continue on to nat'l and int'l venues for additional screenings. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled with name, title, length, phone # and any support materials incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Microcinema, Inc., 2318 Second Ave., #313-A, Seattle, WA 98121, USA. Info/details: (206) 322-0282; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com

A Meeting of the Minds

It's hard sometimes to stay in tune with the always-changing entertainment industry, especially when you're on the ground floor. So on March 2nd & 3rd at the New Yorker Hotel the Global Entertainment & Media Summit will take place. Created to help those who want to learn about new products and opportunities, the summit is a perfect opportunity for those who want to make connections. Thousands of people from the film and music industry will gather to discuss current topics. Speaking at the summit will be record manager Miles Copeland and filmmaker John Waters. For more information go to www.globalentertainmentnetwork.com. See listing.

PARK4DTV: Is an Amsterdam-based organization specializing in broadcast of a 60 min. TV art piece every night. Works vary from computer-generated abstract work to ultra hard-core reality TV. Founded in 1991, PARK4DTV has broadcast more than 1100 different 1 hr. tapes made by artist around the world & is looking for tapes that fit into the program. Artists will be paid for broadcasted work. Organization also has programs in Rotterdam, New York & Berlin. Contact: PARK4DTV, Box 11344, 1001 GH Amsterdam, Netherlands; info@park.nl; www.park.nl

QUEER PUBLIC ACCESS TV PRODUCERS: Seek public access show tapes by/for/about gay, lesbian, bi, drag, trans subjects, for inclusion in academic press book on queer community programming. All program genres welcome. Incl. info about your program's history & distribution. Send VHS tapes to: Eric Freedman, Asst. Professor, Comm. Dept., Florida Atlantic Univ., 777 Glades Rd., Boca Raton, FL 33431; (561) 297-2534; efreedma@fau.edu

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: Is a quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are saught. Incl. synopsis of work, artist's bio & contract info. Deadline ongoing. Tapes are unable to be returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a non-profit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, please visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SOUTHWEST ALTERNATE MEDIA PROJECT: Seeks short films of up to 28 min. to air on The Territory (the longest-running showcase of short films on PBS in America, airing on 13 PBS stations in Texas). Artists of works chosen are paid $35 per min. Deadline: April 15, 2002. Send VHS (NTSC): The Territory, Mary Lampe, Co-Exec. Producer, SWAMP, 1519 W. Main, Houston, TX 77006; (713) 522-8592; fax: 522-0953; mmlampe@swamp.org

THE VIDEO PROJECT: A leading educational distributor of videos, seeks environment and educational films and videos to aggressively market to the educational market. Contact us with finished projects or rough cuts. The Video Project, 45 Lusk Alley, San Francisco, CA, 94107. www.videoproject.net; video@videoproject.net

ZOIE SKIN FESTIVAL: Included in the Zoie Film Festival will be a FLASH animation festival of the sexy kind! Send us your sexy shorts (movies and animation that is). Looking for erotic, passionate movies. Film shorts with scenes that expose skin, movies with sexual tension. Entry form and more info at www.zoiefilms.com/sexyshorts.htm

Publications

JOURNAL OF FILM & VIDEO: Seeks written reviews of Univ. Film & Video Assoc. member films for possible inclusion in journal. Send approx. 5 double-spaced pages to: Suzanne Regan, Editor, Journal of Film and Video, Department of Communication Studies, California State University, Los Angeles, 5151 Sate University Dr., L.A., CA, 90032; (323) 343-4206; sregan@calstatela.edu

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: Is a new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. Sanctuary is devoted exclusively to creative work—thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

Resources • Funds

OPEN DOOR COMPLETION FUND: Funding is available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants with public TV projects in final post-production phase. Full-length rough cut must be submitted. Awards average $20,000 & NAATA funds must be the last monies needed to finish project. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Review process takes approximately 1-3 months. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428; mediafind@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA: New filmmaker grant equip. program offers access to professional 16mm camera system for first serious new productions in dramatic,

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

To succeed as an independent you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. Whether through our service and education programs, the pages of our magazine, our web resource, or through the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while reminding you you're not alone.

About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

AIVF Online

Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

Insurance & Discounts

Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports over 20 member-organized, member-run regional salons across the country, to strengthen local media arts communities.

Advocacy

AIVF has been consistently outspoken about preserving the resources and rights of independent mediamakers. Members receive information on current issues and public policy, and the opportunity to add their voice to collective actions.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

INDIVIDUAL/STUDENT

Includes: one year's subscription to *The Independent* • access to group insurance plans • discounts on goods & services from national Trade Partners • online & over-the-phone information services • discounted admission to seminars, screenings, & events • book discounts • classifieds discounts • advocacy action alerts • eligibility to vote & run for board of directors • members-only web services.

DUAL MEMBERSHIP

All of the above benefits extended to two members of the same household, except the year's subscription to *The Independent* which is shared by both.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY, SCHOOL, OR NON-PROFIT MEMBERSHIP

All above benefits for up to three contacts, plus • discounts on display advertising • special mention in each issue of *The Independent*.

FRIEND OF FIVF

Individual membership plus $45 tax-deductible donation. Special recognition in *The Independent*.

JOINT MEMBERSHIPS

Special AIVF memberships are also available through AIVF Regional Salons as well as many local media arts organizations — for details call (212) 807-1400 x236.

LIBRARY SUBSCRIPTION

Year's subscription to *The Independent* for multiple readers, mailed first class. Contact your subscription service to order or call AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x501.

AIVF
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

With all that AIVF has to offer, can you afford *not* to be a member? Join today!

Mail to AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl, New York, NY 10013; or charge by phone (212) 807-1400 x 503, by fax (212) 463-8519, or via www.aivf.org. Your first issue of *The Independent* will arrive in 4-6 weeks.

For Library subscriptions: please contact your subscription service, or call AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x501.

MEMBERSHIP RATES (see reverse for categories)

Individual	☐ $55/1 yr.	☐ $100/2 yrs.
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Business & Industry	☐ $150/1 yr.	
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Magazines are mailed second-class in the U.S.

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* Your additional, tax-deductible contribution will help support the educational programs of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, a public 501(c)(3) organization.

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doc, experimental, or narrative form. Purely commercial projects not considered. Provides camera on year-round basis. No appl. deadline, but allow 10 week minimum for processing. Contact: Film Grant, Oppenheimer Camera, 666 S. Plummer St., Seattle, WA 98134; (206) 467-8666; fax: (206) 467-9165; marty@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com

PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA: Solicits projects addressing critical social & political issues w/ goal of creating social change. Funding for radio projects in all stages of production; film & video projects in preproduction or distribution stages only. Grants range from $3,000-$8,000. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Trinh Duong, The Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

PORTLAND, OREGON FILMMAKING GRANTS: Digital Media Education Center of Portland, OR is announcing an open call for submissions for Avid Film Camp program. AFC affords a boost to indie feature directors looking to complete their films, while offering Avid-authorized training to career editors. Films will also receive free Pro Tools audio finishing & Avid Symphony Online editing. Submissions need to be feature-length projects w/ shooting completed. Projects accepted on a rolling basis. Contact: Deborah Cravey, Digital Media Education Center, 5201 SW Westgate Dr., Ste. 111, Portland, OR 97221; (503) 297-2324; deb@filmcamp.com; www.filmcamp.com

THOUSAND WORDS FINISHING FUND: Considers projects by first or second time feature filmmakers looking to create intelligent, innovative, and challenging films. The $500,000 fund is available in varied amounts for editing, sound mixing, music rights, and other post-production costs. Selected films will also receive assistance in film festival planning and distribution. Narratives, animation and works-in-progress may be submitted. Application forms can be downloaded at Thousand Words' website: www.thousand-words.com. Contact: finishingfund@thousand-words.com or Thousand Words, 9100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 404E, Los Angeles, CA 90212. (310) 859-8330, fax, (310) 859-8333.

WRITER'S FILM PROJECT: Sponsored by Paramount Pictures, the WFP offers fiction, theature & film writers the opportunity to begin a career in screenwriting. Up to five writers will be chosen to participate & each will recieve a $20,000 stipend to cover his or her living expenses. Deadling is May 15, 2002. Applications must be sent by mail only. Contact: Chesterfield WFP. 1158 26th St., P.O. Box 544, Santa Monica, CA 90403; 213-683-3977; www.chesterfield-co.com

Find just what you need to know!

AIVF members can search all current notices using the AIVF interactive resource directory at www.aivf.org/listings

2002 Call for Entries

LONG ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL

19th Annual Film/Video Festival

Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center
May 2nd-5th, 2002

Call or Write for Entry Forms (Due 4/1/02)
Christopher Cooke, Director
Long Island Film Festival
c/o P.O. Box 13243
Hauppauge, NY 11788
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DEADLINE: 1ST OF EACH MONTH, 2 MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G. APRIL 1 FOR JUNE ISSUE). CONTACT: JAMES ISRAEL, (212) 807-1400, FAX: 463-8519; CLASSIFIEDS@AIVF.ORG.

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0-240 CHARACTERS (INCL. SPACES & PUNCTUATION) $45 FOR NONMEMBERS/$30 FOR AIVF MEMBERS; 241-360 CHARS: $65/$45; 361-480 CHARS: $80/$60; 481-600 CHARS: $95/$75; OVER 600 CHARACTERS: CALL FOR QUOTE (212) 807-1400 X. 229

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ADS OVER SPECIFIED LENGTH WILL BE EDITED. COPY SHOULD BE TYPED & ACCOMPANIED BY CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: FIVF, 304 HUDSON ST., 6TH FL, NEW YORK, NY 10013. INCLUDE BILLING ADDRESS; DAYTIME PHONE; # OF ISSUES; AND VALID MEMBER ID# FOR MEMBER DISCOUNT. TO PAY BY VISA /MC/AMEX INCL. CARD #; NAME ON CARD; EXP. DATE.

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SHARE DOWNTOWN PRODUCTION OFFICE: Up to 300 sq. ft. available, 4-line phone system with voicemail, fax, copier, TV/VCR, cable. Broadway/Houston area. Short/long term. Call High Voltage Productions at (212) 295-7878.

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EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS VIDEOS on guidance issues, such as violence, drug prevention, mentoring, children's health, & parenting for exclusive distribution. Our marketing gives unequaled results! Call Sally Germain at The Bureau for At-Risk Youth: (800) 99-YOUTH x. 210.

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THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational, & animation programs for distribution. Send videocassettes or discs for evaluation to: The Cinema Guild, 130 Madison Ave., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 685-6242; growdus@cinemaguild.com; Ask for our Distribution Services brochure.

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ACCOUNTANT/BOOKKEEPER/CONTROLLER: Experience in both corporate & nonprofit sectors. Hold MBA in Marketing & Accounting. Freelance work sought. Sam Sagenkahn (917) 374-2464.

ANDREW DUNN, Director of Photography/camera operator Arri35 BL3, Aaton XTRprod S16, Sony DVCAM. Experience in features, docs, TV, & industrials. Credits: Dog Run, Strays, Working Space/Working Light. (212) 477-0172; AndrewD158@aol.com.

AVID EDITOR W/ SYMPHONY recently relocated to Burbank. Excellent rates, both off- and online. Looking to form long-term relationships with independents. Call Charlene for info and reel at (818) 563-1426 or email PeregrineFilms@aol.com.

AWARD-WINNING EDITOR w/ Avid and Beta SP facility. Features, shorts, docs, music videos, educational, industrials, demos. Trilingual: Spanish, English, Catalan. Nuria Olive-Belles (212) 228-4724.

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CAMERAMAN/STEADICAM OPERATOR: 35BL, 16SR, Beta SP, Stereo TC Nagra4, TC Fostex PD-4 DAT, feature lite pkg. to shoot features, music videos, commercials, etc. Call Mik Cribben for info & reel, (212) 929-7728 or (800) 592-3350.

CINEMATOGRAPHER w / Aaton reg/super-16mm, Sony 600 Beta, Sony DSR-500 DVCAM packages + lights + Van. Experienced, looking to collaborate on features, docs shorts & commercials. Adam Vardy, reel + rates (212) 932 8255; nyvardy@worldnet.att.net

CINEMATOGRAPHER w / awards, talent, & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs. Various film/video pkgs. avail. Call for top quality reel. Robert (212) 343-0755 rblnr@earthlink.net.

CINEMATOGRAPHER w/ Super 16 package with video tap, digital, lighting; 20 yrs experience on features, shorts, documentaries, music videos. Excellent crew. Italian, English, some Spanish; will travel. Renato Tonelli (718) 728-7567; rtonelli@tiscalinet.it.

CINEMATOGRAPHER with Aaton 16mm/s16mm package, DVCAM, DV, lighting gear and more. A special interest in docs and other projects with progressive social values. Kevin Skvorak (718) 782-9179; k.skvorak@verizon.net.

COMPOSER Miriam Cutler loves to collaborate with filmmakers—features, docs. Sundance: Scout's Honor, Licensed To Kill / Peabody: The Castro / POV: Double Life of Ernesto Gomez Gomez, PBS, & more (323) 664-1807; mircut2@earthlink.net.

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DV CONSULTANT: Need help w/ Final Cut Pro? Exp. consultant avail. for training in FCP, AfterEffects, Media Cleaner Pro, or just Mac basics. Former Apple tech rep. & working filmmaker in NYC. Discount for AIVF members. Greg (347) 731-3466.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in The Independent & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

ENTERTAINMENT LAW FIRM: Film and television production, distribution, financing; business consultants; and artist counsel. Ask about AIVF discounts for members. Brandon A. Blake, Blake & Wang P.A. 310/543-9085, blakewang@optimalegal.com.

EXPERIENCED LINE PRODUCER available to help with your Breakdown, Schedule, Day out of Days, and/or Budget. Specialty is low budget but high quality. Email AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates and references.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition, & educational projects of media). Successful proposals to NYSCA, NEA, NEH, ITVS, Soros, Rockefeller, Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation. Fast writers, reasonable rates. Wanda Bershen, (212) 598-0224; www.reddiaper.com; or Geri Thomas (212) 625-2011; www.artstaffing.com.

LOCATION SOUND: Over 20 yrs sound exp. w/ timecode Nagra & DAT, quality mics. Reduced rates for low-budget projects. Harvey & Fred Edwards, (518) 677-5720; edfilms@worldnet.att.net.

PRODUCER WITH CREW: Line Producer with top notch crew and equipment available for features, industrials, commercials, and shorts. Rates for all budgets. Contact Peter Welch at (212) 615-6457; email: pwelch@earthlink.net.

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Opportunities • Gigs

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YELLOW HOOK CINEMAFEST Ongoing film series seeks submissions from local filmmakers. 45 min. and under for weekly screenings. Please send VHS only with contact info to Kevin Kash c/o Three Jolly Pigeons, 6802 3rd Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11220.

Postproduction

16MM SOUND MIX only $100/hr. Interlocked 16mm picture & tracks mixed to 16 or 35mm fullcoat. 16mm/35mm post services: picture & sound editorial, ADR, interlock screening, 16mm mag xfers (.065/ft), 16mm edgecoding (.015/ft). Call Tom (201) 741-4367.

A-RAY PRODUCTIONS RENTS AVIDS: Our place or yours. Comfortable edit suites in Weston, CT or we'll bring it to you (2-wk minimum). Rates from $1000. Includes AVR 77 + Real Time EFX. Award-winning editors available. Call (203) 544-1267.

AVID EDITOR A dozen feature credits. New Media Composer w/ AVR 77 & offline rez. Beta SP, DAT, extra drives, Pro-tools editing & mixing, and your Avid or mine. Fast & easy to get along with. Credit cards accepted. Drina (212) 561-0829.

AVID MEDIA COMPOSER XL1000 On-Line or Off. Great rental prices! Convenient Chelsea location, 24/7 access: Riverside Films (212) 242-3005.

BRODSKY & TREADWAY Film-to-tape masters. Reversal only. Regular 8mm, Super 8, or archival 16mm. We love early B&W & Kodachrome. Scene-by-scene only. Correct frame rates. For appt. call (978) 948-7985.

DVD AUTHORING FOR VIDEO PROFESSIONALS. JTF Graphics provides high quality design and authoring at a great price. Visit our website for pricing information and references from other video professionals. www.jtf-graphics.com; 1-800-993-9552.

DVD DESIGN AND PRODUCTION for film and video artists. Even if you have your own DVD burner, quality design and authoring makes all the difference. Discount for AIVF members. Contact: dvd@randomroom.com; www.randomroom.com.

EDITOR - AVID/FCP w/AVID facility located in Soho. Docs, features, shorts, music videos, and industrials. Bilingual: French, Italian, & basic Spanish. Contact Charlotte at (718) 855-6711; stobbs@earthlink.net; www.invisiblesplice.com.

FINAL CUT PRO CLASSES Learn to edit video/film on Final Cut Pro! Each student works on a dual screen FCP workstation. Our class sizes are very small (only 2 students per class), so we can give you the individual attention you need to really learn the software fast. The teacher for this class is a former commercial Avid editor/instructor who has worked at most of the major ad agencies in NYC for the past 5 years, and who has switched to Final Cut Pro two years ago believing it will soon be the standard for all professional editing because it is affordable to all, and can accomplish all the aspects of professional editing at a fraction of the cost of an Avid Media Composer. Bring your own project in. Lab time included with class. Weekend, weekday, day, and night classes. Check out our website and register online. Classes located at 225 Lafayette Street, Suite 714. We also do one on one instruction at our studio, or at your home or office. Make your first music video, documentary, feature film, or just take those old wedding pictures out and cut something special. Editing services also available. S.R.P. Video Services, Inc., 225 Lafayette st., Suite 714, NY, NY 10012. Phone: 212-334-7380. Web: www.FinalCutproClasses.com. E-mail: fcpclasses@aol.com.

FINAL CUT PRO RENTAL: Private edit suite in the Financial District w/ 24 hour access. 35 hours broadcast storage, 200+ at low res. Call Jonathan at Mint Leaf Productions: (212) 952-0121 x. 229.

Interactive classified ads available online at www.aivf.org/classifieds

NAATA MEDIA FUND

With support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) provides production and completion funds for Asian American film and video projects that have potential for national public television broadcast.

RECENT MEDIA FUND HIGHLIGHTS

ANCESTORS IN THE AMERICAS by Loni Ding
THE DEBUT by Gene Cajayon
DREAM CATCHER by Ed Radtke
FIRST PERSON PLURAL by Deann Borshay Liem
THE FLIP SIDE by Rod Pulido
RABBIT IN THE MOON by Emiko Omori
REGRET TO INFORM by Barbara Sonneborn and Janet Cole
ROOTS IN THE SAND by Jaysari Hart
THE SPLIT HORN by Taggart Siegel and Jim McSilver
TURBANS by Erika Surat Andersen

Check out the Filmmaker's Corner at naatanet.org or call (415) 863-0814 x 206.

NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION NAATA cpb

@AIVF

www.aivf.org

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL AIVF EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT OUR OFFICES (SEE BELOW). RSVP REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS. (212) 807-1400 X301 OR INFO@AIVF.ORG.

AIVF at the DC INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL (February 28-March 7, Washington, DC)

The DC Independent Film Festival and Market thrives as a showcase for works by local and national independent filmmakers, drawing attention to the nation's capital as a market for independent filmmaking. AIVF and its Washington, D.C. salon will copresent a panel at the Market. Details will be posted at www.aivf.org and on the festival website. For further information: www.dciff.org, or 202-686-8867.

AIVF at the NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL (March 6-12, Anthology Film Archives, NYC)

The Independent has affectionately dubbed the NYUFF "in between Warhol's Factory and the Manson Family." And here it is, parading its 9th Year in full regalia. Don't miss the collection (that defies convention!) of fiction/non-fiction/avant garde shorts and features from film- and videomakers around the world. AIVF is proud to support NYUFF and to copresent two panel discussions:

Saturday, March 9, 12-2 p.m.

OFF THE SHELF: NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION FOR FILM AND VIDEO

A panel on distributing experimental, underground, and avant garde media non-theatrically via DVD, video, and any means necessary! After all, what good's your film if it's sitting on the shelf? Featuring Jon Gartenberg (Re-Voir), Matt McCormick (Peripheral Produce), Gary Hurwit (Plexifilm), and other guests TBA.

Sunday, March 10, 12-2

IS THE GRASS GREENER? ART WORLD VS. FILM WORLD

A panel on the ins and outs of gallery exhibition and representation of film and video in the art world. Curated by Lia Gangitano (Participant Inc.). Panelists TBA.

Events take place at Anthology Film Archives (32 2nd Ave, NYC) and are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Check in at www.aivf.org or www.nyuff.com for complete details.

AIVF at SXSW: PITCHING TO THE PROS: THE ART OF VERBALLY SELLING YOUR PROJECT

South By Southwest Film Festival and Conference (March 8-17)

Part panel discussion, part practice-pitch session, AIVF's Pitching to the Pros takes an in-depth look at how to perfect your pitch, illustrating how producers can put their best foot forward when orally presenting their non-fiction concept or project to commissioning editors and acquisitions executives.

Audience members will learn the do's and don'ts of delivering their own project ideas from advice offered by industry representatives and by also hearing their peers publicly pitch their projects for critique and discussion.

Five producers attending SXSW have been pre-selected to pitch their projects, which will then be critiqued before industry reps and a viewing audience. The focus is on the pitch, rather than on the project per se, allowing the audience to glean unique insight in to the pitch process, and learn for themselves how best to capture the attention and confidence of industry professionals.

Details will be posted at www.aivf.org.

For more information on the South By Southwest Film Festival and Conference: www.sxsw.com.

Documentary Dialogues: FLYING SOLO OR BIKING IN TANDEM?

When: Tues., March 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Wine & Goldfish reception til 9:30 p.m.
Where: AIVF office
Cost: $5 members; $20 general public

Is it worth learning how to do everything? Is it really less expensive? And if you decide to join forces, where can you find qualified people with your same enthusiasm and commitment. If you direct, shoot and edit your film all alone or you have a court that does it for you...come and share the advantages and disadvantages of either modality of making your documentaries.

Hosted by AIVF member and filmmaker, Fernanda Rossi.

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY HOURS: TUES.-FRI. 11-6; WED. 11-9

The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400

Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.-Fri. 2-5p.m. EST

BY INTERNET: www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

In Brief:
PRODUCERS' LEGAL SERIES

Back by popular demand, AIVF continues our legal series for the independent producer. Led by entertainment attorney, Innes Gumnitsky of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, these sessions present definitions, dos and don'ts, and invaluable advice within the legal spectrum of independent film.

March 14:
Film Financing: Private Offerings

March 28:
Film Financing: International Coproductions & Cable Television

Tickets are $20/AIVF members; $30/nonmembers per session.
All sessions take place at the AIVF office from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Future topics will include:

April: **Production Legal Issues**

May: **Distribution Deals**

AIVF co-sponsors:
DOCSHOP

Two New Profiles
(Martin Scorsese and Jane Campion)
by Albert Maysles

When: Tues., March. 19th
Where: Reception at 7 p.m., Den of Cin, Two Boots Video (44 Ave. A at 3rd St)
Screening and filmmaker discussion at 8 p.m., Pioneer Theater (155 E 3rd St.)
Cost: $8.50 general public, $6 students & seniors

Tickets: 212/668-1575; www.docfest.org

The New York Documentary Center, presenter of docfest, continues this monthly series. Following the screening, the director will discuss the art and craft of documentary making with the audience.

Legendary documentarian Albert Maysles (*Grey Gardens*, *Gimme Shelter*) will screen two brand new 30-minute profiles of film giants Martin Scorsese and Jane Campion.

These biographic shorts are segments of a larger series, which Maysles created for The Independent Film Channel.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

State of the Arts NYSCA

The Academy Foundation
The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
The Chase Manhattan Foundation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

Business/Industry Members: **CA:** Action/Cut Directed By Seminars; Attaboc LLC; Busk Entertainment, LLC; Calliope Films, Inc.; Eastman Kodak Co.; Film Society of Ventura County; Forest Creatures Entertainment Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; HBO; The Hollywood Reporter; Moonshadow Production & Research; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; **CO:** The Crew Connection; Inferno Film Productions; **FL:** Bakus Internatinal, Inc/ Odysseas Entertainment, Inc.; Burn Productions; **IL:** Buzzbait; Rock Valley College; Wiggle Puppy Productions; Wonderdog Media; **MA:** CS Associates; Glidecam Industries; **MD:** The Learning Channel; U.S. Independents, Inc.; **MI:** Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Kingberry Productions, Inc.; **MN:** Allies; Media/Art; **NJ:** DIVA Communications, Inc.; **NY:** AKQ Communications, Ltd.; American Montage; Analog Digital Intl., Inc.; Black Bird Post; Bluestocking Films, Inc.; Bravo Film and Video; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cineblast! Prods.; Corra Films; Cypress Films; Dependable Delivery, Inc.; Docurama; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Earth Video; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Guerilla News Network; Highdrama Productions Inc.; Historic Films Archive; Jalapeno Media; Lighthouse Creative, Inc.; MacKenzie Culter, Inc.; Mad Mad Judy; Mercer Street Sound; Metropolis Film Lab Inc.; Mixed Greens; New Rican Filmmaker; New York Independent Film School; One Kilohertz; The Outpost; Partisan Pictures; Paul Dinatale Post, Inc.; Persona Films; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Seahorse Films; Son Vida Pictures, LLC; Suitcase Productions; Swete Studios; Wolfen Prods.; **PA:** Cubist Post & Effects; Smithtown Creek Prods.; **TX:** Upstairs Media Inc.; **UT:** KBYU-TV; Rapid Video, LLC; **VA:** Dorst MediaWorks; Roland House, Inc.; **WV:** Harpers Ferry Center Library.

Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Fest.; **AZ:** Scottsdale Community Coll.; U of Central Arkansas/ Channel 6 Television; **CA:** Antelope Valley Independent Film Festival; California Newsreel; Filmmakers Alliance; International Buddhist Film Festival; Itvs; Los Angeles Film Commission; Media Fund; NAATA; Ojai Film Soc.; Reach L.A.; San Francisco Jewish Film Fest.; USC School of Cinema TV; **FL:** Manatee Community College; **GA:** Image Film & Video Center; **HI:** U. of Hawaii Outreach College; **ID:** Center for School Improvement; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago/Video Data Bank; Community TV Network; PBS Midwest; Rock Valley Coll.; Roxie Media Corporation; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Long Bow Group Inc.; Lowell Telecommunications Corp.; LTC Communications; Projectile Arts; Somerville Community TV; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Fest.; **MN:** Intermedia Arts; Walker Arts Center; IFP North; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **NC:** Cucaloris Film Foundation; Doubletake Documentary Film Fest.; Duke University-Film and Video; **NE:** Great Plains Film Festival; Nebraska Independent Film Proj., Inc.; Ross Film Theater, UN/Lincoln; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; College of NJ/ Dept. of Communication Studies; reat Vision Filmwork, Inc.; **NM:** Taos Talking Pictures; **NY:** American Museum of Natural History; Art 21; Cinema Arts Center; Communications Society; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Creative Capital Foundation; Dependable Delivery; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community TV; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Globalvision, Inc.; John Jay High School; Konscious, Inc.; Listen Up!; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Black Programming Consortium; National Foundation for Jewish Culture; National Video Resources; NW&D Inc.; NYU TV Center; New York Women in Film and TV; OVO, Inc.; School of Visual Arts; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stanton Crenshaw Communication; Stony Brook Film Festival; Thirteen/WNET; Upstate Films, Ltd.; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Cleveland Filmmakers; Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky Film Commission; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio Independent Film Fest.; Ohio University/Film; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; **PA:** PA Council on the Arts; Carnegie Museum of Art; Prince Music Theater; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI:** Flickers Arts Collaborative; **SC:** South Carolina Arts Commission; **TN:** Nashville Independent Film Fest; **TX:** Austin Cinemaker Co-op; Austin Film Society; Michener Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; **WI:** UWM Dept. of Film; Wisconsin Film Office; **Canada:** Toronto Documentary Forum/Hot Docs; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Shorts Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Peru:** Guarango Cine y Video; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Friends of FIVF: Ulises Aristides, Bakus International, Michael Bernstein, Barbara Baxter-Brooks, Hugo M.J. Cassirer, Chris Deaux, Arthur Dong, Aaron Edison, Christopher Farina, Suzanne Griffin, Christopher Gomersall, Patricia Goudvis, Leigh Hanlon, Robert L. Hawk, Henrietta Productions, Jewish Communal Fund, John Kavanaugh, Laura Kim, Bart Lawson, Michelle Lebrun, Elizabeth Mane, Diane Markrow, Sheila Nevins, William Payden, PKXH, Possible Films, Mary Smith, Diana Takata, Rhonda Leigh Tanzman, Mark Vanbork

Meet & Greet:
PRODUCERS REPS & CONSULTANTS

When: Thurs., March 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Where: AIVF office
Cost: $5 AIVF members; $20 general

What exactly is a producer's rep and why might you need one? Find out from a handful of local reps and consultants what services they offer the independent filmmaker in trying to sell their film. Panelists include consultant Bob Hawk, and producers' reps Steven Beer (Rudolph and Beer) and Micah Green (Cinetic).

NEW MASTER CLASS SERIES

AIVF presents a new series offering invaluable tools and information to help develop the filmmaker's craft. Each session includes an in-depth glimpse into a specific film or project as relayed by the producers and directors who created them, followed by break-out sessions which allow the attendees to share information via exercises with their peers. Details will be available at www.aivf.org and will be included in our March events calendar.

PBS

cpb Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Call for Proposals:
5TH ANNUAL PITCH TO PUBLIC TELEVISION

Let AIVF help you get your foot in the door! Pre-selected AIVF members will meet with greenlighting staff from the National PBS and CPB offices to discuss their projects in-depth, receive valuable feedback, and explore the project's broadcast possibilities.

Sesions are scheduled for Friday, June 7 beginning at 10 a.m. at AIVF's NYC office. Note: selected producers are responsible for their own travel and accommodations.

For complete submission details, log on to www.aivf.org or contact 212-807-1400 x507 to have an application packet sent to you by mail.

In-Office Deadline: Fri., March 22.

AIVF Co-Sponsors:
SELECT SCREENINGS AT THE WALTER READE THEATRE, NYC
Presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center

AIVF members may attend specific films for just $5 per ticket! Please show membership card at box office.

The Walter Reade Theatre is located at Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th Street at Broadway in NYC. For more info, contact the Film Society of Lincoln Center box office at 212/875-5600 or www.filmlinc.com.

March Programs:

March 1 – 7:
Sergio Bianchi Retrospective

March 8 – 17:
Rendezvous with French Cinema 2002

March 18:
Golden Silents presents
Short Films from France

March 20-28:
Joris Ivens Retrospective

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Meg Hanley, Editor

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Tel: 212-242-0444 Fax: 212-242-4419
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- cd-rom duplication and mastering
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- production services and editing
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- video encoding for the internet and cd-rom

Film Festival Special - 20 VHS tapes w/sleeves & labels - $99
DVD disk: $200/1st minute, $10 each additional minute

THE EDIT CENTER

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Six-Week Courses and Weekend Intensives

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The Independent Film & Video Monthly

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www.theeditcenter.com
Apple Solution Experts

The AIVF Regional Salons provide opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons section at www.aivf.org for more details.

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: Capital District Arts Ctr., Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 283-7378
jeff_burns23@yahoo.com
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday of the month, 7 pm
Contact: Anne del Castillo, (512) 507-8105
labc@att.net, www.austinfilm.org

Birmingham, AL:
When: First Tuesday of the month
Where: Production Plus, 2910 Crescent Ave., Homewood, AL
Contact: Clay Keith, ckeith1000@yahoo.com
Karen Scott, WScott9268@aol.com,
(205) 663-3802

Boston, MA:
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
FSimon@aol.com

Boulder, CO: "Films for Change"
When: First Tues., 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
patricia@freespeech.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday of the month, 6:30pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun St.
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841;
Peter Wentworth, filmsalon@aol.com

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315, OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com
www.ohiofilms.com

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700,
bart@videofest.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
allen@passionriver.com, www.passionriver.com

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: (713) 522-8592, swamp@swamp.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: Charles White,
charles.white@tdsi.com

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesday, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary,
mediaarts33@yahoo.com
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday of the month, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
mmasucci@aol.com

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
betuccia@aol.com

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Kate Kressmann-Kehoe,
(716) 244-8629, ksk@netacc.net

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
aivf@mediaartscenter.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
mybluesun@hotmail.com; Jane Selle Morgan
(206) 915-6263, jane@heropictures.com

South Florida:
Contact: Dominic Giannetti, (561) 313-0330
themoviebiz@hotmail.com
www.moviebiz.info

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday of the month, 6pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno,
yourdestiny@mindspring.com

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, jatvelez@hotmail.com
DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x 4,
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Detailed salon information is posted on the web! Visit **www.aivf.org**

The Revival of an AIVF Salon

Seattle has long had a thriving local film and video community. Organizations such as 911 Media Arts Center, Northwest Film Forum (Wiggly World), and Cinema Seattle (Seattle International Film Festival) offer a wealth of resources to the Seattle independent film community. The Seattle AIVF salon (the newly formed Seattle Indie Network) will further contribute by helping local film and videomakers tap into the educational, production, financing, and distribution resources AIVF introduces to its members. Serious-minded film and videomakers, excited to have AIVF back in Seattle, attended the salon's first meeting in December, eager to discuss the mission of the new salon.

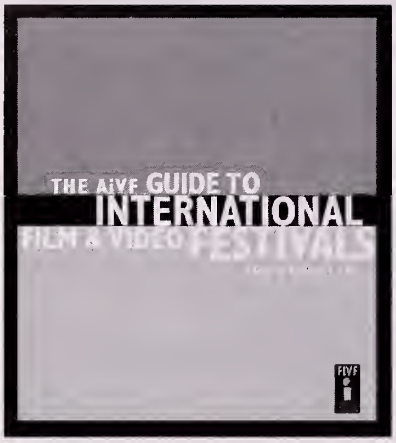
The Seattle Indie Network's first point of agenda is already underway. Governor Locke has presented the draft state budget, which at this time cuts all funds for the Washington State Film Office. The Film Office will be closed effective June 2002 without the rally and support of film- and videomakers throughout the nation. Oddly, the decision comes at a time when major film productions have begun to soar in the state of Washington. If you are interested in learning more about the salon, or how to help put the Film Office back in the budget, please contact Seattle Indie Network Co-Directors Heather Ayres at mybluesun@hotmail.com and Jane Selle Morgan at Jane@HeroPictures.com.

Be sure to contact your local Salon Leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!

Essential Resources for Independent Video and Filmmakers

FIVF
FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILM



AIVF's top selling reference: All New Edition!

The AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals

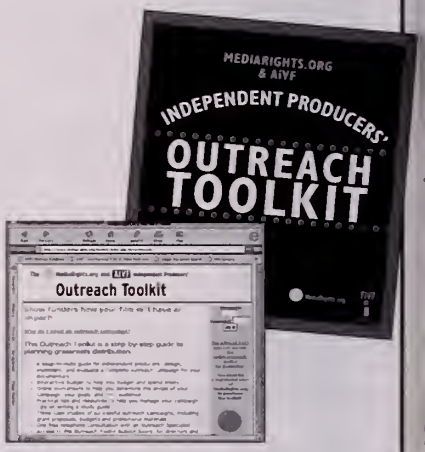
edited by Michelle Coe $35 / $25 AIVF members *plus shipping and handling.*

Up-to-date profiles of over 900 Film & Video Festivals, with complete contact and deadline information. First published in 1982, AIVF's Festival Guide is the most established and trusted source of information and inside views of film and video festivals around the world. Supplemented by selected reprints from *The Independent's* Festival Circuit column, profiling over 40 festivals in-depth from the filmmaker's perspective. The Guide is published to order, ensuring the most current information available! For AIVF members, the Festival Guide is enhanced by monthly listings in *The Independent* magazine, and an online interactive festival directory that is continually updated!

New! An interactive guide to grassroots distribution!

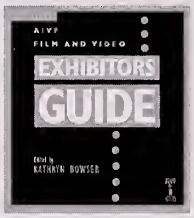
The AIVF & MediaRights.org Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit

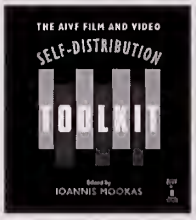
edited by MediaRights.org $125 / $115 AIVF members



Show funders how your film will have an impact! Your documentary can move audiences to take action for social change. What's your plan? Use this interactive resource to design, implement, and evaluate an effective outreach campaign. The Outreach Toolkit also downloads to your PDA and includes interactive worksheets; budgeting tools; a print resource binder; individualized consultation with outreach experts; case studies including funded proposals; an online producers' forum; and much more!

OTHER GUIDES TO GETTING YOUR WORK OUT TO AUDIENCES:



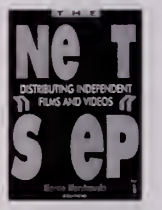


THE AIVF GUIDE TO FILM & VIDEO EXHIBITORS
edited by Kathryn Bowser $35/ $25 AIVF members ©1999

THE AIVF SELF-DISTRIBUTION TOOLKIT
edited by Ioannis Mookas $30 / $20 AIVF members ©1999

Buy Both Self-Distribution Books and Save! $60 / $40 AIVF members

THE NEXT STEP: DISTRIBUTING INDEPENDENT FILMS AND VIDEOS
edited by Morrie Warshawski $24.95 © 1995



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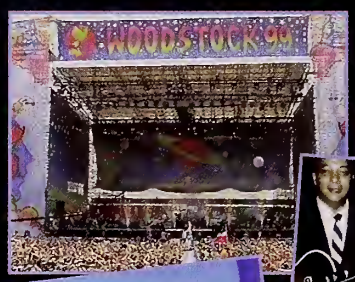

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- John Anderson, *Newsday*

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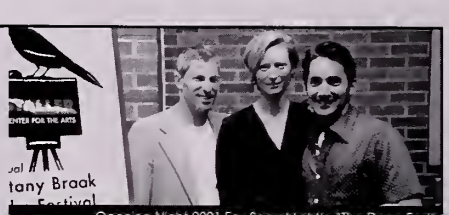
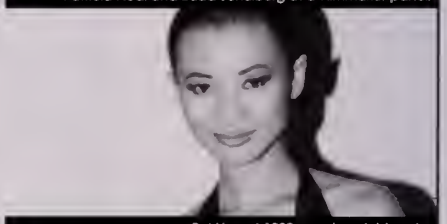

Opening Night 2001 Fox Searchlight's *"The Deep End"* - Writer, director, producer team David Siegel (l), and Scott McGehee flank leading lady Tilda Swinton.

2001 premiere Fine Line's *"Hedwig and the Angry Inch."*

2000 premiere *"Wild Flowers"* - starring Daryl Hannah and Clea Duvall.

2001 Stony Brook Filmmaker Reception from l to r - Jena Malone, Stony Brook University President Dr. Shirley Strum Kenny, Mary Stuart Masterson, *The Book of Stars* Producer Marie Cantin and Director Michael Miner, Festival Director Alan Inkles.

Patricia Neal and Budd Schulberg at a Filmmaker panel.


Bai Ling at 1999 opening night party.

2000 Stony Brook Film Festival Filmmaker Reception L to r: Village Voice Critic, Michael Atkinson; Newsday Film Critic, John Anderson; Lion's Gate *"Steal This Movie"* director, Robert Greenwald; Festival Director, Alan Inkles.

Rod Steiger receives Lifetime Achievement Award and is surrounded by the cast of *"The Headhunter's Sister."*

Back in November, the idea of an issue on shorts seemed like a refreshing way to loosen up for Spring. After all, what's not to like about shorts? The theme encompasses so much of the craft: such a wide variety of genres, approaches, techniques, individuals.... This seemed like an issue where we could truly offer something for everyone.

About a month ago I realized we had made a Terrible Mistake.

This feeling of dread did not grow from the back and forth of working with the additional writers who contributed to the shorts package. It was a big job for two new editors, but the really scary part was the dawning realization that ten articles would simply not be enough.

There's so much to cover!

Well, now it's Spring and you hold in your hands our imperfect overview of the world of short film. Hopefully, the features we've included will introduce you to new artists, new ways of working, and new resources. Hopefully they'll nourish new ideas. Because that's what we think AIVF does best: bring the elements together to help make it easier for you to do your work.

On that note, you may have noticed that our Field Reports have been getting progressively longer. Beth Pinsker instituted the Reports as monthly columns last summer, and we think they're a great way to reflect the broad community we serve. Readers of *The Independent* are so remarkably diverse: geographically, professionally, as persons, and through the work they make. These monthly columns allow us to shine a spotlight on the various communities we are made up of—and to introduce even more new resources and ideas.

Moving right along to old ideas, FIVF is gearing up to finally bring archives of *The Independent* online. We've had some false starts here: it's a big job to do on a slim dime—but this time we think it's really going to happen. To that end, we are updating our writers' data so that we can contact them about clearances for electronic distribution.

If you've ever written for *The Independent*, please phone home; and if you know a former writer who you believe may be out of touch these days, let them know we are looking for them. We'll keep our readers posted on the project.

—*Elizabeth Peters, Publisher/Acting Editor*

If you are a writer who needs to update your contact info, email: Jason@aivf.org or call 212-807-1400 x228.

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NEWS

WHO'S MINDING THE SHOP?

Media Giants Cast Aside Regulatory Oversight

BY RACHEL COEN AND PETER HART

As we sent this issue to press, the telecommunications policy landscape was changing day by day. The following is reprinted from a March 1 report by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting; things have undoubtable continued to change, so please visit www.aivf.org and www.fair.org for breaking news.

FEBRUARY 26 THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Court of Appeals overturned one of the country's last-remaining regulatory protections against media monopoly, and ordered the review of another.

The court overturned the rule that had prevented one company from owning both television stations and cable franchises in a single market. The court also ordered that the FCC either justify or rewrite the rule that bars a company from owning television stations which reach more than 35 percent of U.S. households, stating that as is, the rule is arbitrary and illegal. Both rulings were in response to a suit filed by Fox, AOL Time Warner, NBC and Viacom.

The court called the 35 percent TV ownership cap arbitrary, saying that the FCC hadn't provided proof that such a restriction was necessary. As for the broadcast-cable cross-ownership rule, the court claimed that the increased number of TV stations today and the competition from the proliferation of new services like satellite TV make the rule outdated and unnecessary to protect diversity (*Broadcasting & Cable*, 2/19/02).

Most news coverage echoed the broadcast industry's perspective, portraying the rules as ancient relics that the FCC was using to hold back vital new media companies. *The New York Times* (2/20/02), for instance, described the station ownership cap as having its antecedents in the 1940s and being "rooted in the fears of the European experience at the time that the television industry in the United States could come to be dominated by a few powerful interests."

References to "decades-old ownership restrictions" were common in mainstream coverage, giving a misleading impression of an industry constrained by "old" laws. The station ownership cap has been much revised since the '40s, when networks could only own three stations apiece. The numerical limit was increased a number of times over the years and finally eliminated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which allowed a network to own enough stations to reach 35 percent of the audience.

As one unusually frank article on Forbes.com pointed out (2/20/02), the idea that the government has been trying to keep media giants down is a myth. The FCC has been granting exemptions from ownership rules for years: "Pundits claimed that the court ruling 'opens the door' for a new wave of mergers among cable television conglomerates and broadcast companies," wrote Forbes, "But when was that door ever closed? Media companies have been merging with abandon for the last decade, rules or no rules."

What kind of changes can viewers expect from this latest round of deregulation? *The New York Times* enumerated a few: the bigger, more powerful networks created might gain "leverage over smaller stations" and force them to eliminate local programming to make room for network shows; networks could buy "syndicated programs, like 'Judge Judy'" on better terms; and networks would be free to increase cross promotion. "For example," explained the *Times*, "the more stations NBC owns the more times it can promote the 'Tonight' show in the late local newscast" (2/21/02). None of this suggests the increased diversity of offerings that media companies frequently promise when seeking the elimination of ownership regulations.

Several public interest groups—including Consumers Union, Consumer Federation of America, Media Access Project, Center for Digital Democracy, and the Civil Rights Forum—recently filed a joint comment with the FCC in support of maintaining ownership restrictions (see www.democraticmedia.org). They point out that "among broadcast TV markets, one-seventh are monopolies, one-quarter are duopolies, one-half are tight oligopolies, and the rest are moderately concentrated." The groups also noted that while the number of TV stations has increased from 952 to 1,678 between 1975 and 2000, the number of station owners has actually declined from 543 to 360 in the same period (TV Technology.com, 2/6/02).

The relaxation in ownership rules seems to have generated some opposition in Congress—Senate Commerce Committee Chair Ernest Hollings plans to hold a hearing on the issue in March (*Electronic Media*, 2/27/02)—but not much at the FCC.

> Media companies have been merging with abandon for the last decade, rules or no rules.

If the FCC wanted to stand up for the public, the agency could appeal the decision to the Supreme Court. It could also, as the appeals court suggested, muster new evidence to justify the ownership cap. But neither course seems likely, given the deregulatory zeal of FCC chair Michael Powell, who once declared that "the oppressor here is regulation" and has said that he has "no idea" what the public interest is (*Extra!*, 9-10/01).

The FCC's lackluster response suggests that the agency has forsaken its mission of safeguarding the public interest, and is prepared to allow corporations to redraw the media landscape as they please with little or no public debate.

Rachel Coen and Peter Hart are media analysts with FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting), a national media bias and censorship watch group. For more information, to subscribe to FAIR's publication Extra!, or to register for email action alerts, visit www.fair.org

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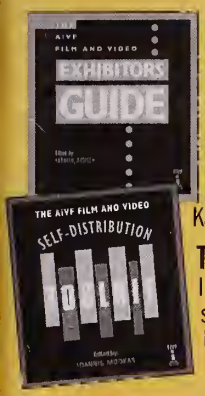

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Anthology Film Archives Plans Library Construction

BY JAMES ISRAEL

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, THE AVANT-garde and independent film museum in New York City is moving forward with plans for construction of an archival library. Founded by filmmaker Jonas Mekas in 1970, most film buffs probably recognize Anthology as a great movie house that offers retrospectives on filmmakers such as Werner Herzog, a New Filmmakers screening series, and is home to film festivals like The New York Underground Film Festival and MIX New York Experimental Lesbian & Gay Film and Video Festival.

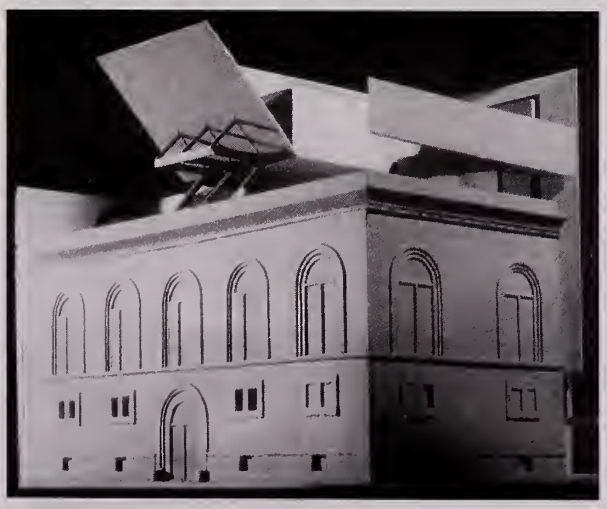
However, the very same building at 32 Second Ave. also houses the largest collection of film, paper, photo and video materials in the world on avant-garde and independent cinema, including books, periodicals, photographs, posters, tapes of lectures and interviews, festival catalogs, scripts, photographs and stills. Currently the material is available to the public by appointment only in Anthology's closed stack library.

The new library will be next to Anthology's current location. Plans are for a five story building with a ground level café (open to the public and a great space to hang out before a screening) and three floors to house the library holdings and study areas. The top floor will be the new home for Anthology's administrative offices.

Fundraising for the new building started in 1998 with a benefit featuring Patti Smith. Anthology is still in the fundraising stage, but has raised $65,000 for the city permits.

"The project has been revived in an earnest way," says John Mhiripiri, director of administration. "Jonas sees the library as the finishing touch to the project he started 31 years ago."

For more information please contact Anthology at (212) 505-5181 or visit www.anthologyfilmarchives.org.



Design for Anthology's planned Archival Library by Austrian architect Raimund Abraham, who designed interior of current building and recently, the award-winning design for the Austrian Cultural Institute in New York City.

Top: The Archive as envisioned.

Bottom: The Archive as it will relate to current structure.

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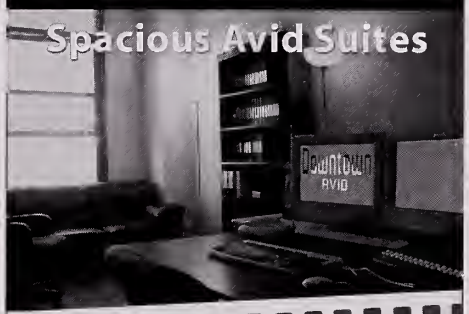
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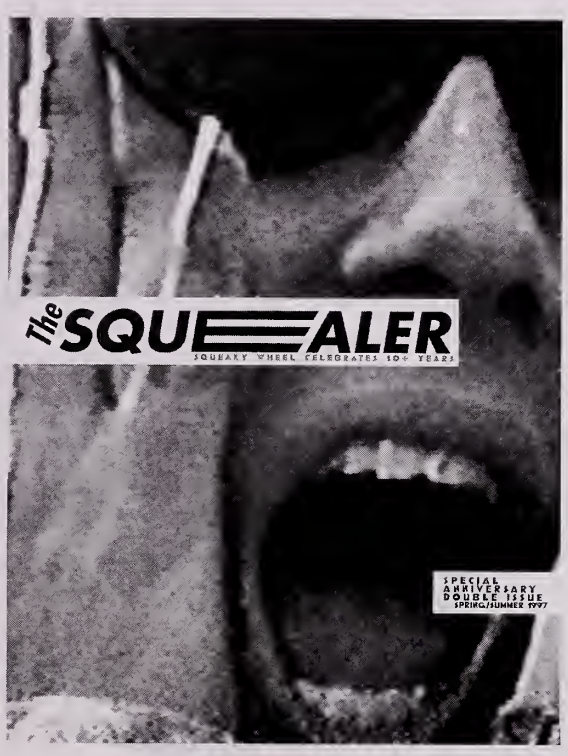
BUFFALO-BASED SQUEALER RETURNS

SQUEAKY WHEEL, THE MEMBERSHIP organization that provides equipment, workshops and screening opportunities for Buffalo and Western New York media makers, has revived its grassroots media arts magazine, *The Squealer*. Due to funding problems, *The Squealer* was cut back to a newsletter primarily promoting Squeaky Wheel services. "We're now returning to its original mission, to engage the local and international media community in intellectual discussion and debate," say editors Stephanie Gray and Kara Olidge. Past issues of *The Squealer* magazine had filmmaker interviews, reviews of media art and avant-garde films, and art pages. There is an open call for articles for the magazine but writers should first pitch their stories to *Squealer*. For more information: www.squeaky.org; office@squeaky.org



BMG OFFERS EASY ACCESS FOR LICENSING MUSIC

BMG MUSIC PUBLISHING, ONE OF THE largest music publishing groups in the world, has launched a global online search engine for filmmakers. Users can search data on over 700,000 copyrights ranging from Verdi to Elvis Costello. Users seeking pop music can search across 12 categories including acoustic, country, and hip hop and can choose from 22 moods such as corporate/motivational and summer/beach. Users can also preview a track and get a rate for licensing the music. "With such a huge catalog, with music ranging from big hits to production music, a filmmaker can find music to suit his or her project, whatever the budget," says BMG. See www.bmgmusicsearch.com.

BRITISH FILM GROUPS TEAM UP TO EXAMINE CINEMA STRATEGIES

"A BETTER PICTURE" IS THE TITLE OF A NEW proposal advocated by the bfi Exhibition Development Unit and managed by the British Film Council. The film organizations have developed a vision for three interlocking programs to develop specialized distribution, cinema education, and cinema exhibition. Their work has been informed by extensive studies of e-cinema and international models of support and distribution, an examination of cinema education practice, and an invitation for public comment (which closed March 3). "Direct intervention is crucial in order to generate change within the sector at a structural level, and to meet vital, cultural, social, and educational objectives," begins the report on specialized distribution models. The full proposals as well as the reports are available for download at www.filmcouncil.org.uk/filmindustry.

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Profiles

Stacy Peralta

Dogtown and Z-Boys

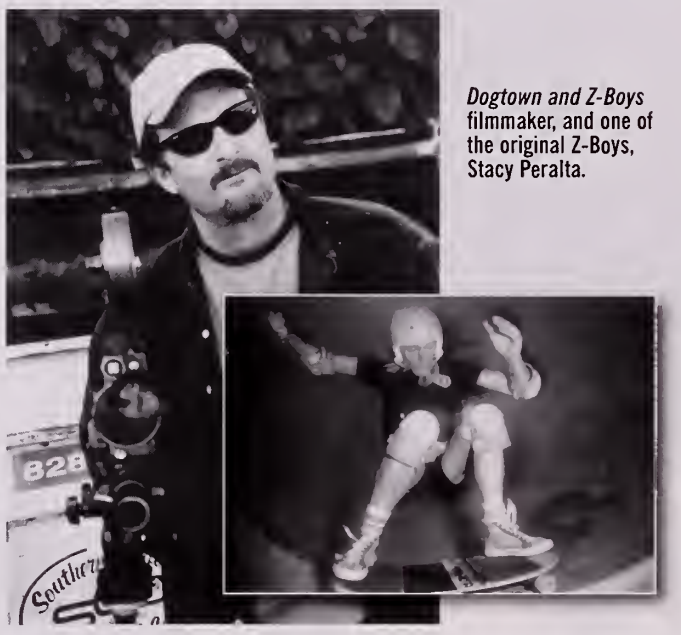
BY DANIEL STEINHART

YEARS BEFORE STACY PERALTA EVER PICKED up a camera, he was defying gravity on a skateboard. He began skating at the age of five and went on to become one of the sport's legends. He didn't know it at the time, but it was good preparation for filmmaking. In his documentary *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, Peralta draws on the same energy and flair that he once brought to skateboarding.

Narrated by Sean Penn, this multi-award-winning film takes an insider's look at the birth of modern skateboarding. It follows a gang of surfers who emerged in the mid-1970s from Dogtown, a rundown section of Santa Monica and Venice, California. These outcasts were known as Z-Boys, named for the Zephyr Surf Shop that provided them refuge. When the waves were low, they took their skateboards to canyon playgrounds and rode the paved hills as if they were ocean waves. Then, when a drought dried up hundreds of LA-area swimming pools, the Z-Boys made the best of it. They trespassed into backyards and rode the concrete pools with a bravado and style that took the sport in a new direction.

Written and directed by Peralta, one of the original Z-Boys, *Dogtown* shows how a bunch of hard-knocks kids unintentionally created a cultural phenomenon. "When I grew up, we were constantly told that skateboarding was a vandalistic, losing activity that was never going to get any of us anywhere," Peralta recalls. "But it was something that we really loved doing and that we stuck with. The film is a validation of that, because people are looking at it saying, 'Wow, this is really something; this is an American story.'"

Peralta originally wanted the story to be made as an independent fiction film, until Hollywood came calling, hoping to buy his life rights for their fictional version. "I was so pissed off that they wanted to come in and do it," he says. "And then it occurred to me, 'Let them do their film; we'll do the documentary.'" So he pitched the idea to producer Agi Orsi, who secured a $400,000 budget from Vans, the shoe and apparel manufacturer and a longtime supporter of skateboarding.



Dogtown and Z-Boys **filmmaker, and one of the original Z-Boys, Stacy Peralta.**

Peralta says that the company gave him complete creative freedom. Their only demand was that he shoot, edit, and deliver the film within six months.

With the help of a private detective, Peralta tracked down most of the old Dogtowners. Two of them, photojournalists Craig Stecyk and Glen E. Friedman, served as the film's co-writer and co-producer, respectively. Their original photographs and home movies, which had captured the Dogtown skate scene from its beginnings, help the film recreate the era's pivotal events. Peralta was interested in experimenting with the original material. "I didn't want to make a typical, methodical documentary," he says. "I wanted to approach a photograph differently than the way a traditional documentary does, which is normally to start with a wide shot of the photo and do a nice gradual push into a close-up. I thought, 'Let's photograph it from different angles. Let's speed it up and make it different.'"

Dogtown's unpolished sensibility derives from its embrace of technical mistakes. In one of the movie's funniest scenes, Sean Penn flubs his voice-over. The mistake could have been left on the cutting room floor; but left in the film it feels true to the spirit of the subject matter. "Skateboarding is an imperfect activity," Peralta says, "Part of the skateboarding experience is falling a lot, so the film was a reflection of that. Skateboarding is an activity where anything goes. You're constantly shifting your focus and improvising. The film seemed to want to be told that way."

One of the major challenges for the director was incorporating his own life into the story. "I didn't want it in the film because I felt that it would come across as too self-congratulatory," he explains. "But when Skip Engblom [co-owner of the Zephyr Surf Shop] saw the first cut, he pulled me aside and said, 'Why didn't you put in that stuff about you? By not doing that, you're rewriting history.' When I got his blessing, it was like, 'Okay, the godfather has blessed me. I can do this.'"

After his skating career, Peralta co-founded his own skateboard manufacturing business, Powell-Peralta. As a way for the company to reach out to its customers, he produced *The Bones Brigade Video Show*, which launched a skate-video revolution. Peralta taught himself filmmaking by shooting and editing the videos. He then went on to serve as a second unit director of skateboard action sequences in Hollywood movies.

Looking back upon the long road from his Dogtown days, Peralta says that now is the right time to tell his story. "You get to a point in your life where you ask yourself, 'What was real in my life?' Well, that time was very real. It was precious. It was uncorrupted."

Sony Pictures Classics will release *Dogtown and Z-Boys* on April 26 in the United States.

Daniel Steinhart is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn, NY.

Photos, this page: left, courtesy of C.R. Stecyk; right, Magic Lantern; facing page: left, DCTV, right, Paola Morrongiello

Jon Alpert

Downtown Community Television

BY DANIEL STEINHART

JON ALPERT HAS DONE A LOT OF STUFF. THE award-winning reporter and video producer has traveled the globe to bring exclusive reports on many of the world's political hot spots. He was often the first reporter to gain access to Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Iran, and Afghanistan at tumultuous moments. He produced breaking news stories with his investigations in the Philippines, the former Soviet Union, China, and Iraq. He interviewed Fidel Castro and Saddam Hussein. Domestically, he brought national attention to the homeless epidemic, environmental problems, and other important social and economic issues. He pioneered the use of the one-person ENG crew, and he produced a series of critically acclaimed documentaries for HBO. As if that wasn't enough, for 30 years he and his wife, Keiko Tsuno, have been running the Downtown Community Television Center (DCTV), one of the largest and most respected community media centers in the country.

Jon Alpert and his dog. The former fire station that houses Alpert's Downtown Community Television.

"I've spent many years at the forefront of news events," says Alpert from DCTV's converted firehouse in New York's Chinatown. "But our community projects are in some ways maybe more important."

DCTV began in 1972 in a loft on Canal Street, a stone's throw from its current location. Alpert and Tsuno parked a mail truck equipped with TV sets outside on the street and showed short videos dealing with pressing community issues. "Some of the tapes," Alpert says, "actually effected change in the community and were used to get better staffing of local schools, to have community input into local hospitals, and to create fair elections for the school boards."

A few years later, they started a youth program in response to budget cuts in the city's educational system. "We didn't think it was fair that these kids who were motivated and wanted to do well in school didn't have any type of electives," Alpert recalls. "So we walked into Lower East Side Prep and said, 'Here we are. We've got a Portapak. We'll teach the kids.' And they said, 'Okay.'"

Since then DCTV has taught videomaking to hundreds of inner city youth that have participated in production workshops and media literacy programs. These young media makers have won numerous awards for their productions, and have gone onto higher education and employment. "I think one of the most rewarding things we do is that we give these kids a chance," Alpert says. "If we went over the thumbnail biographies of our most successful students, you'd be inspired."

In addition, DCTV offers programs that serve the elderly and people with disabilities. They also provide low-cost video training workshops and equipment rentals to independent filmmakers.

One of the newest additions to the media center is the Cyberstudio, a multicamera, state-of-the-art studio with cable TV and web capabilities. Having spent years face to face with his documentary subjects, Alpert was initially hesitant about building a studio. "A studio takes you away from the people," he says. "You're not out on the streets. You're just somebody talking in a chair. I didn't want to do that. But then we began thinking, 'What if we could make it interactive?' We figured out that the Internet could be a useful tool to help our community in the same way that portable video equipment was." The broadband studio allows producers to stream programs to the web in real-time, as well as to allow viewers to participate via the Internet.

Spearheaded by program director Matthew O'Neill, the Cyberstudio broadcasts a series of cultural programs, like *Live From Downtown*, an interactive cable TV and web show that features performances by New York's downtown artists. DCTV also rents the Cyberstudio to outside groups for talk shows, community forums, and performances. Community activists have been using the studio to produce and broadcast Amy Goodman's *Democracy Now* public affairs program.

With its comprehensive video facilities, DCTV supports Alpert's ongoing documentary work. In recent years, his work has received strong backing from HBO. Sheila Nevins, executive VP of original programming at HBO, calls Alpert "a video genius." "He's rebellious in the way he interprets reality," she says. "He doesn't just record it; he turns it upside down and inside out. Without ever being on camera, he's really more of a social commentator than probably any other documentary filmmaker I've ever seen. He's just so original. You couldn't mistake his work for anybody else's."

One of his latest productions is a documentary he shot in Afghanistan. He followed Masuda Sultan, an Afghan peace activist living in New York who discovered that 19 members of her family were killed when the U.S. military wiped out the village they were taking refuge in. Alpert believes: "It's important that the American people know that along with the good things that have happened in Afghanistan—the repressive Taliban regime is gone and Al Qaeda doesn't have a haven at this point—that there are also consequences to employing our military might." The short aired nationally on PBS's *Now with Bill Moyers*.

Last year, Alpert made *Papa*, a moving portrait of his father, who suffers from a crippling nerve disease. The documentary has Alpert's trademark verité style, but it marks the first time he has turned the camera on his own life. For someone who has spent his career probing other people's lives, the change proves that Alpert continues to challenge himself.

Cinemax will broadcast *Papa* on Father's Day. For more information on DCTV, visit: www.dctvny.org.

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BY GAIL DOLGIN AND VICENTE FRANCO

2002 Sundance Film Festival Winner of the Grand Jury Prize in Documentary

Other recent NAATA Media Fund highlights include ANCESTORS IN THE AMERICAS by Loni Ding, THE DEBUT by Gene Cajayon, FIRST PERSON PLURAL by Deann Borshay Liem, THE FLIP SIDE by Rod Pulido, THE SPLIT HORN: LIFE OF A HMONG SHAMAN IN AMERICA by Taggart Siegel and TURBANS by Erika Surat Andersen.

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The Birthplace of Independence

BY JAMES ISRAEL

SCRIBE CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

A crew member on one of the Documentary History Project for Youth Videos.

A workshop session with instructor Maria Rodriguez (center).

"PHILADELPHIA HAS A REALLY STRONG independent video and film community," says Louis Massiah, Scribe executive director and founder. "[It is] not grounded in corporate media. People understand what independent media is." Scribe has been serving this tight knit, diverse community for almost 20 years, offering a wide range of educational workshops, fiscal sponsorship, equipment rental, screenings, and a catalogue of videos. Though their services may seem similar to other media arts organizations, "one of the things different with Scribe is its strong relationship with local community organizations and the neighborhood," says Massiah.

Scribe offers a tremendous service to Philadelphia residents through programs such as Community Visions, which helps community organizations make their own video about important issues in their neighborhood or cultural life. Scribe provides the equipment and technical assistance for a 10 month session that brings in two experienced filmmakers to guide the pre- to postproduction process and ends with local screenings and listing in Scribe's catalogue. Past videos have been *To The Point*, about a needle exchange program for habitual drug users and sex industry workers and *Mediation: Untangling the Knot*, which instructs communities on peaceful alternatives to violence. Upcoming projects include a video for recruiting mentors for paroled prisoners by the prisoner assistance program Thresholds and a video on urban gardens in West Philadelphia by University City High School.

Scribe reaches out to young people with its Documentary Youth History Project. High school students write a script, then shoot and edit a documentary about local Philadelphia history. Scribe also recently screened youth-oriented projects by RAVE, a group dedicated to issues affecting gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual youth, and The Philadelphia Student Union, which is composed of student activists and organizers advocating for the rights and needs of the Philadelphia student population.

Scribe also offers multiweek workshops on everything from 16mm film production to scriptwriting for documentaries to oral history production, which are open to everyone from novices to middle-range filmmakers, regardless of experience. Many of their instructors are also working filmmakers. Scribe relies on past alumni to offer mentorship to new filmmakers. "Some of the people that have come through Scribe, Nadine Patterson, Aishah Simmons, Andres Nicolini, Margie Strosser, lots of folks have helped build Scribe through their participation in the programs," says Massiah.

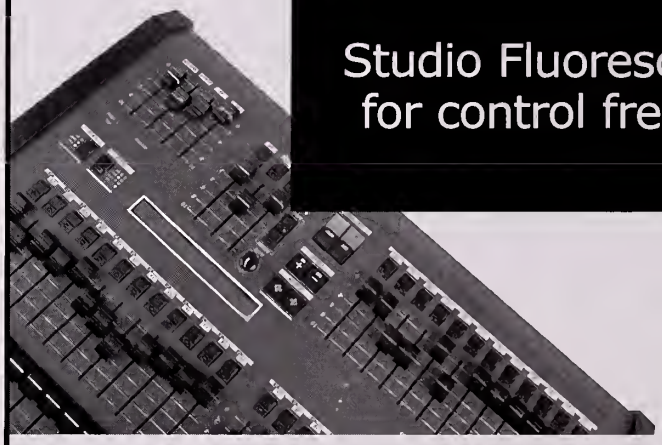
Scribe was founded in 1982 to assist a community that Massiah felt did not have proper access to media tools and instruction. "I realized in the early eighties that Philly did not have a media arts center where people could come together and work together. New York City had DCTV, Boston had BFVF, everywhere else had a place," says Massiah. He also felt at the time if you weren't matriculated in a university that you were left out of the local independent film/video scene. "We are consciously bound to work with the constituency of Philly that have been excluded from access to training and technology." This statement is strongly reflected in Scribe's mission, which is to "engage people of color, women, young people, senior citizens, and those with limited economic resources in a dialogue about the potential of the video medium."

Scribe's future plans include planning for their twentieth anniversary celebration in December. "There will be a number of public events, screenings, and publications to connect with the twentieth anniversary and a further kind of sharing with what Scribe does," says Massiah.

For more info, see www.libertynet.org/scribe.

THE RETURN OF PIVFA

PIVFA, THE PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT Video & Film Association is celebrating its newfound autonomy after electing its first board of directors this past January. The membership organization previously existed as part of the University of Pennsylvania's International House but has been operating on its own for the past year, with an application for 501(c)(3) status currently in the works.



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The move for independence grew from a desire to focus on the needs of local film and videomakers without existing as one aspect of a larger organization. The biggest change is that "membership now determines what the organization is going to do," according to Ron Kanter, longtime PIVFA member and newly elected board member.

The new 25-member board has several individuals well-known in the Philadelphia independent film community, including Ray Murray (TLA Entertainment Group and Philadelphia International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival), Sharon Pinkenson (Greater Philadelphia Film Office), and Mike Lemon (owner of Mike Lemon Casting), to name a few.

Based at the University of the Arts, the organization currently has over 200 members and over 700 mailing list subscribers. Last year they revived the PIVFA newsletter, which offers information on membership accomplishments, screenings, grants, and other opportunities. PIVFA has also started PIVFA Assist, a Tuesday evening phone and e-mail hotline that answers production-related questions. Malkia Lydia was hired as the organization's first director last October.

In the past year, PIVFA has premiered films by members and local filmmakers, awarded subsidy grants, offered production workshops on lighting and audio, and has been involved in informational panels on funding and Public Television. PIVFA also was involved with MAESTRO, AIVF and NAMAC's traveling series of artist focus groups, screenings, panels and networking opportunities.

For more info, visit www.pivfa.org; call 215-717-6464; or e-mail contactus@pivfa.org.

PHILLY INDYMEDIA CENTER PURCHASES SPACE

The Independent Media Center of Philadelphia is currently seeking donations to help refurbish a dilapidated, three-story building in Western Philadelphia that they purchased off the auction block last October for $15,100.

Philly-IMC is a part of the international IndyMedia collective offering independent, non-corporate media coverage via the Web and their newspaper, *Unconvention*. IMC-Philly was created to serve as a hub for over 600 volunteers providing alternative coverage of the Republican Convention in the summer of 2000 (see Conventional Wisdom, The Independent, 11/2000). Since the convention, IMC-Philly has continued to build and support a broad network of independent media makers producing grassroots political coverage.

The future uses for the new space include a home for Philly-IMC, local radio station Radio Volta/WPEB, a public gathering space for film screenings and classes, a public computer lab, and a literature and video library. As the building is lacking certain essentials like plumbing, electricity, and heat, IndyMedia is looking for additional funds so they can bring it up to speed.

For information about IMC-Philly and how to make donations, visit www.phillyimc.org.

TEMPLE SUPPORTS ARTISTIC EXPLORATION

Temple University's Department of Film and Media Arts (FMA) has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the top programs fostering socially conscious work, predominantly in the area of contemporary documentary. The school also prides itself on its role in fostering the alternative voices often ignored by Hollywood and commercial media; better-known graduates include Cheryl Dunye, Niva Dorell, Paul Harrill, and Kimi Takasue. Temple students have garnered an impressive array of awards, from Eastman Kodak scholarships to Oscar nominations.

The program was an early adopter of digital tools, and students have access to an impressive array of technology, from DV to BetaSP to a "hypermedia laboratory," for computer controlled and computer generated media. The School of Communications and Theater (SCAT) received close to $5 million from Pennsylvania's Link-to-Learn program, which was used to upgrade new media facilities in the school.

Students in the FMA also benefit from the School's focus on the creative aspects of new media. SCAT embraces the idea that "Any new medium carries within it the seeds for new conceptual models and new means of interaction." To this end, the School offers a New Media Interdisciplinary Concentration that allows students to expand upon traditional FMA skills and studies through an exploration of convergence technologies and the evolution of media traditions. Curriculum includes computer-based animation along with web and interactive media production classes.

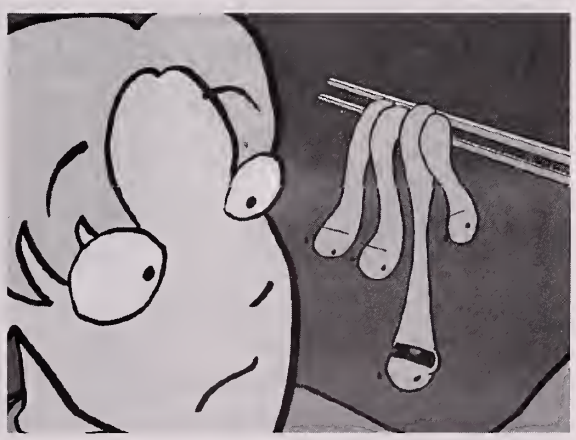
At the same time, Temple has renewed its commitment to the film format, with recent investment in new Aaton Minima super 16mm film cameras, Avid systems for posting film projects, and Pro Tools LE systems for posting film sound.

"The currrent MFA first year is full of hot shots," says associate professor LeAnn Erickson, "...but we've always attracted strong candidates. Students come to our program because here they can develop work in any genre—narrative, documentary, experimental, new media—but above all because they are encouraged to develop work that reflects a personal vision."

For more info, visit www.temple.edu/fma.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT THE 2002 PHILLY FESTIVAL OF WORLD CINEMA

The Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema returns April 4–15 for its 11th year with a John Sayles retrospective, the "Set in Philadelphia" Screenwriting Competition, a newly added Student Film Festival, and The Festival of Independents.



Sean McBride's *That Special Monkey*

Photo: courtesy of Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema

Director-screenwriter John Sayles will be on hand to host a retrospective of his classic films *Return of the Secaucus Seven*, *Lianna*, *The Brother from Another Planet*, and *Matewan*. Well-known horror writer Clive Barker will make his eerie influence felt: he created this year's festival trailer.

The Philadelphia Filmmakers Office and the Greater Philadelphia Film Office are again presenting the "Set in Philadelphia" Screenwriting Competition, which offers awards for best script set in Philadelphia region, best script by a person under 21, and a new regional award for best script set in Philadelphia by a Philadelphian. The panel of judges include Henry Bean, Writer/Director of *The Believer*, Holly Veronica Becker, director of production and development for IFC Productions, and Glenn Holsten, producer/director with national PBS production credits such as *Mothers March* and *The Sounds Of Philadelphia*.

Reflecting current times, the festival is programming Cinema of Muslim Worlds, which will offer dramatic feature films from seven countries about Islamic life. Other international fare includes New Korean Cinema and cutting edge films that appeal to late-night crowds called Danger After Dark. The Student Film Festival, curated by Next Frame will present student films from all over the world, including *That Special Monkey*, by Sean McBride (University of the Arts, USA), *Out of Darkness*, by David Rittey (Victoria College of the Arts, Australia) and *Ribat*, by Dilek Gelebi (Anakara University, Turkey).

Rich Murray's *Snipes*.

A part of the festival (in what could be a festival all by itself) is The Festival of Independents. This year's festival, like last, will be jam packed full of screenings, panel discussions, networking opportunities, and parties. Festival of Independents opens with the American premiere of Rich Murray's film *Snipes*. Featuring rap artist Nelly and set in Philadelphia, the film premiered last year at the Toronto International Film Festival.

On the panel side, PitchFest, a free event sponsored by Festival of Independents and Greater Philadelphia Filmmakers, is an opportunity for screenwriters and filmmakers to pitch their ideas and scripts to agencies in two minutes or less. Keepers of The Flame, a panel discussion of local exhibitors, will offer audiences a chance to pick the brains of Gretjen Clausing (Film at the Prince), Ned (Films at the Balcony), Jay Schwartz (Secret Cinema), and George McCullough (DUTV) and find out why they choose the films that they do.

Chicks on Flix will offer a feminine perspective on the film industry with filmmakers and industry professionals, such as Sara Bernstein (HBO), Gage Johnston (Scout Productions), Michelle Parkerson (filmmaker and professor at Temple University), Anula Shetty (Termite TV), and Kimi Takesue (2002 Slamdance Award Winner).

Finally, just to prove the festival offers something for everyone: filmmakers wondering why their film didn't make it into the festival will appreciate Blast-Off!: An Event for the Cinematically Incorrect, an open mic session for people to share their complaints, release some steam, and share some horror stories over a beer. To round it all out is Cast-A-Way, a chance for wannabe actors and actresses to meet face to face with local casting agencies.

For current details and for a full festival lineup: www.phillyfests.com.

When not deskbound at AIVF providing information services, James Israel is actually a Brooklyn-based filmmaker. He thinks people in Philadelphia are awfully nice.

Photo: courtesy of Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema

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RESOURCES

BY GRETJEN CLAUSING

MovieMaker Magazine recently voted Philadelphia one of the top 10 North American cities for filmmaking and it's easy to see why. Quality venues, committed service organizations, and motivated advocacy groups make for a lethal triple threat. This tight knit, resourceful and diverse community has dug deep and found renewed energy and focus despite its close proximity to the Big Apple. Its rich documentary tradition, hype-free narrative filmmaking, and feisty media activists are evidence that the spirit of independence is alive and kicking.

When in town check out the organizations profiled, plus:

DUTV Drexler University Cable 54: Locally programmed with its slate of indie television, DUTV is a welcome respite from humdrum cable offerings: www.dutv.org.

Film at the Prince: The Sharon Pinkenson Film Project, with its eclectic repertory calendar, is the unofficial venue for indie film from around the corner and the globe: www.princemusictheater.org.

Greater Philadelphia Filmmakers: This new program of the energetic Greater Philadelphia Film Office focuses on local filmmakers with seminars, training, networking opportunities and more: www.film.org.

Media Tank: An outgrowth of the Philly IndyMedia Center, Media Tank works to broaden the debate on important issues of media democracy: www.mediatank.org.

Philadelphia Film Society: is home to two major film festivals, Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema and The Philadelphia International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival: www.phillyfests.com.

PhillyDV: A new group focusing on providing information on new digital and computer technologies for area media makers and producers: contact rob@robkates.com.

Gretjen Clausing is part of the glue that holds Philadelphia together. A former director of PIVFA, she now runs Film at the Prince.

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CineMart and the IFFR

Six thousand meetings and a few dance numbers

BY MARK RABINOWITZ

ON JANUARY 30TH, THE INTERNATIONAL Film Festival Rotterdam's (IFFR) CineMart (www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com) wrapped up in its usual fashion: the festival staff gathered on stage around 2 a.m. at the end of the market's closing night party and danced and sang along to "When Will I See You Again."

It has become a tradition loved by the attendees, and many (inebriated) partygoers held cigarette lighters and candles aloft to celebrate the spirit of CineMart, quite possibly the most enjoyable and convivial business experience in the film world.

Producers Alicia Kratzer and T. Todd Flinchum in Rotterdam

An omnipresent fixture of the festival is Ido Abram, who has been the coordinator of the invitation-only CineMart for the past four years, and estimates that he has seen the event grow between 20-25% in submissions and participants during his tenure. Prior to the IFFR, Abram worked for Dutch art house distributor Cinemien for five years. He has also served as head of marketing, press, and communication for the Netherlands Film Festival. Abram is careful to point out that credit for the growth and success of CineMart must be shared with others. "When I stepped in, everything was set.... I didn't have to start from the ground level." CineMart is the brainchild of IFFR co-director Sandra den Hamer, and prior to Ibram's arrival it was run by Wouter Barendrecht (Fortissimo Film Sales) and Janette Kolkema.

There are three kinds of invitations to the market, and each year the list of who receives what type of invitation is updated with input from the advisory board. Invitees have the chance to buy an accreditation, are given a free accreditation, or granted a free accreditation plus hotel nights. All invitees are then set up in meetings. As far as how the meetings are arranged, Abram explains that the "financiers we invite let us know what projects they are interested in" and those meetings are guaranteed. Additionally, the producers with projects in the market can put in requests, and those are honored on an available basis.

How many meetings take place during the CineMart, you might ask? "This year there were well over 6,000 meetings. Almost 7,000, I think," says Abram. He is not certain of the number because the festival's scheduling software only has a capacity of 6,000, and anything over that is guesswork. Whatever the actual number, it's clear they reached a very healthy level. During the CineMart's four-day run, filmmakers with projects in the market have upwards of 30 formal half-hour meetings, and countless more over myriad beers during the IFFR's many parties and receptions.

Attendees who are asked say the key reason for their participation at the CineMart is its mood. "People do business here in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere," says Abram, and the pressure is off, since "it's not necessary that deals are closed here, as long as they are started here." And successful it is, with Abram claiming that a whopping 85% of projects at CineMart end up being financed and made into films.

Attending CineMart for the first time were producers Andrea Sperling (*But I'm a Cheerleader*) and Jasmine Kosovic (*The Adventures of Sebastian Cole*), who along with director Jamie Babbit (*But I'm a Cheerleader*) were representing Babbit's new script, *The Giggle Factor*, a comedy about money, child molestation, and the odd habit humans have of laughing at truly horrific situations. They were thrilled with their experience not only because they had dozens of positive meetings and made significant progress toward raising money, but also because they were selected to participate in the Rotterdam-Berlinale Express. The Express is a selection of six CineMart projects that get to make a presentation at the European Film Market in Berlin (see www.indieWIRE.com for a complete list of winners).

Another group making their first trip to CineMart was the Cambrai Liberation Collective. T. Todd Flinchum, Alicia Kratzer, and Dante Harper are three of the four people responsible for *The Delicate Art of the Rifle* (1996), directed by Harper (Steve Grant, the fourth member, wasn't in Rotterdam). Their market project, *Dreamland* follows the life of Timothy McVeigh, from his early teen years to just before the Oklahoma City bomb explodes. On the opening day of the market, Harper was slightly nervous, but much less so than he would have been in a regular L.A. film biz setting. "In L.A., these are the kind of meetings that give you diarrhea," he joked. Yet echoing the sentiments of the rest of the CineMart participants, he remarked that the low-key atmosphere of was relaxing.

Photo, this page: courtesy of filmmakers; facing page: courtesy of IFFR

***Manic*, by Jordan Melaned**

I spoke to the trio again at the end of the four days, and they had nothing but glowing things to say about their experience. They had more than 20 meetings and things seem to have gone well. "We were prepared for the hard questions," says Kratzer, "'What does this mean for France?' and so on, but everyone seemed to get [the project]." Harper pointed out that because it is a relatively exclusive market for both projects and producers, "the assumption was that if you're here, you're ok." Harper was also impressed by how noncompetitive the participants were and how everyone seemed genuinely interested in each other's work. Kratzer added that she doesn't "understand why other markets aren't run like this." Flinchum seconded her feelings, adding

Harry Smith in Paola Igliori's *American Magus*

that while "there were a few cast restrictions" proposed by potential financiers, "overall you couldn't ask for a better market." Their only qualm? "They should ring a bell" at the end of the half-hour sessions, remarked Flinchum. It seems that some meetings were going so well that the participants didn't want to end them, so they ran over their allotted time.

As far as the American entries in the festival proper, it was a mixture of films already released in the United States, such as *The Man Who Wasn't There*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Donine Darko*, and *In the Bedroom*, indies soon to be released, like *Manic* and *Scratch*, and a few premieres, including Suki Hawky's and Michael Galinsky's *Horns and Halos*.

Horns and Halos is an engrossing and well-made doc about the battle over *Fortunate Son*, J.W. Hatfield's biography of President George W. Bush. *Fortunate Son* caused something of a scandal when the original publisher, St. Martin's Press, dropped the book for no apparent reason and Sander Hicks and his New York guerrilla publishing outfit, Soft Skull, subsequently picked it up. Hatfield and Hicks make for interesting, if flawed, subjects, as the doc traces the evolution of the book from its original publication in 1999 through the Chicago Book Expo of 2000. Surprising and revealing, *Horns and Halos* delves into journalistic ethics and presidential politics, and scratches the surface of a potential conspiracy that might well be a worthy subject for another film.

An additional world premiere was *American Magus*, Paola Igliori's documentary bio of American artist/filmmaker/collector/eccentric genius, Harry Smith. For those of you who don't know Smith's work, in the early 1950s he was responsible for compiling the definitive collection of American folk music (Bob Dylan once remarked that if it weren't for Harry Smith, "I wouldn't have existed"). He was also arguably the first experimental filmmaker, a prodigious collector (painted Ukrainian Easter eggs, for example), a voracious reader with a photographic memory, and, to be honest, pretty kooky. All this adds up to a compelling subject for a documentary; unfortunately, that doc has yet to be made. Igliori's film is too long and miserably edited. Moreover, Igliori was very close to Smith (she claims to have been with him when he died), and the film lacks a necessary distance from its subject. There are several redundant and unnecessary pieces in the film, and it could easily be cut to 60 minutes (festival running time was 93 minutes). Also, many interesting people are mentioned as having been influenced by, or friends with, Smith, and very few are interviewed or shown.

On the successful side are two films soon to be released in the United States: Jordan Melamed's *Manic* and Doug Pray's documentary history about hip hop DJs, *Scratch*. *Manic* (IFC, mid-June) is a gritty and moving look at a group of emotionally disturbed teenagers at a lock-down facility in California. Melamed's DV format and mostly handheld camera work heighten the anxiety level of the film. *Scratch* (Palm Pictures, March) is a comprehensive review of the rise of hip hop DJs, from their beginnings as basic sidemen and musical backup to MCs to their rightful place as musicians. Current famous DJs like Qbert and Mix Master Mike are interviewed and shown doing their thing, as are pioneers in the field of hip hop music, including Cool Herc, Jazzy Jay, and Afrika Bambaataa.

***Horns and Halos*, by Michael Galinsky**

Overall, the IFFR is not a prime showcase for American indies—although the fest does screen quite a lot of experimental and video work from the United States. But there is no danger of being lost in the shuffle, like at Sundance or Toronto. If your American film is one of the few world or European premieres in the fest, it stands a good chance of being singled out by a Dutch audience who truly appreciate independent films of all genres.

Mark Rabinowitz is co-founder of indieWIRE *and is the film critic for* Alternative Press *magazine. He has written for* IFCRant *and* Time Out New York, *among others, and is currently in postproduction on Vincent Stasolla's* The Forgotten *as co-producer.*

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Lucky 13

Palm Springs International Film Festival

BY RANDY MATIN

Photo: courtesy of Palm Springs International Film Festival

***No Man's Land*, directed by Danis Tanovic**

IT WAS THE YEAR OF LUCKY 13 FOR THE Palm Springs International Film Festival (www.psfilmfest.org), maturing at this juncture, from the quick weekend affair it was when the late pop-singer-turned-politician Sonny Bono first cobbled it together 13 years ago.

During this time Palm Springs has grown in status among regional festivals. Independent features are screened at the Festival of Arts triplex, as well as at the Desert Museum's Annenberg Theatre, Resort Theaters' Courtyard 10 multiplex, and at the Palm Springs High School.

But indies are only a part of a larger program that this year saw some 160 films unspool. Among these were intriguing documentaries, including director Carmen Piccini's tribute to Federico Fellini and the BBC television production *David Hockney Secret Knowledge* in which the master artist assembles a time line of painting from the Renaissance to the modern, citing amazing advances in imagery that came along with the invention of the optical lens. As artists and animators today lovingly embrace computer technology, Hockney argues that painters from the fifteenth century and onward used tools—specifically the optical lens—to help them capture and render images. Although he is not the first to further this idea, Hockney is the first to suggest that the use of such tools was in much wider practice then the global art community has previously cared to accept. The first of the doc's three screenings turned out to be a major art event, with a patient and lucid Hockney in attendance, and staying well over an hour after the film's conclusion to take and answer questions.

Thanks to its veteran programming staff, headed by Jennifer Stark, the festival offers sidebars that reach out to diverse communities, from the Coachella Valley's large population of Jewish seniors to the city's prominent gay population. The ongoing sidebars Il Nuovo Cinema Italiano and Cinematographer's Day (programmed by pathologist and indie filmmaker Dr. David B. Kaminsky) continue to draw record crowds with discussions on Dogma 95 and the digitizing of cinematography.

Adding a new sensibility to the mix, Ian Birnie, who runs the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's film department, came on board with a slate of films from France and Germany. Among Birnie's selections was a pair of quirky 50-minute narratives by Alain Guiraudie, a relatively unknown French filmmaker with an undeniably unique voice and vision. *That Old Dream That Moves* speaks of desire and rejection in enigmatic ways with an effortless gay twist. In contrast, *Sunshine for the Poor*'s folk legend mystery theme and passive defiance to spell out every last detail feels like an F. Scott Fitzgerald short story transported to a European desert. Many, including Birine, feel Guiraudie is poised to become a major new talent in international cinema.

Star power is always close at hand in Palm Springs, long a getaway for the likes of Sinatra, Presley, and a myriad of former presidents. And this year was no exception with Alan Bates present to accept the festival's Career Achievement Award and make appearances at a nine-film career retrospective. *Amelie* director Jean Pierre Jeunet was also flown in as was *Moulin Rouge* helmer Baz Lurhman for evenings of film and conversation.

Glitz aside, the festival's greatest calling card is its ability to cull a large number of films submitted for the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar. This year the festival's 43 offerings (out of the 51 films submitted by their respective countries) represented nearly one third of the festival's total programming. While a handful of these films are well known on the interna-

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Makova Comfort Gay, directed by Gil Portes

tional cinema scene, like Jan Sverak's *Dark Blue World*, most of the selections are projects by indie directors, albeit indie directors who now enjoy some degree of backing from their respective governments despite a lack of significant domestic distribution.

Elling from Norwegian director Petter Naess took one of the top 10 slots among audience balloting. The sweetly comedic tale follows the life of two socially impaired men who are given an apartment in the heart of Oslo upon release from a mental institution.

A surprise among audience favorites was the four-hour Indian confection *Lagaan: Once Upon A Time In India* from director Ashutosh Gowariker. The film includes lavishly choreographed musical fantasias replete with a cast of hundreds of brightly costumed dancers and singers. Harder hitting was German filmmaker Oliver Hirschbiegel's prison drama *The Experiment*, and the sober, methodical, and well-wrought Portuguese entry *Camarate* from director Luis Filipe Rocha, a work that peels back deep layers of a 25-year-old government cover-up. At press time, none of these films had U.S. distribution, though *Lagaan* does have an impending home video release through Columbia/Tri-Star.

In an effort to address the terrorist attack in New York, the festival organized a post September 11-themed director's panel. Filipino director Gil Portes, who had two films at the fest, *Markova Comfort Gay* and his country's Oscar submission, *In The Bosom of the Enemy*, was one of the few to respond positively when asked about filmmakers taking on new responsibilities after the assault. A resident of New York City, Portes, whose films are politically charged, answered that "responsible filmmakers should do something, should show the problems." But as the discussion grew, many of the international congregates, although they empathized with America's woes, felt the U.S. point of view as expressed through CNN was either one-sided or distorted.

Tricky Life director Beatrice Flores Silva, whose film is Uruguay's Oscar submission, stated she was "shocked by the Twin Towers, but in Uruguay we have to live every day with problems. And not just those defined by the 'official version,' the American view of the world." This opened the door for French Canadian filmmaker Denis Chouinard, (*The Tar Angel*) who remarked, "I'm sickened by the American TV depiction of Arabs as all blood thirsty savages." He also heatedly expressed his opposition to the U.S. embargoes directed at Cuba and Iraq. Danis Tanovic, director of the Oscar submission *No Man's Land* from Bosnia, looking jetlagged and unshaven, agreed with Chouinard but also conceded, "This is always the way after a violent world event. It's like the story of Sisyphus. This same panel will likely convene again in 50 years and still be arguing the same questions."

The following evening a shaven and tuxedoed Tanovic would be seen on national television accepting the Golden Globe Award for his film. Ironic, yes, but once they'd had their occasion to vent, the consensus among these international indie filmmakers seemed to be: hold on to one's artistic vision while waving the American flag.

Chouinard's comment perhaps says it best, "In order to be heard, filmmakers of the world will have to stop making films in their native languages because the United States only speaks English." "Otherwise," he sniped, "we will always be relegated to a niche audience."

Randy Matin is a SoCal-based journalist inspired by those who pursue the creative spark and continue to push the envelope across the spectrum of the arts. Reach him by e-mail at PacNewGr@aol.com.

Photo, this page: Courtesy of Palm Springs International Film Festival; facing page: courtesy of the filmmaker

Mood Swings

Shorts International and NY Shorts Expo celebrate poetic visions

BY THERESA EVERLINE

No Dumb Questions, directed by Melissa Regan

THE PLACE OF SHORT FILMS IN THE MOVIE world is akin to the place of poetry in the book world. Consider this: Alan Dugan's collection Poems Seven sold a mere 20 copies the week before it won the prestigious National Book Award in 2001. Shorts, like poems, have no obvious mainstream outlet. Their brevity, rather than being a draw, seems to be off-putting. Audiences accustomed to the narrative arc of features are often cool to the truncated rhythm of shorts.

The for-love-not-money status of the genre lends itself to deeply inventive work, which could be seen at two shorts festivals held in New York City early this winter. The programs were chock-full of innovative pieces just long enough to convey revelatory moments, as well as poetic films steeped in moods and ideas.

Unfortunately, the aftermath of September 11th placed the festivals up against much more than the usual public indifference. It was extraordinary what the Fifth Annual Shorts International Film Festival, held November 12-15, had to endure. Case in point: I almost didn't make it to the opening day's digital program because the crash of Flight 587 in Queens that morning meant the bridges and tunnels into Manhattan were clamped shut yet again. Then an anthrax scare paralyzed the very subway station that delivered people to the closing-night awards ceremony at the Loews Lincoln Square Theatre.

The festival's (www.shorts.org) programs were split between the professional but soulless Loews and, for all the digital films, a gem of a screening room 70 blocks away in the Tribeca Grand Hotel. The herding together of all the digital entries was because the festival had received accreditation from AMPAS, which doesn't accept digital entries for its shorts category. Since any short that won (thus making it eligible for Academy Award consideration) had to be created in a film format, the festival decided to break out the digital projects and give them their own competitive division.

As a viewer, it wasn't so odd to sit through a digital program that mixed documentaries, narratives, and animation. Part of the pleasure of a shorts program is in the mood swings.

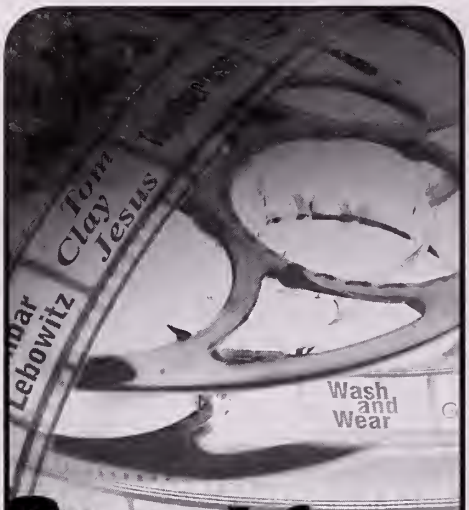
The digital winner was the pitch-perfect documentary *No Dumb Questions*, which captures three young sisters' reactions to their uncle's sex-change operation. The doc's first-time director Melissa Regan considered the pros and cons of separating out the digital films from the rest of the entries. It could boost visibility and recognition, said Regan, yet "my concern is that if digital films remain separate for too many years, we run the danger of relegating them to a second-class status." Nonetheless, she acknowledged that her film, a quickly unfolding family event, would not have been possible without the digital format.

Festival director Lisa Walborsky explained that the use of Loews, instead of one of the many indie screening rooms in the city, was a deliberate attempt to give the films some mainstream cachet. "The filmmakers said it was nice to see their films in a [conventional] theater," Walborsky noted, adding that she hoped the location would make potential filmgoers more comfortable. But there was a drawback: Loews won't give up weekend screens, requiring the festival to show works only during the week when most commercial movie patrons aren't paying attention. At Loews, audience attendance in the afternoons was sparse with the nights faring only a little better. Audiences were further minced because all the programs were shown several times over the festival's three-day run.

When asked why she began the fest five years ago, considering there was already a well-established shorts festival in New York, Walborsky said her main reason was to boost the form's exposure. "I really thought, 'can't we put these [short films] in a commercial venue so they're not always a sidebar at festivals?'" She added that in the last few years Internet and cable companies have paid more attention to shorts programming.

The New York EXPOsition of Short Film and Video (www.nyexpo.org) held its 35th annual event on December 6-9. Like the Shorts International Festival, the EXPO screened a mix of American and foreign works. The quality of projects at both festivals was high, with several standouts. Clearly, there are more than enough shorts to fill two fests held within weeks of one another; each showed more than 100 films with almost no overlap between them. I noticed only one repeated entry, the technically adept *Copy Shop*, directed by Austrian Virgil Widrich (nominated for an Academy Award for best live action short).

The EXPO also felt the considerable repercussions of September 11th, mostly in the form of sponsors dropping out. Anthrax scares weren't a distraction; rather, it was Robert DeNiro who created a stir. On the festival's opening day, the film media were abuzz with DeNiro's announcement that he was going to put on a May film festival in Tribeca.



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Gregor's Greatest Invention, directed by Johannes Kiefer

For the EXPO's opening-night program, the 100-seat Two Boots Pioneer Theater in the East Village was standing room only. The audience enjoyed *Gregor's Greatest Invention*, a charming entry from Germany directed by Johannes Kiefer that eventually took third place in the fiction category (it was also nominated for an Academy Award for best live action short). Almost half of the evening was given over to *The Unknown Putin*, a 52-minute documentary by Sergei Miroshnichenko. As the director follows the Russian leader around for a day, we discover his subject through unexpected angles: instead of policy, we learn about Putin's computer literacy and how he prefers his tea.

The remainder of the festival took place at NYU's Cantor Film Center, which filled up several times. At one point, for the documentary *Big Blue*, a horde of the film's subjects—New York City handball players—swarmed in, cheered in appreciation, then shuffled out before the next film started.

In the competitive animation selection, *Adagio*, directed by Russian Garri Bardine, took first place. It is a stark, angular work in which origami figures act out an epic religious parable. In contrast, the second-place winner *The Neighbors*, directed by Stephan Briykov, is a whimsical tale about bulbous characters being transported by music.

The documentary winner *Close and Far Away took* one element of the depressing state of world affairs and invited it into the theater. Director Tsipi Trope is an Israeli Jew; her subjects, two brothers-in-law, are Arab Israelis. One man is a successful commercial photographer, the other a one-time militant. It's an assured, honest, and surprisingly powerful portrait that's been shown on Israeli TV. America, glutted recently with profiles of suicide bombers and other extremists, would benefit from seeing Trope's film (deliberately cut at 52 minutes to be TV-friendly), but subtitled films are always a hard sell to an American audience.

John "Rookie" Wright (center) serving to Lloyd "Power" Babbs during the 2000 King of the Courts game in Justin Sullivan's doc, *Big Blue*.

The poet Mark Strand once said that most poets are drawn to the unknown, and writing is a way of making the unknown visible. The same could be said for the makers of the best of the short films in these two festivals. It's just too bad that their works can't be *more* visible.

Theresa Everline lives in Brooklyn, N.Y. Her most recent article is on Errol Morris's documentary Vernon, Florida, appearing in The Oxford American's special issue on Southern film.

Photos: courtesy of filmmakers

Diary of a Producer in Utah

Taking *Stone Reader* to Slamdance

BY ROBERT GOODMAN

Photo: ©2002 Robert M. Goodman

At the mic: Slamdance co-founder Peter Baxter (left), and Stone Reader director Mark Mosokowitz (speaking).

A year ago my friend Mark Moskowitz called and asked my advice. He'd made a film, didn't know what to do with it, and thought it was pretty good even though he had intended it to be seen only by a few friends. I was intrigued. After watching a rough cut, I signed on as the consulting producer to move the film out of Mark's basement and into the world.

Stone Reader was accepted into No Borders, the coproduction market held in early October in conjunction with IFP's feature film market in New York. We submitted a rough cut to several festivals. Slamdance took a chance and selected the film for its competition.

Now in its eighth year, the Slamdance Film Festival, which touts itself as the festival by filmmakers for filmmakers, has the distinction of being the oldest alternative to Sundance. Here are my impressions of my first trip to Park City.

Day One, Philadelphia. Pitch black 4 a.m., Friday, January 11th. I dress in clothes carefully laid out three hours ago, wired from weeks preparation. My flight leaves at 7:15 a.m. The shuttle arrives at 5 a.m. A 12-minute ride to the airport. Before September, I would have left at 6:15 a.m. Instead, I check my bags, pass security, and arrive at my gate at 5:20 a.m. At 6:15 Mark calls to say he won't make the plane because of technical problems. He'll fly out later. At 6:30 my wife calls. Her mother has fallen gravely ill. Leaving immediately for Pittsburgh. Our son Daniel, who just graduated college, will house sit. I board the plane, tired and torn. Someone should be at the first event of the day, Slamdance's meet and greet at 2 p.m.

The plane is empty. I nap briefly. We arrive early. The bright, cold sun in Salt Lake is insistent. Climbing steadily the shuttle carries me toward Park City. An hour later, I've checked into the condo. I didn't make these arrangements, so I have no idea whether the location is good or bad. There's space for four. Later in the week, we'll have to house five. A full kitchen. Add buy groceries to my to-do list.

Park City. Disoriented. I catch the bus (free) to the Transit Center in Old Town and transfer to the #4 bus. The Silvermine is where all the Slamdance events are held. It is the last stop on a circuitous route that winds through the mountains for 25 minutes despite the fact that the Silvermine is just over a mile from town. On the bus paranoiacs offer explanations. Make a note to find out the taxi fare.

The Silvermine. More than an acquired name, the Silvermine was once a working mine. Then a museum. Slamdance moved here two years ago after the museum failed. The Slamdance staff has transformed the detritus of a mining museum into a 200-seat theater, lounges, offices, and a snack bar for the eight-day run of the festival. This location offers free parking, an appropriately edgy setting, and space enough to hold all the events in one venue.

I pick up my filmmaker credentials, which entitle me to free coffee and bottled water, a major bonus that's essential for survival given what I've heard. Screenings in Park City run from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. There are six festivals underway, as well as parties. Can anyone watch a film at 8:30 in the morning? I grab coffee and head to the press office to deliver our press kits and clip reels. Margot Gerber, director of media relations, and her assistant occupy a small office. Margot asks if I want to sign up for the last interview slot on a Park City TV show. Absolutely. The first rule of promotion is never pass up an opportunity no matter how insignificant it seems. We get an 8:35 a.m. slot the day before our screening. Thankfully, the station is only

two blocks from our condo. I sense sleep may end up measured in minutes over the week to come.

The lounge fills up with filmmakers. Jeremiah, a student at Emerson, spots me. He's here with a film. I coached his under-eleven soccer team. His mom calls and he puts me on, we talk. Total dislocation. Dan Mirvish, outfitted in mining garb, introduces the staff. Afterward, the filmmakers introduce themselves. We are encouraged to feel we are all in this together. The first screening at Slamdance immediately follows. I'm too exhausted. Plus, I've yet to register with Sundance—I'm covering Park City's main event for another magazine. Paying bills takes precedence. I head to town.

Sundance's hotel headquarters, as I pleasantly discover, is yards from our condo. Make a note to thank Mark's mother. She made the travel arrangements. Hundreds of people mill about the hotel lobby. Six public relations firms have offices here for Sundance. In the press office, a dozen staffers sit at long tables registering press, answering questions, managing the tape library, and handling special requests. I register and am told to return tomorrow to pick up my badge.

I leave the hotel and look around. The ski resort is directly in front of me. Two high schoolers, who've spent their afternoon snowboarding, look at me dressed in my filmmaker's uniform of black with the same bored curiosity of spectators at the zoo. The lifts rise to the top of the ridge and the geography of Park City snaps into place. A once sleepy town at the base of two ski areas, Park City now faces suburban sprawl. I walk past my condo to the shopping center a block beyond. Two bags of groceries later, I'm in the condo making my first real meal of the day, 17 hours after morning coffee.

I cook and take calls from our arriving team. Damon, an affable producer and longtime friend, is on a shuttle. Mark calls between connecting flights. Sue, a lively, talkative consultant from Los Angeles, whose first job was working for Mark, arrives and finds a party before calling for the condo address. She shows up after I finish dinner. Unpacks while I nap. Damon arrives. At 8:30 p.m. we leave for Slamdance's Opening Night Party. The bus to the Silvermine runs once an hour after 6 p.m., so we grab a cab. Eight dollars and six minutes later, we're in line for free drinks. The party gets raucous fast. We split up and start working the crowd. Hand out promotional postcards. Talk. And then talk some more.

We have one screening on Wednesday at noon. One shot at filling the theater. The only way to make that happen is to make sure nearly everyone has heard something about our film before Wednesday. If we can stick the name, the time, and the date in people's heads, we'll garner an audience. Nothing else matters and nothing will matter for the next six days.

Day One in Park City is actually week three in my month long campaign. The first task was to build an e-mail list. Then, at regular intervals, I send out brief notes with intriguing headlines to 100 distributors and 300 press people. A one sheet. Interesting quotes from subjects in the film. Always highlighted is the date, time, and location of our screening. My second rule is to make when, where, and why easy to spot. Busy people, bombarded by hundreds of filmmakers, have no patience hunting for facts.

Mark arrives after 10 p.m. We hang for an hour or so before calling it quits. Sue parties on.

Day Two, Park City. Up early. Get credentials for Sundance. Go to the Maryland's Slamdance filmmaker breakfast. See Christina Ricci being interviewed and Ray Liotta conducting an interview. We fuel up and strategize. Slamdance has warned us—no leafleting allowed on the streets of Park City. Sue will talk to people and hand out postcards while waiting in the lines for Sundance screenings. Damon will engage people in conversations on Main Street. Mark and I stake out Sundance's House of Docs. It has a comfortable lounge and full slate of panel discussions designed to bring doc filmmakers and the players together.

The first panel of the day is a discussion called "Roads to New Funding," moderated by Ruby Lerner of Creative Capital with filmmaker Jon Else and representatives from ITVS, NEH, and Sundance's Documentary Film Fund. I buttonhole Michael Shirley from the NEH to introduce myself. Ruby, present at a rough cut screening we did in the fall, chimes in to rave about the film. Shirley decides to meet with us, 20 minutes hence, to discuss funding. We grab a quick bite and have a great discussion with him. Makes the morning. I call my wife; the prognosis is bleak. We're worlds apart. I hand out postcards and talk to people about the film, meditatively, until 3:30 p.m. Then off to a press reception at Sundance.

Filmmakers' lounge at the Silvermine

Photo: ©2002 Robert M. Goodman

Evening—a private party. Redford shows up. Women of a certain age pull out their pocket cameras. I talk non-stop between sips of wine until the party runs out of steam. Then off to another party. Talk non-stop there. So it goes until after midnight.

Day Three. Sunday. Head to church of Slamdance for a 10 a.m. screening and to check the theater. See two shorts—*Better Life* and *The First Story* —and a competition doc, *Thank You for the Rubbish*. The projection is fine, the shorts outstanding. *Rubbish* funny, interesting, but raw. Afterward, see Ray Liotta at the same place on Main Street as I return to my

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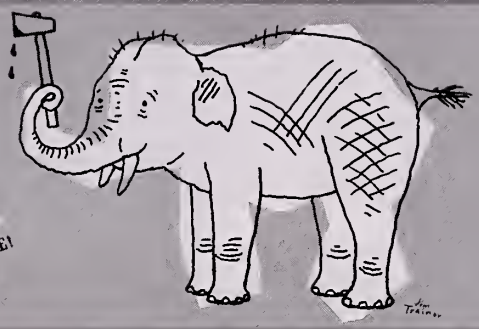

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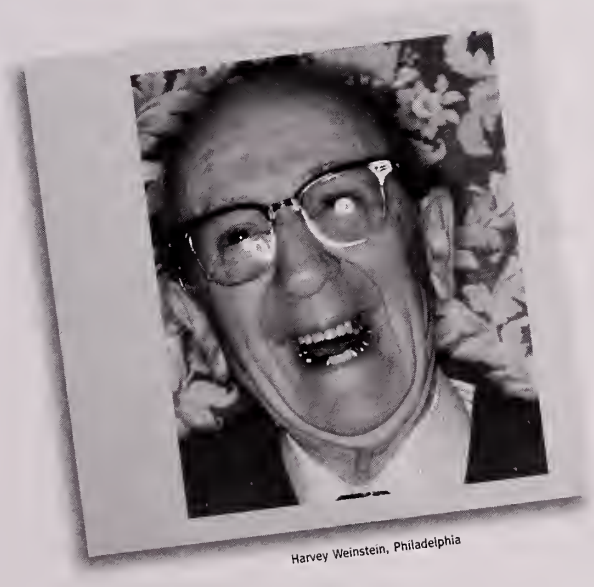

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post-production

Peter Baxter talking to filmmakers at the Silvermine

post at House of Docs. Talk, listen, and more talk. Slowly, an awful realization seeps into my brain. All of the people we're promoting the film to are leaving on Monday or Tuesday. None will be here on Wednesday. Apparently, people come for the first half or the second half of Sundance. Monday is the changeover day. We've wasted more than half of our postcards. I call everyone. Stop now! We must do a full court press on Tuesday. Only Tuesday counts. Damon is in bed early fighting a cold. Drag Mark to a Sundance sponsored party. Accidentally end up meeting Park City residents. Glad. They'll be around.

Day Four. Monday. Mark does a great radio interview for a Salt Lake City station. Buy tickets for *Blue Vinyl*, a Sundance doc. Go to a House of Docs panel. Afterward, talk to Alyce Myatt from PBS who introduces us to Cara Mertes from POV. Alyce gives Cara a glowing report on our film. We consider advertising in the print version of indieWire. Expensive. No space available above the fold. Inserting postcards in indieWire is a possiblity but we don't have enough. Disheartened. All for nought? Go to another Slamdance doc screening. Great short and good feature. The news from home worsens.

Go to Sundance screening. Plusher seats, better projection, older crowd. Sold out. Ebert sits in special seat at the back of the center aisle. The filmmaker's team of suits scans the audience, spotting press and players. Film ends. Ebert slips out. I meet his producer. Return to House of Docs for a reception. More parties, more talk. Burnt toast by 1 a.m. Sue rolls in from a party at 4 a.m., wakes us up.

Day Five. Tuesday. Early a.m. Park City TV interview. Breakfast. Pass Ray Liotta in same spot. Our team launches into maximum promo mode. Talk, postcards, pitch, promote, talk, more talk. Don't stop talking. Everything rides on our performance. Can't recall when I quit. Sometime after Patrick Stewart tells me he's allergic to shellfish. Wednesday a.m. for sure.

S-Day. Drop Mark at the Silvermine. Go to House of Docs for final promotional push. Then, back to the Silvermine to spend an hour helping tweak the projector. Finally, it's perfect. The audience enters. Peter Baxter, Slamdance's co-founder, introduces Mark. Theater about two-thirds full. Not bad. The film starts. Seven minutes in the audience begins laughing. The film plays. No rustling, just laughter, nods and sighs. The film ends. Loud applause, on and on it seems.

For me, all the hard work just paid off. Mark does a Q&A. Finally, they clear the theater for the next screening. We celebrate. It's over. Much later, we go to a cajun-themed party for a Sundance film in a Park City synagogue. Hot music, cold beer, warm pizza. I dance. Head back after midnight. In bed by 2 a.m., my phone rings. Sue with an invite to a hot party. Groan, roll over.

Day Six. Thursday. Relax. Meetings. Talk to my wife—all bad news. We fly back tomorrow. The Slamdance Awards begin at 7 p.m. No expectations. Closing party at 9 p.m. We arrive. The awards start. After a few categories, *Stone Reader* receives the Special Grand Jury Honor. Mark shakes

Photo: ©2002 Robert M. Goodman

hands with jury, leaves empty handed. Pleased but confused. More Sparky awards are handed out, including the one for best doc. Then, the Audience Award for Best Feature Film—it's us. We won . . . a Sparky! One really heavy dog. We get on stage. Wow! All smiles! Italian Television grabs Mark for an interview.

Slamdance juror Heide Van Lier comes over, with Penelope Spheeris in tow, says, "It occurred to us you have no idea what any of this means. We voted to create a special award to acknowledge your film as best in the festival." Breathe deep. The Audience Award is prestigious because it demonstrates audience appeal. Films that win this award usually find distribution. Exhale. Slamdunk!

Winners screen Friday. For us, a 3 p.m. slot. The closing party starts. It's deafening but I call every distributor and press person I know. Then call Daniel and dictate an e-mail to my list. Mark calls his wife, then his mom. Mom works out new travel arrangements so we can be at the Friday screening. We party! Damon drowns his cold.

Day Seven. Friday. We pack up and check out. Catch the beginning of the first award screening at the Silvermine. There are less than 10 people there. Mark and I go to Park City to try and get people to come to our screening. It's like pulling teeth. Plus, it's snowing. The audience for our screening is small. Everyone is burnt out. No big laughs. Too much effort required. Later I discover my "award-winner screens" e-mail never went out because of a technical problem. Mark and I drive to Salt Lake City to impose on friends for the night.

Day Eight. Saturday. Up before dawn, we get lost driving to the airport. The plane is empty. Mark sleeps. I watch the lights of Salt Lake City fade away.

ENDNOTE: *Stone Reader* was covered by indieWIRE and received a glowing review in *Variety* after Slamdance. The film screened in Los Angeles at the American Cinematheque as part of Slamdance's Best Of series. We remain hopeful about distribution.

Robert Goodman is the consulting producer for Stone Reader, *the author of a forthcoming book on editing, and an Emmy nominated director. Send your comments to robert@stonereader.net*

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Blood of Many Poets

Short films are the laboratories of cinema

BY RACHEL TSANGARI

Cinematexas, founded by Rachel Tsangari, celebrates the poetics of the short form.

"SHORT FILMS ARE THE LABORATORIES OF cinema" is the conviction that I and a group of similarly inflamed partners in crime set out to celebrate when we started the Cinematexas Short Film+Video+New Media Festival in 1996. Who would have thought that this University of Texas-based program would so rapidly grow to be one of the most significant international short film festivals in the country, showing over three hundred films over five days?

But quantity is hardly a qualifier for quality, as length is hardly a qualifier for cinema, and Cinematexas was established as a home for work that is brave in its brevity.

How brief is a short film, really? "The frame is eyelids," says Michael Snow, the Canadian artist who has never compromised, surrendered, rested, nor looked away. What would be the shortest film imaginable? A film without a plot, with a camera movement, without a camera even? What, after all, could be more cinematic than a single human glance, suspended for a brief moment on the screen?

Could cinema exist without a screen, a theater, an audience? Is cinema today able to be content-provoking, instead of merely content-providing?

In recent years the dotcom rediscovery of the short form (after all, it's nothing new) has spawned a legion of work that tries to be big and ends up looking small. We will ignore these works. "Product" belongs on grocery store shelves; the cinemaphile seeks something else altogether. Short is sweet only when it dares to be brave.

How brave can a short film be? Touched by passion, inspired by rebellion, they can stubbornly explore lands of rare and fragile images, sounds, mirrors, gestures, ideas. They are road trips into the heart of innovative and groundbreaking cinema. And like all road trips with no fixed destination, maps or rental cars, they explore new alternative routes, secret lands of fragile yet visceral images.

On this journey short films traverse the ever-evolving, crucial landscape of anti-cinema. And I call it that, because short films (our short films), like the antibodies developed by an organism to fight a disease, are the immune system of cinema. By their defiance of tired tropes, stale genres, and vacuous representation, they arduously defend the stamina and integrity of the moving image, whether on celluloid or digital.

For audience members, exposure to all these new testimonies of re-generated life leaves us invigorated: trustful that cinema, in spite of pessimistic predictions, is

not just alive: it's constantly and stubbornly reborn. Kicking and screaming, breathing and shrieking, resisting confinement, bouncing all over those hundred years in suspension of disbelief.

And if silver halide or magnetized particles are the itchy flesh of cinema, what is its blood? What are the red cells, carrying oxygen to the muscles, brain, and viscera? What are the white cells fighting off infection, protecting the body from invasion, decay, and even from itself? What makes cinema blush? What makes it shiver, shudder, and spill its precious bodily fluids?

Shorts allow cinema artists to take the risks that are otherwise pre-empted by the lumbering mechanics of the feature process. They allow makers to leap with faith into the void, because even if they fail gloriously it is but briefly, then it is already time to make the next leap of love.

Short films are the passionate glances of cinema poets. Shy, soulful, bold, subversive; they take but a moment but can change a lifetime. They fix the truth of right now onto chemical emulsions and magnetized particles and preserve it and explode it. Short filmmakers are the transcendental poets of cinema: from those that are trying to find their voice to those trying to change the world.

Godard once said that "technique is a moral act." The preservation, exhibition, and expansion of cinema as we've known it, and as we're about to re-engage with it at the threshold of convergent media, is similarly a moral act. Not moralistic, not righteous, simply what needs to be done.

Our responsibility as image makers, spectators, curators, activists, life participants is to keep holding these tiny mirrors up between history and memory, reality and dream, reality and its reflections, reflections and their realities, the human flesh and its reincarnation on celluloid or digital bits. And to do so sacrilegiously, unapologetically, blissfully.

Rachel Tsangari's feature film The Slow Business of Going *was the* Independent *cover story in July 2001. She is the founding director of Cinematexas and also programs for festivals and cinematheques in Europe.*

Short Stuff:

It is a bit artificial to characterize a body of work solely by length: particularly when 'short' means anything up to an hour, depending on who you are talking to.

Often simpler (often cheaper!) to produce—but usually more challenging to distribute—shorts can be the most independent of independent work. Shorts can also be mini versions of commercial entertainment; and with advances in technology and in producers' skill and savvy, it's getting harder to distinguish animations from ILM (Industrial Light and Magic) from IDM (I Did it Myself).

In general, a more manageable scale means a lower economic barrier, and the dearth of commercial distribution opportunities requires shorts producers to find creative ways to get their work to audiences.

"It's just as much work and almost as expensive to acquire, negotiate a contract, work with the filmmaker to collect elements and market a short as it is a feature," explains Debra Zimmerman, Executive Director of Women Make Movies, a New York-based non-profit distributor celebrating its thirtieth year. "Multiply that work by five or six if you are making a compilation. The economies just aren't there."

Fortunately, Women Make Movies and a host of other distributors continue to champion the short form. In recent years, Internet companies looking to diversify their revenue streams helped mine new markets. And for little more than the cost of a UPC code, independents can turn their promotional tapes into sales units, and with the falling costs of DVD production even more short filmmakers may take up self distribution.

What follows could be considered a compilation of shorts: short articles that address the subject of shorts, from conception to distribution.

—*Elizabeth Peters*

6 to 1, Half a Dozen to Another

Austin shorts celebrate DV technology

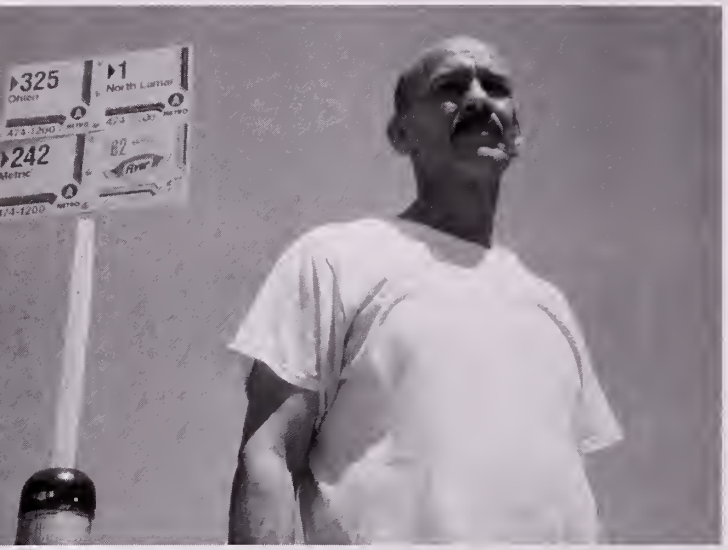
BY CHAD NICHOLS

The *Six in Austin* crew, from left: Zack and Wyatt Phillips, Nathan Zellner, Bob Ray, Gonzo Gonzales, David Zellner, Cat Chandler, Geoff Marslett.

Photo: courtesy of filmmakers

HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT MAKING A SHORT ON A SHORT'S BUDGET and end up with a feature? Just ask Wyatt and Zack Phillips who conceived the film, *Six in Austin*, which screened as part of the narrative features showcase this year at South by Southwest. The film is a collection of six shorts, all filmed in Austin by local filmmakers. The whole idea started with a film called *Six in Paris*. Made in 1965, *Six in Paris* was a collaboration between six of the French New Wave's stalwarts—Godard, Chabrol, and Rohmer, among others—to celebrate two things: the fascinating landscape of urban Paris and the advent of portable 16mm technology. When the Phillipses came across the film in their studies at the University of Texas, they were struck by its unique structure and purpose. Explains Zack, "My brother, Wyatt, immediately had the idea: 'This would be really great to do in Austin.' We could do it on digital which now is almost the equivalent of the new technology that's coming out."

But envisioning a project involving six filmmakers is one thing and executing it, quite another. The idea was to involve established filmmakers to ensure a finished project. Fortunately, finding interested parties wasn't a problem. "We'd approached different friends of ours and just sort of pitched it as an idea, and everyone we talked to said, 'Yes,'" says Zack. Kat Candler, who had previously written, directed, and edited the award-winning feature, *cicadas*, recalls, "Zack Phillips whispered for me to come outside so he could tell me something because it was top secret.



Carlos, from Wyatt and Zack Phillip's entry in the *Six in Austin* compilation.

I don't think I even hesitated or asked any questions, just agreed to participate."

Even with such enthusiasm, things remained hypothetical until the brothers recruited Gonzalo Gonzalez, a regular of the Austin small-gauge collective Cinemaker Coop, and producer of the feature, *Moonlight by the Sea*. "Gonzo really got the fire moving in us. He kind of spurred along the project and we found some great producers to come in and help us coordinate the thing." The great producers of whom Zack speaks are Anne del Castillo, of Austin Film Society fame, and Tamara Klindt, a veteran of the local film and theater scenes. Del Castillo remarks, "When I was at the Film Society, I could see all these different little groups forming but no crossover." *Six* seemed like a viable way to bring some of these different elements together.

The final *Six in Austin* lineup features the brothers Nathan and David Zellner, whose feature *Frontier* debuted at the 2001 SXSW; Gonzalez; Candler; Geoff Marslett, who's currently finishing up the animated feature, *Trip to Roswell*; Bob Ray, helmsman of the rock and roll/stoner/action flick, *Rock Opera*, and the Phillipses. Although all of the participants had completed features and many had other projects already in the works, the decision to do *Six* was a no-brainer. By using digital video, they could keep production costs minimal, and with a producer to focus on fundraising, they could concentrate exclusively on the creative process. The Phillips brothers were adamant that there should be no common thread between the films, not so much as a shared actor, in order to give the individual directors the green light to really do things on their own terms. The only stipulation was that the films in some way incorporate the idea of Austin.

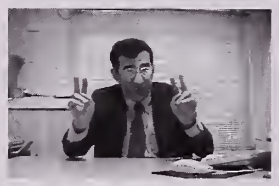
This was more than just a continuity consideration. As Del Castillo points out, "This diversity of filmmakers coming together for a project like this is definitely inherently Austin." Candler adds, "I think there's a lot of talented individuals in this town but there's a lack of business minded folks to support them. One of the main things I wanted to get out of this was for Austin talent to get recognized by producers and business types. I don't want to have to move to Los Angeles or New York. I think I'd die."

Chad Nichols is an Austin-based musician and writer.

Short Essays

Documenting the practice of D-words

BY KAROLINA TEHLE



Accountant Howard Seligman, the subject of Jill Chamberlain's short doc about financing films with credit cards, *Living on Borrowed Time*.

THE MOVEMENT FROM MEDIA ARTS centers to home editing stations means that today's independent documentary makers often work in isolation. Maybe they're even a little lonely. And they're sure handy with computers.

That might explain the success of The D-Word Community, an online discussion forum for documentary professionals. Established by filmmaker (and AIVF board member) Doug Block during the process of making his 1999 documentary *Home Page*, D-Word has grown from one filmmaker's diary into a thriving international community. Now hosted by Utne Café, The D-word Community accommodates discussion of everything from nonlinear editing systems to philosophical quandries to the benefits of Omega3 supplements. Community members provide each other with much needed support through the long process of making non-fiction work.

Docmaker Jill Chamberlain.

Put a bunch of filmmakers together and they'll gleefully talk film. Eventually, a few will wonder why they're just talking about it and get to work continuing the conversation using their medium of choice.

So was born the first D-Word collaboration, Essays on Documentary, a collection of short docs on the subject of making docs. "This seemed to grow pretty naturally out of our on-line discussions," says Block. "Get creative people together and they'll want to work with each other. Ultimately, it seemed like time to pick up a camera."

Robert Goodman shows off his festival badge collection in his short on the life of a doc maker.

The concept for the production was to create a package of short films, conceived and created to play well when streamed over the Web. The package itself could be combined in various ways to create programs that could be sold to television or screened at festivals.

Photos, this page and facing: courtesy of filmmakers; Goodman photo: ©2002 Robert Goodman

Prospective topics were discussed by the full community, and Essays on Documentary was elected. Four supervising producers worked with the nine producers who elected to contribute work. Based in cities from San Francisco to Munich, they worked collaboratively to view streamed edits and advise each other. "This was ambitious, and we were a little ahead of the technology," says Philadelphia-based producer Robert Goodman, who produced a short shot on HD. "We ended up relying on low tech methods and mailing video tapes to each other."

Online collaboration remained a key part of the creative process. The final projects ranged from 40 seconds to six minutes. Last spring they were offered online by docuweb.org and the project itself received notice in the national trades.

Following September 11, D-Word members channeled their conflicted responses into their next collaboration, War and Peace, a compilation of works that has screened at various venues and was invited to the Amsterdam International Documentary Festival last winter. The project is also streamed on the D-Word site. "The process was totally different," says Block. "The first project was somewhat regimented, and War and Peace just came together very organically and democratically."

War and Peace is currently screening in public venues that allow it to catalyze public discussion of the complex issues it invokes. D-Word members have not yet begun discussion of their next collaboration, but they're sure to get around to it—once they resolve that Omega3 debate.

To view the streamed works, learn more about The D-Word, or register for the online discussion community, visit www.d-word.com.

Karolina Tehle lives in New York.

Epics in Brief

Short filmmaker mines big visions

BY CHAD DUERKSEN

AS A FILMMAKER, GILLEY HEBERT REFUSES TO TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT.

In three years, the 21-year-old Houston native has already made three large-scale shorts: a 1960s psychological thriller, a parody of the "Evil Dead" films featuring children in the title roles, and a silent tribute to classical Hollywood. His current project, *When Knight Falls in the City,* is his biggest challenge yet—a 16mm 1940s crime drama/superhero serial—but neither the period aspect nor the large cast deters the writer/producer/editor/director/actor from his vision.

"I can't make a movie in my backyard," he said. "When I write a story, I don't look at what I have, I let it go where it needs to go. I'll worry about where to get the ballroom later."

Indeed, *Knight Falls* does feature a large ballroom sequence, which required a room full of extras decked out in 1940s fashions and hairstyles. Shooting in College Station, Houston, Galveston and Austin, TX, the 40-minute film is actually a segment of a much larger story, inspired by the likes of *Dick Tracy* and *The Spirit.*

"The film is set up like two chapters of what was originally planned to be a six-chapter serial. Since then, we've decided to turn it into two feature films with twelve chapters in all—When *Knight Falls in the City* and *When Knight Falls in the Jungle*. We're actually working on fundraising and are in the very early stages of development."

Hebert is no stranger to working within a much larger canvas than what's generally seen on screen. His first film, *The Two Days In Between*, is actually a sequel and a prequel to two other stories he's conceived but not yet shot, and bridges the larger films together. But *Lil Dead*, an 8-minute spoof of *Evil Dead*, is his most popular title. Although the film's initial VHS run of 300 copies sold out through Hebert's production company website, a new DVD release with an improved transfer from Super 8 is in the works.

Hebert's inspirations range from silent films to serials, comic books to camp classics, from the Rat Pack to Universal monster movies. He's also adamant about shooting on film, a notion that seems, to some, frivolous in today's digital video age.

"It's a shame because there are so many talented moviemakers out there who can't get any recognition because of all the guys who run out, turn on their video cameras and call themselves 'film' makers. I stopped shooting video in high school."

No matter the medium, Hebert is determined to find success, and faithfully rejects the idea of failure.

"As a little kid, everyone tells you that you can be anything you want." he said. "Then you graduate high school and people are like, 'Movies, that's great....What's your back-up plan?'"

He smiles wryly before answering. "I don't have one. This is it."

MXM/Maximum Entertainment's website: www.mxmentertainment.com

Chad Duerksen is an award-winning screenwriter based in Austin, TX.

Gil Hebert directs Kim Ellison and Brian Wells in the ballroom sequence of *When Knight Falls in the City*

Brave Horizons

Don't ring the death knell for the short film boom just yet!

BY KIM ADELMAN

A FEW YEARS AGO AT THE ATLANTA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL I WAS on a panel entitled "The Short Film Renaissance." The organizer proclaimed, "Thanks to the Internet, DVD, and other distribution avenues, the long overlooked short film has become a marketable commodity."

With all the excitement generated by AtomFilms and other rapid-growth distribution and exhibition companies, it certainly did appear that the short film had finally won its place in the sun. That year at the Palm Springs International Short Film Festival and Market unsigned filmmakers were besieged by dotcom acquisitions executives armed with sizable checkbooks. My contribution to the renaissance was producing mass-market short film compilations on DVD, distributed as volumes of *Short Cinema Journal*. Somehow the company I worked for had convinced Warner Home Video that there was a mass market for short films.

We all believed the hype. Now cut to 2002. Most of the acquisition execs are jobless, and the DVD company I worked for is history.

The boom mentality fueled by dotcom mania may be gone, but short format filmmaking is alive and well. To give them their due, the dotcoms did open up untapped markets and pioneer brand new revenue streams from which filmmakers are still benefiting.

During the dotcom goldrush, filmmakers began to believe they could get rich off their shorts. And like all those out of work execs, filmmakers need to perform some expectation modification. "How much can one expect to get in today's marketplace? Sometimes not a lot, sometimes a tremendous amount," explains Andrew Weiner, senior director of acquisitions and development for Hypnotic, a production and marketing company that managed to weather the changes through aggressively developing partnerships. "It really depends. Some films turn into phenoms, licensing to tons and tons of markets and fetching a fairly high value. Others are truly fantastic movies, but they generate next to no revenue."

What's radically changed is not really how much a film can make, but how little a film can cost to make. "The advent of the digital camera has made filmmaking more accessible to everyone out there who wants to make a short," proclaims John Halecky, manager of programming at iFilm. "The tools are readily available. Take your DV camera, firewire into your computer. Edit right at home, put on music, credits, and graphics. You're done." Halecky notes that iFilm gets many submissions arriving on a mini-DV tape or burned onto a CD. "Some of the digital projects sent to us are amazing."

"There are some really talented filmmakers working in digital video right now," concurs Sundance Film Festival programmer Trevor Groth. "It's a logical transition since there is very little revenue generated from shorts, so to spend all that money on film to tell some of these stories doesn't make a lot of sense. And now with the quality being what it is, it just makes a lot of sense to shoot on video." Groth estimates that nearly half of the 2,500 short films submitted to the 2002 Sundance Film Festival were made digitally.

In most cases, short filmmakers have the kind of absolute creative freedom that feature directors dream of. They control their own budget, get final cut, and have total say on marketing. Because the format itself has no rules regarding length, structure, or content, anything goes. "You'll see stuff you couldn't imagine," marvels Groth.

Even filmmakers who have been lucky enough to get sponsors to pay for their productions cling to the artistic freedom the short format encourages. Jason Reitman's *gulp* was produced via AtomFilms program with Ford Focus. Although the car had to be a prominent part of the plotline, Reitman was allowed full creative reign. The resulting film was recently named by *The iFilm Internet Movie Guide* one of the "50 Best Short Films on the Web."

Left, top: ***Short Cinema Journal*** **DVD#5: "Diversity"**

Left, bottom: ***Short Cinema Journal*** **DVD#10: "Chaos"**

Right: Don Hertzfeldt's Academy Award nominated short ***Rejected.***

Below: ***Gasline*** **garnered the 2002 Sundance Film Festival's Jury Prize.**

"It's not about the money, it's not about the prestige, it's about getting your film seen by an audience," Groth reminds filmmakers. "Make the festival route. Show your work in as many festivals as possible. People always ask me if I need world premieres at Sundance for the shorts program. No. I think shorts need to be seen in as many theatres as possible."

Once a film finishes the festival circuit, it can begin to play the ancillary markets. With the proliferation of cable networks, domestic television has become a growing marketplace. HBO and other pay channels license shorts as filler programming. Sci-Fi has a dedicated showcase, *Exposure*, for which the channel

Photos, this page and facing: courtesy of filmmakers; *Gasline* courtesy of Hypnotic

both acquires and commissions films. Both IFC and the Sundance Channel also have devoted programming blocks. In fact, Sundance Channel celebrates the shortest day of the year by running nothing but shorts all day long. Don't forget PBS, the grand patron of the arts, with the national program *Independent Lens* and dozens of station-produced anthology programs.

And then there's the Internet. Although a true number would be impossible to nail down, it's estimated that there are at least 10,000 shorts on the Web. Filmmaker Amy Talkington was completely flabbergasted when *The New Arrival* went up on at AtomFilm's website and the very next day she got an email from someone in Brazil who watched her film. That's the miracle of the Internet.

In the very near future, DVD encoding, authoring, and burning will become widely accessible desktop filmmaking tools. The resulting DVDs might not have the distribution outreach of Warner Home Video, but they'll find their market. Remember when the terrific short *George Lucas in Love* was issued on VHS and sold on Amazon? It ranked higher in sales than Lucas's own *Star Wars —Episode I: The Phantom Menace*. I foresee similar miracles in the future.

Perhaps everything we've seen so far in the short film world is just a little blip compared to the big boom that is coming. Certainly the digital revolution will continue to transform the way films are made, exhibited and marketed. Who really knows what tomorrow's technological innovations will be?

Windows of opportunity open and close in the short film world. As short filmmakers, your best defense is to spread the distribution of your film as wide as possible and embrace every opportunity that comes your way. Take a page from Mark Osborne's playbook. Just when it seemed as if he exploited every possible venue for *More*, he recut it and got it played as a music video on MTV2. In a few years time when everyone will be watching shorts on cell phones, *More* will be undoubtedly playing there, too.

Kim Adelman currently teaches Making and Marketing the Short Film at UCLA Extension. Previously she was the content editor for the DVD series Short and International Release. For the Fox Movie Channel, she produced 19 short films which played over 150 film festivals worldwide and won 30+ awards.

Short Scenarios

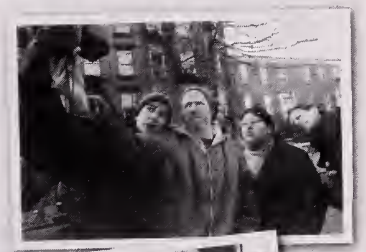
Bringing communities together for health education

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

JANET APONTE HAS SOMETHING TO SAY. "SOME TEACHERS HERE think they need to talk down to our level," the Queens, New York sophmore explains. "My friends and I think it's silly. Teens like to be spoken to like adults. It's not like we go and look up ten-syllable words just so we can talk to you, so why do adults treat us differently?"

Aponte had a chance to illustrate this point with her script for *An Objective Point of View*, a short film produced by ScenariosUSA. Last fall she worked with directors Jim McKay and Hanah Weyer and a professional crew to bring her vision to the screen. Later this year, the short will be used in classrooms across the country to support English, dramatic arts, and sexual health curricula.

"There is an incredible amount of talent out there, particularly in places most would never think it existed: Rikers Island, homeless shelters," says ScenariosUSA co-director Maura Minsky. "The stories these kids wanted to tell are amazing. It was just a matter of people asking."



Top, from left: directors Hanah Weyer and Jim McKay; writer Janet Aponte; script supervisor Seth Copans. Below, the crew at work.

Dedicated to "Kids Creating Social Change," ScenariosUSA was started by Minsky, a former ABC producer, and Kristin Joiner, who formerly worked for Global Dialogues, a West Africa-based NGO with a focus on reproductive health issues. Global Dialogues produces Scenarios from the Sahel, a project dedicated to health education that has collected over 22,000 stories from African children and produced seven as short films with international distribution. Minsky and Joiner now coordinate ScenariosUSA full time.

The program pairs teen writers with professional filmmakers, and everyone wins. The script writing contest provides a way for teachers to introduce complex issues into the classroom; the young people who work on projects are mentored by professionals, gaining skill and self esteem; and the filmmakers themselves have an opportunity to use their skills to make a difference. "Each crew member mentors a young person, which participants have found incredibly rewarding," says Joiner. "A grip can donate two days of labor and help make a film that goes to classrooms across the county. There's a huge ripple effect."

There are currently four completed films, two in post, and three in preproduction. In addition to educational distribution, the shorts have aired on MTV, PBS, CBS, NBC, and Oxygen.

"ScenariosUSA producer Avram Ludwig (*Swingers*) gave our first budget the working title, *Maura and Kristin Do the Impossible*," laughs Minsky. "We had assumed that most things would be donated. It turns out that it wasn't impossible: every single project has been almost entirely donated." ScenariosUSA has received funds from foundations, including Paul Robeson, Hewlett, and Constatin; support from over 800 community organizations; in-kind donations from Kodak and other production resources; and the donation of time and skill from a host of filmmakers including Michael Apted, Doug Liman, Adam Davidson, and Tamara Jenkins.

"It's a program that brings all the elements together," Minsky sums up. "It's an opportunity to use media at its highest power for social change."

For information on the program, the films, and how you can contribute, visit www.scenariosusa.org.

Elizabeth Peters is publisher and acting editor of The Independent.

Silver Screenings

The Return of theatrical shorts

BY JASON GUERRASIO

TIRED OF GOING TO THE MOVIE THEATER ONLY TO BE BOMBARDED with advertisements before the movie starts? Audience members in Portland, OR, were and started a trend that when ads came on they would throw food and drinks at the screen, which inevitably made the theater stop running the ads. Incidents like this made it clear to theater owners that people are tired of what they've been seeing before features and want a change.

BIG FILM SHORTS

***Toy Soldier*, made by Jackie and Catherine May and distributed by Big Film Shorts.**

For six years Big Film Shorts has been developing a way to get shorts back in theaters. A theater in Lincoln, Nebraska has been showing BFS shorts for years, which has demonstrated that there is a theatrical market for short films. Today, BFS represents hundreds of filmmakers who have gained much success in the major international festivals. With his stable of recognized filmmakers and their work, BFS founder David Russell believes that multiplexes will take his proposal seriously and start to show short films before their features. "The theater owners want it," says Russell. "They want to give the space, the time, and they want that creative element in the mix."

One of the major multiplex chains—who wish to remain anonymous until they are ready to program shorts nationwide—have already made a deal with BFS to rent five to seven minute shorts to screen in 77 of their theaters across the country. The program has already started on the West Coast and will expand in the future. But don't expect to be seeing these shorts playing before any Hollywood blockbusters just yet. At the moment they are playing before independent films on arthouse screens. "The more that we're getting it out there the more we're starting to attract theater owners who say they'd love to have them," says Russell. BFS recently developed Tigris Films, Inc., another branch of distribution that they will share with filmfinder.com.

Canada, New Zealand and Switzerland are also interested in participating in developing the program.

"Fortunately, our international clients continue to expand and develop programming needs for the short film. The U.S. markets have not surged forward to lead the world in this growing arena," explains Russell. "Maybe the national theatrical exhibition will perk things up."

Big Film Shorts is currently seeking short work that might be appropriate for theatrical exhibition. For more information, see www.bigfilmshorts.com.

Jason Guerrasio is an intern at The Independent.

'Art' Is Our Middle Name

EAI celebrates 30 years

BY KAROLINA TEHLE

"If you are defining 'short' in relation to 'feature-length,' then almost 100% of our collection is 'short,' ranging from one minute to an hour," says Electronic Arts Intermix director Lori Zippay. "But 'short' seems to refer to a theatrical distribution context, which is not the typical context for video art. Our collection tends to be distributed and seen within an artworld context, rather than through theatrical release."

In the late 1960s video fell into the hands of artists who exploited its relative ease of use and low expense to create an underground movement. EAI was founded in 1971 by New York City gallery owner and early video advocate Howard Wise, with a mission to support video as "a means of personal and creative expression and communication." A generation later, EAI today distributes over 3,000 works and continues to support video artists and audiences in a variety of ways, nurturing the form from production to preservation.

To commemorate its anniversary, EAI has commissioned "The EAI Archives Online: A Kinetic History," a digital resource that will document the history of EAI and also illuminate the evolution of video as an artistic movement. Primary materials, includ-

Photo, this page: courtesy of Matthew Mahaffy

ing documents, catalogues, video footage, and ephemera, will be presented online, supplemented by essays that provide critical context.

Even while celebrating its past, EAI continues to look forward, with a vastly expanded online catalogue of work that includes quicktime clips of artists' work and new work created particularly for the Web. Those tired of online sites seemingly devoted to commercial trailers or calling card films will be refreshed by a visit and the opportunity to see how electronic artists have embraced new tools to keep video free from its box.

Recent mainstream delight with short films and digital video might explain the dramatic surge in sales EAI has enjoyed over the past five years. "EAI's works are seen around the world (last year we distributed works in 27 different countries), at museums, arts and cultural centers, galleries, universities, alternative exhibition spaces, festivals, and on television," says Zippay.

Still from *Video Tape Study No. 3*, 1966-69, Nam June Paik and Jud Yalkut.

From Nam June Paik to Tony Cokes, EAI has always worked with individuals willing to take creative risks. "Those attracted to this form tend to be visual artists who use video as an art-making tool precisely because the medium—and the contexts in which it is exhibited—can be so flexible," Zippay explains. "Many of the works in our collection are highly conceptual or experimental. And that means their length is dictated by content and concept, not by an external distribution mechanism."

For more information on Electronic Arts Intermix and its year-long celebration, see www.eai.org.

Karolina Tehle lives in New York.

Steps for Success

Tips for those who desire fame & fortune

BY MATT MCCORMICK

AIN'T NOBODY GETTING RICH AND famous from making short underground films... it might be impossible to even make a living from the practice. The most successful short filmmakers to date have relied on teaching, currating, and commercial work to get by, and they are certainly never stopped and asked for autographs.

McCormick was thrilled to take his film to Sundance

Short film just gets a bad rap: assaulted by bad student films, Hollywood wanna-be's, and pretentious art films, audiences have learned to fear short films. The current outlets for shorts haven't helped much either, with film festivals segregating categories and formats, and film-viewing websites that are really just lessons in how to download needed software. Either way, short filmmakers continue to live in obscurity and crummy apartments.

I have always found this dilemma to be of particular concern, since my life-long goals are in fact to be both famous and rich. Here in Portland, Oregon, we are working hard to solve these problems, and through specific research and years of practice have developed a sure-fire solution with an easy, six-step program that promises to get any short filmmaker into the spotlight.

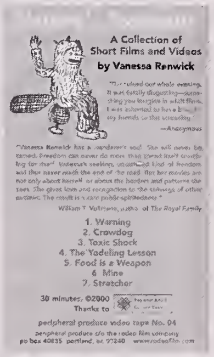
McCormick's Six Steps to the Spotlight™

STEP 1: Set up your own shows. Tired of being rejected from film festivals? Then get a screen and a projector and do it yourself. You can design the posters and put your name on top. Be sure to include your piece on the preview tape that gets sent to all the newspapers.

STEP 2: Show other filmmakers' work with your own. Choose work that will ensure the audience has a good time, and ask filmmakers how many friends they have when making your final selections.

STEP 3: Get videos out there. Put several of your best films together on one tape and make lots of copies at a duplication company (you won't get famous making tapes on your VCR one at a time). Use your artistic skills and the resources at Kinko's to make creative packaging for your tapes: the right packaging determines whether a film goes onto the shelf or into the trashcan. Send the tapes to all your friends and give them to any filmmakers, wealthy people, or celebrities that you meet.

STEP 4: Put other filmmakers' work on videotapes with your own. Choose filmmakers whose work will be sure make the tape interesting, and once again be sure to ask them how many friends they have.



Be sure to use snappy box art for your videos!

STEP 5: Organize the film screenings and the tape distribution into one well-knit package. Think of a flashy name to go by so that the various efforts can be identified as coming from the same source. (A few of the names that are no longer available: Rodeo Film Co., Peripheral Produce, Animal Charm, Other Cinema, Charm Bracelet, Joanie 4 Jackie, etc.)

STEP 6: Repeat steps 1-4 over and over and over (for how long we really are not sure).

[Editor's note: Please be advised that Matt McCormick is not known to be rich or famous.]

Matt McCormick's short The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal *toured the world and was mistakenly included in the 2002 Sundance Film Festival. It's part of a compilation VHS available from www.peripheralproduce.com. Peripheral Produce runs regular screenings, distributes work by 40 artists, and is currently planning the Portland Documentary and eXperimental (PDX) Film Festival for December 2002.*

Photos, this page: courtesy of Matt McCormick; *Video Tape Study No. 3* still, courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix, New York

Staff Picks

AIVF staff share favorite resources

RESfest Hits the Road

Resfest is a touring festival of fun, funky, fabulous films, music videos, and shorts. Last year's festival hit 14 cities worldwide, from San Francisco to Rio de Janeiro, drawing crowds of over 100,000 with screenings, live music events, parties, panel discussions, and tech demos. The fest dubs itself as a "celebration of innovative moviemaking," with a heavy slant toward digital/new media (it is run by Res Magazine after all). With deadlines approaching in May and June 2002, it is a festival that should be on every short filmmaker's hit list. For more info check out www.res.com. —*Bo Mehrad*

Flicker Comes to New York

Flicker, the long running super 8 & 16mm film festival, with venues in Athens, GA, Austin, TX, and Los Angeles, will pass its one year mark at the Knitting Factory in Manhattan this May. Flicker NYC's bimonthly, sold out shows feature short films by local filmmakers, $100 film grants, and raffles for super 8 stock and $50 worth of super 8 processing at Pac Lab. There is also a lending library for super 8 equipment in the works.

"The show is a lot of fun and has developed a strong community of underground/DIY filmmakers who shoot super 8 in New York," says founder David Teague. For more information, check out the web site at www.flickernyc.com.

—*James Israel*

David Teague's *Salome*, recently screened by Flicker

Little Films on a Really Big Screen

Open Air Shorts, in conjunction with xtronx and CBS, is looking for film shorts for its half-hour monthly program presented on a 25' by 28' outdoor video screen at West 42nd St. (between 7th/8th Ave.) in Times Square, New York City. The premiere screening in January drew a crowded sidewalk of film buffs and curious pedestrians. For more information go to www.openairshorts.com. —*James Israel*

It's All About The Guide

Let's face it, you've made a short and you don't want to just screen it in your living room.... It's time to get out there and share the vision with audiences and get some love back. The AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals is a fantastic resource for filmmakers trying to figure out their festival game plan. The book is packed with detailed festival descriptions and articles (culled from the Independent's archives), plus it's indexed four ways to further help you navigate your way through upcoming dates and deadlines. The Festival Guide also exists as a search engine database on the AIVF web site (www.aivf.org/info_services/festivals/), which is available to AIVF members only.

—*Bo Mehrad*

Short Scripts Online Launches Virtual Marketplace

Have you written a film short script but can't find anyone to produce it? Or are you a filmmaker searching for a short script to shoot? Then look no further than www.shortscriptsonline.com, a totally free online database that provides access to short scripts from around the world. "The site was created to provide a central location where short scripts can be found quickly and with ease," says SSO publisher, Keith Moody. While the actual scripts are not posted online, there is a brief description and contact information. Future plans for SSO include "The First Annual Short Scripts Online 10 Page Screenwriting Competition" and another website, ScriptsWanted.com, which will offer market listings for people looking for scripts for stage, television, and film.

—*James Israel*

Alan Denman's film *Luminoid* is distributed by Microcinema International

Exposing it Indie Style

Created in 1996 by Microcinema, Independent Exposure is a short film, video and digital media series that travels the globe, having reached 32 countries (plus Antarctica!), spreading the doctrine of short cinema. By distributing works through exhibition efforts, the Microcinema website and other advocacy efforts, they hope to "expose, promote and distribute" works to the widest global audiences possible. All artists are paid an honorarium if their work is screened and qualify for a non-exclusive exhibition agreement for subsequent screenings. Plus there are no forms to fill out, no fees to pay and no deadline. Gotta love that! www.microcinema.com.

—*Bo Mehrad*

Bewitched in Aspen

A friend of a friend once told us that this festival, hands down, was one of the friendliest, most supportive festivals for filmmakers, period. She stated that, while it was not a hardcore industry event, the sense of community and appreciation for the short film was abundant, and truly inspiring. Our friends at indieWIRE say, "Aspen Shortsfest might just be one of the most enchanting events the film world has to offer. It does what few other festivals can accomplish: it makes the film experience personal." Amen to that! April 9-13, Aspen, CO; 970-925-6882; www.aspenfilm.org.

—*Michelle Coe*

Photos: courtesy of Microcinema International; *Salome*, courtesy of Kyle McCabe

Often times it seems that film shorts are treated as second class citizens in the film festival world. Listed here are some of the festivals where special attention is paid to the art form of the short film.

UNITED STATES

Asbury Shorts of New York
New York, November
Shorts, under 20 min. in length. Non-competitive.
www.asburyshorts

Aspen Shortsfest
Colorado, April
A premiere competitive showcase for short films (up to 30 min.). Student and international entries also welcome.
www.aspenfilm.org/shortsfest

Chlotrudis Awards Short Film Festival
Massachusetts, February
Presented by a non-profit organization that honors and supports independent film.
www.chlotrudis.org

Cinematexas
Texas, September
Emerging as one of the premiere short film festivals in the world, fest also features multimedia performances by musicians, artists, and activists.
www.cinematexas.org

Humboldt International Short Film Festiva
California, April
Since its inception in 1967, the Fest continues to support and celebrate filmmakers working in experimental and non-traditional ways.
www.humboldt.edu/~filmfest

IFP/Midwest Flyover Zone Short Film Festival
Illinois, November
Eligible films must be 30 min. or less and must have been produced by IFP/Midwest members or produced in the Flyover Zone, or by filmmakers who reside or are originally from the Flyover Zone. (The Flyover Zone is defined as the area of the United States between New York and Los Angeles.)
www.ifp.org

Los Angeles International Short Film Festival
California, October
Eligible films must have been completed after Jan 1 of previous year.
www.lashortsfest.com

New York Expo of Short Film and Video
New York, December
The fest is the nation's longest-running short film festival and seeks fiction, animation, doc & experimental film & video. Films/videos should be under 60 min. & completed in the previous 2 years. Student & international entries welcome.
www.nyexpo.org

Phat Shorts, The Film Festival
New York, April
Premier NYC venue celebrating the artistry of shorts and the community of independent filmmakers.
www.phatshortsfestival.com

Resfest Digital Film Festival
Tours 14 international cities each fall
Annual national/international touring fest seeks short films/videos exploring the dynamic interplay of film, art, music, and design. The underlying guideline for submissions is Innovation.
www.resfest.com

Short Attention Span Film and Video Festival
Year round tour
Annual touring fest of short shorts (3 min. or less) premieres in Georgia and California and tours to 30 cities in North America, Asia, and Europe.
www.shortspan.com

Shorts International Film Festival
New York, November
Fest aims "to put shorts back on the map."
Length: 40 min. or less.
www.shorts.org

INTERNATIONAL

Antimatter:
Festival of Underground Short Film and Video
Canada, September
Fest is anti-Hollywood and anti-censorship and dedicated to film and video as art. Selected works will be included in a three-city international tour.
www.antimatter.ws

Brest Short Film Festival
France, November
Competition open to fiction short films produced/co-produced by an EU country. 48 films accepted for competition and about 30 films incl. in "fringe" screenings outside competition.
www.film-festival.brest.com

Canadian Film Centre Short Film Festival
Canada, June
www.cdnfilmcentre.com

Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival
France, February
Festival presents major international competition with over 50 countries represented, screening over 70 films to enthusiastic audiences.
www.clermont-filmfest.com

Degenere Italy Cinema Como Raoconto
(formerly Adriaticocinema)
Italy, August
The only international competition specifically for shorts (max. 15 min.) made by film school students.
www.comune.rimini.it/cineteca

Eat My Shorts
Canada, July
Comedy short programming as part of Just for Laughs, the Montreal International Comedy Festival.
www.hahaha.com

Flickerfest International Short Film Festival
Australia, January
Australia's premiere short film fest is open to any film or video production under 30 min. Includes an international short and doc market. Entries must be on film for competition (Beta SP accepted for docs).
www.flickerfest.com.au

Shorts Fests

See www.aivf.org/festivals for more!

International Short Film Festival Hamburg
Germany, June
Annual festival is a forum for presenting a diversity of international short films. Shorts must be under 20 min., except for Three-Minute Quickie entries.
www.shortfilm.com

Kinofilm/Manchester International
Short Film and Video Festival
United Kingdom, October
Categories include: Super 8, No/Low budget, Women in Film, Lesbian and Gay, Artists' Film and Video/New Media, Experimental and Animation, German Experimental, International Panorama, Underground Cinema, Black and Asian Cinemas.
www.kinofilm.org.uk

Mostra Curta Cinema: Rio de Janeiro
International Short Film Festival
Brazil, November/December
A non-competitive festival for 16mm and 35mm films.
www.curtacinema.com.br

Oberhausen International Short Film Festival
Germany, May
The world's oldest short film festival offers a forum for aesthetic and technological innovation and reflection.
www.kurzfilmtage.de

Namur International Short Film Festival
Belgium, November
All-short film festival accepts films 45 min. and under. Festival provides hospitality (2 overnight stays & daily allowance) for filmmakers whose work is accepted.

Sao Paolo International Short Film Festival
Brazil, August
With a cultural and noncompetitive section, the festival is the leading event for the short format in Latin America. Entries should have a maximum running time of 35 min. All genres accepted.
www.kinoforum.org

Siena International Short Film Festival
Italy, November
All films must be 30 min. or less.
www.comune.siena.it/short/corto/htm

Tampere International Short Film Festival
Finland, March
Running time may not exceed 30 min. and films must have been completed after Jan. 1 of previous year.
www.tampere.fi/festival/film

Uppsala International Short Film Festival
Sweden, October
Located north of Stockholm in a university town, fest. programs more than 200 international shorts and docs and children's films. Entries must be under 60 min.
www.shortfilmfestival.com

Vila Do Conde International Short Film Festival
Portugal, July
For films under 60 min. produced in the previous two yrs.
www.curtasmetragns.pt

Fight for Your Rights

Short films, long-term legal issues

BY ROBERT SEIGEL

THE RECENT SURGE IN EXHIBITION OUTLETS for short films has provoked many mediamakers working in the genre to think seriously about licensing the rights to their films. Internet venues such as Hypnotic and Atom Films/Shockwave, and commercial markets like the Sundance Channel, the Independent Film Channel, Comedy Central, and the Sci-Fi Channel have broadened the field considerably for short filmmakers looking to get their work shown. But licensing a short to air in a commercial venue concerns legal and business issues that are just as involved as when working with a feature film.

One of the key points that mediamakers face when licensing the rights to their short films is the compensation of performers who are members of unions, like the Screen Actors Guild (SAG). Mediamakers who have produced shorts featuring SAG or other professional performers should become signatories to one of the SAG "low-budget" programs: the SAG Experimental Film Agreement (SAG-EFA) or the Student Film Letter Agreement (SAG-SFLA). The SAG-EFA is intended for use in workshop/training sessions, for example in film schools, and covers any project with a total budget under $75,000 that is shot entirely in the United States and features SAG or other professional performers included in the SAG rules, such as AFTRA, AGVA, and equity members. The SAG-SFLA is for projects budgeted up to $35,000 with a 35 minute maximum running time.

Compensation for professional performers' is deferred under the SAG-EFA and compensation for all performers is deferred under the SAG- SFLA until a project is distributed commercially, meaning it has been or will be shown beyond the film festival circuit. Under the SAG-EFA, mediamakers must obtain each professional performer's written consent, while the terms of the SAG-SFLA require consent from every performer in the film, as well as SAG itself.

Mediamakers are required to pay each professional performer at least the minimum "upgrade" rate noted in the SAG Basic Agreement that is applicable to the initial distribution of a project beyond film festivals. For instance, if a short project is initially distributed or exhibited on television or home video, then each performer must be paid the minimum rate under the SAG Television Agreement (this agreement covers home video, too), which is $636 per day. Additionally, any distribution beyond the initial media requires that mediamakers pay or insure the payment of residuals to professional performers. Residuals are a percentage of the distributor's gross receipts, which is allocated among the professional performers according to their respective length of employment. Residuals for "free" television (e.g., network, local, and syndication) and cable television (basic and pay) is 3.6% and for videocassettes it's 4.5% on the first $1 million and 5.4% thereafter.

LICENSING A SHORT TO AIR IN A COMMERCIAL VENUE CONCERNS LEGAL AND BUSINESS ISSUES THAT ARE JUST AS INVOLVED AS WHEN WORKING WITH A FEATURE FILM.

Obviously, payments to SAG are less problematic if a short features only one or two professional performers rather than several professional performers with speaking roles.

The importance of clearing music rights for any project, whether it is a short or a feature, cannot be understated. There are generally two types of music licenses that mediamakers must secure: one, the synchronization license for the use of a musical composition on a project's soundtrack in synchronicity with a project's picture; and two, the master use license for the use of a recorded performance of a musical composition on a project's soundtrack.

Generally, mediamakers contact the songwriter or publisher of a musical composition when securing a synchronization license. When securing a master use license for a recording of a musical composition, a mediamaker should contact the person or entity that controls and/or administers the rights in and to a sound recording (a record company, for example) from which approval must be obtained. Approaching synchronization and master use rights holders or administrators for licenses often brings both good and bad news. If a project is screening at film festivals only, licensors usually will provide a "festival use" license at no charge or for a small fee, for instance $100 to $500 for a certain number of festivals or a term during which a project can "travel" the festival circuit. However, if the project is exhibited beyond film festivals, mediamakers should be prepared to pay more substantial license fees, commonly running in the thousands of dollars.

To avoid or limit music licensing costs, mediamakers have the option of commissioning musical compositions and sound recordings on a "work for hire" basis, maintaining the rights to such musical compositions and/or recordings used on a project's soundtrack along with its use in any publicity or advertising materials concerning the project. If a mediamaker and a composer or sound recording licensor cannot agree on terms for a work-for-hire contract, the composer and/or the sound recording licensor can retain the rights to their respective works and only grant a license to use such musical compositions or recordings on the soundtrack of a project, including its publicity and advertisements. Additionally, mediamakers can secure the synchronization rights to a musical composition from the appropriate licensor and record their own sound recording, or "cover version," of the performance of the musical composition. They also can use musical compositions and recordings that are not protected by copyright law because they are in the public domain.

Many commercial venues for shorts, such as television channels, require that a mediamaker secure an Errors and Omission (E&O) insurance policy. An

E&O policy protects mediamakers—and their respective licensees and assigns—from third party claims like copyright or trademark infringement, violation of any person's right of privacy or publicity, or claims of defamation. The cost of such coverage can range from $2,500 to $8,000 (controversial projects with significant real life elements tend to be more expensive) per year, and generally covers any term for a broadcast or any other media license that is entered into during the policy period. It is wise to consult with more than one entertainment insurance broker before deciding on an insurance policy.

Mediamakers should check to see if there are any restrictions concerning the script or the underlying source material of a short before shooting begins, and especially prior to entering the commercial marketplace. In addition to SAG, the Writers Guild of America (WGA) or the Directors Guild of America (DGA) may become involved if a project's writer or director is a union member.

To complicate matters further, the usual media outlets for shorts pay rather low licensing fees (e.g., from $500 to $3,000 with the latter in rare cases). Many people begin to realize that the costs of securing the appropriate authorizations and rights, as well as the payment of any E&O coverage, are significantly higher than any license fee for the short. So why make a short? The main reason comes down to one word: exposure. The chance to have your work aired on a cable channel or the Internet where the potential audience is in the tens of thousands can assist a mediamaker in finding an agent, potential funding sources, or a sales agent who can license the short, perhaps on a worldwide basis and in various media.

Some would consider the mediamaker's expenditure in time and money to license a short a leap of faith to parlay one's abilities into possible future opportunities. However, by recognizing and addressing the legal and business issues concerning the licensing of a short, a mediamaker can look before such a leap.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a partner at Daniel, Seigel & Bimbler, LLP, a firm that specializes in entertainment and media law. rseigel@DSBLLP.com.

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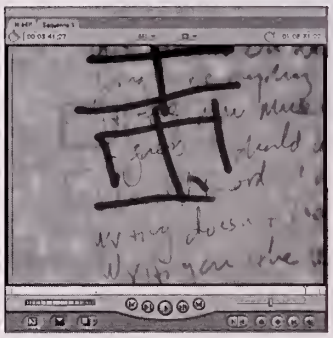
Apple Makes Amends

FCP 3 improves function and results

BY GREG GILPATRICK

IF APPLE COMPUTER HAS A TEAM OF SPIES I think they have been following me. Apple's Final Cut Pro version 3 includes nearly all the features I have been telling people I thought were missing or not implemented well enough in Final Cut Pro 2. Version 2 of Final Cut Pro made significant inroads into the professional editing market with its better media management and documentation, but I still had some complaints. There wasn't anything inherently wrong with the application—I believe that it was the best editing application at that price point. But there were whispers of malcontent amongst those of us who used Final Cut Pro (or "FCP" to us insiders) on an every day basis. In the back of editing rooms and the corners of user group meetings we scrawled notes to each other like "The color correction filters are no good," "it's too slow to render," "there's no low-res DV offline" and the number-one complaint of FCP users everywhere, "the manual is too heavy!"



Final Cut pro running natively inside Mac OSX looks and behaves almost identically to FCP in OS9. The only real differences are that windows now have little bubbles in the upper left corner to close them.

Apparently, Apple either actually does have a team of super-spies or they're just very good at listening to their customers' needs. Either way, Final Cut Pro 3 successfully builds upon the previous strengths of version 2 and adds significant new features that make it an important upgrade for anyone that uses FCP for anything more than simple cuts-only editing.

Although there are a number of enhancements in FCP 3, the main new features are new color correction filters, real-time previews of certain effects for DV material, low resolution off-line editing of DV material, voiceover recording, and native support for Apple's new operating system, Mac OS X. These new features, along with the surprisingly high level of quality and stability that the program provides, should cement the already solid reputation enjoyed by Final Cut Pro in the independent film and video world.

Final Cut Pro's minimum requirements are still the same but some of the new features won't be available for users with older G3 or even some G4-based systems. The real-time previews of effects are available only for Dual Processor PowerMac G4s or single processors at 500 MHz or higher and Powerbook G4s at 667MHz or higher. (For those with slower PowerMac G4's the Matrox RTMac, IgniterRT, and Cinewave RT cards can still provide you real-time effect processing. See contacts box for info.) Those interested in using FCP with Mac OS X will also want to use a fast single or dual-processor G4 system. Although Apple says Mac OS X works on a G3-based computer—and it does, I'm writing this on PowerBook G3 in OS X—the demands of both OS X and FCP together merit at least a G4 (see sidebar).

Of all the new features in FCP, I was most impressed by the new color correction tools. The previous versions of Final

Cut Pro had some of the worst color correction filters in any video program. The interface and terminology were unintuitive and the results were usually only a slight improvement upon the original material. The new color correction features in version 3 add a totally new dimension to the post process with FCP. For DV productions, color correction can make the difference between looking like a home video and looking like a professional production. With these tools included as part of FCP, effective color correction can now be accomplished without spending a fortune at a post facility. The color correction tools in FCP 3 encompass a handful of filters and new image analysis tools, such as a waveform monitor and vectorscope. The main color correction filters, Color Corrector and Color Corrector 3-Way, allow you to refine color with an interface that resembles the trackball used in professional color correction suites. A nice extra is that if you have a trackball device, you can set it up to drive the color correction interface, giving a tactile control over the color correction process.

While the color correction tools are much more advanced and user-friendly, they are still far from intuitive to those who are not familiar with color correction methods. Thankfully, the FCP 3 manual helps out here with authoritative and understandable information on the color correction process in FCP and video in general. In fact, the documentation in version 3 is an improvement upon the manual in FCP 2. FCP 1 had a skimpy and obtuse manual that Apple responded to by supplementing FCP 2 with a huge tome that was over 1000 pages long. That manual, while surprisingly well written and informative, was a huge pain to lug around and even just sitting and reading it was difficult. With FCP 3, Apple has split the manual into 4 different volumes so that us weakling editors of the world won't have to carry around such a huge book.

Although I believe that the new color correction tools will have the most profound effect upon the quality and style of independent production finished with Final Cut Pro 3, many others aremost interested in the real-time effects. The ability to process effects in real-time without additional hardware is impressive, but this feature did not strike me as essential

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and I suspect that it will not be something that many editors use on a regular basis. For real-time effects FCP 3 offers a handful of transitions, the main color corrector filter, and some of the motion settings like opacity and scale that are able to show a lesser-quality preview without having to render the clip. Since the real-time preview is not full quality, all the effects still need to be rendered before outputing a project to tape. The real-time functions are available only for DV material captured via firewire at either full or Offline RT resolutions. The one limitation that severely lessens their functionality is that the video cannot be sent over firewire to a broadcast monitor—you must watch your real-time effects on the computer monitor. The computer monitor probably works fine for setting up transitions and motion effects but color correction needs to be done on a broadcast monitor, severely compromising the usefulness of the real-time color correction filter.

Offline RT is a feature that those on a budget or on the go will find very attractive. While analog video can be saved at a lower resolution to save disk space, DV video captured via firewire has a fixed datarate and usually cannot be compressed. Offline RT is FCP 3's new compression scheme that allows for DV video to be saved as smaller files that take up less space on a hard drive. DV saved in the Offline RT format fits about two hours per gigabyte of disk space, as opposed to 40 min. per gig if uncompressed. The image quality is noticeably less than regular DV but still functional for editing purposes, especially when seen in the small windows on a computer monitor. Offline RT video cannot be played over firewire to be seen on a broadcast monitor but individual still frames can. Offline RT will be very useful for those editing long projects with many hours of video without the budget to buy an array of hard drives to store the full resolution DV. Those editing with a Powerbook will also find Offline RT useful since it lessens their dependence upon external firewire hard drives.

When finished editing in Offline RT mode, an editor uses FCP's Media Manager to recapture the DV material at online quality. Media Manager's new features make it easier to delete unused media from your project without making a copy of it, reconnect higher resolution media to your sequences, and make a new low resolution copy of a project if you want to move it to a Powerbook.

FCP 3 also has a new option for undoing work you don't like. The Restore Project feature allows you to go back in time to any one of a number of auto-saved projects. This feature is similar to the Avid's Attic and is another great feature in FCP 3. When you choose Restore Project you are given a list of all the time and dates for which there are auto-saved versions of your project. Choosing one of these dates and times will make your project match the state it was at that point.

The last big new feature in FCP 3 is the Voice Over Tool that allows you to record audio directly into the timeline as your video plays. This tool could be useful for those making their own DVDs who want to add commentary or those who want to add voice over to their edit. This feature works as advertised but I found it unexciting because most editing rooms have terrible sound—voiceovers should be recorded in recording studios, which are usually not near a video editing setup. However, those collaborating over long distances could use this feature to record notes and critiques of the project and then hear it in sync when the project is opened elsewhere.

Although some of Final Cut Pro 3's new features are not as useful as others, they all work as advertised and altogether make a compelling reason for upgrading from a previous version or making the switch to FCP from a different editing system. Apple still has a few tricks up its sleeve for future versions. Version 3 doesn't include any features of the Film Logic film negative matchback software Apple acquired last year and Apple just acquired high-end compositing software maker Nothing Real. Hopefully the next version of FCP will include native film matchback tools and a more professional compositing system. In the meantime, however, this version of Final Cut Pro unquestionably delivers the best video editing software in its price-range.

Greg Gilpatrick is an independent producer and director and technology consultant based in NYC. His email address is greg@randomroom.com.

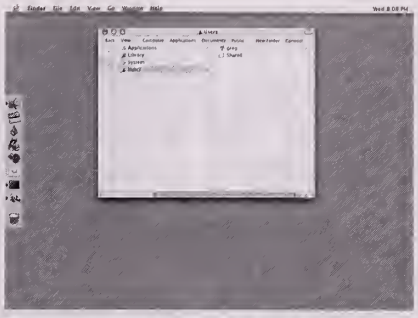
Mac OS X

One of the main new features of Final Cut Pro 3 is that it runs natively inside Apple's new operating system, Mac OS X (pronounced "Oh Ess Ten"). An operating system is the software that controls the background operation of the computer itself. While one may think that Mac OS X is just the latest incremental upgrade from the previous system, in actuality OS X is completely new to Mac users with new modern features that could not have been implemented in OS 9 or its predecessors.

Written in the early 1980s, the original Macintosh operating system, which OS 9 is a variant of, missed a lot of the technical features that the heavy duty video and graphics programs of today crave. Mac OS X is a response to that problem, delivering the modern architecture needed for resource intensive operations like video editing or 3D animation. For instance, one of OS X's main features is a system that distributes memory to applications as it becomes available. No longer do you need to tell applications how much memory to use or define whether virtual memory is on or off.

The list of new technical features in OS X is too long for this article but the bottom line is that OS X provides a solid foundation on which to run Final Cut Pro or any other application. The catch is that to take advantage of the new features of OS X your programs require an update for them to run natively—like FCP 3. By the time you read this just about every major Mac application will have an OS X native version out but nearly all of them will require users to purchase an upgrade. Along with the cost of upgrading will be the time needed to learning a totally new interface. OS X's interface, dubbed "Aqua" by Apple, is a new design and abandons several familiar Mac interface conventions.

The bottom line is that OS X provides important technical features but most cost-conscious independents will want to wait until they buy a new computer that comes with OS X installed. Those who use their Mac solely for editing with Final Cut Pro should consider upgrading if they are already upgrading to FCP 3, as the $125 pricetag of OS X is well worth the features it provides. DV import via Firewire works well, however, at press time no OS X compatible drivers were available for video digitizing boards. Pinnacle, Aurora, and Digital Voodoo have each promised OS X software that may even be available by the time you read this.



The desktop in Mac OSX is a departure from the previous Mac interface. At the left side of the screen is the Dock, which is a set of shortcuts for applications and documents.

— Greg Gilpatrick

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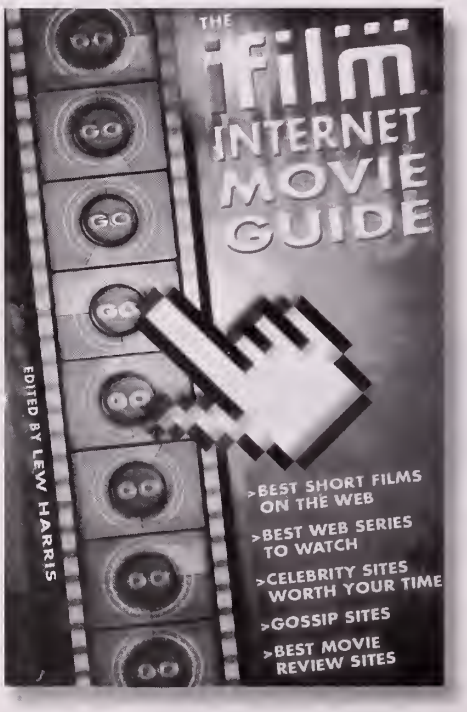
Books

The iFilm Internet Movie Guide
Edited by Lew Harris
iFilm Publishing, 2002
BY MICHA WASCHKE

FOR FILM FRIENDS, THE GREAT PROMISE OF the Internet was that it would be a trough for distribution and promotion of a new diet of works: lower in budget and higher in content. Pioneering freaks and geeks



attempted to claim the new domain of low-resolution short filmmaking as their own. When the Web films of these no-name indies and animation amateurs started gaining popularity, commercial interests rushed in and raised the bar. A maze of web sites ensued to channel the flood of trailers, flicks, cartoons, and soaps in the hope of grabbing a share of a potentially immense audience. Many of these sites cultivated a faithful following, and inspired a variety of cinematic adepts to produce for the new genre. IFilm, perhaps the best known among these sites, has now published the *iFilm Internet Movie Guide*. For Internet neophytes, this book may prove a useful and fairly comprehensive resource, directing people to most of the major web-based film sites, including indieWire, a must see for film news and reviews. Ifilms' main intent is to presort the wide variety of cyber shorts and serve up the cream. Yet it contains little that isn't already available online, and the selection of film titles is far from complete. Given the fluidity of the Internet, several addresses and links mentioned have already changed, and the reader is advised to make ample use of search engines when looking for a desired film. Moreover, the book is jovial in tone instead of brief and arid, as is customary for a resource book. It also lacks index features; however, it does provide an intelligent and comprehensive appendix of specific information for would be Web filmmakers and cineastes.

Micha Waschke, born 1969 in Berlin, is a musician and editor of the DVD-based art magazine, Sonic Unpublished. *He lives and works in Brooklyn, N.Y.*

Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde
Edited by Bill Nichols
Univ. of California Press, 2001
BY BRIAN FRYE

IF YOU SAW ONLY ONE EXPERIMENTAL FILM in college, the smart money says it was Maya Deren's and Alexander Hammid's *Meshes of the Afternoon*. And it's no wonder, as most critics consider it the film that jump-started American avant-garde cinema, with Deren the founder of the movement. As a result, there's no shortage of writing on Deren's life and work: the yet unfinished biography, *The Legend of Maya Deren* will eventually comprise three volumes. But *Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde*, a new collection of essays edited by Bill Nichols, is rather more ambitious. Nichols asked several critics to examine Deren's significance not only as a filmmaker, but also as a writer and a thinker. Despite the uneven results, the book itself is long overdue.

The key to *American Avant-Garde* is Deren's own seminal essay "An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film," the entire text of which is included in a postscript. Deren wrote prolifically on ethnography, philosophy, and film, but she is best repre-

sented by this woefully undervalued manifesto (written in 1946) for a new, poetic cinema, which ought to be required reading in every introductory film course. "Anagram" is distinguished by its peculiar "anagrammatic" layout. The nine chapters of the essay are mapped onto a 3x3 grid that serves as a guide—something like a theoretical choose-your-own-adventure. For example, the three chapters in the top row of the grid respond to "The State of Nature and the Character of Man," while the three in the first column explain "The Nature of Forms."

In his preface, Nichols equates the structure of *American Avant-Garde* to that of Deren's "Anagram." Unfortunately, Nichols includes 11 essays, creating an awfully ungainly grid. And it's as awkward in execution as appearance. "Anagram" is a rigorous, tightly conceived polemic, while *American Avant-Garde* is a respectable, but fairly standard issue collection of essays. Nichols's attempt to graft Deren's format onto his utterly dissimilar book amounts to little more than a facile trivialization. In lieu of Deren's inspired meta-essay, we get a pedantic and self-evident table of contents. It's not an auspicious beginning.

Academic writing on art is always a tricky business, as careless professors can all too easily come off as pompous phonies. When the artist in question is herself a brilliant essayist, the peril is even greater. Luckily, the majority of the essays Nichols selected are quite good. In gener-

al, the more modestly conceived, fact-based essays are the most successful.

Mark Franko's essay on Deren's relationship to modern dance and its expression in her films is especially valuable. In comparing Talley Beatty's role in Deren's *A Study in Choreography for Camera* to both Beatty's own *Mourner's Bench* and Martha Graham's *Lamentation*, he convincingly explains Deren's and Beatty's very different interpretations of Graham's ideas.

Deren's undoing was her last film, *Divine Horsemen*, an uncompleted study of Haitian Voudoun. Moira Sullivan's essay on the reception (or lack thereof) of *Divine Horsemen* by ethnographic filmmakers is excellent. Margaret Mead spoke for a great many ethnographers of her day when she insisted that ethnographic films ought to be as objective as possible. Deren had her own notion of what ethnographic film ought to—or could—look like; she saw ethnographic film as the perfect medium for her interest in choreography, ritual, and form. That she never managed to complete the film is a reflection of the enormous task she set for herself. Sullivan's account of the production of the film, and its long history of underappreciation is both well-researched and uncommonly lucid. With luck, it will prompt more frequent screenings of the film.

Unfortunately, quite a few of the contributors resort to the obfuscatory prose common to academics who haven't got anything to say. Renata Jackson, Maureen Turim, and Marai Pramaggiore are egregious offenders on this front. Deren's films are little more than a pretext for these windy regurgitations of academic cant.

But Lucy Fischer's comparison of Deren's films to those of Georges Melies was particularly ill conceived. The total lack of any but the most trivial similarities should give anyone familiar with the films discussed pause, and by the end of the essay one questions the extent to which even Ms. Fischer takes her thesis seriously. Scholars have indeed linked Deren's films to those of the Surrealists rather than early filmmakers like Melies. And for good reason. In many ways Deren's films do in fact look like those of the Surrealists, but they do not look like those of Melies. At all. My jaw dropped at her approving quotation of one Michael O'Pray to the effect that with the exception of the Lumieres, "Maya Deren's *A Study in Choreography in Camera* was probably the simplest film...to be made at the time, 1945," a claim which is neither true, relevant, or even comprehensible.

Happily, the entire book could rest on the two brilliant essays which bookend it. *American Avant-Garde* begins with what is easily the most important essay on Maya Deren's films and thought, Annette Michelson's newly revised "Poetics and Savage Thought: About Anagram." A profound dissection of Deren's "Anagram," Michelson's essay discusses Deren's radical rethinking of film form in relation to Sergei Eisenstein's theory of montage and Roman Jakobson's writings on aphasia. It's far too dense to properly address here, but well worth the effort.

But of course, the shining jewel of the collection is Deren's "Anagram" itself. Set off almost like an appendix, in its own period typeface, it seems to stand outside the book proper. This essay alone justifies purchasing the book. The crystalline, pellucid precision of Deren's prose is awe-inspiring. Her 52-page essay offers the most perfectly realized accounting of a film theory ever put to paper. She did what she could with it, and its repercussions are now history.

Brian Frye is a filmmaker, curator, and writer currently living in New York City.

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ON View

BY JASON GUERRASIO

THEATRICAL:

The Cat's Meow (Lions Gate, April 5)
Dir. Peter Bogdanovich
The Cat's Meow examines one of Hollywood's legendary hushed-up murders. In 1924 newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst invited a handful of tinsel town's A-list players for a weekend of fun aboard his lavish yacht. The festivities took a rather nasty turn, however, and came crashing to an end with the murder of producer Thomas Ince (unresolved to this day). Bogdanovich became interested in the slaying after talking with Orson Welles about the event (Welles had written the murder into his first draft of *Citizen Kane*). Though the film has its moments, the dialogue between Kirsten Dunst, playing Hearst's mistress Marion Davies, and Eddie Izzard, as Charlie Chaplin, is clever, and the production design invokes the roaring twenties in earnest, it's safe to say that the plot is lost at sea.

Dogtown and Z-Boys
(Sony Pictures Classics, April 26)
Dir. Stacy Peralta
A must see for all surf-style skateboard fans who are curious about the sport's evolution, *Dogtown* chronicles the rise of the '70s cult legends who formed the Zephyr skateboard team, otherwise known as the Z-Boys. Using archival footage, this fast-paced doc dazzles the eye with images of amazing stunts and nail-biting spills as it reveals how a rowdy bunch of California beach kids from Santa Monica and Venice created today's skateboarding techniques. Bouncing off Sean Penn's mellow narrative is a sampling of legendary hard rock hits, including music from Led Zeppelin, Santana, Pink Floyd, and Ted Nugent, among others. Though the film has its dry spells, it makes up for it with funny testimonials by the Z-Boys, who are a lot grayer now but still kids at heart. *Dogtown* took both the audience and director awards at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival. (See profile, page 12.)

Some Body (Lot 47, April 26)
Dir. Henry Barrial
Inspired from real life experiences of its star/co-writer/producer, Stephanie Bennett's *Some Body* is the story of a twentysomething schoolteacher who is at a crossroad. Tired of her long-standing boyfriend, Anthony (Jeramy Guillory), Samantha (Bennett) decides to indulge in a bit of heavy drinking and promiscuous sex, leading her to some interesting encounters. Shot on DV, director Henry Barrial uses a mock documentary approach to tell the story. The challenge for the viewer is to find where reality ends and the acting begins. To boost the factual quotient, Bennett cast some of her real life ex-boyfriends in the film. I guess the old saying is true: it's not what you know, it's who you know.

Stephanie Bennett in Henry Barnal's *Some Body*

The Chateau (IFC Films, May 1)
Dir. Jesse Peretz
This lighthearted comedy follows two brothers enjoying a holiday in France while staying at, you guessed it, a chateau they inherited from a departed relative. Along with the most obvious comedy of the clash of cultures, we get a kick out of watching the one brother, Graham (Paul Rudd), a middle-aged slacker, bumbling around the chateau trying to put the moves on Isabella (Silvie Testud), the cute maid. The acting by the film's two protagonists (Rudd and newcomer Romany Malco) fuels the film, but otherwise there isn't really much to praise. The supporting cast is as old and stale as a block of rotten cheese, and with the film being shot in natural light on a digital video camera the night scenes are impossible to watch.

Romany Malcoo in *The Chateau* directed by Jesse Peretz

TELEVISION:

Small Town Ecstasy (HBO, April 28)
Dir. Arnold Shapiro
The twisted life of a middle-aged father struggling with his inner demons takes center stage in *Small Town Ecstasy*, a documentary about the noxious effects of drug addiction. Recently divorced and floundering, Scott (the film uses first names only) begins hanging out at rave parties with his son Craig, scoring drugs and drinking himself into a stupor. After a lifetime of being drug free and responsible, Scott's loss of control is shocking to his family and friends. Eventually, his downward spiral leads him to enlist his children as drug procurers for his habit. Although painful to watch at moments, *Small Town Ecstasy* offers a brutally honest portrait of substance abusers.

A Day's Work, A Day's Pay (PBS, April)
Dir. Kathy Leichter
A Day's Work, A Day's Pay follows the trials of three welfare recipients who are participating in New York's welfare-to-work program, the largest of its kind in the nation. The documentary traces the trio's personal and political evolution as they struggle with long hours, poor working conditions, and minimal pay. The brainchild of former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, the welfare-to-work program was intended to slash the welfare rolls with little regard given to the consequences that would ensue. The film wonderfully captures the spirit of a group of people who refused to be bullied by the system. (See profile, March 2001.

Photos: *Some Body*, courtesy of Lot 47; *The Chateau*, IFC Films

BY BO MEHRAD

LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL DIRECTLY BEFORE SENDING CASSETTES, AS DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS. DEADLINE TO PLACE LISTING: 1ST OF THE MONTH TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (MAY 1 FOR JULY/AUGUST ISSUE). INCLUDE FESTIVAL DATES, CATEGORIES, PRIZES, ENTRY FEES, DEADLINES, FORMATS & CONTACT INFO. SEND TO: FESTIVALS@AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

BLACK HARVEST INTERNATIONAL VIDEO AND FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 20-29, IL. Deadline: May 10. Gene Siskel Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago presents the annual fest, a noncompetitive showcase for contemporary cinema & video from the African diaspora. Fest will feature films from around the world, reflecting Black cultural, political & social experiences. Offerings from African nations, the U.S., Britain, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean are expected. Recent African-American film and video provide the core of the fest. Directors will present feature-length and short work in all genres and an artists' panel will provide additional commentary and insight on the black experience in film. Founded: 1995. Cats: African/Diaspora, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, family, children, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, 35mm, DigiBeta, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Barbara Scharres, Film Center director, Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State Street, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 846-2600; fax: (312)332-5859; jhyde@artic.edu; www.siskelfilmcenter.org

BRAINWASH MOVIE FESTIVAL, July / August, CA. Deadline: May 1; May 10 (Final). Annual fest presents works from a nat'l selection of movie makers. Provides the opportunity to show "odd & obscure shorts, performance videos, works made for TV & out-of-genre efforts." Independent shorts & features from across the globe. Founded: 1995. Cats: TV, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, any style or genre. Awards: incl. in "Best of" collection for possible broadcast & small cash prizes. Formats: 16mm, VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (shorts, under 13 min.), $50 (features, under 130 min.) Contact: Shelby Toland, Box 23302, Oakland, CA 94623-0302;(415) 273-1545; shelby@brainwash.com; www.brainwash.com

CHICAGO INT'L CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, October 24-November 3, IL. Deadline: May 1. The CICFF is the largest competitive fest for films & videos for children in North America, & programs over 200 films & videos from 43 countries targeted primarily for children ages 2-13. Entries must have copyright date of previous yr. or later. Fest presents films in contexts which encourage dialogue between filmmakers, children, parents & educators. Goal is the sustenance & nurture of positive images for children. Founded: 1984. Cats: Children, Adult Produced Feature, Short, TV, Animation, Child-produced work (ages 3-13), , youth media, family. Awards: Best of Fest Prize ($2,500), Montgomery Jury Prize - Adult Director ($2,500), Montgomery Jury Prize - Child Director ($2,500), Green Screen Prize ($1,000), Liv Ullmann Peace Prize & Rights of the Child Prize, in addition to prizes in many cats from both Adult & Children's Juries. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee: $35 Short (Less than 60 mins.) $75 Feature (60 mins. or more); No fee for child-produced films (age 3-13). Contact: CICFF, Facets Film & Video, 1517 West Fullerton Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614; (773) 281-9075; fax: (773) 929-5437 or 929-0266; kidsfest@facets.org; www.cicff.org

CINE-NITES, July 20, CA. Deadline: May 1. Cine-Nites is a free, annual digital film fest for feature-length movies held at Raleigh Studios. Five films are selected as premieres to be screened for the filmmaker & his/her own audience. Also presents Digi-Nites. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature. Awards: Winners get promotion on Cine-Nites website. Formats: DV. VHS (will not be returned). Entry Fee: Free to submit. Contact: Festival, 10521 West Pico Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, USA 90064; www.cine-nites.com

DIGI-NITES, August 3, CA. Deadline: May 1. Diginites is a free, annual digital film fest for feature-length movies held at Raleigh Studios. Five films are selected as premieres to be screened for the filmmaker & his/her own audience. Founded: 2001. Cats: feature. Awards: Winners get promotion on Digi-Nites website. Formats: DV. VHS (will not be returned). Entry Fee: Free to submit. Contact: Festival, 10521 West Pico Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, USA 90064; www.digi-nites.com

FLICKS ON 66 WILD WEST DIGITAL SHOOTOUT, July 12-20, NM. Deadline: April 15. Flicks on 66 chooses 6 10-page scripts to produce in Albuquerque, NM. Finalists participate in a one-week shoot/ edit/screen workshop. Their films compete for the Palm de Grease. Awards: Digital video camera & editing equipment. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35. Contact: Jim Graebner, Festival Director, PO Box 4879, Albuquerque, NM 87196; (505) 766-9414; fax: (505) 888-4057; flicksdigital66@aol.com; www.Flickson66.com

JEWISH WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, November, NY. Deadline: April 22. Fest seeks films that focus on the experiences of Jewish women wherever & whoever they may be. The fest "provides an opportunity for filmmakers who have never shown commercially in a metropolitan area." Gender of filmmaker is of no consequence & all cats will be considered, provided they are no longer than 60 min. Cats: short (no longer than 60 min.), any style or genre. Awards: Awards for Best Film in each category. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35. Contact: Annette Landau, NCJW New York Section, 820 2nd Ave, New York, NY 10021; (212) 687-5030 x.40; plsp@ncjw.org; www.ncjw.org

LONG ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL, May 2-5 (add. screenings in June & July), NY. Deadline: April 15 (films); June 1 (screenplays). Annual competitive fest screens over 50 features & shorts submitted from around the world. Cats: feature, short, doc, student, experimental. Awards: 1st prizes presented in all cats (film & video), w/ cash awards TBA. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (screenplays & films up to 15 min.); $40 (15 to 30 min.); $60 (30-60 min.); $75 (over 60 min.). Contact: Chris Cooke, Box 13243, Hauppauge, NY 11788; (800) 762-4796; fax: (631) 853-4888; suffolkfilm@yahoo.com; www.lifilm.org

LOS ANGELES LATINO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 19-28, CA. Deadline: April 22. The fest is presented by producer/director/actor Edward James Olmos. LALIFF is dedicated to presenting the diversity & quality of Latino films made in the US, Spain, S.America, Mexico & the Carribean. A competitive fest, LALIFF establishes a platform to accomplish many goals the most important of which is giving filmmakers an opportunity to present their films in Hollywood, meet potential distributors, network w/ studios & learn new technology. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Best Film; Best Screenplay; Best Director; Best Doc, Best Short; Audience Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" (shorts & docs), 1/2" (shorts & docs), Beta (shorts & docs). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (features); $10 (docs & shorts). Contact: Marlene Dermer, 6777 Hollywood Blvd. Suite #500, Los Angeles, CA 90028; (323) 469-9066; fax: (323) 469-9067; latinofilm@yahoo.com; www.latinofilm.org

LUNAFEST, September-October, CA. Deadline: April 30. Fest seeks films by women, for women, or about women. Areas of interest can incl. culture, diversity of people, adventure, sports, the environment, spirituality, inspiration, challenges, relationships, & breaking barriers. Program will tour to ten college campuses during the fall. Proceeds from fest will benefit The Breast Cancer Fund to assist their efforts to promote awareness & education of womens' health. Films should be no longer than 75 min. Cats: short, doc, feature, student, family. Awards: Cash prizes. Formats: Beta, S-VHS, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 made payable to The Breast Cancer Fund. Contact: Allison Levy, c/o Clif Bar, 1610 5th St., Berkeley, CA 94710; allison@aspiringheights.com; www.lunabar.com

MAINE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, July 12-21, ME. Deadline: March 15 (early); April 30 (final). A leading New England regional film fest with an exceptional emphasis on international productions. Festival seeks features and shorts "shot in Maine or with a significant Maine focus." Recent fest guests and winners of MIFF's Mid-Life Achievement Award include Sissy Spacek and Terrence Malick. Founded: 1998. Cats: Feature, Short, doc. Awards: Audience Award (Best Feature). Formats: 35mm, 3/4", Beta SP, 16mm, S-VHS, 1/2", Beta, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30 (early); $40 (final). Entry form avail. on web site. Contact: MIFF, 10 Railroad Sq., Waterville, ME 04901; (207) 861-8138; fax: 872-5502; info@miff.org; www.miff.org

MALIBU INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, August 16-22, CA. Deadline: May 1. The Malibu Film Foundation, a California non-profit organization was founded to create, develop, & produce the Malibu Int'l Film Festival. The eight-day competitive fest is made possible through local support, corporate sponsorship & the blood, sweat, & tears of independent filmmakers. The fest screens over forty independent feature, short & doc films from around the world. Cats: feature, short, doc. Awards: Grand Prize (jury ballot); Directing Award (jury ballot); Audience Award (popular ballot); Cinematography Award (jury ballot); Screenwriter Award (jury ballot); Emerging Director Award (jury). Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Entry Fee: $50 (fee is waived w/ valid student ID). Contact: Skye Wilson, P.O. Box 695, Venice, CA 90265; (310) 317-9111; fax: (310) 581-8366; info@malibufilmfest.org; www.malibufilmfest.org

MARGARET MEAD FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November 2-10, 2001, NY. Deadline: May 8. Premiere U.S. fest for

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int'l cultural documentaries, w/ no restrictions on subject, length, or yr. of production. 2001 wil be the 25th anniversary of the fest & highlights will incl. a classics section & possibly a focus on generations. Film & videomakers whose works are selected receive a pass to all fest events, limited financial assistance & housing. After the November event, a number of titles are selected for a traveling fest that tours nat'lly & int'lly. Founded: 1977. Cats: Short, doc, animation, experimental, student, youth media. Awards: no awards, some financial assistance & honorarium. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: American Museum of Natural History, Dept. Education, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, NY 10024; (212) 769-5305; fax: 769-5329; meadfest@amnh.org; www.amnh.org/mead

MIDWEST MUSICAL MULTIMEDIA FESTIVAL, April 26, IW. Deadline: April 1. Hosted by the Electronic Division of the Communication Dept. at the University of Northern Iowa. The Video Fest is an "exploration in music, image, text & beyond..." The Fest curators aim to showcase work that explores intersections among music, images & beyond. Experimental, music video & animation are all of interest. Selected works will be uplinked onto the University website. Cats: short, animation, experimental, student, music video. Formats: 3/4", DVD, VHS, DV Cam. preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $8! Contact: Carol Vernallis; (319) 273-6985; vernallis@uni.edu

NANTUCKET FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-23, MA. Deadline: April 13 (film); March 16 (screenplay competition). Fest focuses on screenwriters & their craft, presents feature films, short films, docs, staged readings, Q&A w/ filmmakers, panel discussions & the Morning Coffee With... series. Writers are encouraged to present their films & works-in-progress & get feedback from other screenwriters & filmmakers. Entry must not have had commercial distribution or U.S. broadcast. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Tony Cox Award for Screenwriting Competition, Best Writer/Director Award, Audience Awards for Best Feature & Short Film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (features); $25 (shorts, 35 min. or less); $15 (5 min or less). Contact: Jill Goode, Festival Director, 1633 Broadway, Ste. 14-334, New York, NY 10019; (212) 708-1278; ackfest@aol.com; www.nantucketfilmfest.org

NOMAD VIDEOFILM FESTIVAL, June tour, WA, OR, CA. Deadline: April 15. Berkeley-based fest has been a Pacific Coast touring venue for alternative media since 1992, w/ stops in Port Townsend WA, Seattle, Portland, San Fran., Santa Monica & others. Fest seeks short video/films (15 min. max, any category) expressing audacity & strong visions. No theme this year; short docs & animation encouraged. Founded: 1991. Cats: short, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: No cash prizes, selected entries receive written audience responses. Works can originate in any video, film &/or media format. Formats: DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (no fee for int'l entries). Contact: Antero Alli c/o NVF, Box 7518, Berkeley, CA 94707; (510) 464-4640; anteros@speakeasy.net; www.verticalpool.com/nomad.html

NORTH CAROLINA GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, August 9-12, NC. Deadline: May. Competitive fest aims to open up audiences to wide spectrum of films by &/or about gay/lesbian/bisexual/ transgender lives. Fest also has produced series of events leading up to the fest incl. series on early gay films ("The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly"). No restriction on film's year of completion. Cats: feature, doc, short. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15. Contact: Lawrence Ferber, Coordinator, 573 6th St. #1, Brooklyn, NY 11215; (212) 414-7654; fax: (212) 233-9299; NCGLFF@aol.com; www.carolinatheatre.org

PHILADELPHIA INT'L GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, July 11-22, PA. Deadline: May 1. Competitive fest screening int'l features, documentaries, & shorts, w/ cash prizes for both jury & audience awards. Cats: feature, short, doc, children. Awards: Audience Award, Best Feature ($1,000); Audience Award, Gay Male Short ($500); Audience Award, Lesbian Short ($500); Jury Award, Best Feature ($500); Jury Award, Doc ($500); Jury Award, Lesbian Short ($250); Jury Award, Gay Male Short ($250). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee; Send media kit & screener. Contact: Thom Cardwell, Philadelphia Film Society, 234 Market St., Fifth Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106; 215-733-0608 ext. 237; fax: (215) 733-0637; tcardwell@tlavideo.com; www.phillyfests.com

RESFEST DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept.-Dec., CA, WA, IL, NY. Deadline: May 3 (early); June 3 (final). Annual nat'l/int'l touring fest seeks short films/videos exploring the dynamic interplay of film, art, music & design. The Fest showcases the best of the year's shorts, features, music videos, & animation along w/ screenings, live music events, parties, panel discussions, & tech demos. The underlying guideline for submissions is Innovation. The previous years the fest toured 14 cities int'lly. Cats: Doc, Experimental, Feature, Animation, music video, short. Awards: Audience Choice Award w/ cash prizes. Formats: DV, Beta SP, 35mm, DigiBeta (preferred), Mini DV (NTSC). Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL), Beta SP (NTSC), Mini DV (NTSC). Entry Fee: $20 (early), $25 (final). Contact: RESFEST, 601 West 26th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10001; resfest@resfest.com; www.resfest.com

SAN ANTONIO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, June 14-15, TX. Deadline: May 1. Looking for features & shorts out of the mainstream. Include two sentence synopsis. Awards: Grand Prize: Lowrider Bicycle. Formats: VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (CASH ONLY!); Every entry receives a fest T-shirt. Contact: Adam Rocha, 8039 Callaghan Rd. #611 PMB, San Antonio, TX 78230; (210) 977-9004; info@safilm.com; www.safilm.com

STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL, July 17-27, NY. Deadline: April 15. Eleven days, fifty screenings of features & short films ranging from the best & most exciting foreign, art & popular films to world & U.S. premieres of the best Independent Cinema from the U.S. & abroad. Cats: Feature, Short, Doc, Animation. Awards: Grand Prize, Jury Feature, Jury Short, Jury Directing, & Audience Choice Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (shorts up to 30 min.); $40 (features over 30 min.). Contact: Patrick Kelly, Stellar Arts Center, Stony Brook University, Rm 2032, Stony Brook, NY 11794; (631) 632-7235; fax: (631) 632-7354; filmfest@stonybrookfilmfest.com; www.stonybrookfilmfest.com

THE BRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL, May 11, NY. Deadline: April 8. Featuring films by middle- & upper school stu-

dents at Quaker schools worldwide. The goal of the fest is to promote value-based filmmaking on topics that our children & communities grapple w/ regularly, such as integrity, non-violence, social conscience, & political justice. The Fest is not looking for films about Quaker philosophy but rather films that depict Quaker ideals in action. From the participating schools, finalist films will be chosen & will be screened & awards are given based on both the quality of filmmaking & content. Entries may be up to 12 min. in length. Cats: doc, Nature, Comedy, Drama, Animation, music video, student, short. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: $25. Contact: Andy Cohen, 375 Pearl Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201; (718) 852.1029; fax: (718) 643.4868; acohen@brooklynfriends.org; www.brooklynfriends.org/bridgefilm/index.html

WINE COUNTRY FILM FESTIVAL, July 18-Aug. 11, CA. Deadline: May 1. Annual fest held in Napa & Sonoma Valleys, 45 miles north of San Francisco. A competitive & non-competitive int'l showcase of 100+ feature films, shorts, docs & animation. On average the fest showcases 102 films from 32 countries, w/ seminars & gala screens outdoors under the stars in a vineyard setting Founded: 1987. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation. Awards: Best First Feature, David L. Wolper Best Doc Prize, Best Short & Audience Choice Awards . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35. Contact: Festival, Box 303, Glen Ellen, CA 95442; (707) 996-2536; fax: (707) 996-6964; wcfilmfest@aol.com; www.winecountryfilmfest.com

WOODS HOLE FILM FESTIVAL, July 27-Aug. 3, MA. Deadline: May 1. A showcase for independent film w/ special emphasis on regional filmmakers & cinematography. Founded: 1991. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, script. Awards: Best feature, short, doc, film, cinematography. Formats: Beta, 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (under 40 min.); $45 (feature); $25 screenplay. Contact: Judy Laster, PO Box 624, Woods Hole, MA 02543; (617) 347-0316; woho3@aol.com; www.woodsholefilmfest.com

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, OR. Deadline: mid-May. Young People's Film and Video Festival is an annual juried survey of outstanding work by grade & high school students from the Northwest (OR, WA, ID, MT, UT, AK). A jury reviews entries & assembles a program for public presentation. Judges' Certificates are awarded. About 20 films & videos are selected each year. Entries must have been made within previous 2 yrs. Founded: 1975. Cats: Student, any style or genre. Awards: Judges Certificates awarded. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2", Hi8, CD-ROM, S-VHS, super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Kristin Konsterlie, Festival Coordinator, Northwest Film Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 294-0874; kristin@nwfilm.org; www.nwfilm.org

BELLA LUNA

Ever wonder what happens to your festival entry fees? With LunaFest there is no guesswork. One of the few festivals of its kind, LunaFest has generated over $7,500 to date for The Breast Cancer Fund—a nonprofit that works to uncover and eliminate the preventable causes of breast cancer. All submission fees are directly paid to TBCF (entry checks are made out to The Breast Cancer Fund—no middlemen!). Celebrating its second year, the fest also provides a unique forum for films by, for, and about women, all while raising awareness of the fight to eradicate breast cancer. Last year's audiences were treated to an eccentric platter of films from across the globe, including *This is For Betsy Hall* (pictured) along with speakers who shared their experience of living with or surviving breast cancer. See listing.

Foreign

ANTIMATTER: FESTIVAL OF UNDERGROUND SHORT FILM & VIDEO, Sept. 20-28, Canada. Deadline: May 3 (early); June 7 (late). Annual fest, produced by Rogue Art, seeks imaginative, volatile, entertaining & critical works which exist outside mainstream, regardless of subversive or dangerous nature of their content, stylistic concerns, or commercial viability. Fest is anti-Hollywood & anti-censorship & dedicated to film & video as art. Selected works will be included in a three-city int'l tour. Industrial, commercial & studio products ineligible. Films must be under 30 min. & produced w/in last two years. Founded: 1998. Cats: any style or genre, short. Formats: 1/2", 16mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (early); $15 (late). Contact: Todd Eacrett, Director, Studio F, 1322, Broad St., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W-2A9; (250) 385-3327; fax: (250) 385-3327; rogueart@island.com; www.antimatter.ws

BRISBANE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 4-14, Australia. Deadline: April 8. Festival will showcase more than 200

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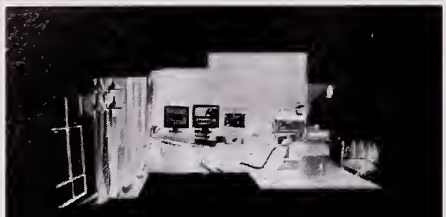

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films, docs, shorts, & animations at venues across Brisbane. Also adding to this year's fest fever will be the much-anticipated announcement of the Chauvel Award winner. Past winners of this prestigious award incl. Fred Schepisi, Paul Cox, Gillian Armstrong, John Seale, Dr. George Miller & Rolf de Heer. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation, Experimental. Preview on VHS. Contact: Third Floor Hoyts Regent, 167 Queen St. Mall, Brisbane, QLD 4000, Austrailia; 011 61 7 3007-3003; fax: 011 61 7 3007-3030; biff@biff.com.au; www.biff.com.au

EDINBURGH INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, August 14-25, Scotland. Deadline: April 19. Fest of discovery, celebration of cinema, centre of debate, & catalyst for new directors & first films. Began in 1947 as a doc film fest & is particularly interested in non-fiction; also premieres. Showcases about 110 new features & 120 new shorts each yr; shows live action & animated shorts before every film in every section. In 1995 initiated New British Expo, a market & talent spotting showcase for British film. All films screened to public audiences except NBX; also screenings for press, delegates & attending guests. Founded: 1947. Cats: Feature, Short, Animation, Experimental, doc. Awards: Awards go to Best New British Feature, Best British Animation plus Standard Life Audience Award, Channel Four Director's Award, Observer Doc Award & Pathé Performance Award. Audience vote for Best Gala Film & Best Animation.. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: £10-£80. Contact: Lizze Francke, Director, Filmhouse, 88 Lothian Road, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ, Scotland, UK; 011 44 31 221 8709; fax: 011 44 31 229 5501; submissions@edfilmfest.org.uk or info@edfilmfest.org.uk; www.edfilmfest.org.uk

FANTASY FILMFEST, July 24-August 21, Germany. Deadline: May 31. Annual fest is held in six German cities (Frankfurt, Cologne. Munich, Berlin, Stuttgart, Hamburg) celebrating the following genres: science fiction, horror, thriller & killer, animation, fantasy & action adventure. Film must be German premieres Founded: 1987. Cats: feature, short, animation. Awards: none.. Formats: 35mm. Preview on VHS/DVD. Entry Fee: No entry fee; $25 (for return of tape). Contact: Schorsch Muller, Rosebud Entertainment, Veranstaltungs + Medien GMBH, Fregestr. 36, Berlin, Germany 12161; 011 49 30 861 45 32; fax: 49 30 861 45 39; rosebud_entertainment@t-online.de; www.fantasyfilmfest.com

HIROSHIMA INT'L ANIMATION FESTIVAL, August 22-26, Japan. Deadline: April 10. Biennale fest's philosophy is that animation brings together every & all kinds of art forms & cultures & as a result animation can express more humane feelings, such as kindness, love, & peace. Founded: 1985. Cats: animation, short. Awards: Grand Prize, Hiroshima Prize, Debut Prize, Renzo Kinoshita Prize, Special Int'l Jury Prizes, prizes for Outstanding Works. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" (Low band), Beta Cam (NTSC). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Sayoko Kinoshita, Fest. Dir., 4-17 Kako-machi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima, Japan 730-0812; 011 81 82 245 0245; fax: 81 82 245 0246; hiroanim@urban.ne.jp; www.urban.ne.jp/home/hiroanim/

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL CINEMA JOVE, June 15-22, Spain. Deadline: April 15. Cinema Jove has two cats: Official Int'l Category for Videocreation, Electronic Graphics & Computer Graphics (open to any young videomaker born after January 1st 1965), & Official Nat'l Category for Short Fictions produced on video (open to those born or resident in the Spanish State, born after Jan. 1st 1969). (Int'l Short Film Market takes place in the framework of the Cinema Jove fest.) Founded: 1985. Cats: short, feature, any style or genre. Awards: Luna de Valencia; Gold (18.000 Euros): best feature; Gold (6.000 Euros): best short; Silver (3.000 Euros): 2nd short; Bronze (1.800 Euros): 3rd short; Int'l CANAL+ award to the best short film (rights purchasing for Europe); Special MADRID FILM nat'l award to the best short film (work services valued: 1.500 Euros); Special INJUVE award to more creative short film (3.000 Euros); Special TRIVISION award to the best Valencian short film Director (work services valued: 1.800 Euros). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry fees. Contact: Rafael Maluenda, Festival Director, Calle Jeronimo de Monsoriu,19 , Valencia, Spain 46022 ; 011 34 96 331 10 47; fax: 011 34 96 331 08 05; cinemajove@ivaj.gva.es; www.gva.es/cinemajove/

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE. July 8-19, Uruguay. Deadline: May 3. Annual fest presents overview of new films for children & adolescents, facilitates access to best & most diverse material created today & encourages distribution of new films for children. Entries cannot have been shown in Uruguay & must include: complete tech info, five-line synopsis of work, dialogue script in English & VHS copy of film. Cats: children, animation, feature, short, family, TV. Awards: Prizes for fiction, animation, doc; UNESCO prize to director of best Latin American or Caribbean film or video; Guri prize for best of fest; UNICEF prize to best film/video promoting children's rights; OCIC prize to best film/video enhancing human values, & Children's Jury award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Richard Casas, Cinemateca Uruguaya, Lorenzo Carnelli 1311, Montevideo, Uruguay 11200; fax: 011 598 409 4572; cinemuy@chasque.apc.org; www.cinemateca.org.uy

JERUSALEM FILM FESTIVAL, July 18-27, Israel. Deadline: April 18. Annual fest will screen over 175 films in various cats, incl. int'l cinema, doc, shorts, animation, avant garde, US indie, Israeli & Mediterranean cinema; Jewish themes, restorations & classics. Must be Israeli premieres. Founded: 1984. Cats: Feature, Short, Retro, Jewish, Doc, Experimental. Awards: Wolgin Awards for Israeli cinema, Lipper Award for best Israeli script, Wim van Leer Award (int'l competition), Mediterranean Cinema Award, Films on Jewish Theme Award (int'l comp.). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Lia van Leer, Director, Box 8561, Derech Hebron, Jerusalem, Israel 91083; 011 9722 672 4131; fax: 011 9722 673 3076; jer_cine@inter.net.il; www.jer.cine.org.il

"MESSAGE TO MAN" INT'L DOC, SHORT & ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, June 15-22, Russia. Deadline: April 15. The largest int'l film fest in Russia in the field of documentaries, short fiction & animation. Fest is a unique opportunity for communication between filmmakers from different countries who develop themes of justice, goodwill, "message to people", realizing them by the means of cinema. Fest accepts feature doc (up to 120 min.), short doc (up to 40 min.), short fiction (up to 60 min.),

animated films (up to 40 min.). Cats: Doc, Short, Animation, any style or genre. Awards: "Centaur" prizes & cash awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Contact: Mikhail Litviakov, 12 Karavannaya, St. Petersburg, Russia 191011; 011 7 812 235 2660, or 230-22-00; fax: 011 7 812 235 3995; centaur@spb.cityline.ru; www.cl.spb.ru/centaur/

MILANO & BOLOGNA INT'L GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, May 29-June 8, Italy. Deadline: April 20. The largest event of public screenings of lesbian & gay films in Milano & Bologna. Founded: 1985. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta (PAL only), U-matic (NTSC / PAL), 1/2"(NTSC / PAL). Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL or SECAM). Entry Fee: none. Contact: Giampaolo Marzi, C/O MBE 208, Via Del Torchino 12, Milano, Italy 20123; 011 39 023 319 118; fax: 39 0272 002 942; marzig@energy.it; www.cinemagaylesbico.com

NEW ZEALAND FILM FESTIVALS, July 12-28 (Auckland); July 19-August 4 (Wellington); July 26-August 11 (Dunedin); August 1-18 (ChristChurch), New Zealand. Deadline: April 15. July is Film Festival time: festivals are presented every winter by the New Zealand Film Festival. Made up of a core programme of approx. 120 features & as many shorts, the organizers present major Festivals in Wellington & Auckland & "selected highlights" programmes in the South Island cities of Christchurch & Dunedin. A further reduced programme travels to six provincial cities. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, PO Box 9544, Marion Square, Wellington, New Zealand 6001; 01 64 4 385 0162; fax: 64 4 801 7304; entries@enzedff.co.nz; www.enzedff.co.nz

VANCOUVER QUEER FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, August 8-18, Canada. Deadline: April 18th. Annual event screens both int'l & local Canadian films & videos of interest to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgendered communities. Festival screens work of all lengths & genres & incls. panels, workshops, & receptions providing a forum for the development of dialogue between LGBT people of all ethnicities, cultures, ages, abilities, & gender definitions. Fees paid for independent work screened. Founded: 1989. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Gerry Brunet Memorial Award ($400) to the most inspirational B.C. short work of any genre or format (under 35 min.) made after January 1, 2000.. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 1/2", Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS, NTSC only. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Michael Barrett, Director of Programming, 207 West Hastings Street, Ste 405, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 1H7; (604) 844-1615; fax: 844-1698; programming@outonscreen.com; www.outonscreen.com

VILA DO CONDE INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, July 2-7, Portugal. Deadline: April 19. Annual fest accepting films under 60 min. produced in the previous 2 years. If film has dialogue in languages other than English, French, Spanish or Portugese & it is not subtitled in any of these languages, incl. translated script. Extracts of accepted films may be broadcast on TV channels for fest publicity. Founded: 1993. Cats: Short, doc, Animation, any style or genre. Awards: Grand Prize in each category of a trophy, diploma & PTE 3,000; Prize of the Audience, trophy & PTE 2,000. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fees. Contact: Mario Micaelo, Auditorio Municipal, Praca da Republica, 4480-715 Vila do Conde, Portugal; 011 351 252 646 516; fax: 351 252 248 416; fest@curtasmetragens.pt; www.curtasmetragns.pt

2002 Call for Entries

LONG ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL

19th Annual Film/Video Festival

Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center
May 2nd-5th, 2002

Call or Write for Entry Forms (Due 4/1/02)
Christopher Cooke, Director
Long Island Film Festival
c/o P.O. Box 13243
Hauppauge, NY 11788
1-800-762-4769 • (631) 853-4800
From 10:00am-6pm, Mon-Fri
or visit our website at **www.lifilm.org**

Long Island International Film Expo 2002

Seeks Submissions for July 12-18 Film Festival

Short and Feature Length Films, all genres considered.
If accepted, ability to screen in Beta SP, 16mm, 35mm and VHS Video.
Cut off date May 13.

GALA AWARDS CEREMONY August 22

For application, please email debfilm@aol.com, call 516-571-3168
or visit our websites: www.LongIslandFilm.com and www.Co.Nassau.NY.US/film/form2002.html

The Long Island International Film Expo is under the auspices of the Long Island Film/TV Foundation and the Nassau County Film Commission

NOTICES OF RELEVANCE TO AIVF MEMBERS ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE AS SPACE PERMITS. *THE INDEPENDENT* RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH AND MAKES NO GUARANTEES ABOUT REPETITIONS OF A GIVEN NOTICE. LIMIT SUBMISSIONS TO 60 WORDS & INDICATE HOW LONG INFO WILL BE CURRENT. DEADLINE: 1ST OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G., MAY 1 FOR JULY/AUG. ISSUE). COMPLETE CONTACT INFO (NAME, ADDRESS & PHONE) MUST ACCOMPANY ALL NOTICES. SEND TO: NOTICES@AIVF.ORG. WE TRY TO BE AS CURRENT AS POSSIBLE, BUT DOUBLE-CHECK BEFORE SUBMITTING TAPES OR APPLICATIONS.

Competitions

FILM IN ARIZONA SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Sixth year. To promote screenplays to film exec. that take place in Arizona. Nat'l competition for original feature-length screenplays (90 min., 120 max. pgs). Industry standard format req'd. Awards: $1,000 Cox Communications Award, guaranteed industry meetings, hotel accomodations, rental car, pro script notes; all finalists flown to LA for awards breakfast and will receive Scriptware software along with free exposure on Writers Script Network. Entry fees & deadlines: $30 (by April 13, 2002), $40 (by May 15). Wendy Carroll, "Film In Arizona" Screenwriting Competition, 3800 N. Central Ave., Bldg. D, Phoenix, AZ 85012; (602) 280-1380; hotline: 280-1384; wendy@azcommerce.com; www.azmmerce.com/azfilmcommission.htm

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: To provide new valuable outlets for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, btwn 90 & 130 pages. Rules & Requirement in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script loglines sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies by Writers Script Network for 6 months. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Winner's diploma posted on HSI website for 1 month. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; (800)-SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com

NCFR MEDIA AWARDS, November 19-24 (NCFR Conference), MI. Deadline: May 1. Nat'l Council on Media Relations sponsors an annual competition to recognize outstanding videos & CD-Roms on marriage & family. Their mission is to "evaluate quality & conceptual content, encourage excellence in production of themes relevant to family issues, promote the effective use of these resources & high standards in the development of creative learning opportunities, & disseminate media competition results to interested professionals." Cats: Abuse, Aging, Contemporary Social Issues, Families w/ Special Needs, Family Violence/Abuse, Human Development Across the Life Span, Marital & Family Issues & Communications, Mental Health, Stress, Transition, & Crisis Management, Diverse Family Systems, Parenting Issues, Sexuality & Sex Role Development, Teenage Pregnancy & Sexuality, STD/AIDS, Other (eg. PSAs). Contact: Lynda Bessey, 3989 Central Ave. NE, #550, Minneapolis, MN 55421; (763)-781-9331; fax:781-9348; TOLL FREE (888)781-9331; fvilla@pilot.msu.edu; ncfr3989@ncfr.com.; www.ncfr.org

SCRIPTAPALOOZA 4th ANNUAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: First prize is $10,000 and screenwriting software for the 3 winners and 10 runner-ups. All thirteen winners will be considered by Scriptapalooza's outstanding participants; AMG, Samuel Goldwyn Films, Film Colony, Evolution, Phoenix Pictures and many more. Sponsors include Screenplay Systems and The Writer's Store. All entries must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2002. For further information or an application please visit www.scriptapalooza.com or call (323) 654-5809.

TEXAS FILM INSTITUTE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: To promote, develop & seek production of new talented screenwriters within the studio and independent film market. Our sponsors expect to read solid dramatic scripts from our winners that reflect our high standards of writing for which we are known in the industry. Awards: Cash, possible option, entrants placing in semi-finals and up receive free evaluation of script, admission to the Santa Fe Screenwriters Conference. Entry fee: $40. Deadline: April 15. Contact: Lisa Matter, Creative Assistant, TFI 2002, The Ranch of Dos Cerros, 409 Mountain Spring, Boerne, Tx 78006; (830)-537-5906; 537-5906; txflix@aol.com; www.texasfilminstitute.com

THE ANNUAL IDA AWARDS COMPETITION: Sponsored by Eastman Kodak, the IDA Awards recognize & honor distinguished achievement in nonfiction film & video. Winners honored at the Awards Gala on Dec. 13, 2002. The IDA screens the winning films at DocuFest on Dec. 14, 2002. Early Bird Deadline with discount May 17. Final Deadline June 30. Entry forms available at www.documentary.org beginning March 15 or contact IDA at 213-534-3600 x7446 or idaawards@documentary.org

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: Offers the excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features, of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail hour to showcase local organizations and allow for a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 401 W. Ontario, Suite 208, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 863-3451; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com

Conferences • Workshops

INSTITUTE OF VIDEOGRAPHY'S ANNUAL CONVENTION & TRADE EXHIBITION: April 24th & 25th 2002. Event showcases the latest technology & services in DV production. Event includes full schedule of seminars & workshops aimed at addressing the needs of today's video production community, including discussions on all key business topics. IOV welcomes non-members & offers free convention pre-registration service and convention info via web site. Contact: +44 (0) 20 8502 3817; www.iov.co.uk

Films • Tapes Wanted

CINEMARENO: A year-round festival of films. Monthly screenings showcase new independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: $20. Contact: Cinemareno, P.O. Box 5372, Reno NV 89513, e-mail: cinemareno@excite.com. Entry form and guidelines at www.cinemareno.org

DUTV: A progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia, seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & 3/4" accepted for possible cablecast & webcast. VHS for preview. Contact: Debbie Rudman, DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St., Bldg 9B, Rm 4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.dutv.org

MAKOR: Continues its on-going Reel Jews Film Series that showcases the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs and/or works-in-progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration and network building. For more info, call Ken Sherman at (212) 601-1021 or kensherman@makor.org.

PARK4DTV: Is an Amsterdam-based organization specializing in broadcast of a 60 min. TV art piece every night. Works vary from computer-generated abstract work to ultra hard-core reality TV. Founded in 1991, PARK4DTV has broadcast more than 1100 different 1 hr. tapes made by artist around the world & is looking for tapes that fit into the program. Artists will be paid for broadcasted work. Organization also has programs in Rotterdam, New York & Berlin. Contact: PARK4DTV, Box 11344, 1001 GH Amsterdam, Netherlands; info@park.nl; www.park.nl

It's a Brand New Day

NEW DAY FILMS

In this day and age when mega-media mergers and conglomerates are king, it's good to know some people are still interested in independent projects. For the past 29 years, New Day Films has offered independently produced, award-winning films that both educate and inspire. Created in the 1970s to promote works that other distributors thought to controversial, New Day presently has 50 filmmakers in their stable who pride themselves on creating films that range from local social issues to global concerns. New Day Films is always looking for video and filmmakers that have social issue documentaries. See listing.

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

To succeed as an independent you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. Whether through our service and education programs, the pages of our magazine, our web resource, or through the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while reminding you you're not alone.

About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

AIVF Online

Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

Insurance & Discounts

Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports over 20 member-organized, member-run regional salons across the country, to strengthen local media arts communities.

Advocacy

AIVF has been consistently outspoken about preserving the resources and rights of independent mediamakers. Members receive information on current issues and public policy, and the opportunity to add their voice to collective actions.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

INDIVIDUAL/STUDENT

Includes: one year's subscription to *The Independent* • access to group insurance plans • discounts on goods & services from national Trade Partners • online & over-the-phone information services • discounted admission to seminars, screenings, & events • book discounts • classifieds discounts • advocacy action alerts • eligibility to vote & run for board of directors • members-only web services.

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Individual membership plus $45 tax-deductible donation. Special recognition in *The Independent*.

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Special AIVF memberships are also available through AIVF Regional Salons as well as many local media arts organizations — for details call (212) 807-1400 x236.

LIBRARY SUBSCRIPTION

Year's subscription to *The Independent* for multiple readers, mailed first class. Contact your subscription service to order or call AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x501.

AIVF
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

With all that AIVF has to offer, can you afford *not* to be a member? Join today!

Mail to AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl, New York, NY 10013; or charge by phone (212) 807-1400 x 503, by fax (212) 463-8519, or via www.aivf.org. Your first issue of *The Independent* will arrive in 4-6 weeks.

For Library subscriptions: please contact your subscription service, or call AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x501.

MEMBERSHIP RATES (see reverse for categories)

Individual	☐ $55/1 yr.	☐ $100/2 yrs.
Dual	☐ $95/1 yr.	☐ $180/2 yrs.
Student	☐ $35/1 yr. enclose copy of current student ID	
Friend of FIVF	☐ $100/1 yr. includes $45 donation	
Business & Industry	☐ $150/1 yr.	
School & Non-profit	☐ $100/1 yr.	

MAILING RATES

Magazines are mailed second-class in the U.S.

☐ First-class U.S. mailing - add $30

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☐ All other countries - add $45

* Your additional, tax-deductible contribution will help support the educational programs of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, a public 501(c)(3) organization.

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PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals from programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS Web page from content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Senior Director, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295. Email: cjones@pbs.org. Web: www.pbs.org/producers/.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: Is a quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are sought. Incl. synopsis of work, artist's bio & contract info. Deadline ongoing. Tapes are unable to be returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

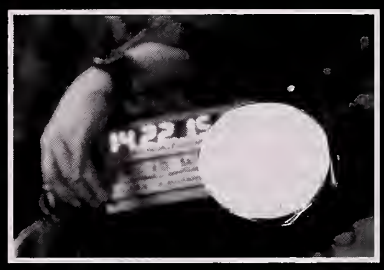
SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Is looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature length non-fiction productions in all areas of the special interest or instructional fields, cutting edge documentaries and children and family programming. Also seeking feature length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural themed products wanted, both fiction and non fiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; (315) 454-5608; webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a non-profit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, please visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL: One of the oldest alternative media organizations in U.S., is seeking film & video submissions of short & feature length docs, narratives, experimental & other works attentive to intersections of race, class & gender. Projects that address other issues of political & social interest also welcome. Formats: 1/2" VHS tapes. Send submissions, synopsis of the film & director's bio to: Third World Newsreel, Attn: Sherae Rimpsey, 545 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10018; (212) 947-9277; fax: 594-6417; twn@twn.org; www.twn.org

SOUTHWEST ALTERNATE MEDIA PROJECT: Is now seeking submissions for the 27th season (2002-03) of *The Territory*, the longest running PBS showcase of independent film/video in the country. Recent works 27 minutes or less, of all genre are accepted. Artists will be paid $35/minute for non-exclusive Texas broadcast. Send VHS (NTSC) copy of work with bio and synopsis to SWAMP 1519 W. Main, Houston, Texas, 77006; (713) 522-8592; swamp@swamp.org; www.swamp.org. Deadline: April 19, 2002.

UNQUOTE TV: Weekly nonprofit program dedicated to exposing innovative work of all genres. Not cablecast nationally. Unquote is now in its 12th year. Send to: Unquote TV c/o DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St. 9B/4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.dutv.org



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QUEER PUBLIC ACCESS TV PRODUCERS: Seek public access show tapes by/for/about gay, lesbian, bi, drag, trans subjects, for inclusion in academic press book on queer community programming. All program genres welcome. Incl. info about your program's history & distribution. Send VHS tapes to: Eric Freedman, Asst. Professor, Comm. Dept., Florida Atlantic Univ., 777 Glades Rd., Boca Raton, FL 33431; (561) 297-2534; efreedma@fau.edu

THE SHORT LIST: Showcase int'l short films, airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc; contact: fax (619) 462-8266 or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu

Publications

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: Is a new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. *Sanctuary* is devoted exclusively to creative work: thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. www.sanctuaryquarterly.com.

Resources • Funds

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS: Provide grants to support educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact: Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202-4921; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis/

BAVC: Announces Artist Equipment Access Awards call for entries, in postproduction grants for innovative video or new media projects. Award: $2000 in-kind grant for equipment use. BAVC takes special interest in video artists working on projects in association with community groups or about community issues. Deadline: May 21. Contact: Michella Rivera-Gravage, michella@bavc.org; www.bavc.org

DIGITAL MEDIA TRAINING SERIES: DMTS is a video & DVD-based training series for film, television & web developers. The series provides high-end training tools that improve productivity & creativity for the end-user. DMTS training episodes feature the latest topics & technology, giving viewers access to working professionals & experts that they would not have in a traditional classroom setting, at a fraction of the cost. Contact: Rafael, (877) 606-5012; info@magnetmediafilms.com; www.digitalmediatraining.com

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in Richmond, VA & Austin, TX offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super-8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX, 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com

ITVS'S LINCS 2002 FUNDING INITIATIVE: The Independent Television Services (ITVS) announces LinCS 2002 (Local Independent Collaborating with Stations), a funding initiative that gives independent producers and local public stations the opportunity to work together. LinCS provides incentive or matching monies to collaborations between public television stations and independent producers. Funding amounts will range from $10,000 - $75,000. LinCS 2002 seeks regionally and culturally diverse projects. Programs should stimulate civic discourse and break traditional molds of exploring regional, cultural, political, social and economic issues. Deadline: April 30.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Summer seminars & institutes for college & univ. teachers. Seminars incl. 15 participants working in collaboration w/ 1 or 2 leading scholars. Institutes provide intensive collaborative study of texts, historical periods & ideas for teachers of undergrad humanities. Info & appl. materials are avail. from project directors. Contact: (202) 606-8463; sem-inst@neh.gov; www.neh.gov

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ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in The Independent & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

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MASTER CLASS:
SUSTAINING YOUR VISION: A DISCUSSION IN THREE PARTS

Sustaining Your Vision provides an opportunity to learn from accomplished feature film producers, directors, and distributors via their triumphs, untold tactics and war stories. The Master Class Series examines how filmmakers have maintained their independence throughout the production process, and have been able to present their work to their intended audiences.

Three case studies will inform producers of ways to maintain creative vision through technique, craft, and a little business savvy. Find out how successful filmmakers got the deals, and got their films made and ultimately seen. How did they maintain the integrity of their project?

I. Financing Your Independent Vision

The first session addresses the many aspects of fundraising and financing the independent film, including forming a legal entity, putting together a prospectus or business plan, finding and approaching investors, and exploring other avenues of funding.

II. Realizing Your Independent Vision

This session will explore the director's creative process. Topics will include working with the writer, casting and directing actors, and collaborating with the cinematographer.

III. Sharing Your Independent Vision

This final session focuses on getting your film to its audience. How might you work with a distributor to maximize viewer potential? Topics will include creating buzz, getting publicity and working with a publicist, outreach and audience development, and ways to engage your audience beyond the screening.

Details pending at press time. Visit www.aivf.org for info.

Unless otherwise noted, all AIVF events take place at our offices (see below) and require an RSVP. For information, call (212) 807-1400 ext. 301 or info@aivf.org.

In Brief:
PRODUCERS LEGAL SERIES

In Brief: Producers Legal Series addresses the issues independent producers face throughout the various stages of their projects, from forming a legal entity to financing a film through private investments and foundation grants. These small group sessions answer common questions and connect producers with individuals who can introduce them to resources for their projects. The series is led by entertainment attorney Innes Smolansky of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard. Smolansky specializes in independent film, and represents independent producers, writers, and directors.

Production Legal Issues
When: Thurs., April 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Cost: $20 members; $30 nonmembers

Discussion will address all types of clearances, including literary clearances, music rights, personal releases, clearing stock footage, and negotiating location permits. Errors and Omissions insurance and negotiations with guilds and unions will also be defined and addressed.

The final seminar in the Legal Series will be held in May and will focus on distribution deals.

Meet & Greet
KILLER FILMS

When: Thurs., April 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Where: AIVF office
Cost: $5 members; $20 nonmembers

KILLER FILMS was founded in 1996 and is headed by producers Christine Vachon, Pamela Koffler, and Katie Roumel. Killer Films' first project was photographer Cindy Sherman's *Office Killer*. Vachon, Koffler, and Roumel have made a number of award-winning films, including Tony Vitale's *Kiss Me Guido*, Todd Solondz' *Happiness* and *Storytelling*, Todd Haynes's *Velvet Goldmine*, Dan Minahan's *Series 7*, Kimberly Pierce's *Boys Don't Cry*, and John Cameron Mitchell's *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, based on the off-Broadway stage show.

Upcoming releases include Mark Romanek's *One Hour Photo*, Rose Troche's *The Safety of Objects*, Tim Blake Nelson's *The Grey Zone*, and Ethan Hawke's *Chelsea Walls*. Killer Films is currently in production on Todd Haynes's new film, *Far From Heaven*. Killer also has film and television projects in development with Isaac Mizrahi, Mary Harron, Q-Tip, Neve Campbell, Whit Stillman, and several other writers, directors, and performers.

reach AIVF

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HOURS: TUES.-FRI. 11-6; WED. 11-9
The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
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April 4-7, Durham, NC

DoubleTake celebrates the power and artistry of documentary cinema. DDFF offers a rare opportunity for documentary filmmakers to showcase their work theatrically, in an environment that stimulates conversation and community between filmmakers, industry executives and the general public.

The four-day event presents a unique assortment of film screenings, both curated and submitted for competition, panel discussions, seminars and Q&A sessions. It offers tributes to the masters of the documentary genre and business leaders in the industry and, of course, parties where attendees can meet and greet one another and the filmmakers whose works they have come to see. For further info: www.ddff.org; (919) 660-3699.

WISCONSIN INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL
April 4-7, Madison, WI

Now in its fourth year, the Wisconsin Film Festival has quickly grown to be the region's premier independent and specialty film event. Featuring fresh and original independent film, documentaries, world cinema, new media and the work of Wisconsin filmmakers, the media has hailed the Festival as "one of the best events of its kind in the Midwest," and "a vital forum for community-unifying art." www.wifilmfest.org, or (877) 963-FILM.

During the festival, be sure to check out:
Meet the Filmmaker Coffeehouse: Self-Distribution with *Okie Noodling*'s Bradley Beesley

When: Sun., April 7, 1 p.m.
Where: Steep & Brew
Cost: Free

Okie Noodling and *The Flaming Lips Have Landed* will screen on Sat., April 6, 3 p.m. at the Orpheum Stage Door (216 State Street). Tickets are $7 general admission.

ASPEN SHORTSFEST
April 9-13, Aspen, CO

One of North America's pre-eminent short film competitions, this eleven-year-old festival showcases the most innovative and vibrant voice on the cinematic landscape—the short film. Competing for significant cash prizes, animated, live action and documentary award winners may also qualify for Academy Award consideration.

Enthusiastic audiences, young film artists and special guests from around the globe gather to participate in public screenings, panels, workshops, and other festivities celebrating the art and craft of short filmmaking. For info: www.aspenfilm.org; (970) 925-6882.

MIAMI GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL
April 26 -May 5, Miami, FL

Around the world, the MGLFF is one of the festivals for both the film industry and the general public to watch for high-quality, innovative gay cinema, not to mention the event's fun, tropical Latin-South Beach flavor. MGLFF presents films and videos of all genres, lengths, and formats, including dramatic, documentary, and experimental works by, about, and of interest to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community. With a strong international showing, it places special emphasis on works by U.S. Hispanic, Latin American and Spanish filmmakers.

The upcoming Festival will continue its lineup of world, U.S., and South Florida premieres, with a diverse group of more than 33 programs over 10 days. For info: www.miamigaylesbianfilm.com, (305) 534-9924.

AIVF members are eligible for discounted tickets at **The Walter Reade Theatre** and **Cinema Village**. Both New York venues show independent and international films. Please show membership card at box office.

The Walter Reade Theatre is located at Lincoln Center, 165 West 65th St. (212) 875-5600; www.filmlinc.com.

Cinema Village is located at 22 E 12th Street. (212) 924-3363.

AIVF REGIONAL SALONS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS TO DISCUSS WORK, MEET OTHER INDEPENDENTS, SHARE WAR STORIES, AND CONNECT WITH THE AIVF COMMUNITY ACROSS THE COUNTRY. VISIT THE REGIONAL SALONS SECTION AT WWW.AIVF.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS.

BE SURE TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SALON LEADER TO CONFIRM DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION OF THE NEXT MEETING!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday, 6:30 pm
Where: Capital District Arts Ctr., Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 283-7378, jeff_burns23@yahoo.com, www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12, www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday, 7 pm
Contact: Anne del Castillo, (512) 507-8105, labc@att.net, www.austinfilm.org

Birmingham, AL:
When: First Tuesday
Where: Production Plus, 2910 Crescent Ave., Homewood, AL
Contact: Clay Keith, ckeith1000@yahoo.com, Karen Scott, WScott9268@aol.com, (205) 663-3802

Boston, MA:
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627, FSimon@aol.com

Boulder, CO: "Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesday, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445, patricia@freespeech.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday, 6:30pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun St.
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841; Peter Wentworth, filmsalon@aol.com

Cleveland, OH: Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315, OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com, www.ohiofilms.com

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700, bart@videofest.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711, allen@passionriver.com, www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:
Contact: Eric Molberg, emollberg@acpl.lib.in.us; Catherine Lee, movies@cinemacenter.org, www.cinemacenter.org

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday, 6:30pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: (713) 522-8592, swamp@swamp.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite, charles.white@tdsi.com

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesday, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, mediaarts33@yahoo.com, www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389, mmasucci@aol.com

Milwaukee, WI: Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday, 7pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563, www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407, betuccia@aol.com

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday, 7pm
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Kate Kressmann-Kehoe, (716) 244-8629, ksk@netacc.net

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938, aivf@mediaartscenter.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933 mybluesun@hotmail.com; Jane Selle Morgan,(206) 915-6263, jane@heropictures.com

South Florida:
Contact: Dominic Giannetti, (561) 313-0330, themoviebiz@hotmail.com, www.moviebiz.info

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday, 6pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno, yourdestiny@mindspring.com

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, jatvelez@hotmail.com, DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x 4, aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

SALONS ARE RUN BY AIVF MEMBERS, OFTEN IN ASSOCIATION WITH LOCAL PARTNERS.

AIVF HAS RESOURCES TO ASSIST ENTHUSIASTIC AND COMMITTED MEMBERS WHO WISH TO START A SALON IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITY!

PLEASE CALL (212) 807-1400 X236 OR E-MAIL MEMBERS@AIVF.ORG FOR INFORMATION!

AIVF Welcomes Fort Wayne, Indiana, into the Salon Family!

Catherine Lee and Eric Mollberg have embarked together on the challenge of running an AIVF Salon. Their mission is to identify independent community film- and videomakers, provide opportunities to showcase salon members' work, and foster a supportive environment for up and coming independent artists within the media field. The first salon meeting will be a showcase of works by local film and video artists.

In the coming months, Lee and Molberg intend to provide forums for showcasing salon members' work through the help of Cinema Center in Fort Wayne. The Fort Wayne Salon will also be partnering with the Communications Department of Saint Francis College for resource building.

Lee is the executive director of Cinema Center. Since 1976, Cinema Center has brought the best in independent, classic, foreign, documentary, and specialty films to Fort Wayne. Mollberg is an assistant manager at the Government and Public Cable Access stations that are hosted through the local public library.

For more info: emollberg@acpl.lib.in.us movies@cinemacenter.org www.cinemacenter.org

Detailed information on all salons is posted on the web! Visit **www.aivf.org**

Essential Resources for Independent Video and Filmmakers

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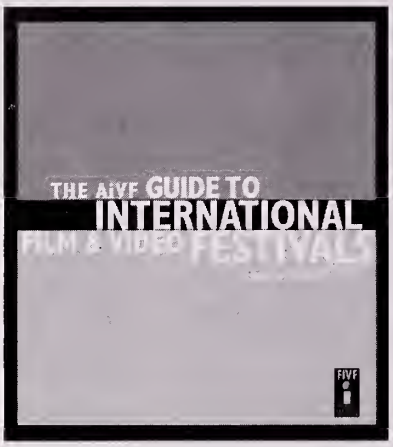


AIVF's top selling reference: All New Edition!

The AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals

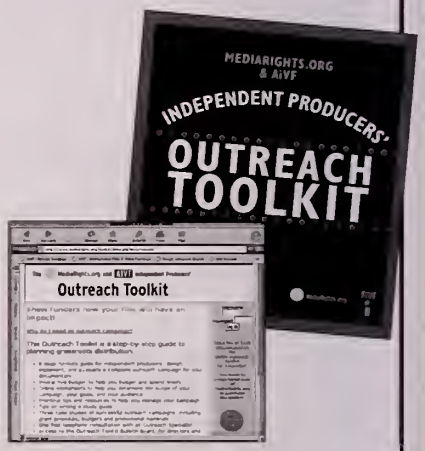
edited by Michelle Coe $35 / $25 AIVF members *plus shipping and handling.*

Up-to-date profiles of over 900 Film & Video Festivals, with complete contact and deadline information. First published in 1982, AIVF's Festival Guide is the most established and trusted source of information and inside views of film and video festivals around the world. Supplemented by selected reprints from *The Independent's* Festival Circuit column, profiling over 40 festivals in-depth from the filmmaker's perspective. The Guide is published to order, ensuring the most current information available! For AIVF members, the Festival Guide is enhanced by monthly listings in *The Independent* magazine, and an online interactive festival directory that is continually updated!

New! An interactive guide to grassroots distribution!

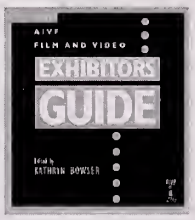
The AIVF & MediaRights.org Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit

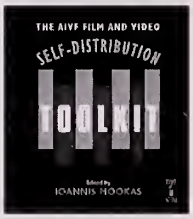
edited by MediaRights.org $125 / $115 AIVF members



Show funders how your film will have an impact! Your documentary can move audiences to take action for social change. What's your plan? Use this interactive resource to design, implement, and evaluate an effective outreach campaign. The Outreach Toolkit also downloads to your PDA and includes interactive worksheets; budgeting tools; a print resource binder; individualized consultation with outreach experts; case studies including funded proposals; an online producers' forum; and much more!

OTHER GUIDES TO GETTING YOUR WORK OUT TO AUDIENCES:





THE AIVF GUIDE TO FILM & VIDEO EXHIBITORS
edited by Kathryn Bowser $35/ $25 AIVF members ©1999

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Academy Foundation
The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
The Chase Manhattan Foundation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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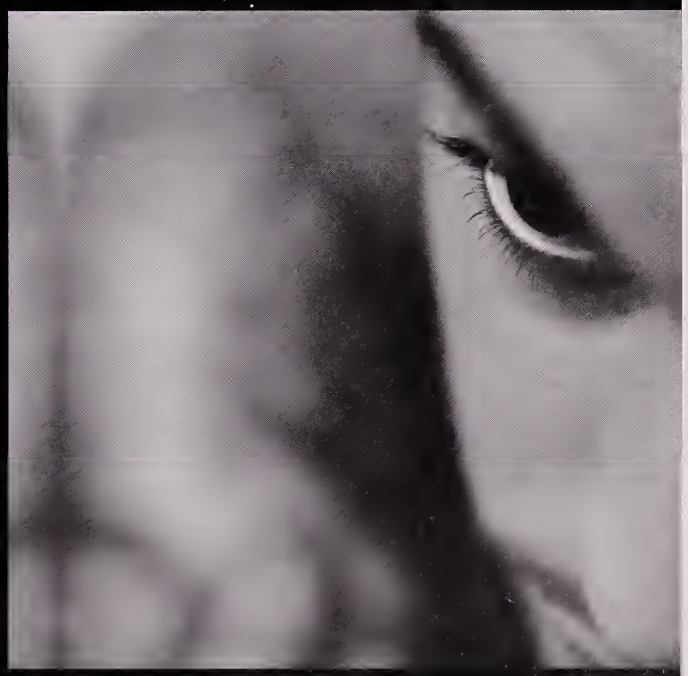

To get an entry form, either visit our website at SHO.com or send your name, age, address and phone number to:

Showtime's Black Filmmaker Showcase
Att: Selby Segall
or
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Att: Lorie Hope

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the Independent
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A spunky teenager finds long-held ideas about freedom, Vietnam, and herself challenged when an exchange program brings her from cosmopolitan Hanoi to rural Mississippi in Marlo Poras's ITVS production. A *P.O.V.* premiere, August 6 on PBS.

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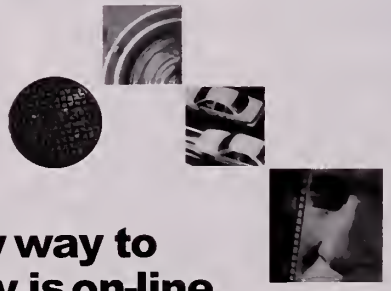

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Dear Readers,

"The fundamental goal of PBS has always been to inform, to enlighten, to educate, and to provide an uplifting voice for all Americans," says PBS CEO Pat Mitchell in her introduction to the PBS 2001 *Annual Report*, going on to make note of the contributions of "the world's best independents."

Each spring, *The Independent* casts a spotlight on the symbiotic relationship between independent producers and public television. What better way to fulfill the PBS mandate than to feature the work of artists who have eschewed commercial interests in order to better make work that informs, inspires, and delights? And what better venue for challenging work that reflects the full diversity of our national discourse than PBS, reaching nearly 100 million Americans each week?

In this issue, Jana Germano reviews changes at PBS under Mitchell's tenure, highlighting improvements and drawing attention to areas of continued concern for independents. The practical advice in her article is complemented by wise words of counsel from four program directors who make it a point to work with local independent producers in order to bring unique stories to their stations.

Our cover story on *P.O.V.*'s fifteenth anniversary provides a look back at a body of remarkable independent work and a look forward toward expanded programming and reach. Plus, we profile opportunities for independents within the PBS Producers' Academy and PBS Interactive, provide a sampling of independent programs that will extend beyond public television in the coming year, and offer a directory of online resources for independents working in public television.

We also move beyond the world of PBS to review former AIVF Board President Dee Dee Halleck's recently published anthology *Hand Held Visions*, which provides an extensive and impassioned overview of the last fifty years of public media. And Alliance for Community Media director Bunnie Reidel makes a case for preserving bandwidth for the nation's community media centers.

Next month we'll take a look at "Media that Matters," with features that spotlight avenues for social issue and activist media. What could be more public than that? See you then!

—*Elizabeth Peters, publisher/acting editor*

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P.O.V.® Celebrates 15 Years Presenting Independent Film to National Audiences

Manito, Eric Eason's portrait of 48 hours in the life of a Washington Heights family, will screen in the Tribeca Film Festival Independent Film Competition. Pictured: Leo Minaya as Manny.

Tribeca celebrates Tribeca

Film Fest aims to "reenergize" lower Manhattan

AMERICAN EXPRESS EMPLOYEES WHO LOST their offices on September 11 will return to lower Manhattan in May, just in time to partake in the Tribeca Film Festival, a community celebration of "the spirit of New York City and the international independent film community at home and abroad," according to festival literature.

The brainchild of Tribeca Entertainment founders Robert DeNiro and Jane Rosenthal, the festival will run from May 8–13, opening with a gala presentation of Tribeca Production's *About A Boy*. The festival will continue with a variety of programs geared towards the general public, including outdoor screenings, concerts, panels, and films, presented at a variety of downtown venues.

The festival has received major multi-year support from American Express and an enthusiastic reception from public officials, who hope the event will stimulate tourism and help revitalize the lower Manhattan economy.

62 films were selected for the Independent Film Competition, and will be eligible for juried awards in the categories of short, feature, documentary, and emerging filmmaker.

The festival will also include a curated International Film Showcase, a Restored Classic Series, selections from Tribeca Film's First Look Series, a Best of New York Film series curated by Martin Scorecese, and a selection of films that commemorate the events of September 11th. A Family Program on May 11th and 12th will feature a carnival, picnics, film screenings, and other programs, and the festival hopes to attract 10,000 participants to an outdoor Rock and Comedy concert on May 10th.

"Coming at this moment and for this reason, this year the festival is necessarily focusing on upbeat programming for a broad audience," says Magnolia Pictures' Eammon Bowles, who curated the International Showcase. "Still, it provided the opportunity to bring some outstanding independent work to larger audiences."

"Personally, this is an important festival for all of us," says Allen Bain of The 7th Floor, who produced Eric Eason's debut film *Manito* which was selected for competition. "This is a New York film, made by New Yorkers about the things our community faces every day. It's going to be great to screen in our home town."

For more info, call (866) 941-FEST or visit www.tribecafilmfestival.org.

Change of media officers at MacArthur Foundation

WOODWARD WICKHAM, Vice President of the General Program of the John D. and Catharine T. MacArthur Foundation, announced his retirement from the Foundation in April. The decision followed a six-month sabbatical, during which Wickham had the opportunity to pursue his interest in interactive digital documentaries.

"This is a personal interest, not a priority of the MacArthur Foundation," says Wickham. "But it seems an appropriate area for those interested in furthering public interest documentary work."

Wickham championed media funding through a landscape that changed significantly over his 12 years at MacArthur. "The biggest change is the emergence of commercial sources of funding, particularly HBO. And now more foundations fund film and video than did 12 years ago. Back then, large foundations such as Kellogg, Casey, and others just didn't fund documentary work." Wickham points out, however, that funding from these sources is not open-ended: cable stations will have ideas about effective positions, and public funders provide support to work that can serve as an instrument of public education about issues within their areas of concern. Particularly with cuts to the NEA, Wickham surmises that even with these new sources there is no more funding than there was 12 years ago for independent documentary work "chosen purely for its excellence."

In 2001, MacArthur renewed its commitment to providing 5-6 million dollars of annual funding for media, but refocused priorities of the program, including discontinuing grants to fund media arts centers. Funds are now allocated primarily to independent documentary production, with a portion earmarked for project outreach and distribution (including substantial funding for *P.O.V.*), as well as limited funding for organizations that support the field of documentary production, including AIVF and NAMAC. MacArthur also funds public interest radio, including NPR and PRI.

Future MacArthur media funding will be overseen by Director of the General Program, Elspeth Revere. For more info, see www.macfound.org.

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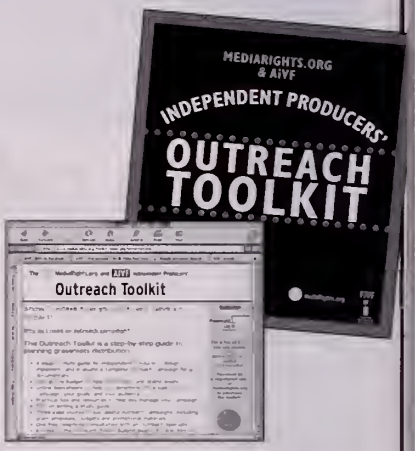

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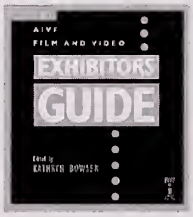

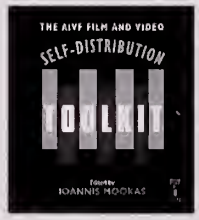

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BRIEFS

IFP Refines Market

Opening September 27th with the Gotham Awards ceremony at Chelsea Piers, this year's IFP Market will be significantly reworked from previous installments. While IFP's No Borders International Co-Production market and the Spotlight on Documentaries will be essentially unchanged, the Emerging Narrative section will now showcase 62% fewer projects. In addition, screenings of completed narrative features have been discontinued entirely.

Overall, the number of projects at the market will be trimmed to a maximum of 220. "By refocusing, we will be able to provide a more effective level of support to Market participants," says incoming Market Director Patricia Finneran.

These changes are the result of five years of focus groups and re-evaluation, led by IFP executive director Michelle Byrd and deputy director Ellen Cotler. With $50,000 in cash and service awards available, and an increased focus on scripts and works-in-progress, Byrd hopes the new format will shift attention away from "finished films which are already on their way to the festival circuit" and toward filmmakers seeking production and finishing funds. The IFP has also added a "Buzz Cuts" program, with sponsorship from the Sundance Channel, to provide a new venue for short films. See www.ifp.org.

Kodak Issues Warning on Airport Security X-rays

In a warning to filmmakers dealing with the recently instated airport security measures, Kodak has issued a notice that the stronger X-rays emitted by powerful security machines such as the CTX 5500 will "fog and ruin all unprocessed film of any speed whether exposed or not." While it has always been considered advisable to protect film from exposure to X-rays, it had previously been thought that faster films were at a relatively low risk of fogging.

Anyone attempting to bring film onto an airplane should explain their situation to airport security personnel and politely request a hand inspection. "Do Not X-ray" labels are also downloadable from www.kodak.com/go/xraylabel. While this should eliminate many difficulties, hand inspections may not be an option at some overseas airports.

Errata

In the "Settling the Score" article in the March 2002 issue of *The Independent*, Sarah George's documentary about contemporary trainhoppers was misidentified on page 33. George's film is *Catching Out*. *Riding the Rails* is a documentary about depression-era hobos made by Lexy Lovell and Michael Uys and released in 1997.

In the same article, *Independent* staff blew our indie music scene credibility by misspelling Stephin Merritt's name in his photo caption. Please give us points for spelling it correctly in the body of the article.

On page 27 of the April 2002 issue, the first "Diary of a Producer in Utah" photo caption is incorrect. The photo does not include Peter Baxter, but rather (left to right): Gabe Wardell, Mark Moskowitz, Heidi Van Leir, Penelope Spheeris, Debra Eisenstadt, and Drea Clark.

And finally, after a full day of churning out graphics for television, a caffeine-addled Greg Gilpatrick apparently succumbed to overly optimistic dreams about the state of editing technology in his April review of Final Cut Pro 3. While we all would like full resolution DV video to fit 40 minutes per Gigabyte of hard drive space as he stated on page 46, the truth is that each Gigabyte currently holds about five minutes' worth. Gilpatrick regrets the error and pledges to drink no more than three cans of Jolt Cola before writing his next article.

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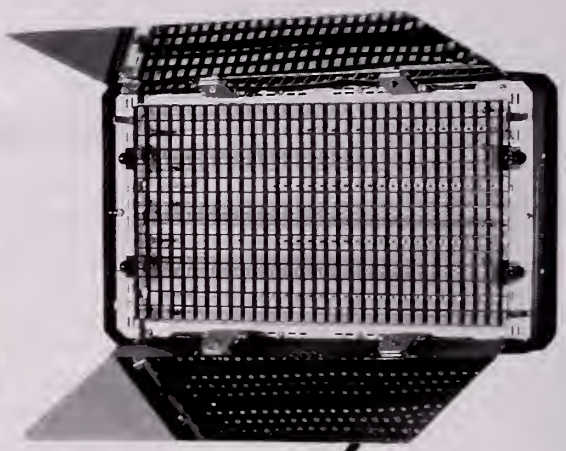

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Save Bandwidth for PEG

Community media preserves democratic discourse

BY BUNNIE RIEDEL

OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS AS I HAVE SERVED as executive director of the Alliance for Community Media, the pace of media merger and consolidation has been stunning. The news of the Comcast bid to buy AT&T cable is just one example of how the industry has changed. The bid certainly speaks to the success of Comcast as a company (and for that they should be congratulated) but it once again raises fundamental issues. Even media mogul Ted Turner recently bemoaned the fact that we are soon going to have only two or three cable operators in this country.

We are all asking ourselves how this consolidation will affect our communities. Will we see standardized, one-size-fits all, franchise agreements? Will the power of these mega-companies threaten the existence of community media centers? How will the public interest be served by single-source communications? Will democratic discourse be limited?

As media consolidation has grown I have witnessed the growth of the importance of community media. More and more municipalities are opening Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) access facilities. More and more municipalities are going to the mat to make sure that the voice of the community and the important information provided by community media is heard and seen.

Added to what PEG does by "providing" information is the growing capability PEG facilities have for "facilitating" multipath communication. With the advent of broadband comes new, exciting possibilities for every part of our work. One area I am most excited about is how broadband will expand educational opportunities. Broadband will allow students at all levels to have real-time video, voice, and data interaction with instructors and other students. These will be virtual classrooms that provide a real classroom environment. Educational access practitioners across the country have been using this kind of technology for some time, but broadband will guarantee that this becomes widespread and common.

Photo: Alliance for Community Media

We have barely scratched the surface on what we will be able to accomplish in the public interest through the application of new technologies. The greatest threat we face is whether or not we will have the capacity set-aside that we will need. For instance, when the state of Vermont required cable operators to provide up to 10 percent of broadband capacity, they secured a future for the growth of public interest applications. We as residents of communities need to make sure that every franchise agreement includes at least 10 percent of the bandwidth capacity for PEG. Whether we can accomplish this through local negotiations or we need federal relief remains to be seen. But we have to make sure that we aren't relegated to a "digital Siberia" (as Vermont stated it) and we aren't identified as strictly a video environment (which is what the Tauzin-Dingell legislation will do).

We have barely scratched the surface on what we will be able to accomplish in the public interest through the application of new technologies. The greatest threat we face is whether or not we will have the capacity set-aside that we will need.

Much of this is going to require our being "heard" by the cable industry and these large media corporations. We need to demonstrate that providing our communities with capacity will create a win-win situation for all of us, including the cable operators. There is no way cable operators can meet the needs of a community with as much cost-efficiency as PEG access does. Imagine being a cable operator and finding yourself in the position of having to deliver government, educational, and public programming. Just visualizing having to staff such an endeavor sets my head spinning.

We bring a lot to the table, in terms of capability, existing infrastructure and expertise. Ultimately we save cable operators tremendous amounts of time, energy and money and that can only be good for the bottom line. And we provide the bridge between the operator and the community that is so important. We facilitate their ability to communicate and to reach diverse audiences and we create good will among their customers.

While much has changed in the last few years, there is a consistent need for community media centers to build a healthy partnership with the cable industry, especially as the number of companies continues to diminish.

Communities will demand more accountability from these large concerns and we will stand as a shining example of what can be accomplished when companies practice good corporate citizenship.

PEG access is leading the way in developing new and exciting uses for emerging technologies. We will continue to innovate, create, and educate as long as we have the foresight to make sure that we reserve the bandwidth we will need.

Bunnie Riedel is executive director of the Alliance for Community Media, www.alliancecm.com, a national membership organization that represents over 1,000 PEG access organizations and community media centers and works to assure public access to electronic media.

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PBS

THOMAS ALLEN HARRIS HAS HAD AN impressive run of recognition for his daringly formalist, personal documentary *That's My Face*—it has played to high acclaim at major festivals, including Toronto and Sundance—but nothing with quite the personal satisfaction of the Berlin International Film Festival.

Thomas Allen Harris

BY PAT AUFDERHEIDE

That's My Face expresses Harris's quest to integrate the fractured experiences and beliefs of an artist obsessed with doubleness in his life. He experiences that doubleness as an African American in a racist society, as an American who had lived in Africa, and as the grandson of a Christian preacher who turns to orixás, the deities of the syncretic, Afro-Brazilian religion. He eventually discovers not wholeness but multiplicity, and finally understands that multiple identities have defined and continue to define his life as an African American.

In Berlin, his richly textured film took the prestigious Prize of the Churches of the Ecumenical Jury. He found himself on stage holding an envelope full of cash—2,500 Euros (about $2,100). The prize is awarded "to directors who have displayed genuine artistic talent and succeeded in expressing actions or human experiences that comply with the Gospels, or sensitize viewers to spiritual, human or social values." That award surely put Thomas Harris's mind at ease. He had, after all, begun the film fearful that he was violating his grandparents' deepest religious convictions.

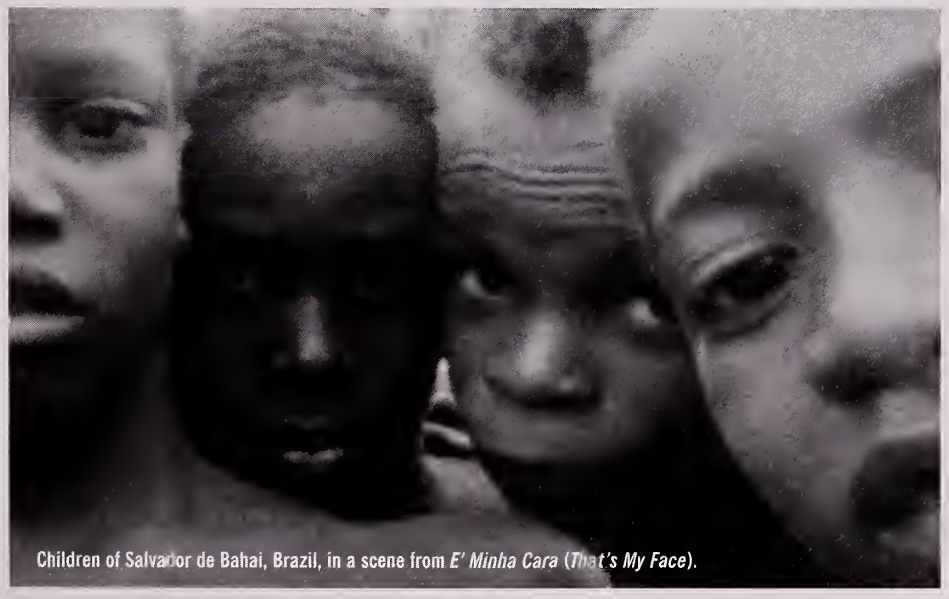
That's My Face plunges the viewer into an intense experience from the very first moments. Extravagantly layered both aurally and visually, it overwhelms the viewer's rational defenses and offers an interior experience that might (but needn't) be parallel to the filmmaker's journey. Harris narrates the film, with phrases by both actors and the actual characters of the film overlapping and interwoven along with ambient sounds, rhythms and music. The soundtrack becomes a complex and multidimensional poem.

The visual experience is conditioned by Harris's use of Super-8, which matches his grandfather's home movies taken in the 1960s. It also explores the metaphor of doubleness, of vision and experience. Harris sees only colors and shapes out of one eye, a lifelong condition. This clinical reality is amplified by his lifelong experience of double cultural vision, which the film represents with superimposition, floating images, unfocused shots, juxtaposition of past and present, and the gentle fuzziness of Super-8. The metaphor is amplified with repeated imagery of masks. The dense editing of both sound and images creates an experience something like a dream, something like a poem, something like a trance.

While the film features many kinds of doubling, it never directly references sexual orientation – a significant omission in an openly gay filmmaker. To Harris, that element is implicit and pervasive. "A queer reading of the film is to ask what kinds of things do you have to closet," he told *The Independent*. "My sexual orientation was just the beginning of the onion. That I lived in Tanzania, that I grew up with an African stepfather, while notions of blackness are very essentialized in America made me hide who I was, that I lived with a mother who didn't observe the religion of her parents. So much of what this film is about is the power of our imagination in constructing our identity."

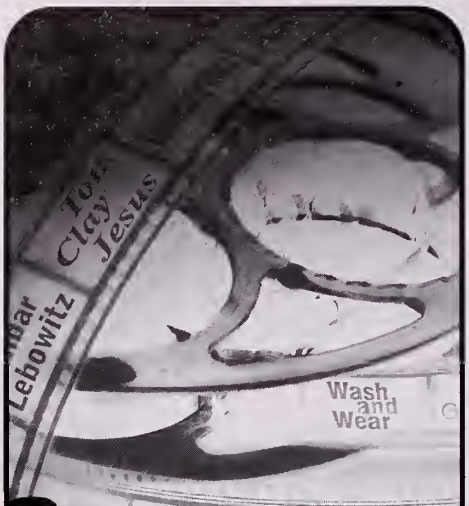
The film, which can be categorized as a documentary, defies neat categories. "In Berlin, people kept saying, 'It's an essay,' but if it is, it's a call-and-response essay," said Harris. "Partly this film is a reaction to my professional training at WNET-13, where you work with veracity, you shoot talking heads, you tell people what they'll see, you show 'em, and then you tell 'em what they've seen."

Conventional or no, his producer position at WNET from 1987-91 gave Harris an essential skills and networking base. After a college travel grant to Europe derailed him from his premed track at Harvard and turned him toward art,



Children of Salvador de Bahai, Brazil, in a scene from *E' Minha Cara* (*That's My Face*).

Photos: filmmaker



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Thomas had taken up filmmaking, and wound up as one of the youngest producers at WNET, on the program *13 Live*. He learned from, among others, producer John Santos, who would go on to become a program officer at the Ford Foundation and a major backer of *That's My Face*.

Harris, who with his brother Lyle has been considered part of the "New Black Renaissance" of visual artists, left WNET to explore visual artforms, and made a personal documentary about gay siblings, using family footage, called *Vintage*. His position as a film professor at the University of California at San Diego gave him access to small grants and resources that permitted installation art projects (some viewable at www.chimpanzeeproductions.org) and kept *That's My Face* alive over the course of years. The film also benefited from Harris's participation in an Avid camp, in the IFP's No Borders program, and from the inaugural Sundance documentary workshop. Its budget, still ticking, is in the order of $200,000-$300,000.

Harris found his reception in Berlin more intellectually stimulating than in the United States. "People responded at Sundance emotionally to the film but it wasn't like the hour-long TV interview I had with Alexander Kluge [a leader of German independent film]. The kinds of discussions I had in public venues in Europe were the kinds of discussions I had one-on-one at Sundance. And Sundance is supposed to be the heart of independent film."

"And that's why I realized I had to make this film. Ever since I left 13 I've been coming out—about my sexual orientation, about my identification with women, orientation around desire and sexuality. With this film I'm coming out with a deeper sense of who I am and who we are, beyond simply labels, race or nationality."

Harris has two new projects. One concerns the first wave of South African exiles after 1960, including his stepfather. Another is *On the DL*, a sex comedy about three couples where one member of each couple has a sexual secret. But he's not giving up on formal experimentation. "If I don't push the form, I would stop making films."

Pat Aufderheide directs the Center for Social Media in the School of Communication at American University in Washington, D.C.

James Fortier

BY CLEO CACOULIDIS

MOMENTOUS EVENTS IN HISTORY ARE OFTEN accompanied by competing versions of the truth. *Alcatraz Is Not An Island*, a documentary by James Fortier, presents for the first time the Native American version of the 1969-71 occupation of Alcatraz Island, a political catalyst for Native Americans and a turning point in contemporary United States-American Indian relations.

"This is a glimpse of a non-Hollywood interpretation of the modern Native American experience. One that, hopefully, shatters some of the stereotypes of what Indian people are supposed to be," says Fortier, who is Métis-Ojibway of French Canadian and Ojibway descent.

Alcatraz, which will air nationally on PBS in November, chronicles how the Federal government's relocation and assimilation policies of the 1950s caused thousands of Native Americans to migrate to urban centers, with many being resettled in the San Francisco Bay Area. By the late 1960s, young Native Americans were caught up in the activist fervor of the times, and began voicing their discontent with the brutal injustices inflicted upon American Indians. In November 1969, a group of Indian activists and students took over Alcatraz Island as a way to attract national attention to the plight of Native Americans. The act blossomed into a full-blown, pan-Indian protest that reverberated across the country and sparked the "Red Power" movement of the 1970s.

"For a long time I had wanted to bring my interest in filmmaking together with who I am as a native person. I learned about what happened on Alcatraz while working as a D.P. on a Native American short [*Looks Into the Night*, 1995]. I knew then that the story had to be told, and that it was the kind of project I had been looking for," explains Fortier when discussing his motivation to make the film. "I was just a kid when the occupation happened, but now, having gone through the occupation by making this film, the events that occurred there will stay with me the rest of my life."

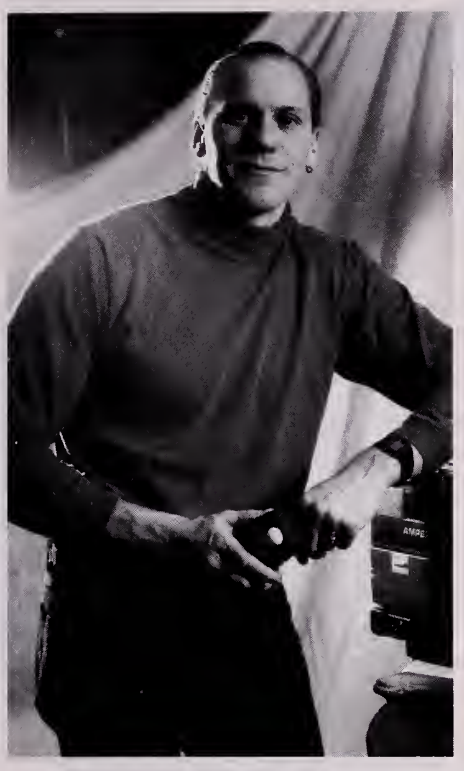

Photo: filmmaker

Fortier finished *Alcatraz* in 1999, and the original 70-minute version of the documentary went on to screen at several festivals, including Sundance in 2001. Afterward, ITVS stepped in with completion funds and the film was re-edited to its current one-hour format for public television.

Looks Into the Night and *Alcatraz* were only the beginning, however, of Fortier's commitment to projects that had a connection to his heritage. In 1996 he formed Turtle Island Productions, primarily to develop and produce American Indian and Canadian First Nation work. After toiling for 10 years as a director of photography and cameraman on myriad corporate and industrial projects, it was time to create "Films closer to my heart," he says, "Films that show what it is *really* like for native people to strive and live in a white world."

Living in the mainstream is something Fortier knows well. Born in Nipigon, Ontario, Canada, he was raised in a middle-class suburb of Chicago after the death of his Métis-Ojibway father, totally removed from his Indian heritage. It wasn't until he went to film school at San Francisco State University in the early eighties that he "woke up" politically. "SFSU was a real eye-opener for me; my activist views and my connection to my history were shaped during my time there."

Fortier's involvement with Native American film productions continued with his work as an associate producer and writer on a six-hour PBS documentary series about the history of the Ojibway (Chippewa) people of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan entitled, *Waasa Inaabidaa: We Look In All Directions*.

The series, which was directed and produced by Lorraine Norrgard (a non-Indian filmmaker who has lived and worked among the Ojibway people for more than 15 years), spans over five hundred years of history, from precontact to contemporary times, and focuses on topics such as language, economic development, and education. "Indians are often depicted as docile and child-like, as having abandoned their culture and ways of life when the Europeans came," remarks Fortier. "This series illustrates that that simply wasn't true." An interactive web site complements the series.

The six one-hour episodes of *Waasa Inaabidaa* are presently airing on WDSE in Deluth, Minnesota, twice a month through May. The series will also be shown nationwide in Canada on the Aboriginal People's Television Network.

Currently, Fortier is trying to raise money for his new documentary project, *"I" Is Not For Indian*. The film is an examination of the corrosive effects on both Native and non-Native children of school curricula that continue to promote myths, outright lies, and skewed characterizations of Native American history. The idea for the doc came to him while he was writing the education script for the *Waasa Inaabidaa* series, "I realized that my 8-year-old son wasn't going to learn the truth about Native Americans and Native American history in his public school in California, and that it was going to be my responsibility to teach him."

These days Fortier is busy hunting down potential funding sources for *"I" Is Not For Indian*, screening *Alcatraz* on reservations and in urban Indian communities, and trying to establish a network of Native American production crew personnel. "The more native people you empower to become filmmakers, then the further along we will be in gaining control of our stories, our voices, our history."

Cleo Cacoulidis is the managing editor of The Independent.

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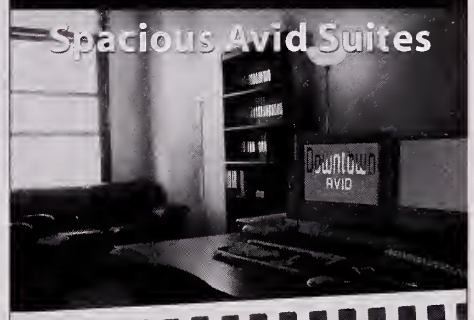

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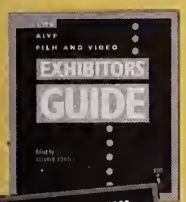

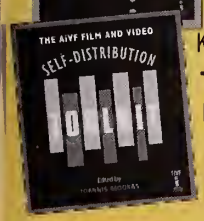

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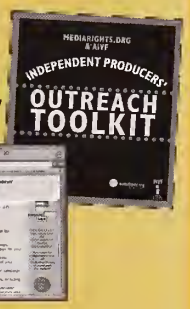

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The AIVF Guide to Film & Video Distributors
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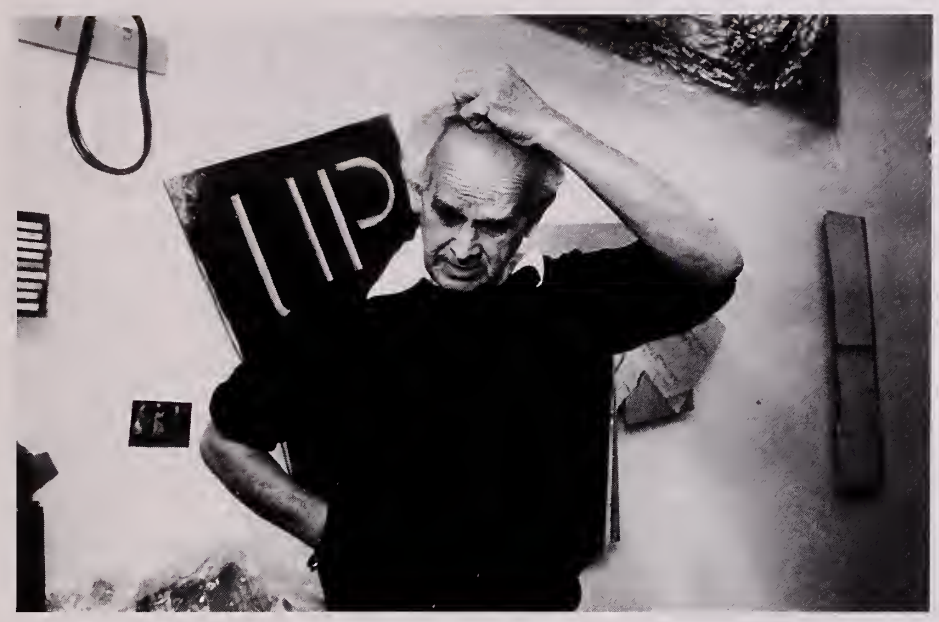
Photos: Farber, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Kilp, LOOM

San Diego

BY NEIL KENDRICKS



Hi-Def Termite Art:

Documenting Farber for Public TV

PAINTER AND FILM CRITIC EXTRAORDINAIRE Manny Farber is an enigma that is hard to crack. And documentary filmmakers Paul Alexander Juutilainen and Robert Greaves have their work cut out for them as they craft a true-to-life, comprehensive overview of the celebrated artist-critic's multifaceted body of work in their current documentary-in-progress, *Manny Farber: American Maverick*, one of several films about artists being funded by San Diego's public television station, KPBS.

Juutilainen says KPBS approached him last fall with the idea of doing a program about Farber. Having filmed the retired film critic on his home turf only a few times, Juutilainen says, it's too early to determine what shape the documentary (shot in the high-definition video format) will eventually take. But the freelance producer-editor is wary of falling into the traps that often beset many portraits of the artist as a familiar subject of documentary filmmaking.

"It is difficult when you make a documentary about an artist, not to make it a grandiose statement about that person," explains Juutilainen, who won an Emmy for his 1998 documentary on philosopher Herbert Marcuse, *Herbert's Hippopotamus*. "And I think Manny would feel uncomfortable with that."

The co-directors and cinematographer Michael Gerdes are aiming for something far more intimate, unpretentious, and ultimately akin to the sorts of films that Farber champions in his famous essay, "White Elephant Art vs. Termite Art" from his celebrated book, *Negative Space*.

This intent to find truth in a kind of "termite art" in some ways circles back to the thematic concerns underscoring all of Juutilainen's films, including his other documentary film in the works, *Salton City: Miracle in the Desert*.

"All of my work is about grounding people where they live," Juutilainen says. "It's the relationship of people to the space. I see myself working within the context of space and where people live. That's sort of my inspiration for my work, including Manny."

Asian Cinema Thrives in San Diego

Annual fest transcends barriers

EVERY FILM FESTIVAL NEEDS A GUIDING force to keep its mission on track. For the San Diego Asian Film Festival, there is no question that the annual event's driving motor and guardian angel is the multitalented festival director, Lee Ann Kim. When Kim isn't busy keeping San Diego's KGTV/ Channel 10 viewers informed with her Emmy award-winning work as a television anchor, chances are she is busy working on this international film festival that started out as a blind call for entries on a web site, back in 1999.

"If we did not have the Internet, I don't think we would have had a festival," remarks Kim. "Literally, how it began was putting up a web site with a call for entries. And that first year, we had more than 100 films and most of them were through word of mouth and through email. And they're from all over the world."

Left: The work of film critic, painter, and enigma Manny Farber is the subject of a new HDTV program by Paul Alexander Juutilainen; below, festival director Lee Ann Kim at the 2001 San Diego Asian Film Festival.

"I couldn't believe how many people wrote to us by saying they went to Yahoo and went through a search and put in 'Asian' and 'film,' and boom!: up popped the San Diego Asian Film Festival and that's how they got to know us. Had the Internet not been out there, and the ability to coordinate people via email, we definitely wouldn't be doing as well as today."

The 2002 installment of Kim's movie-mad brainchild (which runs Oct. 3 through Oct. 6) received approximately 200 entries of which the festival accepted 80 films thus far. The eclectic range of work has also expanded with Asian-American indies like this year's Sundance Film Festival sensation, Justin Lin's dark, high-school fable *Better Luck Tomorrow* to Gene Rhee's comic documentary, *Quest for Length*, which debunks stereotypes about Asian manhood.

This growth spurt of San Diego's home-grown showcase of Asian cinema has inspired Kim and her collaborators to take the next step toward developing the San

Photos: Farber, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Kim, SDAFF

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Diego Asian Film Festival as its own foundation where it aspires to provide year-round programs like workshops as well as screenings.

The festival is also reaching out to the public with the grass-roots efforts of Kim's "street team" of volunteers who are getting the word out about the festival at various schools and community events.

It all comes down to having a clearly defined vision that pushes the festival's mission forward. And Kim says part of her motivation behind creating the festival runs parallel to why she got involved in the media in the first place: there wasn't enough representation of the Asian-American community in the mass media to truly voice its concerns.

"It all boils down to why you started it," Kim explains. "If you started it because you wanted money or you're a filmmaker who wanted to showcase your own work, those are certain motivations. I started the festival because I wanted the Asian American Journalism Association to offer an event to a broad audience. And film transcends barriers, culturally and socially."

San Diego Secrets

Locals spill the beans on resources

"I'M A NEW YORKER, SO I'M USED TO HAVING things there," says San Diego State University filmmaker-in-residence Jack Ofield. But the Emmy award-winning producer of *The Short List*, the PBS-TV series showcasing the best in international short films, is practically a native San Diegan since he has been living and working on various film-related projects in the area for the past 12 and a half years.

When asked about San Diego's resources that Ofield draws upon for *The Short List*, he shared another short list of his own.

Ofield, who also runs SDSU's Production Center, says he buys tape stock and other supplies at both Televideo San Diego (4783 Ruffner Rd., (858) 268-1100); and Voice & Video (4909 Ruffner, 560-5000). He adds that both companies are "reliable and they have good prices."

To round out his list of San Diego media resources, Ofield also highly recommends the Duplication Center of San Diego (15870 Bernardo Center Drive, 675-9050).

"SO MUCH OF MY WORK HAS BEEN ABOUT THE interconnection of the U.S. and Mexico," says San Diego-based producer (and AIVF board member) Paul Espinosa, whose work includes *The Hunt for Pancho Villa* and not coincidentally, *The Border*. "Here we are right at the heart of the border region, and it's been a very productive place to work."

Espinosa adds a few of his own tips: for duplication and post services, Perfect Image Video (4565 Ruffner Rd., 292-0818), and Advance Recording Products (8859 Balboa Ave East, 277-2540), who have been particularly supportive of the San Diego AIVF salon, which Espinosa founded in 1997.

Espinosa also underscores the important role the San Diego Film Commission has played, not just for features but also for independents and documentary makers.

Finally, Espinosa sees the Media Arts Center San Diego (which he helped found in 2000) emerging as an important organization that is helping to foster and showcase a variety of work. In addtion to monthly programs, such as the CineMexicano screening series, the Media Arts Center presents the San Diego Latino Film Festival, which brought in over 12,000 people this past March. "The Media Arts Center, and the Festival in particular, provide important occasions not just to show films, but also to create a dialogue that in turn helps further our community," Espinosa concludes.

Contact info:

KPBS TV/FM
www.kpbs.org

Media Arts Center San Diego
www.mediaartscenter.org

San Diego Asian Film Festival
www.sdaff.org

San Diego Film Commission
www.sdfilm.com

San Diego Independent Media Center
www.sdimc.org

San Diego Museum of Photographic Arts
www.mopa.org

Neil Kendricks is a San Diego-based artist, filmmaker, and writer who is currently working toward his master's at SDSU's Television, Film & New Media program. Kendricks has several projects in development, including his next short film, loop.

Distributor FAQ

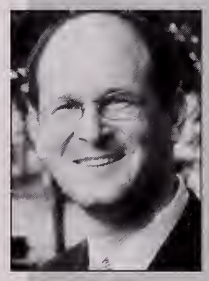
BY JASON GUERRASIO

ThinkFilm came along when a lot of distributors were leaving New York—Lions Gate moved their offices to L.A. and Shooting Gallery shut down—why do you feel New York is still a good location for a distribution company?

Urman: Lions Gate Films, which is where all of us were previously employed, made a decision that many of us felt was problematic: to shut down the entire New York distribution office. We felt it was wrong because New York is the most vital and sustaining community in which to function. If you look at companies that have true longevity and have achieved size and stature, whether it be Miramax, Sony Pictures Classics, Artisan, Fine Line: they have maintained a headquarters in New York or a substantial presence in New York.

A lot of that has to do with the work ethic in New York, the amount of the hours we put in and the energy that we put into our tasks. More than anything I think that New York is the media capital of the nation, the place where films are almost always launched, and a big chunk of the audience is here. We need to be here as well.

ThinkFilm



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The Slate:

November 2001:
***Time Out*, Laurent Cantent**

April 2002:
***World Traveler*, Bart Freundlich**
***The Mystic Masseur*, Ismail Merchant**

June 2002:
***The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys*, Peter Care**

Upcoming:
***Love in the Time of Money*, Peter Mattei**
***Gerry*, Gus Van Sant**

How was ThinkFilm created?

Sackman: With the change at Lions Gate I decided it was time to re-create the parts that I liked. I really liked the thought of an absence of corporate politics and all the other things that happen when you get big. We started in May and things sort of fell into place.

What where the challenges in the beginning?

Sackman: Last year, the months of May, June, and July we were in Toronto sharing one very small office between four people, staying focused, working on one thing and it just worked out.

What's the advantage of also being based in Toronto?

Urman: Economic. We are housing a lot of our back room functions in Toronto: delivery, accounting, operations, business affairs and legal. Things are just cheaper in Canada. A dollar goes 50% further. In Toronto they house about eight people for a fraction of what I pay for a much smaller office in Manhattan.

Sackman: We are really based in both. One couldn't possibly do what we do solely based in Toronto. I consider our operating activity in New York.

Jodie Foster and Kieran Culkin in Peter Care's *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys*.

Any disadvantages?

Urman: No. We have never suffered from it. Apart from the fact that there's a geographical separation between some of our staff and others. But it's an hour away by plane—it takes me less time to get to Toronto than it does to the upper east side sometimes!

Are there any changes you have seen in the Canadian film scene?

Sackman: What's happening is that it's becoming more serious and you can't get by with mediocrity, you can't get by by merely existing. You actually have to be able.

What is ThinkFilm's philosophy?

Sackman: We have the perfect blend of film acumen and business acumen and I believe that with Mark at the helm we will be the first choice for those films that don't get engaged in bidding wars. We have demonstrated our skill over the years and people are responding to us as people, not the fact that it is a new company. So the business plan of ThinkFilm is how do we

Photos: Urman and Sackman: ThinkFilm; *Altar Boys*: James Bridges

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exploit that situation to our maximum benefit? By working with people we like to work with and working on films that we feel are important and meaningful.

Who is the ideal filmmaker you're looking to work with?

Urman: We're interested in working with people who have a clear and distinctive vision as filmmakers and who are also committed to being fully responsible for the destiny of their films. The sort of filmmaker who makes a film and walks away from it and has no interest in how it is presented is probably not going to gravitate toward us in the first place. We want to be working with filmmakers who actually are into that collaboration, who roll up their sleeves and give as much as we intend to give.

Billy Crudup in Bart Freundlich's *World Traveler.*

What drives you to acquire a film? There must have been a lot of competition for *Gerry* just because of the people involved (Matt Damon, Casey Affleck, Gus Van Sant). Take me through that.

Sackman: We met with Gus Van Sant, Casey, Ben and Matt. Mark made a presentation on how we would market the film and how we would position it and basically it was so phenomenal that Gus Van Sant understood his film more after listening to Mark than he did after making the film. I believe that's why we ended up with the film despite the fact that others wanted it, and others with deeper pockets.

Urman: It begins with really getting excited by a film and its possibilities. You have to like it, but you also at the same time have to see a path toward making it work, you have to be sufficiently enthusiastic so that enthusiasm translates to the other people in the process.

What's the most important issue facing ThinkFilm at the present time?

Sackman: It's clear to me that we are getting into the game with a lot of good will and a lot of ability, but we have to perform. Until you actually release the film and get the results it's all chatter. So the biggest issue facing us is waiting for results, and if we get the results we just have to be capable and clever enough to stay in the game.

ThinkFilm, along with a few other indie distributors, seems to be challenging the rating system. Why do you feel it's important to release challenging, edgy films?

Sackman: I don't think that we are consciously looking for films to challenge the rating system. The idea is to find a film that will get through to consumers. We cannot spend $72 million dollars marketing *Black Hawk Down*. There has to be an angle and if it's controversy that's what it is.

Urman: Whenever you're able to get people talking about a movie just by throwing it out for evaluation and appreciation you have a leg up. Sometimes that means it is forbidden or taboo content.

What films out there now do you wish were in your stable?

Sackman: *Monster's Ball.*

Urman: I was the executive producer on the film and I love it dearly, and it would be lovely if it bore our logo as opposed to another, but I'm certainly happy it exists. As for the others, it's a season crowded with big Hollywood spectaculars.

Are you guys anti-Hollywood or do you welcome that?

Urman: I think that our company and companies like us that succeed try to stick with what they are uniquely qualified to do well. If we try to make a commercial romantic comedy then we're just doing a pale and cheap imitation of what Hollywood has been doing successfully for the past century. What we do better than Hollywood can do is make a film that's different and unusual and sometimes challenging. They're not going to be a pale imitation of Hollywood, they're going to be the first generation of whatever they choose to be.

What's the difference between ThinkFilm and other indie distributors?

Sackman: I think that we have demonstrated remarkable consistency in this business and we're professional, we treat people respectfully, we include the filmmakers in the entire process. Having the track record that we have makes it easier to get people to want us to succeed.

What advice would you give to indie filmmakers?

Sackman: Bring us compelling films that have an edge that makes our jobs easier. A definable niche that we can exploit, that we can lend our expertise to.

Urman: A film, any film, has to be about communication. You have to think in terms of an audience, I don't mean pandering to an audience, but envisioning an audience. A film is not a resume, and I think too often filmmakers want to get something in the can that will set them up for the next film. Remember that there will not be a next film if the first does not connect.

Jason Guerrasio is an intern at The Independent.

If you would like to suggest other companies to profile in Funder or Distributor FAQs, contact info@aivf.org.

Photo: ThinkFilm

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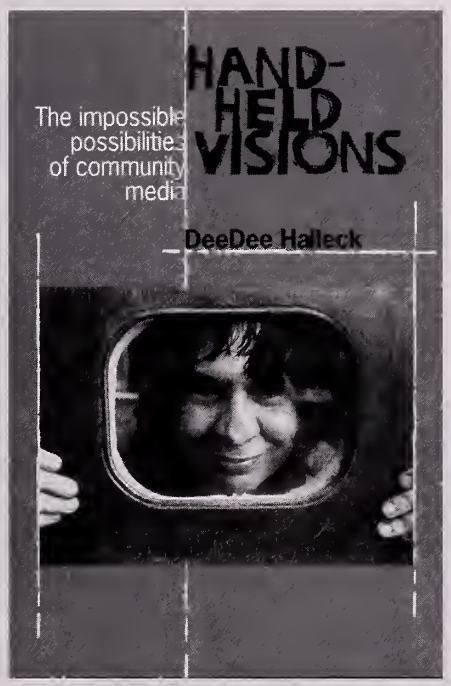
Books

Hand-Held Visions: The Impossible Possibilities of Community Media By DeeDee Halleck (Fordham University Press, 2002)

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

HAND HELD VISIONS: THE IMPOSSIBLE Possibilities of Community Media accomplishes something quite rare for a media studies book: it is equal parts historical record and handbook for media democracy.



This groundbreaking anthology —nearly 500 pages in length—provides a counter-history of communications in the last half of the twentieth century. Rather than an inventory of government policies and corporate changes, however, *Hand-Held* confirms the ongoing necessity for media makers creating nonconformist, oppositional work to fight for and reimagine the public sphere. It's also a compelling and inspiring memoir of Halleck's four decades as a fearless warrior on the front lines of the international public media movement.

Let me admit up front that, like Halleck, I'm a public media partisan: I wrote one of the jacket blurbs for this extraordinary book. As Halleck demonstrates so adroitly, public media has played an integral part in the major political and social struggles of the last 50 years: anticommunism, the antiwar movement, the Gulf War, globalization, and AIDS, to name just a few. Halleck is the Emma Goldman of public media; a heroine whose political work is as much about grand democratic visions as it is about hard core, in-the-trenches media activism. For Halleck, cameras, crews, airtime, and distribution must be wrenched from every possible source in order to further public media goals.

The book's array of essays, reviews, lectures, and manifestos may surprise readers who only know Halleck through her production work as a director and independent producer (*Gringo in Mananaland*, for example), and as co-founder of Paper Tiger Television and Deep Dish Satellite Network. Like Dziga Vertov and Trinh T. Minh-ha, Halleck's political media work shifts between theory and praxis, mapping the debates and dialectics of oppositional public media.

Divided into nine sections, *Hand-Held* covers a lot of ground, spanning the cold war, teaching media, alternative media and infrastructures, public television, Latin American media, the Internet, and international media movements. Hall-eck's introduction for each section establishes a historical context, sharpening the reader's sense of the shifting political terrain, from early feminism to creating an international alliance for independent media. Taken as a whole, *Hand-Held* powerfully demonstrates how Halleck operates on all fronts: producing, writing, arguing for policy changes, and creating organizations. And how her feisty and intellectually fearless collectives have been at the forefront of combating disinformation. The book's timeline on technology and alternative media and annotated bibliography and filmography are particularly useful resources for professors and activists alike.

Hand-Held Visions reminds me of Saul Alinsky's *Reveille for Radicals* or Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: it shows us, concretely, how to make the impossible possible. Now, with perhaps the most severe media blackout in U.S. history on the war coverage in Afghanistan, *Hand-Held* is not only an urgent and timely book, but also a necessary one.

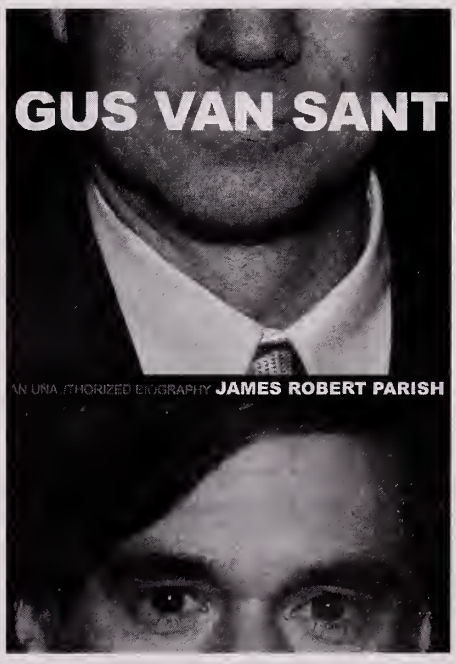
Patricia R. Zimmermann is a professor in the department of cinema and photography at Ithaca College. She is also the author of Reel Families: A Social History of Amateur Film *(Indiana 1995) and* States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies *(Minnesota, 2000).*

Gus Van Sant: An Unauthorized Biography By James Robert Parish (Thunder Mouth Press, 2001)

BY BO MEHRAD

GUS VAN SANT IS A FILMMAKER. GUS VAN Sant is gay. Those are the facts.

By reading James Robert Parish's *Gus Van Sant: An Unauthorized Biography*, the facts are what you get. Parish's writing is at times clinical and tends to lean toward the academic (read: boring) side; still, not even the most yawn-inducing writing can quell the anomaly of a career that is Van Sant's. His is one filled with contradictions, from stories of Portland street hustlers (*Mala Noche*, *My Own Private Idaho*) to Cambridge geniuses (*Good Will Hunting*), and from low/no budgets to multimillion dollar productions.



But those looking for a cross between Judy Garland- and Sid Vicious-style antics will be disappointed. Of course, it's hard

Gus Van Sant Book Jacket: photo: Pacha/Corbis; cover design: Jan Glinski

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to believe that old Gus is as angelic as he comes off here, that is, there is no mention of sex, drugs , or rock & roll (actually he does play in a band!). Yet there is a certain respect to be found from a neo-celebrity that doesn't air his dirty laundry in public.

To be fair, Parish has done his research, culling quotes and facts from various magazine interviews, books, and even DVD commentaries, trying to pin down a director who at times comes off as a bit of an enigma. He also interviews various friends, former colleagues, and family members, but alas, not the director himself, hence the "unauthorized" title.

The early chapters are dedicated to Van Sant's childhood and upbringing, but the meat and potatoes of the book deals chronologically with Van Sant's different films. There are some interesting tidbits: It took Van Sant almost 10 years to break even on *Mala Noche's* $25,000 budget (well after *Drugstore Cowboy* made him an indie darling); River Phoenix was quite hesitant in playing a gay street hustler in Idaho and it took much convincing and tenacity by the director to get him to sign on; and the now legendary tale of how Miramax was ambivalent about handing the directing duties of *Good Will Hunting* over to Van Sant, who at the time was known mostly as an "off beat" director, and how that film changed the course of the director's career.

Of course the issue of Van Sant's sexuality is something that comes up in almost every chapter of the book. Which is ironic, since the director himself, who never hides the fact that he's gay, doesn't seem as preoccupied with it as the author is. Van Sant sums it up by saying: "To me, it's embarrassing when your sexuality becomes an important political message. I think there are important political messages to be had, but it [gay sexuality] doesn't really strike me as one of the most important."

But what Gus Van Sant ultimately reaffirms to the reader is the director's immense talent and his ability to pull off what few have been able to: doing the Hollywood dance, yet retaining a fiercely independent vision.

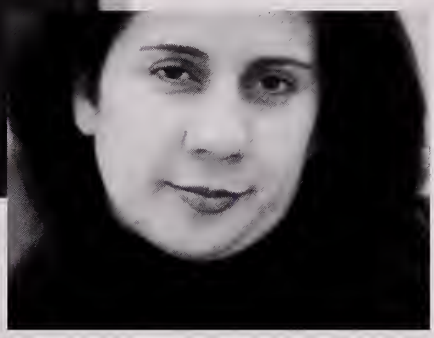
Bo Mehrad edits the Festivals section of The Independent. *He is a writer/director. He has a weakness for chocolate chip cookies.*

Celebrating Sisterhood

African American women directors tell it like it is

BY AARON KRACH

THIS YEAR'S SECOND AFRICAN AMERICAN Women in Cinema Film Festival began with poetry and ended in prison. The poetry came from *Daughters of the Dust* director Julie Dash, whose early 1970s short film *Illusions* concentrated many of the issues facing African American women in cinema (both behind the scene and on the screen) into a beautiful 30-minute black and white drama. The festival didn't actually end in prison. Closing night included a screening of portions of Neema Barnette's prison-themed film, *Civil Brand* (working title), a well-researched and vividly produced interrogation of the prison system in America, which she is currently finishing for Lions Gate Films. The two directors are easily the most successful women of color working inside and outside of Hollywood today. Throughout the festival it was truly moving to see so many young women filmmakers testify to their admiration of them. It was perhaps even more touching to see Barnette and Dash thrive on the young filmmakers' energy and enthusiasm.



Filmmakers Yvonne Welbon (L.), and Evelyn Badia (R.); above, *Illusions* by Julie Dash.

"This festival, as you may have noticed, is different from others," said programmer Michelle Materre, addressing the festival crowd gathered inside the New York Sheraton Hotel. "We didn't accept submissions. Instead, we went out, looked, and picked the best work we could find because we wanted to get a sense of the breadth of women's work today." After the applause subsided, Materre concluded, "We put this festival together because, well, we need to toot our own horns."

And celebrate they did. There were tears of joy as Barnette (the first African American woman to break into directing episodic television: "What's Happening Now," "Cosby," "China Beach," etc.) received a Pioneering Spirit Award for her lifetime commitment to African American women in cinema. But her achievements were hard won. She cautioned the cheering crowd of aspiring filmmakers of the perils of being a woman of color in cinema by relaying some harrowing stories about getting *Civil Brand* made.

Barnette started production on the film two years ago, and due to mergers of independent film companies along the way, *Civil Brand* is now at Lions Gate without a producer and with no executive support. The company slashed her budget to such a degree that they had to stop shooting after 14 days. She called in the Directors Guild of America (yes, there is a reason for the organization's existence) to try and regain control of her project. Their efforts worked (a little). Burnette was allowed one more full day of shooting—she did 41 set-ups that day—and now Lions Gate is paying to finish at least one print, but won't promise to release it when it's completed. Explaining that the film she's making now is drastically different than what she set out to create, Burnette noted, "All film is political." With the import of her stories hanging heavily in the auditorium, the audience finally grasped how a "genre film could be 100 percent political."

Similar stories of strong women trying to make their mark and being held back at every turn abounded. All 13 films screened at the festival were worthy of inclusion and obviously a labor of love for each director. The narratives were intensely personal and almost exclusively about issues of concern to women. They were also universally about characters not seen in mainstream films or prime time television.

The festival was scheduled to open with 30 minutes of Yvonne Welbon's work-in-progress documentary about African American women directors, *Sisters in Cinema*, followed by *Daughters of the Dust*-director Julie Dash's *Rosa Parks Story*, starring Angela Bassett. Welbon's *Sisters in Cinema* held the audience in total rapture as it quickly recapped the miniscule amount of women who have been allowed to get behind the camera to make a feature film, and not until very recently at that. Welbon's film, with its affecting archival footage and wonderful interviews of everyone from Sundance programmer Shari Frilot to Maya Angelou, is destined for wide play.

Then the announcement was made that Dash's *Rosa Parks Story*, which she made for CBS, would not be shown. Two of Dash's first short films would be presented instead. Details were never given, but in the Q & A afterward Dash hinted that heated disagreements between herself and CBS over the final cut of *Rosa Parks* were to blame for their not allowing the film to screen. No matter: Dash's *Illusions* and *Four Women* more than made up for

Photos: Welbon: Alison Duke; Badia: filmmaker; *Illusions*: Women Make Movies

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Bibby Oyukie Acosta in Christina Ibarra's *Dirty Laundry.*

the absence of *Rosa Parks. Illusions* is shockingly well made. On her very first film, Dash revealed talent, depth, and a sense of sublime nuance. When she told the audience that they needed to always remember one thing, "Redefine what you know to be real," it was obvious that she not only meant it, but practiced it in her own work as well.

Almost all of the other works in the festival were short to medium length films from first-time filmmakers. A few were up to Dash's high standard, but not all. Those that didn't quite "redefine real" fell short because of too much ambition, too much emotional urgency, or too many inexperienced actors. None of the films failed for lack of trying, though. As a testament to the breadth of the films, the festival handed out four Audience Awards. No one said if there was a tie in the voting, or if the staff simply couldn't bear to give only one award away.

Regardless, the winners all deserve special mention. Christina Ibarra's *Dirty Laundry* garnered the most laughs from any audience with its tender jabs at growing up Latina along the Texas/Mexico border. *Dirty Laundry* is a successful hybrid of telenovela and Judy Blume's *Are You There God, It's Me Margaret.* Olunfunmilayo Gittens was more than lucky with her film *Lucky*. She drew warm and surprising performances from an experienced cast while exploring issues of aging and romance. *All Water Has a Perfect Memory* by Natalia Almada was the most experimental film to win a prize. It is a collage of both found and new footage and interviews with the filmmaker's parents talking about the death of their daughter (Almada's sister) many years ago. Evelyn Badia also touched on the trauma of a mother who loses a child with her inventively made *The Box*.

It cannot go unnoticed that two of the winners were Latina. The festival commendably opened its program to other women of color without changing the name of the festival. There are simply so few African American women working in the film industry that they need any buzz they can get from a festival with a name like this one. Materre pointed out that by opening up the curatorial focus to include other women of color, the festival "was able to broaden the spectrum of our understanding of other cultures." And she was right.

Unlike festivals that are about picking up distribution (Sundance) or about audience development (Urbanworld, Gen Art), The African American Women in Cinema Film Festival is, at this point in time, about filmmakers. Audiences were not overwhelming, and many times it seemed that everyone had a badge that read either "staff," "press," or "filmmaker." While that may sound like a questionable success, it was not. The intimacy, bonding, and support shown from "sister to sister," as so many women kept saying, was the real success of this festival. Dash summed up her feelings about the program as she received her Pioneer Award, "Thank you, everyone. I'm not considered marketable, and maybe that's a good thing. Because you in the audience are the reason that I'm still making movies."

Aaron Krach is the New York-based editor of Empire *magazine, a gay lifestyle quarterly. His last piece for* The Independent *was a profile of Todd Downing (August, 2001).*

Photo this page: filmmaker; facing page: Brendan Christie

Realscreen's *Real* Message

Taking documentaries to the market

BY JANA GERMANO

THE MESSAGE AT THIS YEAR'S REALSCREEN Summit was loud and clear—the big networks are open to your pitches. Just don't be derivative, show them the next new thing not the last great thing, and, whatever else, don't say you don't watch TV.

Only mentioned in passing was the sobering fact that the majority of projects come not from pitches, but from internal sources. Michael Cascio of *Animal Planet* said only about five percent of outside proposals get developed.

Given that, listening to panelists sharing their perspective on pitches should be less compelling. But the audience remained enthralled—manifesting the eternal tenacity that independent filmmakers and producers need to survive.

Realscreen Summit: The International Conference on the Business of Factual Programming, held February 13–15 in Washington, D.C., drew representatives from all the big kahunas—Discovery, HBO, National Geographic, Fox TV, Bravo, and IFC. And at $1,000 a head, Realscreen is no misnomer for a conference that focused on the business realities of independent producers and filmmakers.

The "Filmmaker Turns Entrepreneur" panel offered advice to filmmakers who had set up their own companies. Just crank out those proposals, or as Brian J. Kelly of Henninger Productions said, "keep throwing shit against the wall and see what sticks." He reminded the audience that "we're in the business of failure . . . more pitches fail than succeed."

Keith Lawrence, an independent producer who sponsored a roundtable entitled "Creative Financing for Producers," said that the conference was useful because "you should be equipped with any tool you can get." He also felt that although the panelists were "big, their attitudes weren't big—they're just trying to keep their jobs."

Filmmaker Rebecca Kingsley, attending the summit in hopes of finding funding for her television series *The Last Colony*, was rejuvenated by the sense of camaraderie and community, reflecting on the isolated nature of independent filmmaking.

But is this sense of accessibility warranted? Is there really a kind of symbiosis in the relationship between the monolithic vehicles of distribution and independents—or are the independents justified in their fear that access is closing down?

According to one established producer from Southern California (who requested anonymity), regardless of what the panelists claimed, "the networks are closed to the small independent. We could walk naked through the networks without raising an eyebrow." She also noted that despite what was being said at the summit, "nobody's taking any risks now," and the networks are becoming almost indistinguishable from each other.

Adding insult to injury, the brutal nature of the market encourages independent filmmakers and producers to sell themselves short out of desperation, thereby undermining their worth. "They know that if they say 'sorry, I can't do it for that,' there'll be lots more who will," said Meg Villarreal of U.S. Independents. Villarreal sponsored a roundtable discussing U.S. Independents, an association that helps independents promote, market, and sell their films in the international marketplace.

The panelists on the candid "Politically Incorrect: Independent Producer's Rant" panel had the same concern that independents are going with business deals that aren't in their best interests. "They're setting precedents for other independents which are ultimately cannibalizing our industry," noted panelist Louise Rosen. One of the solutions she presented was that since there isn't room for everyone, it has become increasingly necessary to pool talents and cooperate with other producers.

Working on the old adage that there's strength in numbers, one solution would be to develop a trade organization for independent producers and filmmakers.

The Discovery Channel party during the Realscreen Summit.

During the Rant panel, Tim Sparke, director of Mercury Media International, offered the services of PACT, Britain's Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television, to help set up an American equivalent. By establishing guidelines and standardized contracts, a trade organization for U.S. independents would address many issues, including the complaint that

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network release forms wholly protect the networks if they end up developing an idea similar to the one you showed them. Although there are some U.S. organizations working in support of independent filmmakers, PACT lobbies on behalf of British independents to ensure that 25 percent of all network programming comes from independents and one percent of the network production budgets goes into PACT.

Although there are now more venues than ever before where independents can showcase their work, the accessibility of new technology is also placing filmmaking tools into more people's hands. According to PBS Vice President of Programming, Alice Myatt, "More and more people are calling themselves, and actually are, filmmakers and producers and this is causing a flood of people entering the industry."

This flood is making it "harder and harder for established, talented filmmakers to earn a living making films they care deeply about," according to Barbara Burst, editor of the documentary, *you don't know what i got*. "Less government money translates into more corporate funding," Burst said, "So controversial subjects become taboo."

But many independent filmmakers feel encouraged that there will soon be a home for controversial subjects—coming from a name heartening to anyone concerned with quality independent films—Sundance. During an informal session at the summit, Paola Freccero, Sundance's senior vice president of film programming, provided a chance to learn about their new network that will be devoted exclusively to documentaries and aimed at "bringing the work of the indies to hungry audiences." Slated for a digital launch at the end of 2002, its sponsorship-free content promises to be genre-bending and non-formulaic—consisting of "films with topics that take extra courage to produce and don't fit into any other channel format," Freccero noted.

Since they're only in the business of acquiring finished work and won't yet provide funding, Freccero recommends letting your film "have a life" and generate a buzz at film festivals. Of the 16 documentaries entered into the Documentary Competition category at the Sundance Film Festival this year, 12 had some funding by television outlets, seven from PBS/ITVS and five from HBO, which are, Freccero said, "producing and funding great work."

Janet Gardner and Pham Quoc Thai, creators of the acclaimed documentary *Precious Cargo*, said that funding remains the independent's most persistent challenge because there is "no one way to approach funding . . . you have to find a different solution every time for every film." One of the solutions they found for *Precious Cargo* was ITVS (Independent Television Service), which provided them with about one-half the necessary funding. As it was their fourth grant application, persistence is sometimes rewarded.

A contact list for independent filmmakers concerned with social activist media:

www.centerforsocialmedia.org: showcases and analyzes the best works in social media.

www.documentary.org: the International Documentary Association works to promote nonfiction filmmaking and support the efforts of filmmakers worldwide.

www.itvs.org: seeks to create and promote independent media that will advance issues and represent points of view not usually seen on commercial or public television.

www.mediarights.org: helps media makers, educators, nonprofits, and activists use documentaries to encourage action and dialogue on contemporary social issues.

www.usindependents.com: offers United States-based independents cost-effective access to international markets to better promote, market, and sell their products.

www.workingfilms.org: links independent documentary filmmaking with community education, organizing, and direct action to support social, economic, and civil justice.

With so much focus on the "bottom line" at Realscreen, there is a tendency to lose perspective on why filmmakers and producers battle the odds to create films that matter. To that end, the Center for Social Media at American University in Washington, D.C., a group that promotes media as a creative tool for social activism, hosted a roundtable discussion of Realscreen participants and attendees following the conference.

The roundtable reminded me of one reality that Realscreen neglected; it's still possible to infuse your values and passion into a successful commercial project. The challenge is to find alternative funding paths.

In response to the wish to make films that don't necessarily fit into current programming, Professor Pat Aufderheide, the Center's director, asserted that while the summit was "industry hardball," some of the more traditional business techniques could be utilized to build an economy around social action filmmaking.

One roundtable panelist, Judith Helfand, offered the secret of her success in funding her socially conscious films—find a potential funder who is interested in your issue and say the following: "You can maximize your long-term investment in (insert your social issue here) by funding my film."

Helfand also presented a useful model of community outreach by setting up a community education and citizen action campaign for her film *Blue Vinyl*, called "My House Is Your House," a collaboration between organizers, the filmmakers, and Working Films, a community outreach organization. This is intended to introduce audiences and consumers to a growing campaign to help phase out the use of PVC products in construction, while promoting the manufacture and use of safe, affordable alternatives. The campaign will take advantage of the attention *Blue Vinyl* has garnered from its festival circuit and its HBO broadcast in spring 2002.

Which proves that while funding and a good business plan are necessary for independents, they are not sufficient. If you want to be heard, advises Chris Cramer, president of CNN International Networks, you must "make the important interesting."

Jana Germano, based in Bethesda, Maryland, is a freelance writer covering film and media issues.

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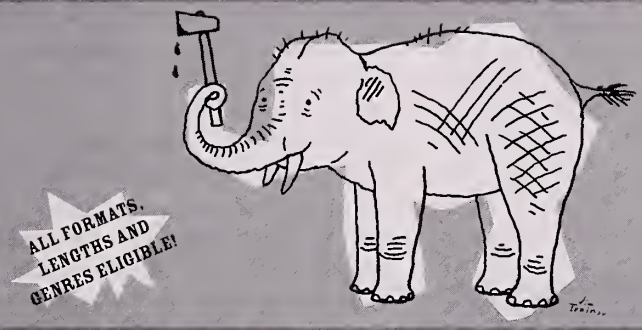

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Cuba or Bust

One filmmaker's reflections on the Havana film festival

BY NEIL KENDRICKS

WHEN AMERICANS MENTION CUBA, MOST people never think of the Havana International Festival of New Latin American Cinema, now in its 23rd year. More often than not, they conjure Cold War-era images of Fidel Castro and the U.S. trade embargo, or, more recently, the lush, rhythmic sounds of the legendary Buena Vista Social Club, celebrated in Wim Wenders's documentary of the same name.

But this much-loved showcase of international films is an equally lively and vivid representation of Cuba's cultural life for anyone fortunate enough to make it to Havana for the festival.

Last December, I was one of those fortunate souls to get my first taste of this lesser known side of Cuba's artistic repertoire. My five-minute short film, *sigh*, was accepted into the film festival's Binacom section, which features student films from both the United States and Mexico. This would be the second international film festival to screen my quirky, no-budget black-and-white short (co-produced and edited by my frequent collaborator, Teri Lang) that had been completed in April 2001.

To my surprise, San Diego State University film professor and AIVF member Carroll Blue convinced her colleagues to send SDSU film student Cale Mitchell and myself to the festival to represent both our respective short films and the university. Also along for the trip were fellow SDSU film student Julio Banuelos and San Diego City College film students Robert Broms and Paul de Santiago. Mitchell's short film, *Poor Man* (co-directed by Cheryl Kanekar and Justin Halpern), Brom's documentary, *Binacom in Cuba*, and Santiago's animated *The Cactus and The Rose*, were also among the U.S. shorts slated to screen at the festival, courtesy of Binacom.

When we first arrived, it quickly became apparent that Havana's lavish Hotel Nacional was the festival's social epicenter. Here, filmgoers and filmmakers alike stopped by regularly to pick up copies of the event's official publication, Diario del Festival, which was published daily with the times and locations of that day's scheduled films. Press conferences and panel discussions were ongoing, and wandering around the lobby one could readily find journalists, filmmakers, actors, and moviegoers to discuss cinema with. If you were looking for a respite, the hotel's open courtyard, where exotic peacocks gracefully strolled across the immaculate grounds, would easily do the trick.

In many respects, the necessity to keep your schedule flexible and open to surprises reminded me of the attitude and spirit I found at the Telluride Film Festival. Like Telluride, Havana is refreshing because it places emphasis on the art instead of the business of filmmaking, a notably difference from the more industry-oriented and popular festivals, such as Sundance.

Irene Visedo as Conchita in Guillermo del Toro's *The Devil's Backbone*.

Photo: Miguel Bracho

As a filmmaker and lifelong film lover, I prefer Havana's low-key and casual ambiance to the media frenzy that always accompanies Sundance's well-publicized screenings. At the Havana festival, people were really there to see films rather than simply trying to make the scene, or catch a glimpse of their favorite movie stars. Often you would find yourself standing in long lines with throngs of ordinary Cuban citizens who were curious and eager to see a new, foreign movie.

"It was not uncommon to find entire families waiting for hours in line to see the latest films from all over the world," said Banuelos. This Mexico-born student filmmaker is currently wrapping up his four-month stay as the first exchange student from SDSU to attend Cuba's highly regarded La Escuela Internacional de Cine y Television (The International School of Film and Television). He added that, "If people did not like the film within the first 25 minutes or so, they walked out and let the rest of the audience know of their displeasure."

Throughout my weeklong stay in Havana, I frequently encountered boisterous audience reactions during screenings. Drama or a comedy, it didn't seem to matter; filmgoers gleefully shouted at the characters on the screen. Such was the case during an extended monologue in Chilean filmmaker Rodrigo Sepulveda Urzua's melodrama, *Un Ladron Y Su Mujer* (*A Thief and His Lady*). This highly vocal accompaniment from the audience added an unintended note of levity to what was supposed to be a poignant scene in an otherwise grim tale about a woman lamenting the fate of her incarcerated, con-artist husband during the 1940s.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Spanish director Joaquin Oristrell's light-hearted, romantic comedy about struggling actors, *Sin Verguenza* (*Without Shame*), and *Fucking Amal*, directed by Danish filmmaker Lukas Moodysson, drew enthusiastic and equally vocal reactions. A late-night screening of Moodysson's teen-angst drama about an awkward young girl falling in love with one of the most popular girls at her high school had the irreverent spirit of a midnight screening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. The mostly twentysomething audience's laughter was punctuated by filmgoers shouting out their opinions about the characters' actions. While filmgoers at festivals are usually more reserved, the lively, uninhibited audiences in Havana turned film viewing into an interactive experience. These unexpected displays of audience participation gave each screening an almost electric charge.

Fortunately, the audience's reactions to the Binacom screenings were mostly favorably as they soaked up the series of short films, observing the filmmakers' eclectic approaches and frequently bold cinematic techniques. The films ranged from Mitchell's homage to Charlie Chaplin to Aaron Soto's 12-minute-long, apocalyptic fantasy *Omega Shell* (shot on digital video for only $200), and my short about a woman desperately trying to contact her estranged boyfriend only to encounter a couple whose dysfunctional relationship strangely mirrored her own.

Although most of the Binacom films weren't subtitled in Spanish, and were shown in a tiny screening room located at a local art gallery, there was still a small crowd of locals who showed up. It didn't hurt that my film and a few others had received a favorable review by one of the critics of Diario del Festival. We also weren't above spreading the news about our screening via word of mouth to other festival attendees who crossed our path.

The Binacom section's emphasis on English language films was a sharp contrast to the bulk of the festival's other works. Most of the films were either in Spanish or had Spanish subtitles. Of course it helped if festivalgoers were fluent in Spanish, or at least went to the cinema with someone who could translate for them.

I found myself frequently drawing upon my years of high school and college Spanish classes as I watched film after film in various large, one-screen movie theatres scattered throughout Havana. It also helped when the films were visually driven pieces, like writer-director Guillermo del Toro's elegant horror film, *El Espinazo del Diablo* (*The Devil's Backbone*), which unfolds with the lyrical imagery and fever-dream intensity of Luis Bunuel's surrealist masterworks. Other offbeat films, such as Mexico's Alfonso Cuaron's coming-of-age road movie, *Y Tu Mama Tambien* (*And Your Mother Also*, which opened theatrically), and a film by one of Cuba's own native sons, Juan Carlos Cremata Malberti's drama, *Nada* (*Nothing*), were also compelling for me despite the language difficulties.

According to Banuelos, most Cuban films are made as coproductions with international production companies. This is an obvious byproduct of Cuba's Third World economic situation. For instance, *Nada* was made as a coproduction with French, Spanish, and Italian funding.

There were, however, a handful of American independent films sponsored by the Sundance Institute. They included Michael Almereyda's postmodern take on *Hamlet*, John Cameron Mitchell's poignant and fun rock musical, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, as well as releases like Daniel Minahan's *Series 7: The Contenders* and Christopher Nolan's mind-bending thriller, *Memento*. Since I had already seen these impressive indies, either at last year's Sundance Film Festival or during their initial releases, I chose to spend my time watching non-American films.

It was a testament to the Havana festival's unpretentious atmosphere that it wasn't difficult to meet numerous filmmakers either in the lobby of the Hotel Nacional, or simply walking on the streets to various screenings around Cuba's capital. At one point, I even caught a late-night screening of *Kandahar* with Almereyda and a few of my companions. Throughout the festival, I felt as if most festivalgoers dealt with one another democratically: ordinary folks, serious cinephiles, struggling actors, aspiring filmmakers, and established directors mingled and interacted without much difficulty.

I also learned that when people discovered you were a filmmaker, they treated you with a sense of authentic appreciation. While enjoying Havana's vibrant nightlife at a small club called Las Vegas, one of the club's hip-hop performers announced that some film directors were in the house. The mostly young, and poor, club kids responded with enthusiastic applause. This acknowledgement from the crowd had a resonance and feeling that was hard to beat.

The general attitude of equating filmmaking with art was a real change from California's more Hollywood-weaned perspective that has filmmakers being judged by box office and how commercial their projects might be. For me, New York-based filmmaker Roberto Monticello said it best: "There is a lot of culture here. Not a lot of money, but a lot of culture."

Neil Kendricks is a San Diego-based artist, filmmaker, and writer who is currently working toward his Masters' at SDSU's Television, Film & New Media program. At the moment, Kendricks has several projects in development, including his next short film, loop.

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common concerns of Uncommon Voices

BY JANA GERMANO

NOBODY WOULD SAY THAT PAT MITCHELL, ONCE AN INDEPENDENT producer herself, wasn't committed to making PBS less of a labyrinth for independents after taking the reins as its fifth president in March 2000.

Intent on increasing the independent producer's access to the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), Mitchell set in motion initiatives so pragmatic in nature it made one wonder why they hadn't been conceived of sooner. Mitchell's goal was to make the process more transparent to independents, as well as to ensure more successful review of the nearly 3,000 proposals and programs that land on PBS's proverbial doorstep each year.

Consequently, for independent producers and filmmakers, PBS has become a friendlier place. But is it more open to independent work? Recent cutbacks, the expansion of common carriage hours, and the burden of additional delivery elements seem to be cause for concern.

How is PBS living up to its pledge to improve relations with indies?

Putting out the welcome mat

To make PBS more receptive to independents, in the fall of 2000 Mitchell broadened the programming greenlight structure by establishing three regional vice presidents based in L.A., Chicago, and Miami, who, along with Washington-based co-chief John Wilson and senior vice president of PBS Interactive Cindy Johanson, constitute the PBS greenlight committee. This change was viewed optimistically as establishing more points of access to PBS for producers around the country.

However, recent budget considerations and corporate restructuring have fractured committee members' duties. Along with the cost-savings closure of the Midwest office, these changes have been interpreted by some as a retreat from Mitchell's original pledge to ensure access. Additional duties were given to both Vice President Alyce Myatt, formerly of the Chicago office, now based in Washington and also in charge of PBS's Ready to Learn service; and Gustavo Sagastume, vice president of programming in Florida, now also "riding herd" for pledge and fundraising programming and the "soft feed" program service, PBS Plus. Wilson, along with co-chief program executive Jacoba "Coby" Atlas, located on the West Coast, continue to oversee all PBS programming services.

David Van Taylor, producer of the five-part series *Local News* that aired on PBS's National Program Service (NPS) in fall of 2001, sums up the frustration of many independent producers: "As long as PBS management or the greenlighting structure continues to transition, it will continue to be very confusing. I think that the number one need is having a set of people at the top who have their jobs long enough and have a clear enough mission to work with independents. If there is transition after transition, it remains hard for independents to navigate the complexities of the system."

One of the first actions of the new greenlighting team was to streamline the program review system. The old review process was criticized by many as being a long, protracted procedure.

Since the Independent Television Service (ITVS) has had, over a 10 year period, more than 250 of the 350 programs they've presented to PBS picked up, ITVS director of broadcast, distribution, and communications, Lois Vossen appreciates the effort to improve communication and response. "The large part of this problem was in the world of independents," says Vossen, "and the time it took a project to go through the system." PBS has set a goal of responding to submissions in six to eight weeks. "It's a challenge," says PBS co-chief Wilson. "There are periods when we're meeting that goal and periods when we're not." He notes that they will be reviewing the necessity of sending everyone an original reply and they're considering a series of form letters to speed up the reply process. "It's a balancing act," he says, "between being responsive and being thoughtful with that response. While a form letter smacks as unsatisfying, it's less satisfying to hear nothing."

Establishing an internal tracking system was another improvement aimed at making the system more receptive. Independent projects are now entered into a database so producers can call up PBS and find out where in the review process their project is. This also allows the far-flung greenlighting team to coordinate more efficiently.

How the greenlight process has made the system more accessible to independents remains somewhat "opaque" to Patrick Wickham, director of production at ITVS. He refers to the fact that although the greenlighting team "sends out emissaries, there still remains one person to send your materials to."

That person is Cheryl Jones, senior director of program development and independent film at PBS, who for independent producers continues to be, as Myatt says, the "center of the universe." All independent projects are first filtered through and

reviewed by the two-person frontline submissions department that Jones heads, before being further reviewed by the greenlight team. Even when a project is submitted directly to one of the members of the team, it must be forwarded to Jones's department to be reviewed and recorded in the database before it can be sent back to the team. Based in D.C., Jones is responsible for coordinating the greenlight committee and working with independent producers vying for much coveted program slots.

Unified programming but fewer timeslots: common carriage raises the stakes

As a membership organization of community stations, PBS requires that the stations devote significant portions of their programming to a common national schedule. With the goal of better resourcing national outreach, Mitchell has required member stations to carry more hours of national programming. Of the 846 hours available in the prime time schedule during the September to June season, 500 are now committed to existing programming strands, or series, which leaves 346 prime time hours open to special series or new independent work.

With the increase in common carriage and the accompanying decrease in real estate, especially for one-offs (single programs rather than series), comes the fear that this requirement may be shutting out some of the unique voices that characterize the independent community.

Sound and Fury **illuminates the battle over cochlear implants. The documentary follows the tumult in the Artinian family when daughter Heather (pictured) requests an implant.**

PHOTO: JOSEPH SINNOTT

For independents, common carriage wields a double-edged sword. It does enable the work of some independents to be carried by all the stations, bringing with it a wide audience; the benefit of being able to establish a national promotional campaign; and the prestige of having a program nationally aired. Wilson explains, "Having no common carriage policy didn't help independents. In fact, new series like *Life 360* have created new opportunities for them in the national schedule." *Life 360* plans on hiring producers for 4–10 minute segments covering chosen topics, which will present an opportunity for less established producers to learn and grow while working for PBS.

Myatt, vice president of programming at PBS, provides the example that the documentary *Sound and Fury* was designated for all the stations, "and if it hadn't been, it would have been replaced by *Lawrence Welk* in some markets."

However, even successful independents, such as *Sound and Fury*'s director Roger Weisberg, who has had over 20 documentaries programmed by PBS over the last two decades, view the programming trend of increased common carriage hours as a hazard to producers of one-offs. "It's a concern, with so many series taking up the NPS [the programming service which supplies prime time and children's series programs], leaving fewer and fewer slots for one-offs."

This trend, he says, started before Mitchell came on board and continues under her command. PBS confirms that common carriage hours are going to continue to increase.

Weisberg points out the significant extra work that goes into trying to boost a common carriage program. This ranges from screening the program to give stations a chance it see it, to initiating a campaign to make stations aware of the community outreach aspects of the program.

Most common carriage blocks are given to programming strands or limited series that get more mileage out of promotion dollars. "Series take up more real estate, leaving limited space for one-offs and making competition for those hours is extremely tight," says Weisberg.

"There's not much real estate left for independent producers," agrees Janet Garner, producer of *Precious Cargo*, which was picked up by PBS Plus, a "soft feed" program service that does not schedule program dates or times. Because local stations will schedule broadcast in a variety of timeslots, it is often difficult for the audience to ultimately find the program. "This is supposed to be public television, and prime time has gotten more and more commercial. It feels like we don't have an alternative anymore to commercial TV."

"The dilemma of a one-off," says Cheryl Head, director of outreach and diversity programming at CPB, "is that it's becoming increasingly tougher to have it create the high impact that will get it a tremendous slot, instead of an occasional slot. So PBS is interested in developing programming which would sit neatly under programming strands such as *NOVA*, *Frontline*, *American Experience*."

And many of these strands, such as *American Masters*, *American Experience*, *Frontline* and *Now with Bill Moyers*, generally work with a core stable of highly-experienced independent producers. Since these shows have a distinctive look they're going for, they're not looking for brand new talent.

It is quite tough for new faces to break in, agrees Head. When faced with making the decision of whether to fund a new producer, she is "very reluctant to give money to a proposal when I'm not familiar with the producer's work or I can't tell from their sample tape whether they can pull off a national program."

When appropriate, independents are encouraged to submit work directly to the individual strand, but they can also send programs to Jones at PBS headquarters. In turn, the program office may refer submissions to the PBS "genre" directors: senior directors Sandy Heberer, Factual Programming; Glenn DuBose, Performance and Fictional Programming; and Pat Nugent, Children's Programming. The genre directors will help make

appropriate matches between programs and strands, and recommend programs to the greenlighting committee.

But, at the end of the day, attachment to a series might not set well with independents who, as Vossen says, "want their own unique place with no one telling them what to do."

Meeting PBS standards

Once PBS accepts a project, a concern facing some independent producers is what ITVS's Wickham calls the "nightmare of success." PBS's stringent technical requirements have been called "the toughest in the broadcast industry," and include such additional elements as closed captioning, on-air promos, a web site, and credits meeting PBS specs. While ITVS and P.O.V. have budgets for these requirements, there is still the added expense of saying 'yes' for independents without this help.

The *PBS Red Book*, available in print or online, is an indispensable resource for producers of PBS programs who need to know the nitty gritty of technical specifications. For a more indie-friendly reference, ITVS sells the production manual it has customized to serve the needs of the independent producers it takes on.

Elizabeth Sowles was among the first generation of Vietnamese adoptees featured in the documentary *Precious Cargo* which was produced by The Gardner Documentary Group in association with ITVS.

Recognizing that the burden of program delivery was limiting submissions, PBS has relaxed a long-time mandate. "For years, PBS would only look at final shows, captioned and locked in the can, but they will now view works at the rough cut stage. So we're trying to get their buy-in earlier so the program can be broadcast sooner," Vossen says.

Reviewing work at the rough cut stage allows PBS to take a larger role in the programs they do decide to take on. It gives producers valuable information at a stage when they can choose to incorporate it. And when PBS passes on a project, the producer has the opportunity to explore other options.

Persistence and tenacity remain useful qualities to help independents break into public broadcasting since even a pass can eventually lead to a yes. Vossen says that most producers don't get funded by ITVS until the third or fourth time they submit their project. The submission process alone can help the project eventually get accepted since producers can improve their projects from the feedback they receive from ITVS readers and panelists. And since they are often continuing work on their project, producers can also submit new and possibly better footage with the next submission.

Improving relationships

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) also recognizes an improved working relationship with PBS since Mitchell came on board. CPB provides much of the funding for development and acquisition of programming for PBS. "There was a time when PBS saw CPB as 'the bank' but it makes more sense to be having conversations about strategy and tactics," says CPB's Head. "Now we're trying to coordinate on programming. We'll say 'here's the list of projects we like, do you see them as being able to be scheduled in the national program?'"

Head notes that a challenge facing PBS is "the ability to keep the producers we have on board. Indies come to PBS and then head off to HBO where they feel they have more freedom, such as a total lack of censorship. But we reach significantly more viewers. We want to build a culture where indies can hone their skills and become master producers and remain with PBS."

This was the impetus behind the Producers Academy Project, intended to create an arena where accomplished PBS producers from series such as *Nova* and *American Masters* could teach new producers, about one-half of whom are independents. "It gives a leg up to producers who need to ratchet up their skills to work in our sometimes cumbersome system and break through the doors," says Head. (See page 39)

And what is the program content that would provide a hopeful independent passage through these doors? "PBS doesn't give a lot of reasons for why they accept or don't accept shows," says Vossen. It is important to realize that just because a producer has had a program picked up by PBS in the past, doesn't guarantee acceptance in the future. Vossen says that name recognition only goes so far and that each show has to sell itself all over again. "Whereas in Hollywood you're as good as your last movie; at PBS, you're as good as that show you're presenting," she says.

But greenlight committee members describe common themes. What they look at is the scope of the project and whether it's designed to give the audience a thorough understanding of the topic. Equally important is the general quality of the storytelling and how well its speaks to universal truths. While the program can be small, it must be able to address the universality of the topic.

"Attention is now being paid to how we can promote diverse perspectives and experiences across all of the shows," says Cara Mertes, executive producer of the independent documentary strand P.O.V. "In the past 2 years," she says, "P.O.V. has seen more support and growth than in the 13 years prior." (See page 42.)

Wilson also notes the importance of creating opportunities within a structure that local stations can deal with. "For example, PBS is looking at a weekly place in our schedule for short dramas, which get lost in the schedule. So we want to put them in one place." This anthology program would join *Independent Lens*, *Life 360*, and *Now with Bill Moyers* as one of the homes for short works that gets national carriage.

They're also focused on timely pieces. PBS sustained budget cuts that coincided with September 11th, "So we robbed Peter to pay Paul," says Myatt, by putting their limited resources into crisis funds for a series of *Frontline* and Bill Moyers specials used to help launch *Now With Bill Moyers*.

PHOTO: SUSAN AND DOUGLAS SOWLES

In addition to these programs, they are also supporting independent documentaries slated to be aired in observance of the 1st anniversary of September 11th, such as *Caught in the Crossfire*, co-produced and co-directed by David Van Taylor and Cal Skaggs, which presents the impact of the events on Arab Americans in New York City.

Who picks up the tab?

Since the majority of PBS's funding support comes from donors, it's not only the whims of Congress that dictates their future. "It's the people who like *Lawrence Welk*," says Myatt, "who send money to public television stations. The people who want independent films do not." Myatt presents the scenario that for the last couple of years, "the producer community has moved away from any kind of advocacy on their own behalf. They have stopped at the door of the broadcaster as opposed to their congressperson. Great work went into getting an independent TV service into being and we need that kind of support now."

As for funding independent projects, CPB's Head believes that independents must become better at writing proposals and treatments. "Not everyone's great at it. Sometimes producers should find someone who is, someone who can paint a picture on paper so you can help us to envision what the producer has in mind," she says.

Citing a common mistake, she says that producers often "find funding pools and twist and turn their project to make it fit when it doesn't, or they simply send in something that doesn't fit at all. So, producers must do their homework."

And how does the independent producer prepare for the ever-changing future? "Eventually everything will be digital and multicasting and producers who cut their teeth in broadcast production will need to understand digital for production and distribution issues," Head emphasizes.

Will the multicasting expansion finally bring the utopia independents have dreamt of? "Everyone's hopeful that the expansion of digital channels will create a new home for independents," says Vossen. "But that's what independents thought when cable came along and they have yet to stake the claim they thought they would."

As these new platforms open up, independents can expect a greater demand for program enhancements such as web and interactive components, necessitating filmmakers to consider these elements during production. "While we tend to receive pushback from filmmakers about being filmmakers and not being webmasters, the reality of the marketplace is that you have to understand that nobody is going to hear your little tree drop in that forest without these added components," says Myatt.

Vossen agrees that documentary filmmakers in particular should be asking themselves, "Am I getting materials and interviews that I'm not going to use but we can stream online? What are the resources and who are the organizations that I want to tie this project to? Because to wait until after the fact is getting to become more of a problem." (See PBS Interactive, page 41.)

Producers must also think in terms of a promotional and strategic plan to extend the life of their program and make it more accessible to audiences who will need to be able to find it in the ever-enlarging broadcast world.

"To extend the impact of the program beyond its broadcast and find more nontraditional audiences," says Head, "producers must find other ways for the audience to enter into the issues of the program." These ways include community outreach programs, such as community screenings and seminars. "We don't want the program just to have one broadcast and disappear," she says.

The consolidation of media ownership makes the need for diverse voices more important.

But, who, asks Vossen, is going to pick up the tab? "This will be hard to do without more money and more time."

Head concurs. "It is absolutely unrealistic to assume that independents are going to be able to deliver a one-hour show, an interactive component, a web site and all these other things without getting substantially more money. A lot of independents are going to get caught in that crossfire and these additional requirements are going to make a 20- and a 30-second promo seem like nothing."

By community, for community

"The consolidation of media ownership makes the need for diverse voices more important," says Myatt, which, in turn, increases the importance of the role of public media. "Being a membership organization of community stations, public TV inherently has the ability to build social capital at the community level, community-based outreach being the clearest example. We have managed through the stations to rally people around issues in the community and in society at large."

Vossen says that one of the things that ITVS appreciates about Mitchell and her team is their reaffirmation of belief that public television is about community. While all concerned are interested in maximizing audience viewership, Vossen points out that "this is not the only way we should measure success. The ideal shows shouldn't be driven by ratings but by their ability to spark interesting and challenging dialogues. And PBS is getting to a place where they're interested in doing that."

While facing these new, and sometimes daunting, challenges, it's important to remember that, given the built-in diversity inherent in the community of independent producers, the value of their work resides in its ability to let those many voices speak.

"Although the term indie implies a certain level of isolation and struggle, independents shouldn't feel beaten," reminds Head. "While we sit in our offices, indies are on the front line of what America's thinking about."

Jana Germano, based in Bethesda, Maryland, is a freelance writer covering film and media issues.

INDEPENDENT
BRINGING DIVERSE VOICES

Four broadcast directors describe how they bring independent voices to public stations.

William Marcus
Director, Broadcast Media Center
MontanaPBS
www.montanapbs.org

MontanaPBS produced Sun River Homestead, *a history of women homesteaders told through their letters and postcards. This LINCs-sponsored program by Montana independent Maggie Carey will air on the PBS national schedule this May.*

Perhaps the top benefit of working with independents is that you get an individual with a real passion for the subject they are presenting. They know the subject intimately and have the time and desire to make a special program. Another is that it is a great way to add variety to the programming for the station without the overhead of hiring another staff producer. This works best of course when the independent enjoys being independent, but it's also a way to test out the talent in your area so you can have some idea of the "pool" of applicants when a new job opens up.

For LinCs projects, the ITVS producer/station agreement is an important step. It outlines the responsibilities, expectations, timelines, copyright issues and other things. Having everything down in writing is really important. Also, understand that the relationship is going to throw your operation for a loop occasionally. Get the staff prepared by telling them why you think this collaboration is important. They are going to take on most of the frustrating technical issues and they need to understand why the station is a partner in this project.

Craig Cornwell
Director of Production
Kentucky Educational Television
www.ketv.org

KET has always had a very strong commitment to working with independents. Kentucky is the only state whose legislature allocates production funding for independents (the Kentucky Fund for Independent Production, or KFIP). KET administers the monies through a grant process and has worked with many producers over the past 12 years that this program has been in effect.

There are a number of benefits working with independents. First and foremost, we get great programming for KET, programs which are usually unique to and about Kentucky, stories that we often don't have the time or crew to cover completely, or features that are perhaps under our radar screen but extremely worthwhile. Several of the programs which have been funded through the KFIP have gone on to air nationally on PBS and other outlets with KET being the originating station.

As part of my role of administering the funding for the KFIP, I have to see periodic updates of the projects, so I view scripts, rough cuts, etc. We establish a good dialogue and relationship with the producers so that they don't end up producing something we can't air. And we give them feedback on other ways to make their program better. I often share these projects with my staff, screening tapes to give them a feel on what other producers are doing outside the building and I feel this helps their creative approach. In fact, just having independents in the building fosters good exchanges between our staff and them, and in the end, we all seem to come away with something good from the partnership.

Now I would have a word of advice for independents trying to establish a relationship with a station and that is to be realistic. Don't walk in the door asking for two months of on-line, several weeks of audio post, and major animation. Most stations can't handle requests like that. Sometimes, the simpler, the better in terms of what you need to get from a station.

Left to right: Rebecca Lee in Maggie Carey's documentary, *Sun River Homestead*; Photo from *Sun River Homestead*; Diane Livia Nelson, director of broadcast services at KQED TV.

I sit down with each independent before we even agree to partner and we lay out all their needs, evaluate their timelines, and see if our schedules can work together. I also present them with things we can and cannot do, so that they don't have unrealistic expectations.

For instance, we can offer audio post facilities but cannot offer E & O insurance. We can provide graphics but can't let them take our cameras out in the field. Each project is different with different needs and as long as the independent is realistic about our priorities, timetables AND limitations, we have a good working relationship which results in an end product we can all take pride in.

Diane Nelson
Director, Broadcast Services
KQED TV
www.kqed.org/tv/indiefilms/

KQED

KQED's Independent Initiative reflects the station's commitment to supporting independent work. Projects include production of Intensity TV, *a series of acquired independent narratives and shorts; financial support through awards and in-kind grants; sponsorship of local film festivals; and a robust acquisition of work by independents. Broadcasting nearly 30 independent programs each month, the Bay Area's KQED is now airing more independent work than any other public television station in the country.*

PHOTO CREDITS L TO R: ANDREW KEMMIS; FILMMAKER; KQED; P.O.V.; ROBERT GUMPERT; ROBERT GUMPERT

Working with independents you get the most interesting works in terms of off-the-beaten path, local views, point of view and just plain quirky. When you are co-producing, they bring a myriad of ideas, partnerships, relationships with institutions and other producing bodies. Generally, they are a rich infusion of the same kind of thing that goes on at most stations—they just provide more of it. They often bring expertise in a particular kind of production or subject that a station doesn't have in-house.

Stations must recognize that most independents are working on a "business model" very different than a station's. Their model is, "make this film at any price." It's normal for independent producers just starting out to max out several credit cards, mortgage their homes, work for almost no pay, have old cars and little furniture. That must be respected, and independents should never be asked to offer their films, their sweat or their expertise for free. Stations must be entirely frank when discussing the resources they can bring to a coproduction.

On the other hand, independents are used to being just that—independent. They are not used to being accountable to anyone and they don't think in terms of "deliverables." They often want their work to be perfect, rather than finished in time for a particular air date. The level of accountability the station expects must be clearly spelled out, and the station has to build in protections so that they don't end up making an investment with no pay-off.

Independents must understand the medium they are producing for, or using as an outlet for their work, i.e., television. There's almost no use for a program that is 61-minutes long, no matter how good it is. They must understand and respect the medium of television and make their work fit the medium. In truth, we don't air film, we air television programs and they must be willing to make television programs. Often independents feel their film is their "baby." I think it's a great metaphor but one they must be willing to play out. I tell them that once they get to the stage of really trying to make it to air, their film has become a teenager and they don't have much control over it anymore. They have to be ready to accept that.

In general, the more we work with independent producers, the more independent work happens—we're nurturing it. And the more people producing, the greater the richness and breadth of what we produce and air.

SPIRIT
TO STATION PROGRAMMING

Nancy Kates and Bennett Singer's *Brother Outsider: The Bayard Rustin Story*; *Presumed Guilty*, by Pamela Yates and Peter Kinoy: Jeff Adachi advising his client in a holding cell, Adachi defending a client in court.

Pat Finn
Station Manager
KPBS, San Diego
www.kpbs.org/tv/indiefilm/splash.html

KPBS frequently commissions work from independents, as filler or shorter pieces, or as targeted programming. They also produce work for outside clients, and have developed a group of local independents whose particular sensibilities they can match to projects. (See page 17.)

When stations are reluctant to open their doors to independents, it's penny wise and pound foolish! If you don't do that, you end up with a big staff of producers: any smaller or medium-size public television station just can't afford to work this way. When I got to San Diego, we didn't have many: I was calling Los Angeles to bring people down. Now we've developed some people we're really happy to be working with.

Our programmer Keith York is responsible for commissioning a lot of pledge programming, and what he'll do is he'll set aside $35,000 say, and say, "Here's your idea, great: here's how I want it, here's how it needs to be delivered, here's how it's going to work for a pledge; here's your $35,000, I want to see a rough cut, and the fine cut, and that's all I want to see." And, so far so good!

This very young man Chris Pyle just produced this beautiful show for us. This is a brand new relationship, but we pretty much trusted him, having seen a show he already shot. It always helps if an independent producer has a reel that shows promise, even if it's not polished. We get contacted a lot for LInCs grants, so we meet a lot of people that way. We can't do them all, but it's important to be approachable.

PBS can be such a mystery. There's a lot of confusion, and there's been a lot of work to clear the air. It would be great if more stations realized the benefits of working with independents and could learn how to reach out to their community, how to make these relationships work.

HONOR ROLL

The member stations of PBS have a mandate to program diverse, community oriented programming, and many do this through relationships with independent producers. Extra props to the following stations for the exemplary work they do with independent producers:

Hawaii Public TV
KCET, Los Angeles
KERA, Dallas
KUED, Salt Lake City
Maine PBS
OETA, Oklahoma City
Oregon Public Broadcasting
WETA, Washington, DC
WGBH, Boston
WNET, New York
WPTD, Dayton, OH
WQED, Pittsburgh
WYBE, Philadelphia

And of course, the danger of compiling any list is the number of folks you leave off! Please let us know of other model, indie-friendly stations we should add to our list (contact info@aivf.org), and we will update it at www.aivf.org/resources/pbs/.

PBS has always made it a priority to get meaningful pieces of work out to the public, but it's not the only way. "We look to PBS because they reach virtually 100% of Americans with televisions, unlike the cable networks. However, we're always free to work elsewhere," says Louis Alvarez, producer/director of *Sex: Female* and *Play Ball!*

Recently PBS has been relaxing their hold on programs and working with filmmakers to get their work out in endless ways. Here are a few examples:

ences of a wide mix of women on love, sex, lust and romance.
Venue: Along with airing on PBS in the near future it will also air on the Oxygen channel and get a theatrical release.

Fire Wars

Kirk Wolfinger, Director
www.pbs.org/nova/fire

Story: Highlighting the summer of 2000, one of the most destructive wildfire seasons ever, *NOVA* pairs with Arrowhead Hotshots, the elite crew who takes on wildfires, to show why America is losing the war on wildfires.
Venue: Airing May 7th on PBS; the documentary web site, www.pbs.org/nova/fire, has added features that go beyond the boundaries of the film, including a teacher's guide and other features related to the doc.

INDIE PIPELINE

COMPILED BY JASON GUERRASIO

The Blue Diner

Natatcha Estabenez, Jan Egleson; producer/directors
www.bluediner.com
Story: A Latino mother and daughter struggle to understand each other after the daughter mysteriously loses her ability to speak Spanish.
Venue: Airing on PBS in 2003, cable subscribers can get a first look at it on HBO in May 2002 (See page 64).

Mama Africa

Fanta Nacro, Bridget Pickering, Ingrid Sinclair, Ngozi Onwurah, Zulfah Otto-Sallies, Raja Amari, directors; Simon Bright, series executive producer
www.mama-africa-online.org
Story: Six of Africa's most successful women filmmakers explore what it means to be a woman.

Venue: Six half-hour narratives will air on PBS in the near future. Three of them will be re-versioned into a feature slated for a theatrical release in May 2002.

Sex: Female

Louis Alvarez, Andrew Kolker; producer/directors
Story: Ninety-minute doc that offers the opinions and experi-

Play Ball!

Louis Alvarez, Andrew Kolker; producer/directors
Story: This documentary focuses on the children, parents, and coaches that make up Little League baseball. Highlighting the 2002 season, the film follows its characters right up to the Little League World Series and also reveals how the game has captured the imagination of children in more than 100 countries worldwide.
Venue: Projected to air on PBS sometime in 2003, the filmmakers also have hopes to distribute the program to churches and after school programs.

The New Americans

Steve James, Gordon Quinn, Peter Gilbert, executive producer/directors; Jerry Blumenthal, Barbara Kopple, Indu Krishman, Susana Aikin, Carlos Aparicio, directors; Gita Saedi, series producer
www.pbs.org/newamericans
Story: From the director of *Hoop Dreams* comes this multipart series which captures the complexities of immigration by taking the viewer inside the lives of six immigrant families.
Venue: The public first saw the series when it was the first non-science program ever chosen by PBS Online to participate in their "Online Learning Adventure" two years ago. This offered students an array of interactive activities that taught them about immigration. The program will air on PBS in the near future.

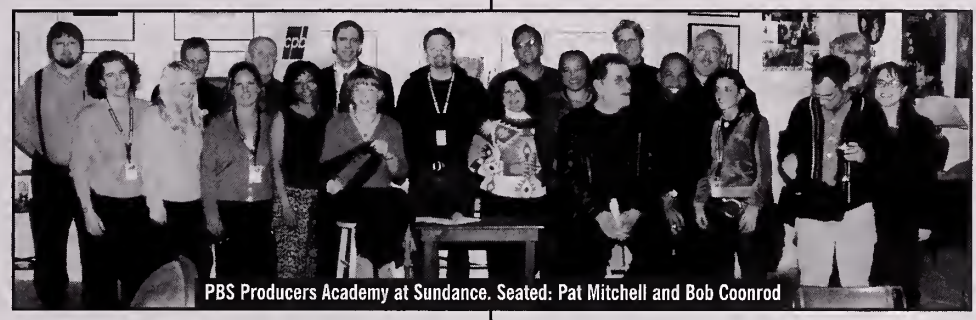
A Bunch of Fine Fellows

The PBS/CPB Producer's Academy swings into action

BY KYLE HENRY

A VIRAL OPPORTUNITY TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF PUBLIC television or an attempt to bring independents into the fold? Maybe just a little bit of both....

The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) made a historic journey to Sundance this year in the guise of their joint mentoring program, the CPB/PBS Producer's Academy. Along with the flotilla of PBS executives and documentary filmmakers that return to Sundance each winter to network, scoop up programming for shows like P.O.V. and premiere their ITVS produced films, the Academy subsidized 20 selected "independent" producers to come and join in on the chaos. (Author's note: Sorry for the quotation marks around independent, but I've almost stopped using that word to describe critical or alternative filmmaking in America, since it's co-optation as pure marketing label is nearly complete.)



PBS Producers Academy at Sundance. Seated: Pat Mitchell and Bob Coonrod

What is this academy up to? Will graduates become the shock troops that revolutionize programming on PBS as we know it?

Formed just last year, the academy partners PBS, CPB, and member station growth funds to create three tiers of support for independent producers: fellowships with top public television producers; scholarships for producers covering expenses at intensive training sessions; and membership stipends to attend nationally recognized confabs like Sundance. Five fellowships, 40 scholarships, and 80 membership stipends have been awarded to date from a pool of 610 applicants, with a new batch of stipends for the annual PBS conference being determined as this magazine goes to press.

Pat Mitchell, president and CEO of PBS, delivered a speech at a special event in Park City honoring the stipend recipients, during which she mentioned that the academy was modeled after the Sundance mentoring programs. At the end of the evening, the recipient's names were roll-called as they walked across the stage in a mock graduation ceremony. A palpable sense of achievement at having been chosen to participate and experience the week in Sundance was in the air, according to participant Emily Morse (see below). And like all graduations, this ceremony announced the arrival of new members into the

PATRICIA GARCIA-RIOS

"What does it mean to be more open to independent producers? What is acceptable, what pushes boundaries?" These were some of the things on Garcia-Rios's mind as she came to Sundance. Starting as an intern and rising up to producer at Blackside Productions, Garcia-Rios was the associate producer on "The Rockefellers" and co-producer of "Chicago: City of the Century." Originally from Spain, and particularly interested in issues of content and style, Garcia-Rios continued, "The fear with PBS is that they'll lose their audience if they take too many risks. Hopefully the producer's academy will allow PBS to bring people into the system that can jump over the hurdles of bureaucracy and make riskier work."

RYAN DEUSSING

"It was a very hands off program. We only did three or four things as a group. The most important thing was to be at Sundance, to be able to afford it and to have PBS in my corner." An award winning documentarian (*Confederacy Theory*) and MFA Film Production student at the University of Texas-Austin, Deussing was able to meet some of his idols, like Rocky Collins and Karen Head (KCET-LA), as well as other aspiring producers and filmmakers while soaking up all the festival's programs. "Being on this program confirmed the fact that being an independent and getting things done depends on who you know and who you connect with. There was a real sense of community in the House of Docs and at the festival, and that's conducive to getting work done."

EMILY MORSE

"Everywhere I went, I met interesting film people and gave out tons of business cards. To say that you're with PBS, people will listen to you." The director of *See How They Run*, a comedic documentary about San Francisco mayor "Slick" Willie Brown's run for re-election, Morse stressed the networking opportunities that the membership stipend afforded her. Morse was particularly satisfied with the credibility and access the PBS name gave her to media insiders at the festival.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE FILMMAKERS

community, and signified the beginning of new challenges that lay ahead.

"PBS was always a home for independent film. We're hoping the academy helps cultivate the next generation of national producers, expanding the pool of producers bringing their work to PBS," said Cheryl Jones, senior director of program development and independent film for PBS. "We're hoping to take local independent producers and expose them to opportunities at the national level. And we're also hoping these producers come back to us with great product. PBS benefits by having producers who understand the needs of the system."

And producers who will hopefully expose and open up the national level to critical and alternative poetics employed by filmmakers and producers at the local level. With strands like *Independent Lens* and *P.O.V.*, and strong partnerships with program services like ITVS, no one would question that PBS has been a valuable production and distribution outlet for filmmakers in America. But some would question how "independent" one can be working within PBS's conception of its "system." Just getting things done doesn't necessarily mean the things that get done will be independent. It could just mean becoming part of the PBS system. Which again begs the question, what is independent? Perhaps new blood will help expand the borders of what is possible and what is permissible with form, content, and intent in the future.

Right now, the academy definitely is offering exposure and networking opportunities to young and beginning producers. The five fellows are working on shows like *EGG the Arts Show* at Thirteen/WNET, *Life 360* with Oregon Public Television, and *American Experience* with WGBH. Scholars have attended a producer's skill workshop at WGBH, the successful PBS member station in Boston, and an interactivity workshop with Wisconsin Public Television (WPT). Two different sets of membership stipends were doled out for PBS's annual meeting and IFP's market, in addition to Sundance. Also, all participants are paired up with online mentors to help build upon their experience after they complete the program.

When asked if the academy will continue this year, Jones replied, "Success will be determined qualitatively if these producers develop the proper skills, and continue to work on them through mentoring. If they bring quality material to PBS, then the program will be deemed a success and will continue."

The producers selected to attend Sundance are already at work producing "quality material," and seemed unanimously excited about the opportunities the academy presented. (See sidebars.)

With the absence of any comparable producers' mentoring program on the scene, outside of Sundance's intensive workshops, here's wishing the producers academy graduates a bumper crop of groundbreaking work.

For those wishing to apply for the academy program, check out the news section at www.pbs.org/producers for future calls for applicants. Announcements are normally posted three weeks before deadlines. Station-based producers can read about calls on PBS Express.

Kyle Henry is a filmmaker, writer, editor, and programmer living in Austin, TX.

ONLINE PTV RESOURCES

PBS
www.pbs.org/producers

CPB
ww.cpb.org/tv/

ITVS
www.itvs.org/producers/

NATIONAL MINORITY CONSORTIA ORGANIZATIONS:

National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA)
www.naatanet.org

National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC)
www.blackstarcom.org

Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT)
www.nativetelecom.org

Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC)
www.piccom.org

Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB)
www.lpbp.org

ANTHOLOGY/MAGAZINE SERIES:

Egg: The Arts Show
www.pbs.org/wnet/egg/

In the Mix
www.pbs.org/inthemix/

Independent Lens
(website under construction)

Life 360
www.pbs.org/opb/life360/

Now with Bill Moyers
www.pbs.org/now/

local anthology program list
www.aivf.org/resources/tips/shorts/

STRANDS:

American Experience
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/

American Masters
www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/

Frontline
www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/

Great Performances
www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/

ExxonMobil Masterpiece Theatre
www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/

Mystery!
www.pbs.org/wgbh/mystery/

Nature
www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/

NOVA
www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/

P.O.V. The American Documentary
www.pbs.org/pov/

TOOLS FOR PRODUCERS:

PBS Red Book
www.pbs.org/insidepbs/redbook

ITVS proposal writing tips
www.itvs.org/producers/treatment.html

PBS Web Production Manual
www.pbs.org/producers/webmanual

Independent Producers Outreach Toolkit
www.mediarights.org/toolkit/

AIVF Pitch to Public Television resources
www.aivf.org/resources/tips/pbssessions/

GET HOOKED ON PBS INTERACTIVE

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

"WE'RE THE NUMBER ONE DOT ORG IN THE WORLD," SAYS AMANDA Hirsch, senior editor, News and Documentaries for PBS Interactive. "Our strategy has been really focused: to extend what we do on the air to online." Indeed, PBS Interactive has racked up a fair share of prestigious Webby awards and Yahoo! picks. Perhaps even more impressive is the way that PBS Online fluidly links pbs.org with more than 300 member station sites and comprehensive companion sites for close to 500 programs.

"The Internet allows a valuable extention of your work," explains Hirsch. "First, it's a good way to keep your story out there. While the program may only broadcast a few times over a four year license period, a site will remain active through this enter window. Second, it opens up creative storytelling opportunities." Hirsch notes that producers often find adapting to non-linear, interactive storytelling a big jump, but "once they get into it most producers get hooked."

PBS Interactive doesn't construct web sites, but rather standardizes and aggregates the plethora of sites produced by member stations and independent producers. This allows a host of disparate producers to create content that presents as a unified resource. Once a site proposal has been accepted, PBS Interactive sets guidelines, shares information and resources, and oversees delivery of elements. Individual sites themselves are produced by teams typically made up of a project manager, writer, fact checker, designer, coder, and technologist. PBS maintains a database of professionals they have worked with at a variety of budget levels, which can be a boon to independents looking to assemble a team. PBS staff themselves will be as hands on (or off) as the project merits, throughout the formal, 17-week site development process.

Although PBS rarely provides funding for sites, their resources and expertise can be invaluable. Earlier this year they completely updated the PBS Web Manual, a comprehensive, user-friendly customizable toolkit for the production of PBS companion sites.

Meanwhile, PBS Interactive (led by Sr. Vice President of Internet and Digital Content Planning, Cindy Johanson) is keeping an eye on the future. Beyond strategizing digital content services, PBS has a small team developing interactive TV projects, and in addition has been a pioneer in wireless technology, with a channel currently streaming on AvantGo. But the bulk of their work right now is based on the good ol' Web.

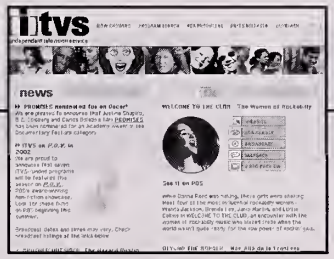
"When we started in 1995, we required a companion site for almost every program we aired. Now, while we still expect to see a web plan included in every project proposal, we're being more strategic about which programs it makes the most sense to extend online," explains Hirsch. She suggests that producers think about interactivity at the outset. "Start early, and err on the side of ideas!" says Hirsch. "It's always easy to scale back. But a clear vision of a site that really serves the goals of the program can only help your proposal."

Elizabeth Peters is director of AIVF and publisher/acting editor of The Independent.

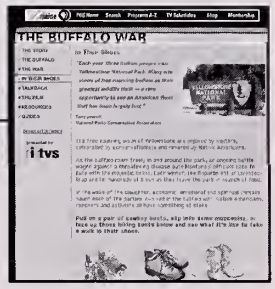
PROPOSING YOUR VISION:

The best way to get started is to browse sites that can spark ideas. Think about the elements that will draw users in and extend their experience. Does the site tell a story: not just with words, but with the organization of its interface? Does it move beyond simply retelling the story of your program and take advantage of interactivity? Can you clear the online rights for assets? Are there ways to particularize the experience? Is it a meaningful content destination for users who have not seen the show? Are there educational components that would make the site appropriate for PBS TeacherSource (www.pbs.org/teachersource/)? In short, what is the goal for the site, and how will it support this goal?

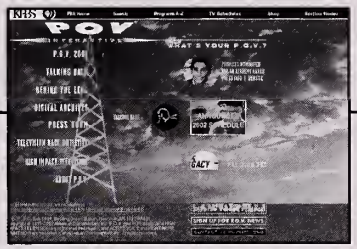
HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLE SITES YOU MAY WISH TO TAKE A LOOK AT:



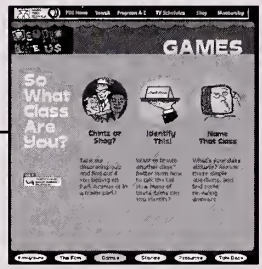
www.itvs.org
"ITVS creates program sites that are usually good models of smart, creative sites built on a small budget," says Hirsch.



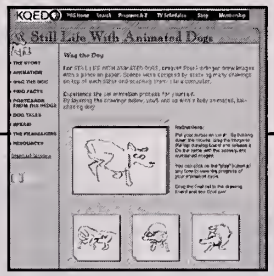
www.pbs.org/buffalowar/
The Buffalo War



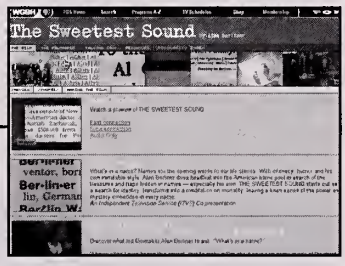
www.pov.org
Last year *P.O.V.* built a site for each program. This year they are doing even more, including the web-original series *Borders*. See page 42.



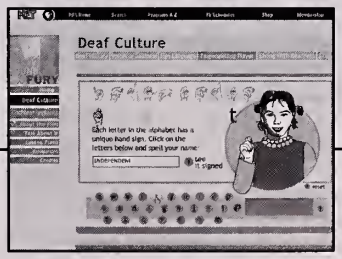
www.pbs.org/peoplelikeus/
People like us: Social Class in America



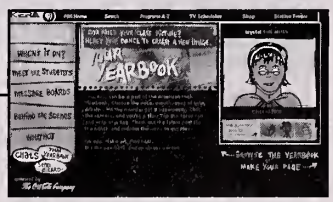
www.pbs.org/animateddogs/
Still Life with Animated Dogs



www.pbs.org/pov/sweetestsound/
The Sweetest Sound



www.pbs.org/wnet/soundandfury/
Sound and Fury



www.pbs.org/americanhigh/
American High

"POINT OF VIEW MEDIA IS EXTREMELY GOOD AT GETTING people to think and to talk about issues in their lives differently. You watch *P.O.V.* and you begin to understand an issue or an event or a person in a different way than you had before," says *P.O.V* Executive Producer Cara Mertes.

For the past 15 years, *P.O.V.* has been the preeminent showcase for independent documentaries on national television. The series has provoked dialogues on topics ranging from gays in the Boy Scouts to the life of children living under the Middle East conflict. With this agenda they've had their share of accomplishments and controversies.

"*P.O.V.* prides itself on programming documentaries that represent 'diversity' not in terms of makers but also in terms of form and content," says Mertes.

P.O.V. has broadcast such untraditional documentary oddities as Errol Morris's pet cemetery doc *Gates of Heaven*, and in 2002 will be showing Monteith McCollum's *Hybrid*, a surrealistic, animation-filled doc about a Midwest corn farmer. "Every single person, including us, said the programmers will never take it," says Mertes. "And then the programmers said, 'Oh, the audiences will never watch it.' And we programmed it and I bet you it's going to get audiences."

SWEET ★

P.O.V. celebrates its anniversary with an expanded scope of activity

BY JAMES ISRAEL

P.O.V. creator Marc Weiss takes pride in the series' commitment to breaking new ground with content. *Regret to Inform*, which looks at Vietnam War widows (both American and Vietnamese), to *Tongues Untied*, Marlon Rigg's poetic exploration of life as a gay black man, *P.O.V.* has presented viewpoints to a national television audience that were not available before.

"With its very raw language and in your face images, *Tongues Untied* was probably the single most controversial film on *P.O.V.*" notes Weiss. *P.O.V.* was also the first to broadcast a documentary on national television that actually showed the faces of people with AIDS. "It was seen as some kind of shameful thing if somebody had AIDS, so their faces were masked. *Living With Aids* gave you an opportunity to know people as human beings as opposed to just victims," says Weiss.

Last season, they aired *My American Girls*, a doc by Aaron Matthews that portrays the life of a Dominican Republic family, another first for *P.O.V.* as there had never been a Dominican documentary on the air. "People were saying I didn't understand the Dominican experience until I saw your program," says Communications Director Cynthia Lopez.

IN 1988 MARC WEISS, AN INDEPENDENT filmmaker (and one of the founding members of AIVF), decided to create *P.O.V.* in response to the difficulty of getting independent documentaries to a national audience. "In the mid-eighties it was very difficult for independent documentaries to find their way onto public television," says Weiss. "There was no structure for one-off films, there was no money for acquisition, there was no real coherent way of getting the stuff on the air." Whenever PBS did acquire a documentary, there was little control over its schedule as each member station would program it as they saw fit. "This made it difficult if not impossible to do publicity around the few independent documentaries that were actually getting on the air." And then the filmmakers were left handling the publicity chores on their own. "It was pretty chaotic," notes Weiss.

Flash forward to 2002, and it's obvious that *P.O.V.* has become an institution, one that gets independent work on the air—and much more. They are in 95% of U.S. households, with an audience of four to six million viewers. They've expanded their program schedule and have a publicity department with the technological savvy of a huge advertising agency. "They are incredi-

PAMELA GENTILE

Scouts Honor
"P.O.V. stood strongly by my side as we defended the merits and integrity of the show. Cara Mertes appeared on national television to discuss why it was entirely appropriate for public television," says filmmaker Thomas Shepard.

JANET COLE

Regret to Inform
"Some people didn't really like the program because it really was about creating peace, not fighting wars," says P.O.V. Executive Producer Cara Mertes of Barbara Sonneborn's 1999 documentary.

RON SIMMONS

Tongues Untied
"It was attacked by various right wing organizations and by the Senate. Despite all of that it went on the air. It is as close as you can get in a documentary film to poetry. It was my proudest moment that we were able to get that on the air," says P.O.V. creator Marc Weiss of Marlon Riggs' controversial doc.

bly sophisticated with their marketing and outreach," says filmmaker Alan Berliner, who's been *P.O.V.*'d four times, more than any other filmmaker. Berliner broadcast his first film on *P.O.V.*'s tenth anniversary. "I was excited because so many people would see it. It was mind boggling. It was in so many people's homes."

From its outset, P.O.V. has functioned as a 'multicast' experience, interlacing broadcast, viewer feedback, interactive resources, and community partnerships, all geared towards expanding audience and enriching viewers' experience.

One promotional tool is High Impact TV, which works both to solidify national partnerships and to get the work out to the mainstream and the specialty press. "With *My American Girls*, we partnered with Latino public broadcasting (LPB) and they gave us a grant to purchase advertising time. We did promotions and outreach in a different way to English and Spanish speaking Latinos and were careful in reaching an audience that perhaps doesn't really tune in to *P.O.V.*." says Lopez

P.O.V.'s outreach doesn't end with the broadcast. They encourage viewers to "Talk Back." Even before the web was ubiquitous, *P.O.V.* was 'interactive,' suggesting that viewers use home video tools to respond to programs by creating video letters for broadcast during the show. Today video letters can be streamed on the web, and viewers can participate in an area of the site dedicated to lively discussion about the issues raised by programming. "We were the first major TV series to have an active web presence," notes Weiss.

The Talk Back section of the *P.O.V.* web site recently saw particularly heated response to *Scout's Honor*. In Tom Shepard's doc, which follows boy scout Steven Cozza's grassroots campaign to overturn the Boy Scouts of America's anti-gay policy, there was fervent debate including extreme anti-gay language attacking PBS's "promotion of gay lifestyle," a call for a halt of public funding to PBS, and criticisms that the doc was one-sided for not showing the Boy Scouts of America's point of view. "There was an organized attempt by conservative religious-based organizations to boycott the broadcast of *Scout's Honor*," says Tom Shepard. "Talk Back was extremely radioactive after the broadcast."

P.O.V.'s use of the web goes far beyond discussion groups. In 2001 every program had its own site, and in 2002 they are partnering with PBS Interactive to debut *Borders*, a web-only series showcasing interactive storytelling. "*Borders* will explore the possibilities of web-based media in terms of interactivity, in terms of breaking up narrative and finding new ways to tell stories, and in terms of involving the viewers, not only viewers reacting to content but actually supplying content. It's hugely experimental," says Mertes.

P.O.V. is further expanding its agenda by offering the Diverse Voices Project, a co-production fund with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) for producers working on minority-based stories. "We'll invest in up to four programs done by emerging makers on minority themes," says Mertes. We're going to be able to get involved in the film much earlier and will be offering technical support and mentorship."

They are also venturing into their first non-broadcast project, Youth Views, which is a youth outreach training program. "There are a lot of folks interested in seeing young people become effective users of independent media, folks who are working in the environment, against hate crimes or working on gay and lesbian tolerance issues. We don't believe that youth are lackadaisical," says Mertes.

P.O.V. has always championed emerging artists and with their 2002 schedule have more first time filmmakers than ever. They are continuing their mission of offering a stage for documentary makers who might otherwise not get the deserved exposure.

"Independent documentary filmmakers are the poets and the prophets of our time," says Weiss. "Filmmaking is the medium that they've chosen to help all of us get some insights about the way the world works and about the way the world might work better."

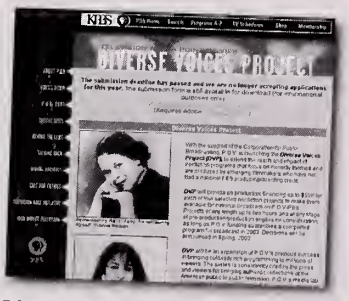
James Israel is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and AIVF staff member.

MONTEITH MCCOLLUM

Hybrid
"I think of Hybrid *as a remote clicker stopper, you're flipping around and you see something like that, you'll stop and say, what is this? You won't see anything that looks like that anywhere else," says* P.O.V.*'s Cara Mertez. Cynthia Lopez chimes in, "We particularly adore all of the corn animation sequences."*

MEAGAN LAURA SHAPIRO

Promises
Promises, directed by B.Z. Goldberg, Justine Shapiro, and Carlos Bolado, examines the views of Israeli and Palestinian children on the Middle East conflict. The film aired on P.O.V. *last year, and has a postbroadcast theatrical release with Cowboy Pictures. "The partnership with Cowboy is going to act as a test because we were able to pass on the baton," says Cynthia Lopez.*



P.O.V. has a long history with the web. They were "the first major TV series to have an active web presence," notes P.O.V. *creator Marc Weiss.*

Development Deals for Independent Docs

BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

GIVEN THE GROWING APPETITE OF SUCH outlets as PBS, HBO/Cinemax, Lifetime, Oxygen, The Sundance Channel, The Independent Film Channel, The History Channel, and many others for nonfiction programming, these venues are gradually shifting toward producing documentary projects "in house" or as a commission to a mediamaker. What then happens when a mediamaker pitches a possible documentary to a network or cable channel's programming or acquisition executive and that executive is intrigued, but not intrigued enough to finance the project?

One possibility is that a network or a channel commits itself to a development deal with a mediamaker for a project. In exchange for a certain amount of "seed" funding (ranging anywhere from $10,000 to $25,000), a mediamaker will be given a period of time to engage in development activities, such as preparing a project's production schedule and budget, writing a treatment or a proposal, and creating either a trailer or a presentation reel of approximately 10 to 20 minutes. Trailers provide the network or channel with a sample of what the project will be like in terms of content and production (to a certain extent) while allowing them to avoid the additional financial commitment of having a pilot program produced.

The network or channel will have an exclusive option on the project and the related development materials for a period of approximately six months to one year in which it shall have the sole ability to acquire the rights to the project with a view toward further developing and producing it. If, after the option period lapses, the network or channel decides not to develop the project further or produce it, or the parties are unable to negotiate a production agreement for the project, then the mediamaker shall have the right to present the project and the development materials to third parties. If there is no interest by any third party to commit to developing further and producing the project, then the mediamaker does not owe the network or channel any of the development monies or the development materials; however, if a third party should decide to develop further or produce the project, the mediamaker will be responsible (or pass such responsibility onto a third party) for repaying the original network or channel its development monies, often from the "first monies" received by the mediamaker from the third party. In order to ensure repayment of development monies, a network or channel will place a lien or a security interest upon the development materials, thereby requiring repayment before the mediamaker can present a project with a clear title of ownership.

There should be a distinct provision in the development agreement regarding the issue of the ownership of the development materials during and after the option period. Some networks or channels will insist that they own the rights in and to the development materials during and after the option period since they paid for them. Other networks or channels will agree that the rights in and to the development materials would be owned by a network or channel during the option period, but that the right to the development materials would be transferred to the mediamaker after the option period has lapsed, subject to a lien or security interest (as discussed above). This point can become one of negotiation for the parties and should not be confused with ownership of the rights in and to the project should the network or channel decide to produce the project and the parties enter into a production agreement for the project.

If the network or channel fully funds the project, it shall own the rights to the project subject to some profit participation for the mediamaker if and when the project is exploited in other markets and media, such as videocassettes and foreign television. The amount of the mediamaker's profit participation is subject to some limited negotiation by the parties. However, if the mediamaker should provide or cause to be provided partial funding for the project, then the mediamaker has more negotiating power regarding ownership rights to the project and any profit participation derived from the exploitation of the project in other markets and media.

A network or a channel often will insist on an extension to the option period to try and close any development deal with a mediamaker. This grace period or 'negotiation period' should be no longer than approximately three months; otherwise, this negotiation period then begins to resemble an additional option period, but one for which the mediamaker did not receive any additional compensation.

A network or a channel often will insist on an extension to the option period to try to close any development deal with a mediamaker. This grace period or "negotiation period" should be no longer than approximately three months; otherwise, this negotiation period then begins to resemble an additional option period, but one for which the mediamaker did not receive any additional compensation.

Mediamakers should be aware of when the network or channel will pay them the development monies. Since much of development is "front-loaded," mediamakers should insist that at least one-half of the development monies be paid after the signing of the development agreement by the parties, with the balance payable no later than a short time after the mediamaker's delivery of the development materials. Although the mediamaker will have to "cash flow" the remaining expenses concerning the development of the project, it is the network's or channel's main safeguard to ensure that the development material will be completed and delivered to it on time.

Most of these development agreements

depend on the negotiating strength of the parties themselves. Nevertheless, in the case of development agreements between a public television station or service (i.e., a public television entity) and a mediamaker, any agreement by the parties is subject to Public Broadcast Service (PBS) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) guidelines and legislation enacted by Congress regarding the allocation of such monies.

One of the most astonishing provisions in the public television development agreement is that a mediamaker may be required to grant and assign to the public television entity the exclusive right to any and all uses of a project for an extensive period of time (such as from the date of the signing of the development deal to the signing of a production agreement, or following a certain number of years after termination of the development agreement). In other words, although the public television entity is providing development and not production money to date, it can "lock up" all rights in and to the project, and not just the public television rights. Therefore, any mediamaker's agreements with third party entities concerning the funding, production, or exploitation of nonpublic television rights would require the public television entity's approval.

Although this provision appears harsh and perhaps one-sided, public television entities cite several examples of how mediamakers previously would "presell" a project's rights to video companies and other licensees under terms that would impact negatively upon the project's public television rights, such as when a project would be released on home video prior to its airing on public television. This often occurred without any notice to the public television entity.

Mediamakers and public television entities can agree to a provision that would permit a mediamaker to enter into different funding arrangements, like the preselling of certain rights in a project provided that such funding arrangements would not negatively impact upon public television exploitation of the public television rights or public broadcasting in general. For example, if a mediamaker enters into a presale licensing agreement with a British television service (the BBC, for instance), such a license should not adversely affect

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the public television entity's exploitation of its rights unless the license extended to other United Kingdom outlets, like a television service or station in Canada. In that case, there may be a possibility that exploitation of the Canadian television rights would interfere with the exploitation of the United States public television rights, since public television's reach or "footprint" often extends into parts of Canada. By way of an additional example of how certain types of funding can impact negatively upon a project's public television rights, if a mediamaker accepts third party funding from a defense contractor for a documentary concerning military spending, such a scenario could compromise the integrity of the project and the reputation of public television.

Mediamakers must remember that there are very few examples of 'free money,' and that securing development funds during the early stages of a project can have consequences concerning later financing and production...

In order to secure the public television entity's approval in these matters, the mediamaker may have to agree that the public television entity will have the ongoing right to share in the project's total revenues in proportion to the amount of funding that it provided to the project. The public television entity's rationale for this provision would be that its share of the project's total revenues over and above the amount of its initial contribution permits the public television entity to provide development or production monies to other projects or, in other words, to replenish the funding pool.

If a mediamaker produces the project in conjunction with a third party or parties, but not for public television solely, even if the project is produced after the expiration of the development deal, the public television entity would require that the mediamaker repay or cause the repayment of the development monies along with an additional percentage of interest (i.e., 15 percent). This provision permits the public television entity not just to recoup its monies, but to receive some additional monies for the mediamaker's use of the development funds, especially if the project is not produced exclusively for public television airing.

In the event that the development deal is terminated due to a breach of the agreement by the mediamaker, there is generally a provision that states that the public television entity still retains the public television rights. The mediamaker also would be required to repay the development monies to the public television entity. The reasoning for this provision is twofold: development monies should not be regarded as some conditional loan to the mediamaker; and two, the mediamaker should not benefit from violating any of the terms of the development agreement.

Mediamakers should also address the issue of how much discretion they would have to deviate from the development budget. In certain cases, mediamakers can deviate from any budgeted line item without the public television entity's approval provided that the overall development budget does not change. In other circumstances, any or a limited deviation (e.g., an increase or decrease of more than 10 percent) in a budgeted line item shall require the public television entity's approval.

Mediamakers must remember that there are very few examples of "free money," and that securing development funds during the early stages of a project can have consequences concerning the later financing and production of the project, as well as the exploitation of the project's rights. Yet mediamakers also must remember that development monies can jump start the development and production of a project, and can mean the difference as to whether a project gets produced at all. A mediamaker only can make such a determination after a careful review of a project's development agreement and consideration of a project's particular requirements and potential success in the marketplace.

(Note: there are several other issues concerning the public television development agreement that either are outside the scope of this article or cannot be addressed due to space constraints.)

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Discreet releases Combustion 2

BY GREG GILPATRICK

COMBUSTION 2 IS THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED new version of editing and effects software maker Discreet's compositing program for desktop computers. For those unaware of what a compositing program is, it is an application designed for combining and animating different video images together. Compositing is an important part of adding visual effects or graphics to a project and Discreet is one of the leading companies associated with the visual effects industry. Discreet's Inferno and Flame systems are synonymous with the visual effects of blockbuster films and expensive commercials and some of the technology from those systems has made it into the relatively inexpensive Combustion. Combustion 2 is an impressive package of post-production tools within a single unified progam, but most compositors and designers will want to stay with Adobe After Effects solely because of Combustion's high price.

Combustion's most distinctive feature is the way it looks. Combustion uses what Discreet calls the Artists User Interface: this is the way that most Discreet programs look and it is quite unlike programs from any other software company. Combustion's interface takes some time to understand and significantly adds to the amount of learning necessary to use the program. Once the interface is understood though it is clear that it is Combustion's major strength. Besides just looking nice, Combustion's interface gives the user a wide variety of different ways of viewing material. Combustion allows you to work on one layer of your composite and see your changes in the context of the final composite in a different window. For example, if you wanted to erase something from your foreground shot you could isolate that shot in the window you erase from while seeing the foreground and background together and simultaneously updated in a second window. While complicated sounding, it actually makes sense when you see it in action, and it is a feature that After Effects does not implement nearly as seamlessly as Combustion does.

Thankfully, Discreet has some of the best technical writers in the post-production industry in their employ. Combustion's documentation guides the new user through every part of the interface very well and makes the learning process almost easy.

Since Adobe After Effects is the most popular application for video compositing and motion graphics design in the independent world, it is the standard by which Combustion must be gauged for those new to Discreet's products. Both programs are able to import Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop files, along with a wide variety of video and still image formats. Both programs also use a timeline window with keyframes to create and define animations.

The edge Combustion holds is the number and quality of tools built-in to Combustion that are either inferior or non-existent inside After Effects. Combustion includes a vector paint system, a superb motion tracker, rotoscoping tools, a versatile text generator, particle effects, and a keyer based on the same keying technology in Discreet's high-end systems. While these are all tools that are either part of After Effects or available as plug-ins or companion programs from other manufacturers, Combustion has the distinct advantage of providing the various tools integrated inside one program with a unified interface. While the post process with After Effects can often mean switching between different programs such as Commotion for rotoscoping and Illustrator for vector illustration, Combustion's integration of features means that everything stays in one program with all the controls adjustable at any time. Combustion also has the advantage of being interchangable with other Discreet systems. Furthermore, if your facility has a Flint, Flame, or Inferno, color correction and keying can be setup on a Combustion system and then finished on the more expensive workstation systems.

Left: Although Combustion's interface is unique and perhaps alienating to newcomers, it is the program's major strength. Below: Combustion's new particle system can create anything from this laser blast to smoke clouds and water flows.

For anyone who uses Combustion 1 already, Combustion 2 contains a number of new feature throughout that make it an exciting upgrade. From small conveniences like pre-rendering and edge gradients on masks to huge ones like the particle system and schematic layout of compositions, Combustion 2 has added features that still work well within the interface and provide stunning results.

Photos: Discreet

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I found myself pleasantly surprised by many of the new features in Combustion but I was most surprised by the new particle generator. Particle generating software is used to create effects over time that emulate many small objects, like puffs of smoke or glowing spheres. There are many particle generator plug-ins for After Effects that give lackluster results and I expected the same from Combustion. But the particle system inside Combustion allows an amount of creative experimentation that most particle systems don't come anywhere near offering. Not only are all the parameters of the particle system adjustable but you can even create your own particles based on your own shapes or video.

The tools and interface inside Combustion are first rate but its price should prompt serious consideration by anyone interested in buying the program. The original Combustion cost $3495 but Discreet is raising the price of Combustion 2 to $4995. Unfortunately, Discreet feels that Combustion was underpriced before, when it was probably slightly overpriced. Certainly, one would have to add hundreds if not thousands of dollars worth of tools to After Effects to gain that same toolset, but for anybody outside of a large post house with a steady stream of compositing work Combustion is now probably priced out of their league. Also, anybody considering setting up a compositing system for use by freelance personel should consider that there are far fewer people fluent in Combustion than in After Effects.

I like Combustion, a lot. In the past, I have even turned down higher paying freelance work using After Effects so that I could work elsewhere with Combustion. Combustion is a superior compositing program with great tools, a modern interface, and well-written documentation. Unfortunately, unless Discreet lowers the price most independents or post-houses that do not do a lot of compositing should stick with After Effects. However, if you feel ready for an upgrade in tools and you find the price difference insignificant, Combustion may be the perfect compositing system for you.

Greg Gilpatrick, greg@randomroom.com, is an independent producer and director and technology consultant based in N.Y.C.

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DOMESTIC

BELLEVUE ART MUSUEM FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 26-27, WA. Deadline: May 17 (postmark). From 1967 to 1981, the Bellevue Art Museum hosted the first experimental/underground/independent film fest in the Northwest. Continuing this tradition, the museum will present a program of film & video from the region & beyond. 15 min. max, shorter works most welcome. Cats: experimental, narrative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, subversive, animated, & underground works. Formats: VHS, S-VHS. Preview on VHS & S-VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: c/o Bellevue Art Museum, 510 Bellevue Way, Bellevue, WA 98004; (425) 519-0747; fax: (425) 637-1799; programs@bellevueart.org

BIG BEAR LAKE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 13-15, CA. Deadline: May 15; July 6. Annual fest seeks independent feature films, short films, student films, documentaries, family films & digital films. This year's cultural event will showcase Asian American films. The fest is located in Big Bear Lake, California, nestled in the San Bernardino Nat'l Forest, just two hours outside of Los Angeles. Cats: feature, student. VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: $35 Features, $25 Student; $45 Features (late), $35 Student (late). Contact: Monika Skerbelis, Festival & Programming Director, PO Box 1981, Big Bear Lake, CA 92315-1981; (909) 866-3433; fax: (909) 866-3433; woodduck@pineknot.com; www.bigbearlakefilmfest.com

BOSTON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-17, MA. Deadline: May 15. Fest is a non-competitive event. Fest screen films & videos that highlight the Jewish experience; deal w/ themes of Jewish culture/heritage/history; or are of particular interest to the Jewish community. BJFF presents narrative, doc, animated & experimental works. Projects can be of any length. Films must not have previously screened in the Boston area. Founded: 1989. Cats: Feature, Experimental, Animation, doc. Formats: Beta SP, 1/2"", 35mm, 16mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Festival, 1001 Watertown Street, West Newton, MA, US 02465; (617) 244-9899; fax: (617) 244-9894; programming@bjff.org; www.bjff.org

BRAINWASH MOVIE FESTIVAL, July / August, CA. Deadline: May 1; May 10 (Final). Annual fest presents works from a nat'l selection of movie makers. Provides the opportunity to show "odd & obscure shorts, performance videos, works made for TV & out-of-genre efforts." Independent shorts & features from across the globe. Founded: 1995. Cats: TV, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, any style or genre. Awards: incl. in "Best of" collection for possible broadcast & small cash prizes. Formats: 16mm, VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (shorts, under 13 min.), $50 (features, under 130 min.) . Contact: Shelby Toland, Box 23302, Oakland, CA 94623-0302; (415) 273-1545; shelby@brainwashm.com; www.brainwash.com

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Sept. 12-15, CO. Deadline: Early deadlines: April 15 (scripts); May 15 (films). Final deadlines: May 10 (scripts); June 10 (films). Annual fest presents 4-day program of films, receptions, premieres, tributes, writers' seminars & film education activities, providing unique & varied film fare shown at venues throughout the community. Approx. 50 ind. U.S. & int'l films are presented from over 300 entries. Scripts should meet U.S. Motion Picture Industry standards & be 90-130 pgs in length. Founded: 1981. Cats: Feature, Children, Short, Script, doc. Awards: Best of Fest awarded to films in 5 cats: drama, comedy, doc, family/children & short. Annual screenplay competition will honor 1st place winners in adult drama, children/family, comedy & action/adventure cats. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (early); $45 (final); Student: $35 (early); $40 (final). Contact: Marty Ferris, Box 718, Riverwalk Center, 150 W. Adams, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (970) 453-6200; fax: (970) 453-2692; filmfest@brecknet.com; www.breckfilmfest.com

CALIFORNIA WORKS, Aug. 16-Sept. 2, CA. Deadline: May 31. Part of the California State Fair, seeks short films & videos under 5 min. Open to all media, California artist ONLY. Cats: short. Awards: Cash (totaling $14,500) plus special awards. Formats: 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $12. Contact: California works/California State Fair, Box 15649, Sacramento, CA 95852; (916) 263-3146; fax: 263-7903; entryoffice@calexpo.com; www.bigfun.org

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, August 17-23, IL. Deadline: May 1 (early); May 15 (final). Chicago's premiere independent film event, CUFF was created to promote films & videos that innovate in form, technique, or content & to present works that challenge & transcend commercial expectations. Also presents fest sponsored screenings through-out the year. Awards given in these cats.: narrative feature, narrative short, doc, experimental, animation, music video, audience choice & "made in Chicago." Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short, Animation. Awards: Cash prizes; choice awards. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, S-8, super 8, DVD, Video, Beta SP, Mini DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30; $35 (late). Contact: CUFF, 3109 North Western Ave, Chicago, IL, USA 60618; (773) 327-FILM; fax: 327-3464; info@cuff.org ; www.cuff.org

CRESTED BUTTE REEL FEST, August 14-18, CO. Deadline: Regular: March 22; Student: May 10. Competitive Festival is a competitive short film fest focusing on films under 40 min. & doc films under 60 min. The Festival is particularly interested in new works which are interpreted creatively, that have a clarity of vision & are of high production quality Founded: 1998. Cats: short, student, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: Gold winners in the five regular cats receive $350; Silver winners, $250; student awards, $200 (Gold) & $100 (Silver). Formats: 35mm, Beta, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. Entry Fee: $30 (student w/ proof of status); $35 (all other cats). Contact: Eney Jones, Exec. Dir., Box 1733, Crested Butte, CO 81224; (970) 349-2600; fax: 349-1384; cbreelfest@webcom.com; www.crestedbuttereelfest.com

DIGITAL UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, July , CA. Deadline: early June. The Fest, presented by the San Francisco Independent Film Festival, claims to be ground zero of the digital revolution. It celebrates digital media & video-produced features, shorts & documentaries. Founded: 2000. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Audience Award for best: Feature; Short; Doc. Formats: Beta SP, S-VHS, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Jeff Ross, c/o SF Indie Fest, 530 Divisadero St. #183, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 820-3907; info@sfindie.com; www.sfindie.com

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA, Nov. 7-14, CA. Deadline: June 7 (early); July 5 (final). FAF-sponsored, noncompetitive fest invites submissions of independent films & videos of any length, genre or subject by N. California media artists. Filmmakers residing outside of California may submit works under thirty min., as long as

Laissez les bon temps rouler!

The 14-year-old Louisiana Video Shorts Festival is a statewide competition that showcases the short (9 minutes or less) video work of media artists who are either from Louisiana, living in Louisiana, or attending school in Louisiana. Run by the New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC), the festival also features a noncompetitive division highlighting the best independently produced video from across the USA and around the world. Past venues have included Mardi Gras World, where works screened among the huge, surreal Mardi Gras parade floats, and at the church of St. Elizabeth, a former orphanage now owned by the renowned author Anne Rice. In 2001, the festival played to sold-out crowds at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. See listing.

he/she is a member of Film Arts Foundation. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 35mm, DV, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (early); $20 (final). Contact: Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: 552-0882; fest@filmarts.org; www.filmarts.org

FIRSTGLANCE: LOS ANGELES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Early Nov., CA. Deadline: June 15. Fest encourages both student & professional film & videomakers w/ all budgets. Festival's mission is to exhibit all genres of work (film, video & digital productions) from mainstream to controversial in a competitive casual atmosphere. "Shot in Philly" sidebar features any project shot in Philadelphia or w/ a director, producer, or actor born or educated in Philadelphia attached. Also incls. "Too Shorts" sidebar for films under 10 min.. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, doc, Mini doc (under 30 min), short (under 45 min), Short 2 (under 10 min), animation, experimental, student. Awards: Prizes incl. trip to L.A., fest tickets, fest t-shirt, "Best of Philly" prize package & prize money for student cat., movie gift certificate, entry into First Glance Philadelphia. Formats: DVD, DV, 8mm, super 8, DigiBeta, Beta SP, Beta, S-VHS, 1/2", 3/4", 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS (NTSC) & DVD. Entry Fee: $25 (students); $40 (professional). Contact: William Ostroff, Firstglance Films, Box 571105, Tarzana, CA 91356; (818) 464-3544; (215) 552-8566; wropro1@msn.com; www.newimaging.com

GREAT LAKES INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 5-8, PA. Deadline: May 15 (early); June 14 (Final). Annual Great Lakes Independent Film Festival will take place in the city of Erie, PA. Centrally located, Erie is only a short drive from the cities of Cleveland, Ohio, Buffalo, NY, & Pittsburgh, PA. The four day event will incl. celebrities, parties, film screenings, award ceremonies, industry professionals, & much more. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. Entry Fee: Early: $35 short, $45 feature; Final: $45 shorts, $55 Features. Contact: George Woods, 109 Erie Street. Suite 2, Edinboro, PA 16412; (814)734-6759; fax: (814)734-4893; fest@greatlakesfilmfest.com; www.greatlakesfilmfest.com

GUERRILLA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 22-29, NY. Deadline: May 31. The Guerilla Film & Video Festival, presented by Guerilla Filmmaker magazine, provides a forum for film & video produced on "guerilla schedules" for under $1 million. Founded: 2001. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta, DV, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (shorts); $35 (features). Contact: Festival, 7 Daze Media , PO Box 280223, Brooklyn, NY 11228; 718/621-9797; fax: 718/621-2121; kevin@7dazemedia.com; www.7dazemedia.com/Festival.html

HARDACRE FILM FESTIVAL, August 2-3, IA. Deadline: June 7. Fest recognizes excellence in independent cinema, w/ screenings at the art-deco Hardacre Theatre. Founded: 1997. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation, Experimental, Foreign, Student. Awards: Non-cash prizes: trophies, certificates. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (shorts under 60 min.); $25 (features). Contact: Festival, 1259 Quincy Ave, Tipton, IA 52772; (563) 886-2175; fax: 886-2213; director@hardacrefilmfest.com; www.hardacrefilmfest.com

HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-25, IN. Deadline: June 15. Fest seeks features & shorts that "explore the human journey by artistically expressing hope & respect for the positive values of life." Founded: 1991. Cats: doc, short, feature, animation, experimental, student, family, children, any style or genre. Awards: Prizes totaling $100,000; $50,000 grand prize for dramatic feature. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (under 50 min.); $55 (50 min. & up). Contact: Jeffrey L. Sparks, 200 S. Meridian, Ste. 220, Indianapolis, IN 46225; (317) 464-9405; fax: 464-9409; info@heartlandfilmfest.org; www.heartlandfilmfest.org

LABORFEST: INT'L WORKING CLASS FILM & VIDEO, July, CA. Deadline: May 31. LaborFest is now calling for videos for the annual event held in San Francisco. Fest organized to commemorate the 1934 San Francisco General Strike through cultural arts of working people. Videos & films can incl. union struggles, political struggles of labor, locally, nat'ly & int'ly. Works should explore the connections between labor & democracy, race, sex, environment, media, war & capitalist economy. Looking for works that challenge practically & ideologically the thinking of working people. Works will be shown throughout the month in S.F. English captions preferred. Open format incl. drama, animation & doc. Send video w/ bio & narrative summary. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, script, music video, student, youth media. Formats: 16mm, Beta, 1/2", 8mm, Hi8, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, Box 425584, San Francisco, CA, US 94142; (415) 282-1908; fax: 695-1369; lvpsf@labornet.org; www.laborfest.net

LOUISIANA VIDEO SHORTS FESTIVAL, August 24, LA. Deadline: May 31. Fest is open to all Louisiana residents, Louisiana natives living in other states & students attending schools/universities in Louisiana. Entries may originate in any format. Fest also incls. a special Youth category for ages 13-18. Founded: 1989. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, animation, short, music video, student, youth media, any style or genre. Awards: Gold, Silver & Bronze; Youth, Animation, Community Portrait & Music Video. Formats: S-VHS, 1/2", 3/4", Beta SP, DV, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15; $5 (ages 13-18). Contact: New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC), 4840 Banks St., New Orleans, LA 70119; (504) 486-9192; novac@neosoft.com; www.novacvideo.org

MADCAT WOMEN'S INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept., CA. Deadline: April 30; June 20 (late). MadCat showcases innovative & challenging works from around the globe. Fest features experimental, avant-garde & independent works by women of all lengths & genres. Works can be produced ANY year. It is the fest's goal to expand the notion of women's cinema beyond the limitations of films about traditional women's issues. Founded: 1996. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, Beta SP, 3/4". Preview on VHS(NTSC). Entry Fee: $10-$30 (sliding scale, pay what you can afford; int'l entrants disregard entry fee). Contact: Ariella Ben-Dov, 639 Steiner St. , San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 436-9523; fax: 934-0642; alionbear@earthlink.net; www.somaglow.com/madcat

MARGARET MEAD FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November 2-10, 2001, NY. Deadline: May 8. Premiere U.S. fest for int'l cultural documentaries, w/ no restrictions on subject, length, or yr. of production. 2001 wil be the 25th anniversary of the fest & highlights will incl. a classics section & possibly a focus on generations. Film & videomakers whose works are selected receive a pass to all fest events, limited financial assistance & housing. After the November event, a number of titles are selected for a traveling fest that tours nat'lly & int'lly. Founded: 1977. Cats: Short, doc, animation, experimental, student, youth media. Awards: no awards, some financial assistance & honorarium. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: , American Museum of Natural History, Dept. Education, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, NY 10024; (212) 769-5305; fax: 769-5329; meadfest@amnh.org; www.amnh.org/mead

MILL VALLEY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL , October 3-13, CA. Deadline: May 31 (early); June 30 (final). Invitational, noncompetitive fest screens films of all genres & lengths, & has become a premiere West Coast event, bringing new & innovative works to Northern California audiences. Official Premieres Selection highlights feature-length narrative & doc premieres. Seminars bring in a stellar lineup of filmmakers & industry professionals. Filmmakers, distributors, press & large local audience meet in "an atmosphere where professional relationships thrive." Around 100 programs of independent features, docs, shorts & video works are shown, as well as interactive exhibits, tributes, a children's filmfest, seminars & special events. Entries must have been completed w/ in previous 18 months; industrial, promotional or instructional works not appropriate; premieres & new works emphasized. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Interactive, Children, Animation, Experimental. Awards: Audience & Jury awards for shorts. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"", 1/2"", Beta SP, Multimedia, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $25 (final). Contact: Zoe Elton, 38 Miller Avenue, Ste 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256; fax: (415) 383-8606; info@finc.org; www.mvff.com

NCFR MEDIA AWARDS, November 19-24 (NCFR Conference), MN. Deadline: May 1. Nat'l Council on Media Relations sponsors an annual Media Awards Competition to recognize outstanding videos & CD-Roms on marriage & family topics.Their mission is to "evaluate quality & conceptual content, encourage excellence in production of themes relevant to family issues, promote the effective use of these resources & high standards in the development of creative learning opportunities, & disseminate media competition results to interested professionals." Check Website for details. Send Original Entry form & Check to NCFR Contact: Lynda Bessey, Competition Director, 3989 Central Ave. NE, #550, Minneapolis, MN 55421; 763-781-9331; fax: 763-781-9348; fvilla@pilot.msu.edu; www.ncfr.org

NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL, October 11-18, LA. Deadline: June 1 (regular), July 1 (late). Annual fest features premieres, classic film retros, panel discussions & gala events. Entries of all lengths & genres, incl. music videos, welcome. Entries must be completed after Jan. 1998. Top prize of $5,000 given to Judges' Award winner. Top films receive the LA Lumiere & LA Lagniappe. Founded: 1990. Cats: Any style or genre, Animation, Doc, Experimental, Short, Feature, Student, Music Video. Awards: Top prizes vary from yr. to year; past winners have received FinalDraft Pro software, cash prizes ($500-$1,500). Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8, 1/2" S-VHS, 35mm, super 8, Beta, 3/4" video, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (U.S)/$45 (int'l); $55 (late). Contact: Cinema 16, 843 Carodelet Street, #1,

New Orleans, LA 70130; (504) 523-5271; fax: (208) 975-3478; info@neworleansfilmfest.com; www.neworleansfilmfest.com

NEXTFRAME: UFVA'S TOURING FESTIVAL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FILM & VIDEO, Oct., PA. Deadline: March 31 (early); May 31 (Late). Fest was founded to survey & exhibit the very best in current student film & video worldwide. Emphasizes independence, creativity & new approaches to visual media. All entries must have been created by students enrolled in a college, univ., or graduate school at time of prod. & should have been completed no earlier than May of previous 2 yrs. All works prescreened by panel of film/videomakers; finalists sent to judges. About 30 works showcased each year. All works premiere at annual conference of Univ. Film & Video Assoc. (UFVA), in Aug. Year-long int'l tour of finalists begins after premiere. Tour travels to major universities & art centers across the U.S. & around the globe. Past int'l venues have incl. Chile, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, & Portugal. Founded: 1993. Cats: Doc, Experimental, Animation, Feature. Awards: Over $15,000 in prizes; 1st & 2nd place prizes awarded in each cat plus a Director's Choice Prize. Fest also holds a craft competition, incl. prizes for film editing, cinematography & screenwriting. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP (NTSC). Preview on VHS (PAL/SECAM okay for preview only). Entry Fee: $25; $20 (UFVA members & int'l entries). Early entries save $5. Contact: Festival, Dept. Film & Media Arts, Temple University 011-00, Philadelphia, PA 19122; 800-499-UFVA; (215) 923-3532; fax: (215) 204-6740; ufva@vm.temple.edu; www.temple.edu/nextframe

NORTH CAROLINA GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, August 9-12, NC. Deadline: May . Competitive fest aims to open up audiences to wide spectrum of films by &/or about gay/lesbian/bisexual/ transgender lives. Fest also has produced series of events leading up to the fest incl. series on early gay films ("The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly"). Fest accepts features, docs & shorts of any length, genre, or category. No restriction on film's yr. of completion. Cats: feature, doc, short. Alt contact: Jim Carl, Carolina Theater (919) 560-3040 x. 232; fax: 560-3065; Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Any style or genre. Awards: TBA. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15. Contact: Lawrence Ferber, Coordinator, 573 6th St. #1, Brooklyn, NY 11215; (212) 414-7654; fax: (212) 233-9299; NCGLFF@aol.com; www.carolinatheatre.org

PALM SPRINGS INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 6-12, CA. Deadline: June 10. Annual competitive fest is one of the world's largest presenter of short films, screening 250 films from 35 countries in pervious years. Fest accepts works no longer than 40 min. & completed in the last 2 years. Founded: 1995. Cats: doc, short, animation, experimental, family, children, student, live action. Awards: Cash prizes of $2,000 (1st) & $500 (2nd) in each cat. 1st place winner becomes eligible for Academy Award consideration. Best of the Fest, $2,000; Palm Springs Int'l Future Filmmakers Award $15,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (student); $35. Contact: Festival, 1700 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Ste. 3, Palm Springs, CA 92262; (760) 322-2930; fax: 322-4087; info@psfilmfest.org; www.psfilmfest.org

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RESFEST DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. - Dec., CA, WA, IL, NY. Deadline: May 3 (early); June 3 (final). Annual nat'l/int'l touring fest seeks short films/videos exploring the dynamic interplay of film, art, music & design. The Fest showcases the best of the year's shorts, features, music videos, & animation along w/ screenings, live music events, parties, panel discussions, & tech demos. The underlying guideline for submissions is Innovation. The previous years the fest toured 14 cities int'lly. Cats: Doc, Experimental, Feature, Animation, music video, short. Awards: Audience Choice Award w/ cash prizes. Formats: DV, Beta SP, 35mm, DigiBeta (preferred), Mini DV (NTSC). Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL), Beta SP (NTSC), Mini DV (NTSC). Entry Fee: $20 (early), $25 (final). Contact: RESFEST, 601 West 26th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10001; resfest@resfest.com; www.resfest.com

RHODE ISLAND INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 7-12, RI. Deadline: June 1. Fest takes place in historic Providence, RI & has become a showcase for int'l independent filmmakers & their work. Fest accepts shorts, features on film or video. Filmmakers may enter their films either in or out of competition. In previous years the fest has screened more than 40 world premieres & over 20 US premieres. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, experimental, animation, short, doc, Final Draft, Kodak Vision, Positive Lifestyle, Tourisme Quebec, Best Film, music video, student, children, family. Awards: All films will be eligible for Fest Favorites awards. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, 3/4", S-VHS, 1/2", DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40. Contact: George T. Marshall, Box 162, Newport, RI 02840; (401) 861-4445; fax: 847-7590; flicksart@aol.com; www.film-fest.org

SAN DIEGO FILM FESTIVAL, September 18-22, CA. Deadline: June 1; July 1 (late). San Diego's first & only competitive fest showcasing the best in American & Int'l narrative features, docs, & shorts. Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (features/docs); $25 (shorts); $45 (features late); $35 (shorts late). Contact: Robin Laatz, Executive Director, 7974 Mission Bonita Drive, San Diego, CA 92120; (619)582-2368; fax: 286-8324; info@sdff.org; www.sdff.org

SUPER 8 SIDESHOW, August, CO. Deadline: June 30. Fest seeks short films & videos that were shot predominantly on Super 8 film. Annual fest is looking for any & all work—narrative or otherwise. Entries must be on tape & must not exceed 15 min. Cats: doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: incl. cash, film stock & supplies. Formats: super 8, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS or mini-DV. Entry Fee: $15 (for one entry), $2 (each additional entry). Contact: Attn: Johnny/Trish, c/o Brainbox, 145 W. 67th St. Apt 4C, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-0990; tivie6@yahoo.com; www.thebrainbox.org

TAHOE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, September 26-30, CA. Deadline: May 3(early); May 31 (final). Fest accepts fictional & doc narratives of all lengths shot on film, video, digital or animated mediums encompassing all genre. Non competitive. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (shorts, under 30 min.); $35 (shorts over 30 min.); $45 (features); $10 off for students; Fees double between the early & final deadline. Contact: Festival, Box 7588 , Tahoe City, CA 96145; 530-583-3024; fax: 581-5474; info@tahoefilmfest.org; www.tahoefilmfest.org

TUBE FILM FESTIVAL, August 20 & 21, CA. Deadline: June 15. In conjunction w/ the X Games in San Francisco, this is a sports film/video fest soliciting worldwide submissions. Filmmakers are asked to submit a short trailer for their film, which may then be posted on EXPN.com. Web site visitors will be able to view the trailers & vote for their favorite films - the top selections being among those screened at the Tube Film Festival. Films must not exceed 30 min. Trailers must not exceed 2 min. Founded: 2000. Cats: doc, animation, experimental, short, action sports. Awards: Audience Award to favorite film, Jury Awards to Best Animation, Best Overall, & Best Highlight Films. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Ken Karn, c/o Outland Films, 2378 Fairglen Drive, San Jose, CA, USA 95125; (408) 266-0242; fax: 445-1335; chilek@aol.com; www.expn.go.com

UNITED NATIONS FILM FESTIVAl, Oct. 24-27, CA. Deadline: June 10. Int'l film fest, held at Stanford Univ., showcases doc films & videos dealing w/ UN-related issues: human rights, environmental survival, war & peace, etc. All genres & lengths eligible. Founded: 1998. Cats: any style or genre, doc, feature, short. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", 35mm, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (up to 30 min.); $35 (longer than 30 min.). Contact: Jasmina Bojic, Stanford Univ., Main Quad Bldg. 40, Stanford, CA 94305; (650) 725-0012; fax: 725-0011; info@unaff.org; www.unaff.org

URBANWORLD, August 7-11, NY. Deadline: June 1. Competitive Black, Latino, & Asian fest showcases features, shorts, docs & animation, as well as a screenplay competition. If director is Black, Latino, or Asian, film may be of any subject matter. Otherwise films must feature Blacks, Latinos, or Asians in prominent roles. Films must have been completed after Jan. 1 of the prior year. Non-English films must be subtitled. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, short, doc, script. Awards: Audience Award; Grand Jury Awards for Best Feature, Short, Doc, Screenplay, & Director. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $40 (screenplay entries). Contact: Film Submissions, 375 Greenwich St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 501-9668; fax: (212) 941-3849; contact_us@urbanworld.com; www.urbanworld.com

WEEKLY ALIBI SHORT FILM FIESTA, July 12-13, NM. Deadline: June 1. Films must be under 25 min. in length. Cats: Any style or genre, Short. Formats: Any, 8mm, super 8, 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", Hi8, 70mm, 3/4", S-VHS, Beta SP, Beta, DigiBeta, DV, U-matic, CD-ROM, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 handling fee if out of state. Contact: Devin D. O'Leary, 2118 Central SE PMB 151, Albequerque, NM 87106; 505-346-0660 ext. 230; fax: 505-256-9651; devin@alibi.com; www.alibi.com/filmfest

WORLD POPULATION FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, September, MA. Deadline: June 15. Secondary & college students eligible to submit works that address population growth, resource consumption, environment & common global future. Cats: drama,image/montage;docs of any length accepted in film, video & multimedia. Founded: 1995. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Animation, Short, Multimedia, Student, music video, youth media. Awards: Total of $10,000 in prizes awarded to best entries in secondary & college cats. "Best of Fest" VHS tapes made avail. to secondary schools & colleges & may be broadcast on MTV, Turner & PBS. . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Multimedia, Beta, DV, U-matic, Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Rawn Fulton, Executive Director, 46 Fox Hill Rd., Bernardston, MA 01337; (800) 638-9464; fax: (413) 648-9204; info@wpfvf.com; www.wpfvf.com

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, OR. Deadline: mid-May . Young People's Film & Video Festival is an annual juried survey of outstanding work by grade & high school students from the Northwest (OR, WA, ID, MT, UT, AK). A jury reviews entries & assembles a program for public presentation. Judges' Certificates are awarded. About 20 films & videos are selected each year. Entries must have been made w/in previous 2 yrs. Founded: 1975. Cats: Student, any style or genre. Awards: Judges Certificates awarded. . Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4"", 1/2"", Hi8, CD-ROM, S-VHS, super 8, . Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Kristin Konsterlie, Festival Coordinator, Northwest Film Center , 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: (503) 294-0874; kristin@nwfilm.org; www.nwfilm.org

ZEITGEIST INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 14 / August 11, CA. Deadline: June 7. ZIFF is an irreverent film/video fest, held in San Francisco in the backyard of the Zeitgeist Bar (seats 300). Works can be in any category/genre "that can hold the attention of the average bar patron". Cats: short (15 min or less), . Awards: none. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: B Berzins, 199 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 786-9967; ikooking@yahoo.com; www.overcookedcinema.com

Foreign

ANTIMATTER: FESTIVAL OF UNDERGROUND SHORT FILM & VIDEO, Sept. 20-28, Canada. Deadline: May 3 (early); June 7 (late). Annual fest, produced by Rogue Art, seeks imaginative, volatile, entertaining & critical works which exist outside mainstream, regardless of subversive or dangerous nature of their content, stylistic concerns, or commercial viability. Fest is anti-Hollywood & anti-censorship & dedicated to film & video as art. Selected works will be included in a three-city int'l tour. Industrial, commercial & studio products ineligible. Films must be under 30 min. & produced w/in last two years. Founded: 1998. Cats: any style or genre, short. Formats: 1/2"", 16mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (early); $15 (late). Contact: Todd Eacrett, Director, Studio F, 1322, Broad St., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W-2A9; (250) 385-3327; fax: (250) 385-3327; rogueart@island.com; www.antimatter.ws

ATLANTIC FILM FESTIVAL. Sept. 13-21, Canada. Deadline: June 1. A nine-day celebration of film & video from Canada & around the world. In 2000, the fest presented over 170 films w/ record attendence figures. The Festival showcases five main programming streams: Atlantic Focus, Canadian Perspective, Int'l Perspective, Late shift, & Frame by Frame. Founded: 1981. Cats: Any style or genre, Children, feature, doc, short, animation, TV. Awards: Cash prizes . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: $25 . Contact: Lia Rinaldo, Festival Director, Box 36139, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 3S9; (902) 422-3456; fax: (902) 422-4006; fest@atlanticfilm.com; www.atlanticfilm.com

AVIGNON FILM FESTIVAL-FRANCE (RENCONTRES CINEMATOGRAPHIQUES EURO-AMERICAINES), June 22-27, France. Deadline: May 18. Celebrates European & American independent film w/ new films, retros, roundtables on pertinent issues, interviews w/ filmmakers & daily receptions. Accepts narrative features & short films as well as feature-length documentaries in English & other European languages. French films must be subtitled in English. Non-French-language films must be subtitled in French. Founded: 1984. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short. Awards: "Tournage Awards" for best three features & best three shorts, as well as "Kodak Vision Award" for best cinematography. Also "SACD Screenwriting Prizes" to 2 writers. Decided by intl. jury.. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: 150 FF. Contact: Jerome Henry Rudes, 10, montee de la Tour, , Villeneuve-les-Avignon, France 30400; 011 33 4 90 25 93 23; fax: 011 33 4 90 25 93 24; jhr2001@aol.com; www.avignonfilmfest.com

CARROUSEL INT'L DU FILM DE RIMOUSKI, Sept. 20-27, Canada. Deadline: May 16. Annual fest aims to promote cinema for young people though animation, introductory & learning activities, film screenings & exchanges among the various int'l players in the film industry. Films must not have commercial distribution in Canada & not screened at any other Quebec fest. Films must be dubbed in French or in its original version w/out subtitles & accompanied by the written texts of dialogue & narration in French or English. Founded: 1982. Cats: long & short (competition), long & short (info), retro &/or tribute. Awards: Best long film, short film, actor, actress; Humanitas award & public award. Jury members are 14-17 yrs old & from various countries. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 3/4"". Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, 10 est rue de l'Evanché CP 1462, Rimouski, Quebec, Canada G5L 8M3 G5L 8M3; (413) 722-0103; fax: 724-9504; cifr@carrousel.qc.ca; www.carrousel.qc.ca/car00001.htm

FAIRY TALES GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, June 14-15, Canada. Deadline: May 1. Fairy Tales, the annual queer film & video fest is presented by The Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers (CSIF) & the Gay & Lesbian Community Services Association (GLCSA). The fest's mandate is to showcase independent films made by gay/les/bi filmmakers, & to provide a venue for filmmakers & members of the queer community to celebrate their diversity. Presented during Calgary's Pride Week, Fairy Tales 3 is home to a whole new set of provocative, humorous, dramatic, & all-around-gay filmmaking. Founded: 1999. Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, Box 23177, Connaught PO, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T2S 3B1; 403-205-4747; fax: 237-4848; fairytales@csif.org; www.csif.org/fairytales

FANTASY FILMFEST, July 24-August 21, Germany. Deadline: May 31. Annual fest is held in six German cities (Frankfurt, Cologne. Munich, Berlin, Stuttgart, Hamburg) celebrating the following genres: science fiction, horror, thriller & killer, animation, fantasy & action adventure. Film must be German premieres Founded: 1987. Cats: feature, short, animation. Awards: none.. Formats: 35mm. Preview on VHS/DVD. Entry Fee: No entry fee; $25 (for return of tape). Contact: Schorsch Muller, Rosebud Entertainment, Veranstaltungs + Medien GMBH, Fregestr. 36, Berlin, Germany 12161 ; 011 49 30 861 45 32; fax: 49 30 861 45 39; rosebud_entertainment@t-online.de; www.fantasyfilmfest.com

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FEMINALE INT'L WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, October, Germany. Deadline: June. Feminale is a biannual int'l women's film fest. All films/videos should be directed by women. All lengths & genres accepted. Founded: 1984. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Feminale Debut Award for Best Debut Feature Film. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Carla Despineux, Maybachstr. 111, 1. Stock, Koln/Cologne, Germany 50670; 0221 13 00 225; fax: 0221 13 00 281; info@feminale.de; www.feminale.de/english.htm

FESTIVAL INT'L NOUVEAU CINEMA ET NOUVEAU MEDIA DE MONTREAl, Oct. 10-20, Canada. Deadline: June 1. Recognized for its bold, eclectic programming, the Montreal Int'l Festival of New Cinema & New Media is a multidisciplinary happening that fuses mediums & genres. In keeping w/ its aim of promoting cinema d'auteur, independent video, & creativity in new media, the FCMM is constantly on the lookout for new & original works. Innovation & exploration are the guiding principles of the FCMM's programming, which is divided into five main cats: feature film & video, doc, short & medium-length work, performance, & digital work. Founded: 1971. Cats: experimental, animation, feature, doc, short. Awards: Festival is non-competitive, but prizes in cash will be awarded by the public & the press for selected films section.. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, CD-ROM, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 US. Contact: Festival, 3530, Blv. Saint Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2V1; (514) 847-9272; fax: (514) 847-0732; montrealfest@fcmm.com; www.fcmm.com

GIFFONI FILM FESTIVAL, July 20-27, Italy. Deadline: June 5. Annual fest showcases "film & short films of high artistic & technical value linked to the problems of the pre-adolescent world." Three competitions are held w/ one non-competitive cat (Y Generation 15-19 years). Cats: feature, youth media, short, any style or genre. Awards: Gold, Silver & Bronze Gryphon. Formats: 35mm, 1/2"" (shorts), Beta(shorts). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: c/o Cittadella del cinema, Via Aldo Moro, Giffoni Valle Piana, Salerno, Italy 84095; 011 390 89 868 544; fax: 390 89 866 111; giffonif@giffoniff.it; www.giffoniff.it

GUERNSEY LILY INT'L AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 4-6, United Kingdom. Deadline: May 31. Fest seeks amateur film & videos "made for love, w/ no financial reward & w/out professional assistance other than processing, copying, or sound transfer." Works must be 30 min. or less. Cats: short. Awards: The winners of the following amateur cats receive awards: Photography, Editing, Use of sound, Script, Fiction, Youth Entry, Animation, Doc, Acting Performance, Comedy. The Best Film in the Festival receives a special award & there are five runners up. The Open Section awards for First, Second, & Third places. Formats: super 8, 8mm, 16mm, S-VHS, 1/2"" (PAL), DV, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: 7 pounds. Contact: Joan M. Ozanne, La Geniesse, , Forest, Guernsey, United Kingdom GY8 OAQ; 011 44 1481-238-147; fax: 011 44 1481-235-989; landjoz@guernsey.net

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE, July 8-19, Uruguay. Deadline: May 3. Annual fest presents overview of new films for children & adolescents, facilitates access to best & most diverse material created today & encourages distribution of new films for children. Cats: Children, Animation, Feature, Short, family, TV. Awards: Prizes for fiction, animation, doc; UNESCO prize to director of best Latin American or Caribbean film or video; Guri prize for best of fest; UNICEF prize to best film/video promoting children's rights; OCIC prize to best film/video enhancing human values, & Children's Jury award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"", 1/2"", Beta SP. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Richard Casas, Cinemateca Uruguaya, Lorenzo Carnelli 1311, Montevideo, Uruguay 11200 ; fax: 011 598 409 4572;cinemuy@chasque.apc.org; www.cinemateca.org.uy

INVIDEO, November 6-10, Italy. Deadline: May 31. Entry Fee: No entry Fee. Contact: A.I.A.C.E./INVIDEO, Via Piolti de Bianchi 19, Milano, Italy 20129; 011 39 2 76115394; fax: 011 39 2 75280119; info@mostrainvideo.com; www.mostrainvideo.com

KINOFILM/MANCHESTER INT'L SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct 21-27, England. Deadline: June 1; June 16(by arrangement only!). Entry is open to anyone in the film making community incl. first time film makers. Categories include: Digital Media, Super 8, No/Low budget, Women in Film, Lesbian & Gay, Artists' Film & Video/New Media, Experimental & Animation, Underground Cinema. Founded: 1993. Cats: Short, Animation, Experimental, music video, student, children. Awards: Eight competitive cats, w/ awards for Best British, Int'l, Animation, Low Budget, Student, Experimental, Editing, Festival Innovation & Screenplay. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, super 8, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: 5 pounds UK (5 Euros or US $10). Contact: John Wojowski, Fest Dir, 42 Edge St., Manchester, England M4 1HN; 011 44 (0) 161 288 2494; fax: 011 44 161 281 1374; kino.info@good.co.uk; www.kinofilm.org.uk

LES ECRANS DE L'AVENTURE/INT'L FEST. OF ADVENTURE FILM, Late October, France. Deadline: Mid-June. Held in Dijon, fest is a showcase for recent adventure-themed docs. Awards: Toison d'Or for the Best Adventure Film, Jean-Marc Boivin Prize for genuineness & ethical dimension of adventure, Young Director Award, Children's Prize. Cats: doc, children. Formats: Beta SP (PAL), 16mm. Preview on VHS (PAL, Secam); 3/4 (Pal, Secam, NTSC). Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Cléo Poussier, Guilde Européenne du Raid, 11 rue de Vaugirard , Paris, France 75006 ; 011 33 1 43 26 97 52; fax: 33 1 46 34 75 45; aventure@la-guilde.org

MIFED, November 3-7, Italy. Deadline: June 22. This annual event is one of the biggest int'l markets for TV & films. Over 80 countries, 2/3 of participants are prods. & distr. 27 film theaters, all w/ Dolby, more than 9,0"00 square mt. exhib & booth space. Facilities incl. commercial office space. After June 22 office space is subject to availability. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Varies.. Contact: MIFED, Foro Buonaparte, 65, Milan 20121, Italy ; 011 39 02 3030211; fax: 011 39 02 89011578; mifed@rassegne.it; www.fmd.it/mifed

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 22-Sept. 2, Canada. Deadline: May 27-June 21 (shorts); June3-July 15 (Features). Only competitive fest in N. America recognized by FIAPF. Founded in '77, large & int'ly known fest boasts audiences of over 400,000 & programs hundreds of films. 11 cats: Official Competition (features & shorts); World Greats (noncompetitive); Focus on One Country's Cinema; Latin American Cinema; World Cinema: Reflections of Our Time; Cinema of Tomorrow: New Trends; Panorama Canada; Films for TV;African Horizons; Ultimate IMAX; Tributes. Features in competition must be 70mm or 35mm, prod in 12 months preceding fest, not released commercially outside of country of origin & not entered in any competitive int'l film fest (unreleased films given priority). Shorts must be 70mm or 35mm & must not exceed 15 min. Cats: feature, short, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"", 70mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Serge Losique, Fest Dir., 1432 de Bleury St., Montreal , Quebec, Canada H3A 2J1; (514) 848-3883; 848-9933; fax: 848-3886; info@ffm-montreal.org; www.ffm-montreal.org

SAO PAOLO INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 22-31, Brazil. Deadline: May 30. With a cultural & noncompetitive section, the fest is the leading event for the short format in Latin America. Its aims are to exhibit short films produced in Brazil, Latin American films as well as int'l films that may contribute to the development of the short film concerning its language specific shape & way of production. Festival features: Brazilian Panorama, Latin American & Int'l Showcase sections. Entries should have a maximum running time of 35 min. All genres accepted. Film must have been produced in 2001/2. Founded: 1990. Cats: short. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Zita Carvalhosa, Festival Director, Associacao Cultural Kinoforum, Rua Simao Alvarez, 784/2, Sao Paulo-SP, Brazil 05417.020; 011 55 11 3034-5538; fax: 011 55 11 33815-9474; spshort@kinoforum.org; www.kinoforum.org

ST. JOHN'S INT'L WOMEN'S FILM & VIDEO FEST, October 16-20, Canada. Deadline: May 31. Festival seeks films & videos made by women. Founded: 1989. Cats: Experimental, Animation, Feature, Doc. Awards: Non-competitive. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2"". VHS. Entry Fee: $15 US. Contact: Program Committee, PO Box 984, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1C6C2; 709-754-3141; fax: 709-754-3143; fimfest@thezone.net; www.womensfilmfest.com

VERZAUBERT INT'L QUEER FILM FESTIVAL, November 21-December 12, Germany. Deadline: May 31. One of Europe's most successful queer fests, Verzaubert is held in five German cities (Frankfurt, Cologne, Munich, Berlin, & Hamburg) & accepts features & shorts by & about gay, lesbian, & transgender people. Film must be German premieres. Founded: 1991. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, TV. Awards: Rosebud Audience Awards: feature endowed w/ 5,000 E; short endowed w/ 1,000 E. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 16mm. Preview on VHS/DVD. Entry Fee: No entry fee; $25 (for return of tape). Contact: Schorsch Muller, Rosebud Entertainment, Veranstaltungs + Medien GMBH, Fregestr. 36, Berlin, Germany 12161; 011 49 30 861 45 32; fax: 49 30 861 45 39; rosebud_entertainment@t-online.de; www.queer-view.com/verzaubert

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Competitions

BIJOU MATINEE: Is a showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35 leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat at 2:30 PM. Submissions should be 25 min. or less. VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY, 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com

CINEMARENO: A year-round festival of films. Monthly screenings showcase new independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: $20. Contact: CINEMARENO, P.O. Box 5372, Reno NV 89513, e-mail: cinemareno@excite.com. Entry form and guidelines at www.cinemareno.org

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: To bridge gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: first place $1,500; second place $1,000; third place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax: 475-0193; awards@Hollywoodawards.com; www.Hollywoodawards.com

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA: Located in Madison, WI Electric Eye is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits redistributed from screenings back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30-90 minute works that are creative, witty or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts - 10 minutes or less - any genre to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; for more information go to www.prolefeedstudios.com

FILM IN ARIZONA SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Sixth year. To promote screenplays to film exec. that take place in Arizona. Nat'l competition for original feature-length screenplays (90 min., 120 max. pgs). Industry standard format req'd. Awards: $1,000 Cox Communications Award, guaranteed industry meetings, hotel accommodations, rental car, pro script notes; all finalists flown to LA for awards breakfast and will receive Scriptware software along with free exposure on Writers Script Network. Entry fees & deadlines: $30 (by April 13, 2002), $40 (by May 15). Wendy Carroll, "Film In Arizona" Screenwriting Competition, 3800 N. Central Ave., Bldg. D, Phoenix, AZ 85012; (602) 280-1380; hotline: 280-1384; wendy@azcommerce.com; www.azmmerce.com/azfilmcommission.ht

FLICKER FILM FESTIVAL: A bi-monthly super 8 and 16mm show which features 12-16 new short films by local filmmakers at the Knitting Factory. Film grants, super 8 stock and $50 worth of super 8 processing are also raffled off at the show. www.flickernyc.com

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: To provide new valuable outlets for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, btwn 90 & 130 pages. Rules & Requirement in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script log-lines sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies by Writers Script Network for 6 months. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Winner's diploma posted on HSI website for 1 month. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; (800)-SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com

OHIO INDEPENDENT SCREENPLAY AWARDS: Call for entries for Screenplay Awards. All genres accepted. Winners receive cash, screenplay reading at the Ohio Independent Film Festival in Nov., subscription to SCR(i)PT magazine. Deadline (postmarked by June 1, 2002) late entry fee (postmarked by July 1, 2002). Contact: Ohio Independent Screenplay Awards (216) 651-7315; OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com for screenplay entry information.

THE ANNUAL IDA AWARDS COMPETITION: Sponsored by Eastman Kodak, the IDA Awards recognize & honor distinguished achievement in nonfiction film & video. Winners honored at the Awards Gala on Dec. 13, 2002. The IDA screens the winning films at DocuFest on Dec. 14, 2002. Early Bird Deadline with discount May17. Final Deadline June 30. Entry forms available at www.documentary.org beginning March 15 or contact IDA at (213) 534-3600 x7446 or idaawards@documentary.orG

WRITER'S FILM PROJECT: Sponsored by Paramount Pictures, the WFP offers fiction, theatre & film writers the opportunity to begin a career in screenwriting. Up to five writers will be chosen to participate & each will receive a $20,000 stipend to cover his or her living expenses. Deadline is May 15, 2002. Applications must be sent by mail only. Contact: Chesterfield WFP. 1158 26th St., P.O. Box 544, Santa Monica, CA 90403; 213-683-3977; www.chesterfield-co.com

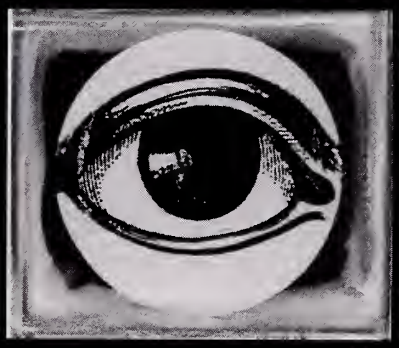
Films • Tapes Wanted

DUTV: A progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia, seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & 3/4" accepted for possible cablecast & webcast. VHS for preview. Contact: Debbie Rudman, DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St., Bldg 9B, Rm 4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.dutv.org

JUPITER OUTDOOR CINEMA: Located in downtown Berkeley, CA, is seeking independent film, video, and animation for upcoming fall season. All genres, lengths, and categories accepted. Selected works will be featured in Jupiter Outdoor Cinema's weekly program which is promoted, listed, and reviewed in local print. Great opportunity for artists to gain exposure and promote material. Submit on VHS or DVD. Include bio, artist statement, still photos, and other promotional material. Submissions not returned. No submission fee. Send to Jupiter, c/o Michael Addicott, 2181 Shattuck Ave, Berkely, CA 94704. Contact: Michael Addicott, (510) 652-0564; adone@pacbell.net.

MAKOR: Continues its on-going Reel Jews Film Series that showcases the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs and/or works-in-progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration and network building. For more info, call Ken Sherman at (212) 601-1021 or e-mail me at kensherman@makor.org. PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals from programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS Web page from content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Senior Director, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295. Email: cjones@pbs.org. Web: www.pbs.org/producers/ .

QUEER PUBLIC ACCESS TV PRODUCERS: Seek public access show tapes by/for/about gay, lesbian, bi, drag, trans subjects, for inclusion in academic press book on queer community programming. All program genres welcome. Incl. info about your program's history & distribution. Send VHS tapes to: Eric Freedman, Asst. Professor, Comm. Dept., Florida Atlantic Univ., 777 Glades Rd., Boca Raton, FL 33431; (561) 297-2534; efreedma@fau.edu



Eye On America

Electric Eye Cinema, the brainchild of Brian Standing, documentary filmmaker and architect of the film co-operative Prolefeed Studios, is a monthly film series operating out of the Electric Eye Café in Madison, Wisconsin. Continuing in the vein of Prolefeed's punk rock attitude, Electric Eye features independent documentaries and shorts that are witty, creative, and politically astute. See listing.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: Is a quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are sought. Incl. synopsis of work, artist's bio & contract info. Deadline ongoing. Tapes are unable to be returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Is looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature length non-fiction productions in all areas of the special interest or instructional fields, cutting edge documentaries and children and family programming. Also seeking feature length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural themes products wanted, both fiction and non fiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; (315) 454-5608; email: webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a non-profit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, please visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

THE VIDEO PROJECT: A leading educational distributor of videos, seeks environment and educational films and videos to aggressively market to the educational market. Contact us with finished projects or rough cuts. The Video Project, 45 Lusk Alley, San Francisco, CA, 94107. www.videoproject.net; video@videoproject.net

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL: One of the oldest alternative media organizations in U.S., is seeking film & video submissions of short & feature length docs, narratives, experimental & other works attentive to intersections of race, class & gender. Projects that address other issues of political & social interest also welcome. Formats: 1/2" VHS tapes. Send submissions, synopsis of the film & director's bio to: Third World Newsreel, Attn: Sherae Rimpsey, 545 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10018; (212) 947-9277; fax: 594-6417; twn@twn.org; www.twn.org

THE SHORT LIST: The showcase int'l short films, airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc; contact: fax (619) 462-8266 or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu

UNQUOTE TV: Weekly nonprofit program dedicated to exposing innovative work of all genres. Not cablecast nationally. Unquote is now in its 12th year. Send to: Unquote TV c/o DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St. 9B/4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.dutv.org

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting edge television station from Nantucket Island Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to: Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

WORKSCREENING/WORKS PRODUCTIONS: Is currently accepting submissions of feature and short documentaries and fiction films for programming of it's upcoming inagural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include a SASE. contact: Julian Rad, Works Productions/WorkScreening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com

YELLOW HOOK CINEMAFEST: Ongoing film series seeks submissions from local filmmakers. 45 min. and under for weekly screenings. Please send VHS only with contact info to Kevin Kash c/o Three Jolly Pigeons, 6802 3rd Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11220.

Publications

INDEPENDENT PRESS ASSOCIATION: Find an independent audience! IPA's Annotations: A Guide To The Independent Press gives you the name & number of the editor you need. For just $10.00 (plus $3.05 S&H) Annotations: A Guide To The Independent Press can open up a world of contacts. Also available: Many Voices, One City: The IPA Guide to the Ethnic Press of New York City ($17 plus $3.05 S&H). For order send check to: IPA, 2729 Mission St., #201, San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 634-4401; www.indypress.org

LE BOOK 2002 EDITION: The international reference for fashion, photography, graphic design and production. Contains thousands of images that give a complete overview of all the latest creative trends. Provides easy access to all businesses with a listing of over 50,000 names, addresses and phone numbers. To find out more call (212) 334-5252 or lebookny@lebook.com, www.lebook.com.

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: Is a new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. Sanctuary is devoted exclusively to creative work --thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplay for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

Resources • Funds

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS: Provide grants to support educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and pre-production is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact: Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202-4921; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis/

COMPOSER CONTACT ON-LINE CATALOGUE: Harvestworks Digital Media Center presents interactive database to learn more about composers who can be commissioned to write & record compositions for various projects. MP3 samples & biographical info can be accessed. Contact: cc@harvestworks.org; www.harvestworks.org

DIGITAL MEDIA TRAINING SERIES: DMTS is a video & DVD-based training series for film, television & web developers. The series provides high-end training tools that improve productivity & creativity for the end-user. DMTS training episodes feature the latest topics & technology, giving viewers access to working professionals & experts that they would not have in a traditional classroom setting, at a fraction of the cost. Contact: Rafael, (877) 606-5012; info@magnetmediafilms.com; www.digitalmediatraining.com

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in Richmond, VA & Austin, TX offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super-8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Auston, TX, 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com

FUNDING AVAILABLE: Private individual willing to participate financially in production of low-budget independent films. Send informal outline of project with emphasis on script. Filmmakers will be contacted via snail mail, email, or telephone. Contact: Indies, 1923 35th Pl., N.W. Apt. #1, Washington, D.C. 20007.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the Foundation's 2 major programs (Human & Community Development; Global Security & Sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact: John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org

LOW COST SOUNDTRACK SONGS: I have pro and indy film song credits. Professionally produced punk, rocl, pop, alternative, dance, love songs. Road Rash Music (ASCAP publisher) e-mail jwall@cox.rr.com

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Summer seminars & institutes for college & univ. teachers. Seminars incl. 15 participants working in collaboration w/ 1 or 2 leading scholars. Institutes provide intensive collaborative study of texts, historical periods & ideas for teachers of undergrad humanities. Info & appl. materials are avail. from project directors. Contact: (202) 606-8463; sem-inst@neh.gov; www.neh.gov

OPEN DOOR COMPLETION FUND: Funding is available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants with public TV projects in final post-production phase. Full-length rough cut must be submitted. Awards average $20,000 & NAATA funds must be the last monies needed to finish project. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Review process takes approximately 1-3 months. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428; mediafind@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA: New filmmaker grant equip. program offers access to professional 16mm camera system for first serious new productions in dramatic, doc, experimental, or narrative form. Purely commercial projects not considered. Provides camera on year-round basis. No appl. deadline, but allow 10 week minimum for processing. Contact: Film Grant, Oppenheimer Camera, 666 S. Plummer St., Seattle, WA 98134; (206) 467-8666; fax: 467-9165; marty@oppenheimer-camera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com

PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA: Solicits projects addressing critical social & political issues w/ goal of creating social change. Funding for radio projects in all stages of production; film & video projects in preproduction or distribution stages only. Grants range from $3,000-$8,000. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Trinh Duong, The Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

PORTLAND, OREGON FILMMAKING GRANTS: Digital Media Education Center of Portland, OR is announcing an open call for submissions for Avid Film Camp program. AFC affords a boost to indie feature directors looking to complete their films, while offering Avid-authorized training to career editors. Films will also receive free Pro Tools audio finishing & Avid Symphony Online editing. Submissions need to be feature-length projects w/ shooting completed. Projects accepted on a rolling basis. Contact: Deborah Cravey, Digital Media Education Center, 5201 SW Westgate Dr., Ste. 111, Portland, OR 97221; (503) 297-2324; deb@filmcamp.com; www.filmcamp.com

TEXAS FILMMAKERS' PRODUCTION FUND: Is an annual grant awarded to emerging film & video artists who are residents of Texas. Grants range from $1,000 to $5,000 for regionally produced projects for any genre. In Sept. the Fund will award $50,000 in grants ranging from $1,000-$5,000. Deadline: July 1. Appl. avail. at Texas Filmmakers' Production Funds, 1901 East 51st St., Austin, TX 78723; (512) 322-0145 or www.austinfilm.org

THOUSAND WORDS FINISHING FUND: Considers projects by first or second time feature filmmakers looking to create intelligent, innovative, and challenging films. The $500,000 fund is available in varied amounts for editing, sound mixing, music rights, and other post-production costs. Selected films will also receive assistance in film festival planning and distribution. Narratives, animation and works-in-progress may be submitted. Application forms can be downloaded at Thousand Words' website: www.thousand-words.com. Contact: finishingfund@thousand-words.com or Thousand Words, 9100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 404E, Los Angeles, CA 90212. (310) 859-8330, fax, (310) 859-8333.

Find just what you need to know!

AIVF members can search all current notices with the AIVF interactive resource directory at www.aivf.org/listings

C&S
www.documentary-insurance.com
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International Insurance Brokers, Inc.
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DIGIBETA/BETA/DVCAM DECKS/EDIT SYSTEMS/CAMERAS FOR RENT: I deliver! Digibeta and Beta-SP decks by day/week/month. Also, Uncompressed Avid Suite, Final Cut, DV Cam decks and cameras, mics, lights, etc. Production Central (212) 631-0435.

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HEY FELLOW INDEPENDENTS! Looking for equipment to rent? We have a complete list of cameras, lights, mics and editing equipment. We'll rent you something as small as a battery or install an entire Avid system in your apartment. Our prices are competitive and our attitude is even better. If you don't know what camera to shoot with or deck to edit with feel free to call. For a complete list go to www.ProductionJunction.com. For questions email info@ProductionJunction.com or phone (212) 769-8927. Also, check out our ads in the Freelance and Post-Production sections of the classifieds.

KEEP IT DIGITAL! Digibeta deck for rent (Sony A-500) by day, week, month. Also dubs from Digibeta to Beta-SP, VHS, DVCam, mini-DV, etc. Uncompressed Avid suite, too. Production Central (212) 631-0435.

MOST COMPLETE SUPER 16MM camera package in U.S. We pay roundtrip next day shipping anywhere. You quote us a price. Support, no extra charge. You won't believe it, check it out. (312) 505-3456; www.zacutorentals.com.

WANTED: STOCK FOOTAGE SUBMISSIONS. Buyout Footage.com is currently seeking submissions for film, video and motion graphics. Please see our web site for details. http://www.buyoutfootage.com.

Distribution

#1 AWARD-WINNING DISTRIBUTOR AND PRODUCER, seeks new programs on healthcare, end-of-life, disabilities, mental health & caregiving, by independent producers. Our producers and their films receive the attention they deserve! Contact us at (888) 440-2963, leslie@aquariusproductions.com, or send a preview copy to: 5 Powderhouse Lane, Sherborn, MA 01701. www.aquariusproductions.com.

19 YEARS AS AN INDUSTRY LEADER! Representing outstanding video on healthcare, mental health, disabilities & related issues; which win Oscars, Emmys, Duponts, Freddies & more. Join us! Fanlight Productions: (800) 937-4113; www.fanlight.com.

EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS VIDEOS on guidance issues such as violence, drug prevention, mentoring, children's health & parenting for exclusive distribution. Our marketing gives unequaled results! Call Sally Germain at The Bureau for At-Risk Youth: (800) 99-YOUTH x. 210.

HAVE A FABULOUS FILM THAT NEEDS AN AUDIENCE? Not interested in the Internet and can't afford the standard issue? Let us put your movie on a new and cost effective medium. Distributors will love you. This medium generates excitement -- you supply the adventure, drama, comedy, etc. email us at: newmovie2002@yahoo.com.

LOOKING FOR AN EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR? Consider the University of California. We can put 80 years of successful marketing expertise to work for you. Kate Spohr: (510) 643-2788; www.-cmil.unex.berkeley.edu/media.

THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational & animation programs for distribution. Send videocassettes or discs for evaluation to: The Cinema Guild, 130 Madison Ave., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 685-6242; gcrowdus@cinemaguild.com; Ask for our Distribution Services brochure.

Freelance

35MM & 16MM PROD. PKG. w/DP. Complete package w/ DP's own Arri 35BL, 16SR, HMI's, dolly, jib crane, lighting, DAT, grip & 5-ton truck.....more. Call for reel: Tom Agnello (201) 741-4367; roadtoindy@aol.com.

ACCOUNTANT/BOOKKEEPER/CONTROLLER: Experience in both corporate & nonprofit sectors. Hold MBA in Marketing & Accounting. Freelance work sought. Sam Sagenkahn (917) 374-2464.

ANDREW DUNN, Director of Photography/camera operator Arri35 BL3, Aaton XTRprod S16, Sony DVCAM. Experience in features, docs, TV & industrials. Credits: Dog Run, Strays, Working Space/Working Light. (212) 477-0172; AndrewD158@aol.com.

AVID EDITOR W/ SYMPHONY, recently relocated to Burbank. excellent rates, both off- and online. Looking to form long-term relationships with independents. Call Charlene for info and reel at (818) 563-1426 or email PeregrineFilms@aol.com.

AWARD-WINNING EDITOR, w/ Avid and Beta SP facility. Features, shorts, docs, music videos, educational, industrials, demos. Trilingual: Spanish, English, Catalan. Nuria Olive-Belles (212) 228-4724.

CAMERAMAN/STEADICAM OPERATOR: Owner Steadicam, Arri 35 BL, Arri 16 SR, Beta SP, Stereo TC Nagra 4, TC Fostex PD-4 DAT, lighting packages to shoot features, music videos, commercials, etc. Call Mik Cribben for info & reel, (212) 929-7728.

CHOREOGRAPHERS: Award Winning choreographer team available for film, commercials or music videos. Hip Hop, Ballroom, Latin, Modern Dance any style you need. Contact: lizmilwe@aol.com.

CINEMATOGRAPHER & EDITOR w/ complete Super 16mm ARRI camera pkg. and AVID Film/Media Composer system. Experienced, award-winning, excellent rates. Call us at (310) 745-1216 or visit www.silhouette-films.com.

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COMPOSER: creative, experienced multi-faceted composer/sound designer excels in any musical style and texture to enhance your project. Credits incl. award winning docus, features, TV films, animations on networks, cable, PBS, MTV. Full prod. studio in NYC. Columbia MA in composition. Free demo CD & consult. Elliot Sokolov (212) 721-3218 elliotsoko@aol.com.

COMPOSER MIRIAM CUTLER loves to collaborate with filmmakers - docs, features, TV, animation, even circus. Highlights: 2002 Berlin "Lost In LaMancha", 2001 Sundance Awards/POV "Scout's Honor", 1998 Peabody "TheCastro", 1997 Sundance Awards /POV "Licensed To Kill", and more. (310) 398-5985 Email: mircut2@earthlink.net.

COMPOSER: Original music for your film or video project. Will work with any budget. Complete digital studio. NYC area. Demo CD upon request. Call Ian O'Brien: (201) 222-2638; iobrien@bellatlantic.net

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DIGITAL VIDEO—Sony VX1000 DV camera & cameraman, shotgun mic, pro accessories. Experienced in dance, theater, performance art documentation & features. Final Cut Pro digital editing. John Newell (212) 677-6652; johnewell@earthlink.net.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Aaton Super 16/ 16mm and Arri 35BL-2 camera pkgs. Expert Lighting and Camerawork for independent films. Create that "big film" look on a low budget. Great prices. Matthew (617)244-6730 (845) 439-5459 mwdp@att.net.

DOC WRITER: Sharon Wood available for treatments, scripts, narration, and proposals. Good collaborator, one-offs or series. Credits incl. *Paragraph 175* (HBO), *KPFA On the Air* (POV), *And Then One Night* (KQED). (415) 282-5317. WoodSL@aol.com.

DV CONSULTANT: Need help w/ Final Cut Pro? Exp. consultant avail. for training in FCP, AfterEffects, Media Cleaner Pro, or just Mac basics. Former Apple tech rep. & working filmmaker in NYC. Discount for AIVF members. Greg (347) 731-3466.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in The Independent & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

ENTERTAINMENT LAW FIRM: Film and TV production, distribution, financing; business consultants; and artist counsel. Ask about AIVF discounts for members. Brandon A. Blake, Blake & Wang P.A. (310) 543-9085, blakewang@optimalegal.com.

EXPERIENCED LINE PRODUCER available to help with your Breakdown, Schedule, Day out of Days and/or Budget. Specialty is low budget but high quality. Email AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates and references.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition, & educational projects of media). Successful proposals to NYSCA, NEA, NEH, ITVS, Soros, Rockefeller, Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation. Fast writers, reasonable rates. Wanda Bershen, (212) 598-0224; www.reddiaper.com; or Geri Thomas (212) 625-2011; www.artstaffing.com.

LOCATION SOUND: Over 20 yrs sound exp. w/ timecode Nagra & DAT, quality mics. Reduced rates for low-budget projects. Harvey & Fred Edwards, (518) 677-5720; edfilms@worldnet.att.net.

PRODUCER WITH CREW: Line Producer with top notch crew and equipment available for features, industrials, commercials and shorts. Rates for all budgets. Contact Peter Welch at (212) 615-6457, email: pwelch@earthlink.net.

PRODUCTION SERVICES: Emmy Award-winning documentary team offers production services from soup to nuts. DV, NTSC and PAL cameras. Extensive international co-production experience. Final Cut Pro and AVID editing. Contact info@jezebel.org.

SCRIPT CONSULTANT: Does your script have a medical scene or character? Experienced MD/filmmaker will review it for accuracy & authenticity. Reasonable rates & fast turnaround. Jay McLean-Riggs (425) 462-7393; jay.mcleanriggs@aya.yale.edu.

VIDEOGRAPHER WITH CANON XL1S. (The Canon XL1s has 27 more features than XL1.) Available for hire in documentaries, shorts and events. Dirt-cheap prices! Call or email Jose Bayona (718) 305-8458; (347) 623-1989 josebayona@yahoo.com.

WEB DESIGN AND COMPRESSION for film and video artists. Design a website for your film or production company. Cheap rates, no frills process. 7 plus years of experience in interactive design. Discount for AIVF members. Contact: info@trans10.com, www.trans10.com.

Opportunities • Gigs

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS! The Center for Peace and Human Security (CPHS) seeks submissions of films, videos, visual, performance, literary arts, and interactive and news media related to peace and human security for its Peace & Human Security Media Festival, Sept 6-15, 2002. Deadline: May 31. CPHS also seeks papers for its Int,l Conference on Peace & Human Security Media. Deadline: June 30. For entry forms or more info, visit www.peaceandhumansecurity.org/media or contact CPHS, Columbia University Station, P.O. Box 250308, New York, NY 10025, Tel: (646) 342-0099, Fax: (212) 281-9269, or Email: mediafestival@peaceandhumansecurity.org.

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PRODUCTION TRANSCRIPTS: Verbatim transcripts for documentaries, journalists, etc. Low prices & flat rates based on tape length. Standard 1 hr., 1-on-1 interview is only $70: www.productiontranscripts.com for details or call: (888) 349-3022.

Updated listings now available!
Visit the AIVF interactive classified ads directory at
www.aivf.org/classifieds

Remember, AIVF members can search all classified, notice, and member discount listings with the AIVF interactive resource directory at
www.aivf.org/listings

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UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL AIVF EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT THE AIVF OFFICE (SEE BELOW). RSVP REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS. (212) 807-1400 X301, OR INFO@AIVF.ORG.

SUSTAINING YOUR VISION: A DISCUSSION IN THREE PARTS

AIVF's Premiere Master Class Series for Independent Filmmakers

AIVF's Master Class Series examines the ways in which filmmakers have maintained their independence and creativity throughout the production process and then presented their vision to their intended audiences. Sustaining Your Vision is an opportunity to learn from accomplished feature film producers, directors, and distributors via their triumphs, untold tactics, and war stories.

All classes take place at The Screening Room (54 Varick St., NYC).

Tickets are $75/general public, $40/AIVF members (includes entire afternoon and box lunch). There are a limited amount of screening and Q&A only tickets available: $20 general public, $15/AIVF members. All 3 daylong sessions for $200/general public, $100/AIVF members.

To purchase tickets: (212) 807-1400 x301; info@aivf.org

I. Financing Your Independent Vision with Good Machine's Anthony Bregman and *Lovely and Amazing*

When: Sat., May 18

Screening: 12 p.m. followed by Q&A

Breakout Session (with Good Machine producer Anthony Bregman and producers from Blow Up Pictures): 3-5 p.m., followed by reception.

Be one of the first to see Nicole Holofcener's (*Walking and Talking*) newest film, *Lovely and Amazing* with Catherine Keener and Dermot Mulroney. Following the film, find out from the producers how they financed the film.

Topics will include grant research and writing, forming a legal entity, putting together a business plan, finding and approaching investors, and exploring novel avenues of funding.

II. Realizing Your Independent Vision with InDigEnt's Gary Winick and *Tadpole*

When: Sat., June 8

Screening: 12 p.m. followed by Q&A

Breakout Session with Gary Winick: 3-5 p.m., followed by reception.

Don't miss this sneak preview of the Sundance award-winning digital video feature, *Tadpole* starring Sigourney Weaver and John Ritter. Gary Winick (*The Tic Code*) will discuss collaborating with the writer, casting and working with actors, and exploring the creative process with the cinematographer and editor.

III. Sharing Your Independent Vision with Jim McKay and *Our Song*

When: Sat., June 15

Screening: 12 p.m. followed by Q&A

Breakout Session with Jim McKay: 3-5 p.m., followed by reception.

If your film was picked up by a distributor, how might you work with him/her to maximize viewer potential? Find out from acclaimed filmmaker Jim McKay (*Girls Town*) how he and IFC Films tapped into their audience.

Topics will include creating buzz, getting publicity and working with a publicist, outreach and developing an audience, and ways of engaging your audience beyond the screening.

Documentary Dialogues

STRUCTURE: 3,2,1, CHARACTERS

When: Tues., May 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wine & Goldfish reception until 9:30 p.m.

Cost: $5 members; $20 general public

Some docs are topic based, others character based. What is gained or lost choosing one style over the other? When is creating a dramatic arc more important than relaying information? Or is information the priority in a documentary? Is it possible to combine the two styles?

In Brief:

PRODUCERS LEGAL SERIES

In Brief: Producers Legal Series addresses issues independent producers face during various stages of their projects, from forming a legal entity to financing a film through private investments and foundation grants. These small group sessions offer answers to common questions, introduce producers to professionals who can help, and inform filmmakers of important resources for their projects. The series is led by entertainment attorney Innes Smolansky of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard. Smolansky represents independent producers, writers, and directors.

DISTRIBUTION DEALS

When: Thurs., May 9

Tickets are $20/AIVF members; $30/nonmembers per session

All sessions take place at the AIVF office from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Join us for a discussion on different types of distributions deals, including production financing and distribution agreements, presale agreements, international distribution and sales agent agreements, as well as standard domestic distribution deals for theatrical, television, video, and other media

deals. The panel will host series moderator Innes Smolansky and Alan Baldachin of the Sundance Channel.

Meet & Greet:
BUYINDIES.COM

BuyIndies.com

When: Tues., May 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Cost: $5 members; $20 general public

BuyIndies.com is a web community for buying and selling independent, educational, and hard-to-find films. Sellers (small distirbutors and individual filmmakers) can add their titles to the catalogue, set prices for consumer and educational use, and receive payment from BuyIndies.com for orders. Buyers (consumers and educational organizations) can browse by category or search for titles. BuyIndies.com has safe credit card payment and purchase order accounts, and currently has over 500 sellers. They have established partnerships with *MovieMaker* magazine and Slamdance Film Festival, among others.

AIVF'S PITCHING TO THE PROS
The Art of Selling Your Project

When: Thurs., May 23, 7-9 p.m.

Where: Anthology Film Archives, Courthouse Theater

Cost: $10 AIVF members; $20 general public

Tickets/Info.: Advanced ticket purchase recommended. Contact AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x 301; or e-mail info@aivf.org to reserve a seat.

Part panel discussion, part practice-pitch session, AIVF's Pitching to the Pros takes an in-depth look at how to perfect your pitch, illustrating how producers can put their best foot forward when verbally presenting their film concept or project to commissioning editors and acquisitions executives. Audience members will learn the do's and don'ts of delivering their own project ideas from advice offered by industry representatives and by hearing their peers publicly pitch their projects. Panelists will be posted at www.aivf.org.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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The National Endowment for the Arts
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We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

Business/Industry Members: **CA:** Action/Cut Directed By Seminars; Attaboc LLC; Busk Entertainment, LLC; Calliope Films, Inc.; Eastman Kodak Co.; Film Society of Ventura County; Forest Creatures Entertainment Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; HBO; The Hollywood Reporter; Moonshadow Production & Research; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; **CO:** The Crew Connection; Inferno Film Productions; **FL:** Bakus Internatinal, Inc/ Odysseas Entertainment, Inc.; Burn Productions; **IL:** Buzzbait; Rock Valley College; Wiggle Puppy Productions; Wonderdog Media; **MA:** CS Associates; Glidecam Industries; **MD:** The Learning Channel; U.S. Independents, Inc.; **MI:** Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Kingberry Productions, Inc.; **MN:** Allies; Media/Art; **NJ:** DIVA Communications, Inc.; **NY:** AKQ Communications, Ltd.; American Montage; Analog Digital Intl., Inc.; Black Bird Post; Bluestocking Films, Inc.; Bravo Film and Video; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cineblast! Prods.; Corra Films; Cypress Films; Dependable Delivery, Inc.; Docurama; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Earth Video; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Guerilla News Network; Highdrama Productions Inc.; Historic Films Archive; Jalapeno Media; Lighthouse Creative, Inc.; MacKenzie Culter, Inc.; Mad Mad Judy; Mercer Street Sound; Metropolis Film Lab Inc.; Mixed Greens; New Rican Filmmaker; New York Independent Film School; One Kilohertz; The Outpost; Partisan Pictures; Paul Dinatale Post, Inc.; Persona Films; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Seahorse Films; Son Vida Pictures, LLC; Suitcase Productions; Swete Studios; Wolfen Prods.; **PA:** Cubist Post & Effects; Smithtown Creek Prods.; **TX:** Upstairs Media Inc.; **UT:** KBYU-TV; Rapid Video, LLC; **VA:** Dorst MediaWorks; Roland House, Inc.; **WV:** Harpers Ferry Center Library.

Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Fest.; **AZ:** Scottsdale Community Coll.; U of Central Arkansas/ Channel 6 Television; **CA:** Antelope Valley Independent Film Festival; California Newsreel; Filmmakers Alliance; International Buddhist Film Festival; Itvs; Los Angeles Film Commission; Media Fund; NAATA; Ojai Film Soc.; Reach L.A.; San Francisco Jewish Film Fest.; USC School of Cinema TV; **FL:** Manatee Community College; **GA:** Image Film & Video Center; **HI:** U. of Hawaii Outreach College; **ID:** Center for School Improvement; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago/Video Data Bank; Community TV Network; PBS Midwest; Rock Valley Coll.; Roxie Media Corporation; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Long Bow Group Inc.; Lowell Telecommunications Corp.; LTC Communications; Projectile Arts; Somerville Community TV; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Fest.; **MN:** Intermedia Arts; Walker Arts Center; IFP North; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **NC:** Cucaloris Film Foundation; Doubletake Documentary Film Fest.; Duke University-Film and Video; **NE:** Great Plains Film Festival; Nebraska Independent Film Proj., Inc.; Ross Film Theater, UN/Lincoln; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; College of NJ/ Dept. of Communication Studies; reat Vision Filmwork, Inc.; **NM:** Taos Talking Pictures; **NY:** American Museum of Natural History; Art 21; Cinema Arts Center; Communications Society; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Creative Capital Foundation; Dependable Delivery; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community TV; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Globalvision, Inc.; John Jay High School; Konscious, Inc.; Listen Up!; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Black Programming Consortium; National Foundation for Jewish Culture; National Video Resources; NW&D Inc.; NYU TV Center; New York Women in Film and TV; OVO, Inc.; School of Visual Arts; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stanton Crenshaw Communication; Stony Brook Film Festival; Thirteen/WNET; Upstate Films, Ltd.; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Cleveland Filmmakers; Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky Film Commission; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio Independent Film Fest.; Ohio University/Film; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; **PA:** PA Council on the Arts; Carnegie Museum of Art; Prince Music Theater; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI:** Flickers Arts Collaborative; **SC:** South Carolina Arts Commission; **TN:** Nashville Independent Film Fest; **TX:** Austin Cinemaker Co-op; Austin Film Society; Michener Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; **WI:** UWM Dept. of Film; Wisconsin Film Office; **Canada:** Toronto Documentary Forum/Hot Docs; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Shorts Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Peru:** Guarango Cine y Video; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Friends of FIVF: Ulises Aristides, Bakus International, Michael Bernstein, Barbara Baxter-Brooks, Hugo M.J. Cassirer, Chris Deaux, Arthur Dong, Aaron Edison, Christopher Farina, Suzanne Griffin, Christopher Gomersall, Patricia Goudvis, Leigh Hanlon, Robert L. Hawk, Henrietta Productions, Jewish Communal Fund, John Kavanaugh, Laura Kim, Bart Lawson, Michelle Lebrun, Elizabeth Mane, Diane Markrow, Sheila Nevins, William Payden, PKXH, Possible Films, Mary Smith, Diana Takata, Rhonda Leigh Tanzman, Mark Vanbork

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Four preselected producers will pitch their projects, which will then be critiqued before industry reps and a viewing audience. The focus is on the pitch, rather than on the project, allowing the audience to gain insight into the pitch process and learn how best to capture the attention and confidence of industry professionals.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS
The Atlanta Film and Video Festival
May 31-June 8, Atlanta, Georgia

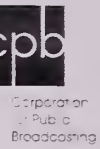
26th annual
atlanta film & video festival

The 26th Annual Atlanta film and Video Festival will showcase over 150 films over nine days to over 13,000 attendees.

AIVF's Atlanta Salon will present screenings of Thomas Allen Harris's film, *E Minha Cara* (*That's My Face*), a quest for identity across three generations of one African American family, shot entirely in Super-8 in the United States, Brazil, and East Africa. Check festival web site for screening times.

AIVF will also co-sponsor a panel with festival documentarians on the craft of nonfiction filmmaking. Details TBA.

The AIVF Atlanta Salon is part of IMAGE Film and Video (Independent Media Artists of Gerogia, Etc.), the presenter of AFVF, and an established nonprofit organization for independents. For more information, www.imagefv.org.



COMING IN JUNE
Meet & Greet: Senior Programming Staff of PBS & CPB

Don't miss this rare opportunity to find out how PBS & CPB work with independent producers and what they look for in terms of film content. Here is your chance to get your questions answered in person! Reps in attendance will be announced at www.aivf.org.

When: Thurs., June 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Cost: $5/AIVF members; $20 general public

AIVF Co-Sponsors:
SELECT SCREENINGS AT THE WALTER READE THEATRE, NYC
Presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center

AIVF members may attend specific films for just $5 per ticket! Please show membership card at box office.

The Walter Reade Theatre is located at Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th Street at Broadway in NYC. For more info, contact the Film Society of Lincoln Center box office at 212/875-5600 or www.filmlinc.com.

AIVF members can search a full directory of member benefits at www.aivf.org/benefits

The AIVF Regional Salons provide opportunities for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons section at www.aivf.org for more details.

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Capital District Arts Ctr., Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 283-7378
jeff_burns23@yahoo.com
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday, 7 p.m.
Contact: Anne del Castillo, (512) 507-8105
labc@att.net, www.austinfilm.org

Birmingham, AL:
When: First Tuesday
Where: Production Plus, 2910 Crescent Ave., Homewood, AL
Contact: Clay Keith, ckeith1000@yahoo.com
Karen Scott, WScott9268@aol.com,
(205) 663-3802

Boston, MA:
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
FSimon@aol.com

Boulder, CO: "Films for Change" Screenings When: First Tuesday, 7 p.m.
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
patricia@freespeech.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday, 6:30pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun St.
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841;
Peter Wentworth, filmsalon@aol.com

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315,
OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com
www.ohiofilms.com

Dallas, TX:
Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700,
bart@videofest.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
allen@passionriver.com,
www.passionriver.com

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday, 6:30p.m.
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: (713) 522-8592,
swamp@swamp.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite,
charles.white@tdsi.com

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary,
mediaarts33@yahoo.com
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday, 7:30 p.m.
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
mmasucci@aol.com

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday, 7p.m.
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
betuccia@aol.com

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday, 7p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Kate Kressmann-Kehoe,
(716) 244-8629, ksk@netacc.net

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
aivf@mediaartscenter.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
mybluesun@hotmail.com; Jane Selle Morgan
(206) 915-6263, jane@heropictures.com

South Florida:
Contact: Dominic Giannetti, (561) 313-0330
themoviebiz@hotmail.com
www.moviebiz.info

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday, 6 p.m.
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno,
yourdestiny@mindspring.com

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, jatvelez@hotmail.com
DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x 4,
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Be sure to contact your local Salon leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!

Detailed salon information is posted on the web! Visit **www.aivf.org** for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon programs as well as up-to-date information on programs.

L.A. Salon Launches Independent Distribution Network

During the Global Entertainment and Media Summit, L.A. salon leader Michael Masucci announced the group's plan to launch an independent distribution system for artists and producers in Southern California. The nonexclusive, not-for-profit distribution company will encourage the exhibition of independent productions, as well as the sale and rental of home videos. In collaboration with other independent media groups, the L.A. salon will work as a distributor and as an advocacy group committed to promoting classic and underground media from the past.

Participants from the Global Entertainment and Media Summit have already begun working with the L.A. salon to build a database of local "indie friendly" venues, and to plan a tour of artists' work. The new distribution network will not be limited to film and video projects, but will include the work of musicians, actors, dancers, and visual artists, as well. At the Summit, filmmaker John Waters and musician Les Paul underlined the need for independents in all media to be sensitive to each other's concerns, and to build alliances that could streamline the process of collaboration.

For more info, contact the L.A. salon at mmasucci@aol.com.

ON View

BY JASON GUERRASIO

THEATRICAL

The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys,
Dir. Peter Care (ThinkFilm, June)
To say *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys* is a film about rebellious kids who love comic books wouldn't do it justice. This coming-of-age tale directed by first timer Peter Care perfectly captures the heady excitement of being a teen, as well as the sorrows. Taken from Chris Fuhrman's novel of the same title, the film follows two comic book obsessed friends (Emile Hirsch and Kieran Culkin) as they find love, rebel against authority, and deal with sudden tragedy. What makes *Altar Boys* different from other teen movies is its brief animated episodes (drawn by *Spawn* creator Todd McFarlane), which show the imaginative breadth of a teenager's mind. Comic book superheroes representing the friends' alter egos battle their arch nemesis (the real authority figure in the kids' lives), the peg-legged Sister Assumpta (played masterfully by Jodie Foster). Set in the 1970s, the film is redolent with teenage playfulness and angst. And the relationship between Francis (Hirsch) and Margie (Jena Malone) is right on target in its portrayal of teens on the cusp of adulthood. Potty-mouth humor, kick-ass animation, and strong plot aside, *Altar Boys* works simply because it's an honest depiction of teenage life.

TELEVISION

Lalee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton,
Dirs. Susan Froemke & Deborah Dickson (HBO, check local listings)
Filmmakers Dickson and Froemke, along with Albert Maysles, spotlight a land that time has forgotten: the Mississippi Delta. *LaLee's Kin* focuses on an impoverished family in West Tallahatchie whose matriarch, LaLee, is valiantly fighting to hold the clan together. Decades of back-breaking labor in the cotton fields was the only type of work LaLee and her neighbors in this rural community had ever known. When machinery ousted them from the fields, their lack of education and training left them unprepared for the modern world. The film depicts how the brutal legacy of grinding poverty and illiteracy has been passed down to LaLee's grandchildren. Images of kids washed in plastic buckets, missed days at school because there is no money to buy paper and pencils, tears shed over a son taken to prison,

Matriarch LaLee Wallace holds her family together in Susan Froemke and Deborah Dickson's compelling doc.

a rat- and roach-infested trailer home without running water, could have been lifted from the developing world. But it is in the United States. LaLee's story is skillfully intertwined with that of educator Reggie Barnes, who is attempting to get the West Tallahatchie school district off probation. It is among the poorest school districts in the country. The depressing sounds of the rhythmic slide guitar adds a final heartbreaking tone to this extraordinary and powerful film. *LaLee's Kin* received the Best Cinematography Award at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival.

Sun River Homestead,
Dir. Maggie Carey (PBS, May 2)
Sun River Homestead tells the incredible story of three sisters, Esther, Lydia, and Anna Strasburger, who ventured out west from Iowa in 1909 to homestead as single women in Montana. Interviews with elderly relatives and friends attest to the difficulties of pioneer life and the grueling work the women endured in order to survive. Voice-over readings of the sisters' extant letters reveal a strong, loving bond among them, regardless of the fact that they rarely had an opportunity to see one another. The doc highlights how the sisters' strength has been passed down, as the newest independent woman in the family, Rebecca Lee, a cattle herder and a rodeo scholarship student, follows in her great-grandmother Esther's footsteps.

The Aleutians: Cradle of Storms,
Dir. Beth Harrington (PBS, May 8)
In a remote corner of the United States there is a land where the most beautiful wildlife, as well as the strangest weather, ever known to mankind exists. Stretching over 1,000 miles between Alaska and Siberia are the Aleutian islands. Discovered by Asian peoples 9,000 years ago, the inhabitants of the Aleutian archipelago lived in peace, hidden from the world by adverse weather conditions. With winds upwards of 206 mph, it was impossible for most ships to sail the treacherous seas around the islands. The Aleutians chronicles what has happened on this mysterious stretch of land since the 1700s. The relative calm that pervaded the islands was altered dramatically by the 1800s when Russian and American hunters decimated the region's wildlife. World War II brought a Japanese takeover of the archipelago, and in the 1960s and 1970s nuclear testing caused many inhabitants to flee. Despite these trials, the Aleuts are a strong people devoted to their surroundings and their religion. The doc's compelling story is heightened by the breathtaking shots of fierce weather.

The Blue Diner, Dir. Jan Egleson (HBO, May)
This fresh look at Latino life follows the story of Elena (Miriam Colon), who suddenly losses her ability to speak or understand her native tongue, Spanish. The story takes off when Elena, speaking only in English, and her mother (veteran actress Lisa Vidal), speaking only in Spanish, try to counter the puzzling spell Elena has fallen under. During this often heartfelt process the bond between mother and daughter blooms. Filmed entirely in the Latino neighborhoods of Boston, *Blue Diner* celebrates love, family, and the Latino heritage. Acclaimed by festivals around the globe, the film's main strength lies in its shattering of media stereotypes of Latinos and Latino culture. Colon and Vidal captivate the viewer with their passionate performances.

Photo: HBO

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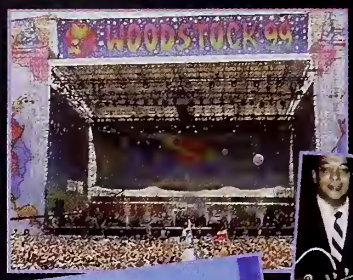

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About the cover:

Julia Sarano and Carlos Echevarria in Italian-Argentinean director Marco Bechis latest feature. *Hijos*, screening June 15 as part of the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, imagines a story of orphans of the disappeared of Argentina's Dirty War. The companion site expands on the issues raised by the drama, with links for additional information and action. See www.garageolimpio.it.

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Dear reader,

The tagline we chose for this issue, "Media that Matters," is a little simplistic: media *always* matters, right? It is because we often forget this fact that media has such an awesome, insidious power. The moving image media that surround us provides a constant and compelling mirror of our culture. When driven by commercial purpose, this mirror necessarily reflects and perpetuates an exaggerated image of our aspirations, desires, and imperfect lives. In it we find both the comfort of complicit familiarity, and the goad of ephemeral need made manifest.

But more matter, less art. This issue take a moment to spotlight a few of the organizations that employ media in ways intended to activate not consumers, but citizens. Whether giving voice to the formerly voiceless by providing equipment, training, and the eyes of an international audience (Witness, page 38); breaking stories on topical issues (Democracy Now, page 34); or acknowledging that objective journalism is a fallicy and embracing stories with an explicit point of view (Free Speech Television, page 33); these organizations work to preserve democracy by fostering the free flow of information and the stimulation of multiple points of view. These avenues for alternative points of view are essential to the survival of the freedoms our country was founded upon.

The cover this month is a bit of a departure for us, as it represents an Italian film that has not yet secured wide distribution in the U.S.—a drama, no less! The dramatic form is often employed to bring important issues to popular audiences, and we felt that the director's ongoing commitment to the cause of the desaparados and orphans of Argentina's Dirty War deserved remark. See the film if you have the chance, or visit www.garageolimpio.com, which offers further resources and links to activist organizations.

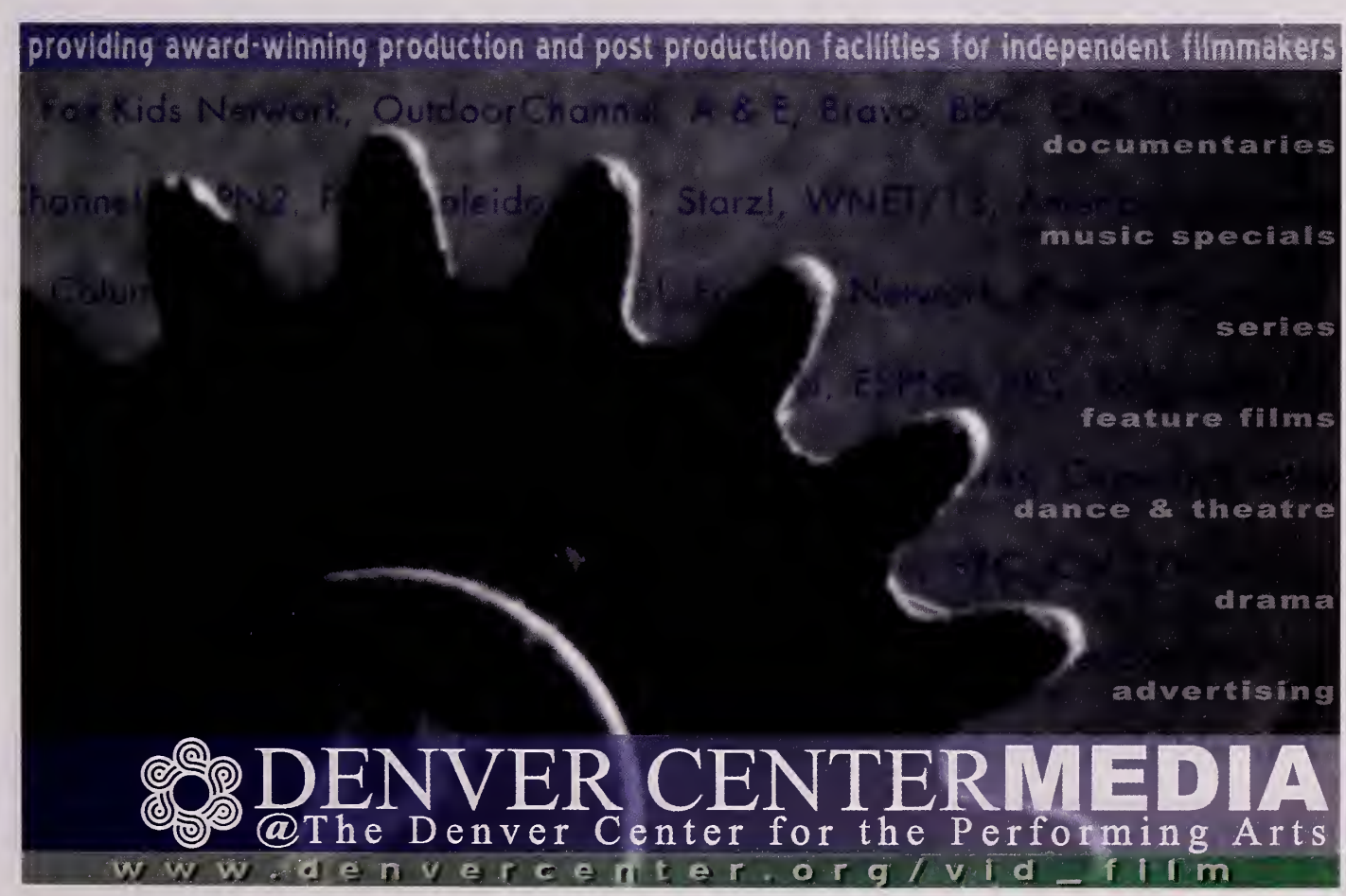
The Human Rights Watch Film Festival takes places June 14-27, and selections will travel to communities throughout the year. See page 36 for more information. Also launching June 14 is the companion Media That Matters online festival, presented by MediaRights.org. This online showcase presents a dozen juried short films complemented by links for further information or action, as well as five outstanding web projects that address human rights issues.

This month we also cast our annual spotlight on AIVF Regional Salons, with profiles of activities in Austin, Cleveland, and Seattle. These examples help demonstrate how media communities can pool their resources to work together to preserve their independence.

A reminder: we've returned to our original publication schedule, which means that this year our summer issue encompasses July and August, with a fresh issue hitting the stands in September.

Our summer double issue is going to be awesome: with 80 pages comprising all of our usual good stuff, a decidedly underground twist, and a special section on experimental film created by guest editor Miranda July. Plus a package of articles on graduate film programs that collect hard to find info and plenty of reality checks, and our ever useful semi-annual listing of member benefits.

—*Elizabeth Peters, acting editor*



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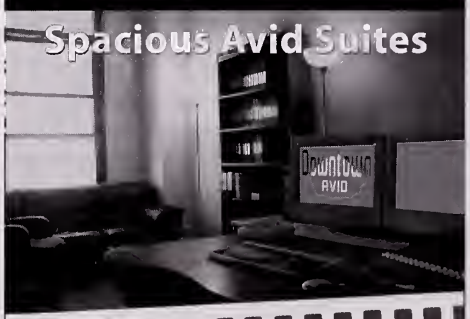

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NEWS

May-September romances

Two young, multitasking distributors pick up classic catalogs

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

THIS PAST SPRING, TWO RELATIVELY YOUNG companies—each founded in 1999—held nuptials with long-established repertory distributors. Madstone acquired New Yorker Films, founded in 1965, while Cowboy Pictures started going steady with 50-something Janus Films.

New Yorker Films was founded—almost inadvertently—by NYC programmer Dan Talbot, who began importing foreign titles for his renowned movie house the New Yorker Theater, and found himself introducing pioneering, politically charged international work to domestic audiences. The New Yorker Films library is now one of the cornerstones of the non-theatrical market, with titles ranging from masterpieces of international cinema to recent independent work such as Sandi Dubowski's *Trembling Before G-D* and Stephanie Black's *Life and Debt*. In 1990 New York Films expanded to the home video market, with close to 300 titles currently available.

Talbot, who programs New York's Lincoln Plaza Cinema, remains actively engaged in the company, whose website proudly declares, "In a time when the term 'independent' has been loosely applied to subsidiaries of giant conglomerates, New Yorker stands as the most durable, important, and truly independent of independent film distributors."

Madstone is exploring vertical interests in independent film, with separate branches acting as a studio, distributor, and exhibitor. Through their Directors Program they are currently funding three directors producing digital productions for Madstone Films. Madstone Theaters operates art-house theaters in Denver and Cleveland, and Madstone DDN is planning an ambitious national digital distribution network.

As the newest member of the family, New Yorker Films clearly rounds out the Madstone portfolio. "This partnership fulfills our shared commitment to bringing new stories to new audiences," says Madstone co-founder Chip Seelig in a prepared statement. Talbot and the existing staff will continue to run New Yorker Films, with Madstone providing expanded support for new releases and existing library titles. "Madstone's approach to bringing new stories to new audiences make our companies a felicitous fit," says Talbot.

In keeping with their work to preserve and restore films from around the world, Janus Films—another major library of international classics—founded the Criterion Collection, today known for its remarkable releases on DVD. In 1996 Janus ceased distribution of theatrical prints and divided its holdings between Kino Films, who handled most of the 35mm, and Kit Parker, who handled 16mm and a few 35mm titles. This spring Cowboy Pictures took on theatrical and non-theatrical rights for this library, including many titles that have been out of circulation.

Cowboy Pictures is another multi-tasking specialty distributor. Besides acquiring and distributing work such as the recent documentaries *Promises* by Justine Shapiro and B.Z. Goldberg and *Home Movie* by Chris Smith, Cowboy also works as a distribution partner for producers and organizations seeking customized approaches to challenging releases or programming events. Additionally, they serve as a worldwide semi-theatrical booking agent for clients ranging from Good Machine International to Guy Madden. To round out their activities, they program the film calendar New York's The Screening Room.

New art for Cowboy Picture's release of the restored version of Cocteau's classic.

To handle the revitalization of the Janus Films library, Cowboy hired former Shooting Gallery staffer Jeff Reichert. In addition to booking films and producing an updated catalog of Janus holdings (which will available in the fall), Reichert is overseeing the annual widespread release of five or so more high profile works, starting with a restored print of Jean Cocteau's post-war fantasy *Beauty and the Beast*. "The film was restored in France five years ago, but it never got over here," says Reichert. "In other cases, prints have been in circulation for years: we can upgrade the films considerably just by striking new prints from elements that are still in good condition." Later this year Cowboy will re-release *Seven Samurai*, kicking off a tour of brand new prints of 13 Akira Kursawa films. Reichert believes prospects are bright for getting this work to audiences. "Cowboy really excels at getting into those random places that larger distributors overlook."

Each of these new partnerships bodes well for classic libraries and film scholarship. Hopefully this new attention to older catalogues will help both to preserve lesser-known work and to enthrall and inspire a new generation of filmmakers.

For more info, see:
www.madstone.com,
www.newyorkerfilms.co, and
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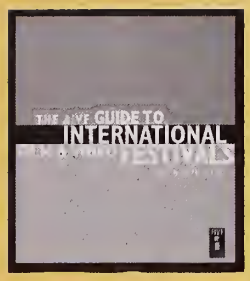

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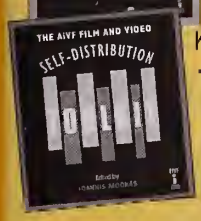

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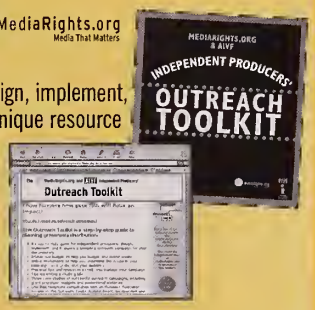

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Changing policy at the Discovery Channel

BY KEN MILLER

COURTING CONTROVERSY WITHIN THE documentary film community, the Discovery Channel has put in motion a plan to eliminate end credits from most of its programming. Along with its subsidiaries TLC (formerly known as The Learning Channel), Animal Planet, The Travel Channel, and BBC America, Discovery is a major purchaser for documentary films. Once the proposal was made public, it was presented in a series of meetings with independent producers throughout the spring, with participants required to sign non-disclosure forms.

The Association of Television Arts and Sciences, the national organization that awards Emmys for television work, has been at the forefront of opposition against the plan. Academy chairman put the reasons opposing Discovery's move in historical terms: "I think people want to stand up for the right to be credited for the work they do." He further noted, "That's been a historic right in Hollywood and the entertainment industry."

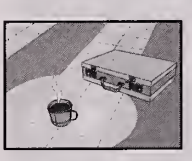
The root is the problem for both sides is largely financial. Discovery maintains that studies show a 30% loss of audience during end credits, as viewers become bored and pick up the remote. John Ford, president of the content group for Discovery Networks U.S. publicly stated that viewers were "leaving in droves" during the end credits. (Equivalent figures for the amount of audience loss occurring during commercial breaks were not available for comparison.)

On the other hand, for independent documentary filmmakers and producers, those end credits often function as currency. Faced with limited budgets, they often promise to reward crews with a production credit that will be useful when seeking future work. As Zabel put it to the Hollywood Reporter, "Credits are the currency of Hollywood, and to the people who have them, they're worth their weight in gold."

Discovery promises to place end credits on the network's web site for 60 days. Nevertheless, for the time being the decision seems to be something of a foregone conclusion.

Individual filmmakers are loathe to challenge the network. In their stead, ATAS has organized a campaign of moral suasion, under the rubric of the Documentary Credit Coalition, with stronger methods of opposition proposed for the future. AIVF has joined in the DCC's campaign, along with representatives from the Director's Guild of America, Producer's Guild of America, American Society of Cinematographers, Writers' Guild of America, and the International Documentary Association.

Media Arts organizations to convene in Seattle



NAMAC, THE NATIONAL Alliance of Media Arts and Culture, promises to keep the coffee coming during its bi-annual conference, to take October 2-5 in Seattle, Washington.

Titled "Pull focus, push forward," the conference is hosted by Seattle's 911 Media Arts Center. The principal gathering of the national media arts community, this incarnation will have a distinctly Seattle flavor: besides the coffee, it comprises an opening ceremony at Seattle's Space Needle, and presentations by local artists Sherman Alexie and DJ Spooky.

For more info, see www.pullfocus.org.

Errata

In the May issue of *The Independent*, the creative team behind *Caught in the Crossfire* was misidentified in the feature article "Common concerns of uncommon voices." Brad Lichtenstein is producing the film, and Lichtenstein and David Van Taylor are serving as co-directors.

In the same issue, we mentioned two new films by Louis Alvarez in the "PBS Pipeline" article. However, PBS actually has nothing to do with the project *Sex:Female*, which is being made for Oxygen.

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Outreach = Reaching Out

Why you should consider an outreach campaign

BY JULIA PIMSLEUR

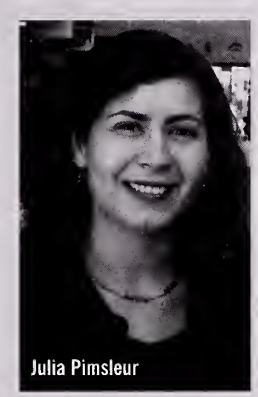
MOST FILMMAKERS DECIDE TO MAKE A documentary because they are passionate about the subject matter or characters. They want their film to be widely seen and presented to people who will be moved by it, and while they hope their film will "make a difference," they are often too busy working on the film itself to think about what will happen when it is done.

If this describes you, this is your wake up call! Start thinking now about how your film can have an impact. The earlier you identify your potential audiences, the easier it will be to reach them and perhaps even move them to action.

Conducting an outreach campaign means literally "reaching out" to nonprofit organizations, special interest groups, and activists to let them know how they can use your film to support their work. Doing an outreach campaign, sometimes called grassroots distribution, ensures your film will be seen and used by the individuals and communities who will most benefit from the story your film has to tell. These audiences will also provide an enthusiastic and invaluable word of mouth network that will extend the life of your film beyond traditional distribution.

It is a commonly held misconception that educational distribution covers outreach. An educational distributor's goal is to sell and rent films to universities, high schools, libraries, and a few large nonprofit organizations. Understandably, they focus most of their energies on these high yield markets.

Most distributors do not send their catalogues to community centers, youth mentorship programs, religious organizations or grassroots organizations (such as those working with day laborers, single mothers facing welfare reform, homelessness, etc). They don't reach smaller specialty groups and grassroots organizations which may be core audiences and important allies in making sure your film gets seen in a context where it will make a difference.


Julia Pimsleur

You are actually the best person to come up with a way of making your film available to these "hard to reach" audiences, as you may have contacts from your production, advisors or other contacts you can build from. You can also work with your educational distributor to offer special rates to groups which can't afford institutional prices.

So what is an outreach campaign? It is a distribution plan that complements other traditional forms of distribution, such as educational, theatrical and broadcast. Outreach can be costly, last more than a year and be very far-reaching, or can last just a few months and have very specific goals which can be met with a modest budget. In either case, it is an opportunity for coalition-building. You can target specific groups and build partnerships with organizations which draw in audiences and offer them ways to leverage attention to their causes.

Organizing an outreach campaign is a very labor-intensive yet deeply satisfying part of filmmaking, where you can actually see your work being used and appreciated by people who care about the issues your film explores.

A great example of what can happen thanks to effective outreach is provided by *Blue Vinyl*, Judith Helfand's new documentary about the environmental hazards of polyvinyl chloride (PVC), otherwise known as vinyl. Helfand and Robert West, who is overseeing the outreach campaign through their company Working Films, used the Sundance Film Festival screenings to convince Victoria's Secret to change their use of toxic packing materials.

Greenpeace had initiated an activist fax campaign to the company in early January, netting over 4,000 messages in favor of ending PVC packaging. At Sundance West and volunteers alerted audience members to the campaign, and after each screening viewers filled out postcards to Victoria's Secret letting them know that they cared about this issue.

By the end of the week of screenings and 1,500 postcards later, Intimate Brands, the owners of Victoria's Secret, called Greenpeace to discuss their PVC policy. As a result of this public response, Victoria's Secret is phasing out its use of PVC packaging.

A good outreach campaign can galvanize to people to take action, as in the case of *Blue Vinyl*. It can also lead to funding. The foundations that fund media are swamped with documentary projects seeking support. Because media is often perceived as a relatively expensive and "indirect" way to address and/or transform social causes, program officers are increasingly asking applicants to provide well-thought out outreach campaigns along with their documentary proposals.

The argument "We don't fund film, we fund organizing" is a very popular phrase. Many projects are turned down for funding not because the film isn't well crafted or researched, but because funders don't want to contribute to films that are at risk of sitting on shelves or which are not tied in with the work of existing organizations that they are already supporting.

So don't wait to think about outreach! If you can explain your commitment to bringing your film to places where it can make a difference, you will not only increase your chances of funding, you may even find the process helps you to make a more effective and powerful film.

Julia Pimsleur is co-founder of Big Mouth Productions, a social issue documentary company based in New York, and co-founder of MediaRights.org, a non-profit organization which helps media makers, educators, nonprofits, and activists use documentaries to encourage action and inspire dialogue on contemporary social issues.

This piece was adapted from the introduction to The Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit (www.mediarights.org/toolkit), *a resource developed by MediaRights.org and AIVF, and "Documntaries and Activism" by Nicole Betancourt, posted on MediaRights.org.*

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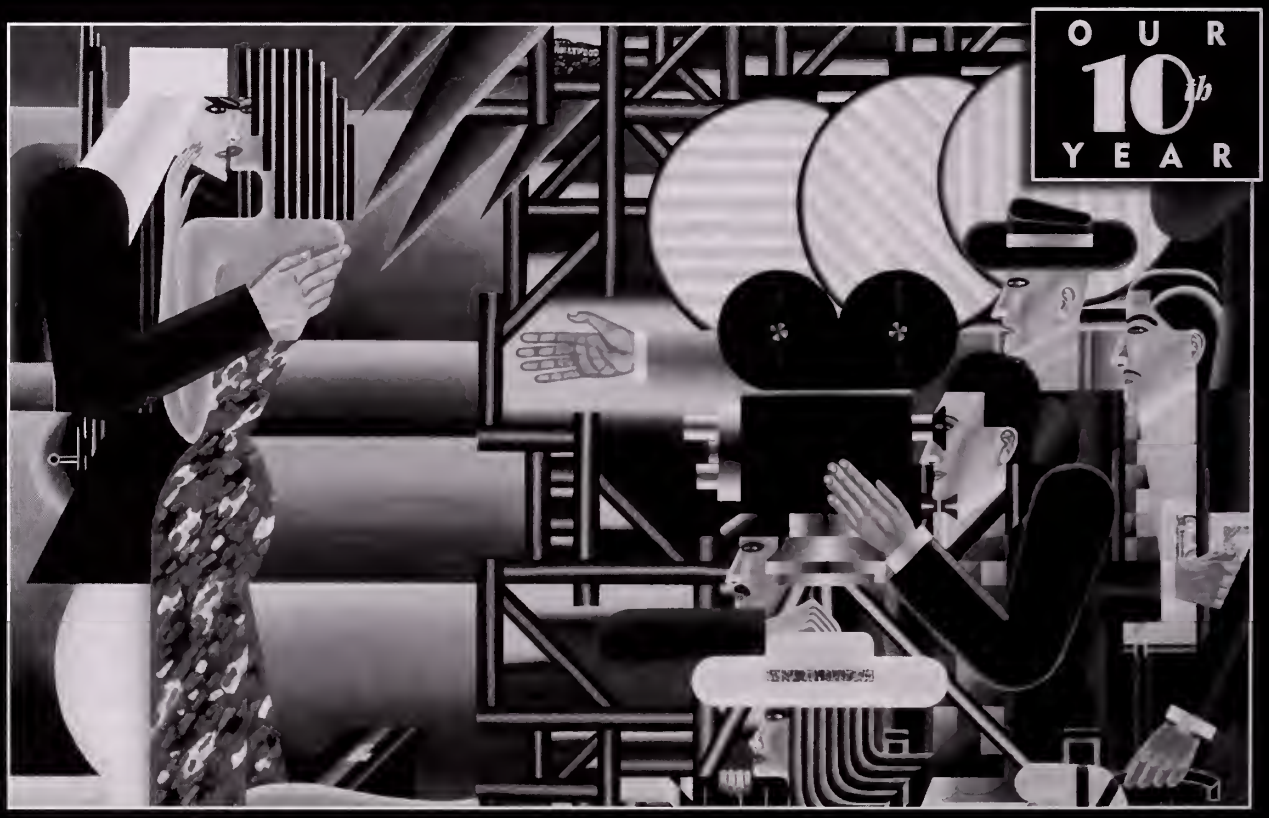

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Rae McGrath

NYC artist prizes everyday settings

BY ARI KAPLAN

INSPIRED BY RISK-TAKERS AND MOTIVATED by a creative addiction, Brooklyn-born photographer-turned-filmmaker Rae McGrath uses film and video to capture the evolution of the ordinary into the extraordinary. McGrath's star is on the rise after successfully premiering, *Lefty-Right*, his widely acclaimed new short feature at both Slamdance in Utah and at Clermont-Ferrand in France. Set for Belo-horizonte Short film Festival of Brazil in June and then European distribution later this year, *Lefty-Right* was produced by Blue Collar Pictures, the production company McGrath formed in 1998.

Above: a self-portrait by filmmaker Rae McGrath. Left: William Brown portrays a man trapped in his own life.

The short film is based on the eccentric personality of the main character actor, William Brown, and McGrath has depicted the human drive to challenge its very existence through the story of a man trapped by the world he so desperately wants to escape. Brown plays Mel Cobb, who, after hearing a report that left-handed people die earlier than right-handers, decides that becoming left-handed is his best option for shortening his life span. Set in New York City, the film follows Mel's journey along the road between hope and despair and uses black and white film to reflect this contrast. McGrath's video to 16mm film transfer process created a "surveillance camera-like" feel for the piece. "We, as the audience, are voyeurs peering in on a lonely man trapped in a vicious cycle of monotonous daily activities. I wanted the look of the piece to give you that impression before a single word is spoken," comments the director.

As impressions go, anyone viewing the film is immediately struck by its post-apocalyptic tone that poignantly captures the mood of the city in the weeks following September 11th. Though shot months before the tragedy, it features images of its characters alone on the subway, downtown and on the Manhattan Bridge in complete isolation. The World Trade Center towers even loom over an eerie backdrop for some of the scenes as a terrible reminder.

The visual impact of the piece is a result of what McGrath describes as his documentary style approach. "I usually have the camera, some lights, a sound guy and the actors. Working with a small crew creates a false sense of reality which I use to my advantage," he remarks. Actor Daniel Weiss commented, "the film had a renegade filmmaking style to it, almost like street performing. That's kind of fun for an actor because it leaves you without a net." Brown echoed Weiss' thoughts noting, "Rae sees a script as more of a blueprint for trying out all sorts of different things."

The freedom of creation that he offers to those with whom he works is a virtue that he first taught to himself very early on. McGrath started drawing at 4 and by 12, he was a pop and graffiti artist. But, it was not until he turned 16, when his mom bought him his first camera that he realized the beauty of everyday people in everyday settings. "I started wandering the streets photographing life and fell in love with the wide-angle lens," McGrath remembers. McGrath feels that "it is one thing to stand across the street and photograph someone with a long lens; it is another to get right up close and personal to find that special something that makes them, and hopefully your interpretation of them, unique."

McGrath is excited about *Lefty-Right*'s success at Slamdance and Clermont-Ferrand, confessing that he thrives on festival crowd responses. He reveals, "it is rewarding to be in the audience and hear them react. It tells me that they can understand and relate to a project I have sweated over for so long." In his opinion, "what was so amazing about the Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival is that each film took you to a different village or city and showed you a day in the life of its people."

McGrath's experience in France was heightened because of his passion for language and travel. "I see the way people live in different places and want to tell their stories—sometimes symbolically. A starving family in a third world country can translate into a single mom in Brooklyn trying to make ends meet. Human struggle transcends all cultures."

A vocal proponent of fusing film with digital video, McGrath encourages other young filmmakers to "start with a good story and then get out there and shoot something." As for money, the rising director who financed *Lefty-Right* on a budget of just over $10,000 (much of which was funded by credit cards) recommends creativity. For *Lefty-Right*, he built kino-flo style lights using hardware store fluorescent bulbs and fome cor and designed a dolly track from sliding door rails.

McGrath notes "my main goal is to keep learning and challenging myself in every way possible. As an artist, you never want to reach the finish line because that would mean the bulb is broken and you're out of ideas." two feature-length screenplays he is trying to turn into reel credits, McGrath's journey has just begun.

Visit www.bluecollarpictures.com to learn more about the film.

Ari Kaplan is an attorney and freelance writer in New York City. He writes on topics ranging from technology to travel for Wired, eWEEk, RES, The American Lawyer, Art Byte, IP Worldwide, L, and others. See www.arikaplan.net.

PHOTO: RAE MCGRATH

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DENVER/BOULDER

BY BO MEHRAD

Jill Hennessey at the 23rd Denver International Film Festival, with *The Acting Class*, a film she produced and starred in.

WITH STARZ IN THEIR EYES

THE STARZ FILMCENTER, A UNIQUE COLLABORATION between the Denver Film Society, Colorado University-Denver, and the Starz Encore Group, is scheduled to officially open its doors in the Fall 2003. The $9 million center will be home to both the Denver Film Society and the Arts and Media Film Education Program of CU-Denver. As such, it is slated to become a unique media center, offering a dazzling mix of film programming, film education, festivals, and daily film screenings.

The educational aspect of the FilmCenter will be run in participation with CU Denver's college of Arts & Media and under the direction of film professor Howard Movshovitz. It will provide film education programs for K–12 and university classes, along with a digital editing facility for use by students.

Currently, daily screenings are up: the new renamed film theater is operating with interim physical enhancements, with daily programming on at least six screens. The offerings range from the latest indie and foreign films, such as *Wendigo* and *Little Otik*, to cinematheque-style programming, including classic re-releases and experimental work. The bulk of the programming is handled by the Denver Film Society, in consultation with the Starz Encore Group, and the day to day management is provided by Magnolia Pictures, an independent distribution and exhibition company based in New York.

The FilmCenter will also house the Denver International Film Festival, which is run by the Denver Film Society and which will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. In previous years, the festival has showcased more than 150 films over an 11 day stretch. Last year's festival included a closing night presentation of Peter Bogdanovich's *The Cat's Meow*. Bogdanovich was also honored with a lifetime achievement award, and the Film Society's Cassavetes award was presented to Richard Linklater for his innovative use of film technology. Previous Cassavetes award winners include Sean Penn and Barbara Kopple.

Visit www.starzfilmcenter.com and www.denverfilm.org.

DCM CENTRAL

THE DENVER CENTER MEDIA, A DIVISION of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, has long been producing works for national and international broadcast.

DCM was created in 1983 as the film and television branch of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Its mission is to support the promotional and outreach activities of the Center for the Performing Arts by providing creative media services.

The production history of DCM is long and ripe with awards. Under the guidance of current Executive Director Dirk Olson, DCM has produced an eclectic slate of work which has appeared on a wide variety of networks, including PBS, Bravo, A&E, and BBC. One of last year's highlights was *Stagestruck: Crossing the Green Room*, which premiered on Bravo, chronicling the lives of actors training in the master's program at the National Theatre Conservatory of the Denver Center Theatre Company.

Rodney Lizcano in Denver Center Media's *Stagestruck*.

For more info, visit www.dcpa.org.

FILMS FOR CHANGE

BOULDER IS A HOTBED OF POLITICAL activism, and since 1997 the AIVF Boulder Salon has participated in a popular monthly screening series of political activist videos. The program is co-presented by Boulder Community Television, Free Speech TV, and the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center (RMPJC). The screenings are often a preface to political

LEFT: LARRY LASZLOW; RIGHT: PAT SWITZER

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actions and debates, with notables such as Jello Biafra making an occasional appearance.

Films for Change Screenings. First Tuesday of each month, 7pm @ Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe. Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445, patricia@freespeech.org

BRAKHAGE FILM FORUM COMES TO AN END

As the lights went down on the Sunday night Stan Brakhage Film Forum this past April, a long-standing tradition came to an end. "Stan said it was like church—you could count on it to be there every week," recalls University of Colorado Associate professor Phil Solomon, a key organizer of the event.

The informal sessions involved noted experimental filmmaker Stan Brakhage exhibiting films from his personal collection, which included his own works and the works of other avant-garde filmmakers such as Joseph Cornell.

It began as a gathering of friends and filmmakers in Brakhage's cabin in the Colorado Mountains. Its more recent incarnation, which took place on the University of Colorado Boulder campus, started roughly nine years ago. The audience could vary in size from 15 to 50 attendees, comprised of students, visiting filmmakers, and a core group of regulars.

But with Brakhage's ailing health and an upcoming move to Canada, the end became inevitable. Solomon notes, "It's a great loss personally and for the scene, because there is a hunger out there for forums like this."

Happily all is not lost; a recent purchase of the complete set of Brakhage's work by the University of Colorado for its libraries insures that his legacy will live on. Also, Solomon is in the early fundraising stages for a Brakhage Research Center, which will include a theater and will house internegatives of his films along with his writings, on display for future scholars, students and filmmakers alike.

Bo Mehrad is an AIVF staff member and NY based writer/director. He cuts his own hair.

Update on Regional Salons

AIVF salons nurture our media communities

BY PRISCILLA GRIM

WHAT IS A SALON? A SALON, IN ITS PUREST form, is a gathering of individuals who wish to do nothing more than speak, listen to each other, and learn. Why do salons exist? Because humans have a thirst for sharing and gaining knowledge through dialogue. This is why we communicate with each other, and continually create new ways to do so. What is the role of a salon? To satisfy our need to have a community of individuals who can possibly change our lives, and to whom we can return the favor. Why would I want to start one up? Why not?

An AIVF Regional Salon is comprised of filmmakers of all types: producers, writers, directors, editors, designers, grips, gaffers, electrics, engineers, and dressers. Sometimes they come with one skill, sometimes they come with more skills than they have opportunities to utilize those skills. But they all have a common goal, to work independently, on their own terms, and where they want to live. The AIVF Salons began because media makers around the country face the challenges that come from working independently and need a community to share resources. This means finding new ways of working, learning how to share work in a meaningful way, learning where to find work, and exploring how to create work in their area. Not everyone has the resources or the desire to move to New York City or Los Angeles, so these alternative communities grew.

"It's really hard to pick up the phone and talk to strangers, but with the Cleveland AIVF Salon, we are no longer strangers."
— Cleveland documentary filmmaker B.J. Metro

IN 1997, ANNETTA MARION AND Bernadette Gillota decided to found the Cleveland Salon, so that the work they were fostering through the Ohio Independent Film Festival could continue throughout the year. Since its founding, the Cleveland Salon has created hands-on workshops for Salon attendees, a training partnership with the Cleveland Media Development Corporation for low-income adults, and supported the creation of the Cleveland Production Manual in cooperation with the Cleveland Film Commission.

Does Cleveland rock? It seems to be so. The training program with the Cleveland Media Development Corporation became a success, with some of the recipients working in California and some working in Ohio. Last year's Director of Photography workshop was sponsored by Kodak, among others, and brought out filmmakers from all over Ohio to experience the methods used by different cinematographers. Local DPs Robert Banks, Naomi Hollander, and John Turk discussed the basics of lighting and shooting a scene on 16mm film. In the most impressive part of the DP workshop, scenes that had been filmed by Salon members were screened the following weekend, by the group, for discussion.

For the past five years, the Salon has also offered a Fiscal Sponsorship program for filmmakers. The program has been successful in helping filmmakers gain access to further funding resources. For example, David Hall, a recent recipient of a fiscal sponsorship, successfully received a grant from the Greater Columbus Arts Council for his short film, *The Shovel*. This program is open to any media or film project. An interview process is required, and though only Ohio residents have applied thus far, it is open to anyone.

Most recently, in April, the Salon presented a panel discussion on the best ways to get the media's attention. Salon attendees were able to directly ask both local and national journalists what makes them pay attention, what outlets to go to first, and how to approach the media. Overall, the Cleveland Salon provides a great example of what can happen if you use your time, your resources, and your community wisely.

Cleveland Salon media panelist Julie Washington.

"The AIVF Austin Salon will provide a forum for film and video makers to show completed and in-progress works so that they may receive feedback and critiques from their peers. It will also be an opportunity for independent artists to find support, advice, and volunteers/labor for future projects."

IN THE SUMMER OF 1995, AMIE PETRONIS interned at the AIVF national office in New York City. Fired up by that experience and full of new information to share, she returned to Austin and founded the Austin AIVF Salon, which became a cen-

terpiece in Austin's burgeoning independent film community. After she moved to Pittsburgh, Tara Venaruso, Ben Davis, and Tommy Pallotta repositioned the salon as a venue to screen work.

Picking up where they left off, in 1999 Anne del Castillo worked for three years developing programs and convincing the Austin film community that a Salon could be a point of focus to look to when help or encouragement was needed. While del Castillo has recently stepped down from her role as coordinator of the AIVF Austin Salon, during her two years the Salon provided a space for filmmakers to come in, if only for one meeting, and share work. At the height of del Castillo's coordination, she presented eight screenings and a panel discussion within a six-month period.

A film with recent success at South by Southwest, *Bike Like U Mean It!*, was one such film that came into the AIVF Austin Salon. Director Susan Kirr says that, though she is involved with other film groups in town, the Salon screening provided "moral support." Though she and her partner already had a solid vision for their film, they needed the Salon space to share their film with a community that would understand the "blood, sweat, and tears that it takes to make a movie." The AIVF Salon served as another venue in which they could critically explore the film's message and method of storytelling.

New coordinator Jen White hopes to successfully focus on the biggest need of Austin filmmakers: financing. In the past, the Salon has provided workshops on how to apply for funding from the Texas Production Fund. White will continue to work with the Austin Film Society, but she wants to bring the film community together, by trying to get different local film groups to pool their efforts and form more of a true community, rather than continuing to lead a splintered existence. White comments that, "It's really bad—most of the films that come through Austin are deferred pay or no pay, unless it is studio work, and then you have to be union to work." She hopes that by forming more of a community, she and her fellow Austin filmmakers can wield their collective power to improve this situation.

IN SEATTLE, FILMMAKERS HEATHER AYRES and Jane Selle Morgan established a new Salon in December of last year. There are many reasons Ayres and Morgan cite for believing that an AIVF Salon is what Seattle needs. Most important is the fact that, though Seattle, like Austin, has a thriving film community, many people are left to work by themselves and can be completely unaware of the various resources available to them at the local level. With a community effort, they want to force recognition of the work that is in Seattle, and with this effort there can also arise a system of connections and opportunities.

The mission of the Seattle Salon is to be a bridge for many people, so that competition can remain in the artistic realm, and not with jobs or opportunities. Specifically, they aim to be a bond for a community of creators that Ayres and Morgan see as being particularly diverse. From features to shorts, experimental works and narrative, documentary and fiction, new ways of storytelling is what the Seattle filmmaker strives to achieve.

"The energy of Seattle? Make a statement. Whatever you're doing—film, video, media art—explore something new, say it differently. That's why I live here."

—Seattle Salon coordinator Heather Ayres

Heather Dew Oaksen and Norie Sato's *Pause* is a six-channel sound and video installation.

The organizing duo plan on several different ways of getting local work—and their message—out to the public. They have initiated a series of "Meet and Greets," based on the New York model for networking and working sessions. These "Meet and Greets" will introduce people and production companies to rising filmmakers in the Seattle Area. To fill the time in-between Salon meetings, Ayres and Morgan are initiating monthly "Coffee Chats." The chats serve as an informal networking environment where members can update each other about the progress of their work. In addition, an online calendar of events will provide information and dialogue that will be invaluable to the Seattle independent community.

What is left after networking are the financing, equipment needs, and distribution outlets for Seattle filmmakers' work. As a first step, the 911 Media Arts center has generously given space for Salon meetings. The media center hosts classes and productions of all kinds—they even have an animation studio. Wiggly World Studios has proven to be another valuable filmmaking resource for local filmmakers with screening rooms, editing suites, and equipment rental. Working in tandem, these two organizations provide Seattle filmmakers answers, space, equipment, and resources. The Salon will serve as a guide and intermediary to these resources, while the 911 Media Arts center and Wiggly World in turn support Ayres and Morgan.

A great opportunity for local filmmakers and artists will occur this October, when Seattle hosts the National Association of Media Arts and Culture Conference. The Seattle conference will lend an even greater air of credibility to this thriving, but nationally unrecognized cultural community. The recent rescue of the Washington State Film Office, which was to be combined with the Vancouver Film Office, has also reemphasized the unique viability of the Seattle filmmaking community. Ayres and Morgan hope to nurture this new recognition and provide the guiding force to the area's filmmakers.

THE SALON MODEL HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE since antiquity, wherever people of every background and discipline could gather over drinks or a good meal to voice their ideas and question the theories of another. The AIVF Salon can fill this role for independent media makers of today. No membership required, just a few passionate souls willing to give some time to each other.

Priscilla Grim lives in Brooklyn and is a filmmaker, activist, and the membership director for AIVF.

The AIVF Regional Salons

provide opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons section at www.aivf.org for more details.

Be sure to contact your local Salon Leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 366-1538
jeff_burns23@yahoo.com
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX:
Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday of the month, 7 pm
Contact: Jen White, jenslittlemovie@hotmail.com, (512)917-3027 www.austinfilm.org

Boston, MA:
Center For Independent Documentary
Where: 1608 Beacon Street, Basement of the Waban Public Library
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
FSimon@aol.com

Boulder, CO:
"Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
patricia@freespeech.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun St.
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841; Peter Wentworth, filmsalon@aol.com

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315, OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com
www.ohiofilms.com

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700, bart@videofest.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
allen@passionriver.com, www.passionriver.com

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: (713) 522-8592, swamp@swamp.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite, charles.white@tdsi.com

Brian Avenet-Bradley's *Freez'r*.

NEWS FROM ATLANTA

In May the Atlanta salon hosted the panel discussion, "Lookout! It's the Return of Independent Horror!" With several Atlanta horror productions in preproduction or already in the can, a question emerges: In the world of kitschy, B-genre horror flicks, is everything old new again? Local filmmakers Brian and Laurence Avenet-Bradley and Matt Green certainly think so. The Avenet-Bradley's *Freez'er* and Green's *Viscous*, both shot locally, focused on two dimensions of the horror genre, the psycho-thriller and the creature feature.

In July the Salon will host a meet and greet with movie marketer Simon M. Kornbilt. The former head of worldwide marketing for Universal Pictures, Kornbilt will talk about the special challenges involved in reaching audiences in a competitive market. Currently the director of the newly formed Film Institute at Kennesaw State University, Kornbilt will share his insights about the state of the film biz, including how to create a blockbuster marketing campaign, working with the biggest names in the biz, and the various revenue streams for films.

For more information, contact mark@imagefv.org.

Lincoln, NE:
Nebraska Independent Film Project
When: Second Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, mediaarts33@yahoo.com
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday of the month, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
mmasucci@aol.com

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
betuccia@aol.com

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7 pm (Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Kate Kressmann-Kehoe, (716) 244-8629, ksk@netacc.net

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
aivf@mediaartscenter.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
mybluesun@hotmail.com; Jane Selle Morgan (206) 915-6263, jane@heropictures.com

South Florida:
Contact: Dominic Giannetti, (561) 313-0330
themoviebiz@hotmail.com
www.moviebiz.info

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday of the month, 6 pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno, yourdestiny@mindspring.com

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, jatvelez@hotmail.com
DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x 4, aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community. Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information.

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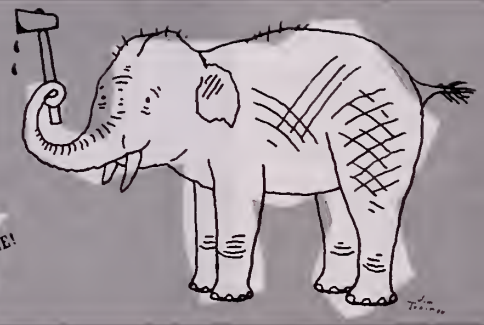
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Books

American Cinematographer Manual, Eighth Edition
edited by Rob Hummel
©2001 The ASC Press
www.cinematographer.com

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

THIS PAST MARCH, THE Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences conferred a special Award of Commendation to the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) for its ongoing publication of the *American Cinematographer Manual*. And no wonder. Since 1930 this manual has been a "bible" for photographers, covering everything from camera prep to circles of confusion.

The *Cinematographer Manual* is without question the most comprehensive field guide available for DPs. It contains indispensable charts of technical data, including depth of field, field of view, filter conversion, and footage to screentime: pages that I guarantee are well worn in manuals owned by any active camera person. Other elementary information includes threading diagrams for all the most popular film cameras, and guidelines for equipment checkout and film testing.

These reference sections are complemented by articles covering special techniques of photography: from the basics of how lenses work to shooting day for night. ASC publishes a separate *Video Manual*, but the *Cinematographer Manual* contains a wealth of information about film to video conversion and digital effects.

The Eighth edition is the first update since 1993, and the changes are substantial. Almost every article has been revised and updated; illustrations have been redrawn (in two color for added clarity!); and tables data have been entirely recalculated. A more legible layout and additional material brings the edition to 969 pages long: half again as long as the 1993 Seventh edition, and almost two and half times the girth of my own 1986 Sixth edition.

This is my only beef with edition Eight. Who wants to lug around 4 lbs. of specialized information in their active duty fanny pack? Editor Rob Hummel made a commendable effort to reorganize material in an intuitive manner, stacking education to the front and reference to the rear. Which means the ASC missed an obvious solution: to publish the edition as two volumes so that DPs could elect to carry one or the other or both into the field. Hopefully they will consider this solution for edition Nine.

Meanwhile, Eight has plenty to offer to justify its $99.95 price tag. It's a valuable resource for novices and experts alike, addressing both the science and the art of cinematography. Beyond the comprehensive updates, new articles address additional areas of postproduction, including using digital key numbers, HD telecine, and digital film postproduction. A personal favorite addition is the closing essay "A Jumpstart Guide for the Student Cinematographer" by *Rumblefish* DP Stephen Burum, which reviews the basics of cinematography without talking down to the reader, and even gives away a few tips for better photography.

Ultimately, as Burum sums up, "All the voluminous books and charts are only a starting point for learning the art and craft of cinematography. So let's get to work."

Elizabeth Peters is director of AIVF/FIVF and publisher/acting editor of The Independent. *In a former life she had time to AC a bit, and still has the upper arms to prove it.*

The Technique of Film and Video Editing: Theory and Practice, Third Ed.
by Ken Dancyger
©2002 Butterworth-Heinemann Press
www.bhusa.com/focalbooks/

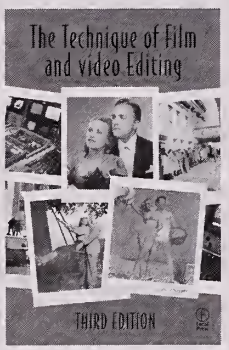
BY KYLE HENRY

GIRTH DOES NOT WARRANT GREATNESS. Time and again, survey books on the history of cinema, or the chronicle of a particular element of cinematic creation (cinematography, editing, etc.), suck the life out of the living history they are intent on interpreting. What astounds is the rate at which these academic textbooks are foisted upon unsuspecting film/video production and critical studies students as gospel.

Books like H.W. Janson's *The History of Art* and Bordwell's and Thompson's *Film Art*, among others, might be useful for competent teachers as launch pads for survey classes; however, such texts can also take the initial spark of creative interplay between "art" object and spectator, between image and interpretive mind, and snuff it out through dull, reductive summations that do nothing to explode the layers of meaning contained within every encounter.

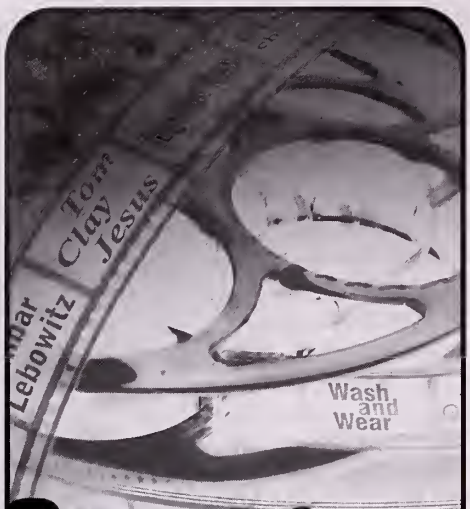
This is a long-winded way of saying how much I abhor books like Ken Dancyger's *The Technique of Film and Video Editing*, weighing in at over 400 pages, and now, shockingly, in its third edition. I feel I can be harsh in this review knowing full well this tome has an assured textbook market.

Stating in the preface that his book includes a "comprehensive history of editing," the first 261 pages reduces this history to platitudes, simplistic categorization of directors and cinematic movements, and lengthy plot summations of films. Moreover, there is an extravagant amount of attention paid to the Hollywood style of seamless editing. Written on a level that makes the *New York Times* seem like literature, let's hear what discerning conclusions Dancyger draws from Hitchcock's oeuvre: "Hitchcock was a master of the art of editing.... Not only did he experiment with sound and image, but he enjoyed that experimentation. His enjoyment broadened the editor's repertoire while giving immeasurable pleasure to film audiences. His was a unique talent."



Missing from Dancyger's inquiry is any specificity regarding Hitchcock's technical and artistic experimentation, and where it fits into the historical record on the development of film editing. Instead of a learned analysis, the reader is treated to a knot of empty generalities.

Even high school textbooks are able to



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define their terms, which Dancyger seems loathe to do, throwing around words like "pace," "speed," "identification," and "experimentation" without adequately bothering to offer a detailed discussion of what he means. To be fair, he does provide an index of film terminology, but after reading the book I was still confused with his use of terms like "rhythm" and "pace."

In other instances, his analysis of specific filmmakers' intentions and techniques are extremely limited, or just flat out wrong. When discussing nonlinear editing, he dismisses the works of Nicholas Roeg (citing *Don't Look Now*) as experiments and flirtations with nonlinearity, which he claims did not come into full flower until Quentin Tarantino (*Pulp Fiction*) and Fraçois Girard (*Thirty-Two Short Films About Glen Gould*) arrived on the scene. Having worked for four years in a repertory cinema in Houston, Texas, seeing on average seven to eight films a week, I'm inoculated against such inane descriptions because I know Roeg's work is defined by nonlinearity. Anyone who has seen Roeg's *Performance*, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, *Insignificance*, or *Eureka!* knows what a shameful slight, as well as major error, it would be to call Roeg's fundamental engagement with nonlinearity "flirtatious."

What one wishes for, and never gets, is a shot-by-shot analysis of film scenes illustrating innovative advancements in the art form of editing. The book's stills could have been used to break down shots by sequence, but instead are mainly publicity material rejects that merely represent the film under discussion.

Perhaps the great film editing treatise filmmakers, film editors, and cinema lovers are waiting for will not be in book form at all; instead, information will be relayed through a DVD or CD-ROM that plays scenes, then breaks them down shot-by-shot while examining the choices the editor made. Supplemental essays by leading theorists would complement the package. Until then, however, I'd recommend aspiring editors to stick to reading the work of editing theorists like Eisenstein or working editors like Walter Murch (*In the Blink of an Eye*) or Gabriella Oldham's *First Cut: Conversations With Film Editors*. All are much more insightful into the craft, art, and history of editing than *The Technique of Film and Video Editing*.

Kyle Henry is a filmmaker, film editor, and writer living in Austin, Texas.

Cinéma du Réel

Reality at its best

BY HENRY LEWES

THE APPROACH TO THE CINÉMA DU RÉEL International Film Festival in Paris is like no other. It involves passing among acrobats, fire eaters, musicians, and pavement artists performing in front of the impressive Pompidou Centre, which houses France's modern art collection. Long snaking queues head toward the Pompidou's two entrances, one set aside for the Cinéma du Réel. Once inside, glass elevators silently whisk the filmgoer away from the tourist crowds and down to the lower levels where friendly bilingual receptionists are waiting.

Now in its 24th year, Cinéma du Réel (réel meaning reality) is one of the premiere festivals for documentary films. Approximately 110 films from 29 countries were shown during festival week, from March 8-17, including special screenings of Frederick Wiseman's recent project, *Domestic Violence*, where he painstakingly documents the Spring Crisis Center, in Tampa, Florida, for abused women, and Ram Loevy's *Close, Closed, Closure*, about the abject conditions under which a million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip now live. Other sections were the French and International Competitions, and a fascinating retrospective of Slovakian and Czech films, the earliest being a 1928 silent on nightlife in prewar Prague.

Acceptance into the Cinéma du Réel is a challenge, since the film subjects must fit within the categories of either ethnography or sociology. In discussing emerging trends in documentary and the demands of the festival, Festival Director Suzette Glénadel noted that "The documentary, so it is said, is in better health than ever. Yet this statement unfortunately needs to be qualified, as it all depends on whether one is referring to reportage documentaries or creative documentaries. The misleading simplicity offered by new film techniques, such as lightweight digital cameras, has much to do with this. Information is captured with no real demand being made on the quality of either images or sound—a major weakness in the 2002 submissions."

Despite these growing pains among documentary makers using new technologies, the festival acquired many moving films on a wide variety of subjects, such as war, memory, tradition, sickness, faith, and lost dreams.

The subject of loss was a dominant theme in many of the Czech and Slovak films, including *Intimate Lighting*, made in 1965 by Czech filmmaker Ivan Passer, who was once an assistant to Milos Forman. This minifeature concerns two musicians, one isolated by monotonous provincial life, the other living in Prague, but both feeling self pity for their failure to fulfill youthful ambitions. Passer, who has lived in the United States since 1969, recalled working under the Communist regime in then Czechoslovakia with remarkable clarity. "They let me make *Intimate Lighting* because it was uncontroversial and cheap. They just wanted us to create films to propagate Communist party policies. Sometimes we had to get scripts past eight different committees. They let my film be shown because it made money abroad. But later it was withdrawn because it didn't have a strong Party message."

War was the subject of Slovak director Peter Kerekes's *Légendes of Ladomirova*. "I wanted, he explained, "to capture the history of the Ruthenian minority who live in a village on the borders of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Rumania. I discovered that grandfathers repeat their stories to their grandchildren endlessly, so they are word perfect to camera. They described to me the idyllic rural life they lived before the war, with the peaceful labor of farming through the changing seasons. Then came the occupation, with men fleeing into the freezing woods to avoid conscription into the Red Army. Then the village monks fled, except for one who stayed and lay in his church in a coma for seven months before dying." Kerekes's response was to create a series of poetic cameos, dominated by scudding clouds, bare silhouetted branches, and snow covered paths.

Another immensely disturbing war film was *Le Témoin* (*The Witness*), by Slovak

Anastasia Lapsui and Markku Lehmuskallio's *Paimen*.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF CINÉMA DU RÉEL

director Dusan Hudeck. Alexandre Bruer was a teenager when the Nazis started hunting for Jews in his hometown of Bratislava. Pretending to be a Christian, he became the uniformed helper of a unit that eventually killed his parents. In *Le Témoin*, Bruer returns to the rooms, streets, and caves where the incidents took place, recounting his appalling experience of being a secret witness to the massacre of some 800 Jews and partisans. His detailed recall of what he had suffered more than 50 years ago was astonishing. When the screening ended the audience reacted with absolute silence, as though in shock.

The several Communist propaganda documentaries shown seemed to have gained a certain humorous charm over time. From Slovakia, Michael Suchy's *I Have Come From Far Away* attempts to show that gypsies are upright and trustworthy citizens. The film observes their rather chaotic life style for 25 minutes before the commentator summarizes the point of the film, "Of course these people can be good Communists, just like you or I!"

Hernan Khourian's *Les Salles*, (*The Wards*) is set in an impoverished government hospital for the mentally ill in Argentina. One of the nurses featured in the film explains, "Because there are so few of us we're cleaning ladies, mothers, and sisters to them, as well as being nurses. Some patients have been here 30 years, so we've grown old together." In between intervals of lining up to take their pills, the patients seem to spend most of their time being harried by the nurses to clean up. As the camera freely noses its way through wards, kitchens, and recreation rooms, the atmosphere of bewilderment becomes palpable. The hapless inhabitants appear both as victims of a bankrupt system and of the camera. Khourian's investigation was certainly well meaning, but the ethics of his filming mentally disabled patients, who are in no position to comprehend the violation of their privacy, is open to question.

The films *Safar: The Journey*, by Sandhya Suri, and Andreas Pichler's *Mirabella/SindelfIngen: A Return Ticket to Germany*, poignantly reveal the dilemmas posed by immigration. Since the 1950s, thousands of Italians from Mirabella, Sicily, have journeyed to Sindelfingen, Germany, to find work. Today, three generations later, these immigrants are uncertain of their identity. The young have almost become German. The old fulfill their dream of retiring to Mirabella only to discover they no longer belong, and that they miss their children. *Safar* is the story of an Indian doctor, who immigrated to Britain in the 1960s with a plan to gain further qualifications and return home. Year after year, in spite of his parents' entreaties, he defers going back. Eventually he is comfortably settled in a smart house with his wife and family. Apparently, he never went back, even for a visit, until after learning of his mother's death. Told through Super 8 movies and cassette letters, *Safar* is a moving testament to the pain of separation, and the personal transformation that is part of the immigrant process.

The 'real" human condition. Top: Ram Loevy's *Close, Closed, Closure*. Middle: Mahvash Sheikhosleslami's *The Old Man from Hara*. Bottom: Kornelijus Matuzevicius and Diana Matuzeviciene's *A Local*.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, the inability to travel or leave home is the subject of Loevy's *Close, Closed, Closure*, an Israeli-French coproduction. This is a remarkably fair account of the frustrating and impoverished lives experienced by Palestinian refugees confined to the Gaza strip. Surrounded by electric fences with exit checks resembling those of a totalitarian state, workers queue endlessly to go to nearby Israeli factories. As Palestinians and Israelis state their cases, the anger each side feels is abundantly clear. The film's most haunting moments were contained in two striking images: a buoyant youngster who had lost his legs because his father was unable to take him to a hospital in Tel Aviv; the fear in the eyes of an Israeli official whose job was checking Palestinians through a turnstile gate as they exited to go to work in Israel.

Cinéma du Réel is a festival rich in material for anyone wanting to learn more about the human condition. This year's crop of films is an insistent reminder that the need to record and remember is vital in the face of mounting dehumanization occurring around the world.

For more information, see www.bpi.fr.

Henry Lewes has directed documentaries in Britain, Australia, Canada, and the Middle East. He writes for International Documentary, Take One, Film West, Africa Film & TV, *among others.*

No 'ghetto' *at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival*

BY ERICA MARCUS

FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS, MARGINALIZED communities have created their own media organizations and festivals. Independents and audiences yearning for representative images have been among the beneficiaries. Great films have found their initial audiences at identity-based film festivals. However, in the last few years, many filmmakers have questioned whether they want to premiere their films in these festivals, fearful that they will be "ghettoizing" their work. Programmers have been dishing some of their star directors when they get that kind of response, "So and so wants to premier at Sundance, so he won't show his little gem to us." Ooh, that hurts, but of course this goes back and forth behind closed doors, so it is rarely addressed publicly.

Let's bust the door open by looking at a case study of the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF), which celebrated its twentieth anniversary in early March. Bay Area audiences had the opportunity to feast on 134 films, featuring Asians and Asian Americans. This year's festival was dedicated to the memory of James Yee. Many of you remember Jim; he was a dedicated and committed media activist and the founding executive director of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA), which presents SFIAAFF. With a ferocious indie spirit himself, Jim went on to serve as the executive director of ITVS in 1994. He continued to fight the good fight with CPB and PBS, wrestling money from the feds for independents until his untimely death last year.

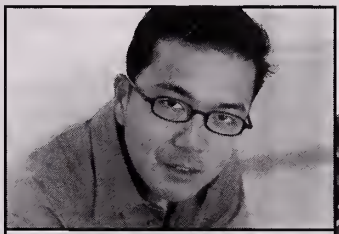
Jim, with his dry sense of humor and intelligence, would probably have had a lot to say about the subject of this article, but since he is fighting the good fight somewhere else, I turned to Hong Kong-born Roger Garcia. "Whether you premier at a mainstream or ethnic film festival is not so much the question. It depends on where you think you can get the maximum bang for your festival buck. You go where you can get the best exposure and publicity for your film," says Garcia, who produces both studio and independent films, and is the author of *Out of the Shadows: Asians in American Cinema.*

SFIAAFF director Chi Hui Yang talked about his experience programming the opening night film. In *Better Luck Tomorrow*, high SAT scores prove lethal for a group of Southern California teens. But Yang knew it wouldn't be lethal for the festival; he recognized it as a groundbreaking Asian American film that would get people talking. The film's director, Justin Lin, was known in the community; he had last been at the SFIAAFF with *Shopping for Fangs* in 1997. *Better Luck Tomorrow* had a very different kind of bite, one that Yang was excited about: "Justin committed to SFIAAFF before he went to Sundance. *Better Luck Tomorrow* has a lot of buzz and Justin could have chosen not to screen his film at Asian American festivals. But...he has a long-term vision. He recognizes that if the film does well, it will get the industry and audiences to pay attention to him, to his actors, and for them to take a chance with other Asian American directors."

I asked Lin if his decision to show at SFIAAFF was a business one or an emotional one, and he explained that "If everything came down to business, I would not have made this film. It was an emotional decision to use my life savings and all my credit cards to make the film. I did this film to have a dialogue inside and outside of my community about the 'model minority' stereotype, and about youth today. And that is what happened. It was refreshing. It was not just about the party afterward."

Timothy Bui also hoped to have a crossover success with SFIAAFF's closing night film, *Green Dragon*, which he directed. In the midst of all the soldier films that are Hollywood's contribution to Bush's "antiterrorist" campaign, *Green Dragon* is a breath of fresh air. Instead of focusing on the familiar stories of the American boys in the trenches, the film centers on the experiences of the Vietnamese refugees who first arrived in America during the fall of Saigon, in 1975.

After its Sundance premiere, Bui felt that *Green Dragon* already had the industry's attention. This was important because he believes the film is not only a Vietnamese story but also a film with "universal themes about humanity." In a



Justin Lin, director of *Better Luck Tomorrow*; right: Karin Anna Cheung (Stephanie) and John Cho (Steve) prepare to meet their destiny in *Better Luck Tomorrow*.

PHOTOS: SFIAAFF

recent interview, Bui added that "Asian film festivals are a wonderful platform for Asian artists or Asian-themed films to reach very specific audiences. So if your film has the opportunity to do both—why not?"

Often filmmakers do not have that luxury. Quentin Lee faced this dilemma last year when deciding where to open his film *Drift*, a searingly honest gay relationship drama that features an Asian American lead. "The San Francisco Asian American Film Festival has always been supportive of my work. But often you only get one shot to launch your film. I had to choose between going to SFIAAFF or Frameline, San Francisco's gay festival. I ultimately premiered *Drift* at Frameline, but it was a very hard decision," noted Lee.

Masami Teraoka in *The Floating World: Masami Teraoka and his Art.*

Yang acknowledged that it was sometimes an agonizing decision for filmmakers, "Many directors who started out making work with Asian American themes have now moved on to exploring other stories that are not specifically about the community. But we are here to support them; our ambitions are the same; we want the community to see the films and we want the mainstream to be exposed to them. But there are limitations to an ethnic-based film festival, particularly one that is Asian American because there is such a history of how Asians have been represented. It is hard to convince the studios, agents, and the industry at large that they should come to the festivals and see that there is an audience for Asian American films."

The industry obviously missed a lot of new, original talent. Running over 10 days with numerous venues all over the Bay Area, it was clear that the SFIAAFF has come a long way since the first festival in 1982. At least 16,000 attended this year and more than 20 programs sold out.

With diverse films from all over the globe, audiences had a lot to choose from. On one evening, you could have viewed the seldom-screened classic *Chan is Missing*, by Wayne Wang, or you could have caught a challenging shorts program featuring up and coming filmmakers. The acclaimed documentary, *Daughter from Danang* was another hot flick at the festival. If you got sold out of that, you could have joined the standing ovation that actors Nancy Kwan and James Shigeta received after the screening of the 1961 musical, *Flower Drum Song*. During the screening, the folks next to me were practically dancing in their seats.

If you wanted something with a queer palate, you could have seen Zang Pictures's *Ke Kulana He Mahu: Remembering a Sense of Place*. The film transcends the typical gender-bender documentary by contextualizing the history of Hawaiian queers, revealing how colonization and modernization attempted to slaughter the spirit of indigenous Hawaii and the once honored transgendered people of the island.

Films about youth seemed to be a motif. The Filipino kids in *Demons* and the Chinese students in *Conjugation* inhabit a radically different landscape than *Better Luck Tomorrow's* bad boys. *Demons*' director Marion O'Hara wove class, local mythology, and the horror of war into this very different Romeo and Juliet story. *Conjugation*, Emily Tang's debut film from China, is a masterful portrayal of life among a group of friends after the 1989 Tiananmen student movement. The most important character in the film appears only through his haunting letters to a nonexistent sister. Yet each character is carefully and subtly drawn, making this an unforgettable first film.

From the producers of the recently released *Beijing Bicycle*, was *Betelnut Beauty*, a Taiwanese film about two young dreamers. Director Lin Cheng-sheng's other works have garnered acclaim at several Cannes festivals, and this new film, with its more commercial feel, still hits its mark. *Betelnut* opens with a memorable image: In the middle of a downpour Feng (Chang Chen from *Happy Together*) joins the rebellious Fei Fei (pop star Sinje) for a wailing scream in the rain. The two become lovers and try to forge a safe haven for themselves in a world that takes unexpected turns. With a cast and crew that includes some of Taiwan's best film artists, *Betelnut Beauty* is a universal story refreshingly told.

On the SFIAAFF documentary front, unexpected turns and large audiences were the norm. Wonsuk Chin's *E-Dreams* takes audiences on a roller-coaster ride inside the offices of the Asian American-founded Internet company, Kozmo. In contrast to the up and down world of the dot-coms was veteran director Pamela Yates's *Presumed Guilty*, about the Public Defenders office in San Francisco.

Yates believes that sometimes launching your film at a niche market festival like SFIAAFF can bring more attention, explaining that "We were so happy that SFIAAFF wanted the world premiere. Even though the film is a national film and not only an Asian American story; one of the protagonists, Jeff Adachi, is Asian American as was the defendant [who] he represented.... SFIAAFF has a very broad concept of what they consider an international Asian American film. They have a great publicist, Karen Larsen, and they got over 1000 people into the Castro on a sunny weekend afternoon!.... After the festival, we were able to roll over *Presumed Guilty* to the Roxie Cinema here in San Francisco, where it had a limited theatrical run."

Louise Lo had not doubts about whether to do the world premiere of her elegant documentary *The Floating World: Masami Teraoka and His Art* at SFIAAFF.

PHOTO: SFIAAFF

Her film sold out and a second screening was added. "I believe in supporting festivals that highlight Asian American subjects. And the stronger the selection of films, the better the chance these festivals have, and we have, of succeeding," Lo remarked.

One of the most exciting elements of SFIAAFF is their definition of Asian and Asian American cinema. Films from Central Asia, India, the Far East, and Southeast Asia have always been an integral part of the festival. Yet it was a surprise for director Babak Shokrian when he got a call from the festival with a request to screen his film. He explained that as a first generation Iranian American, he didn't realize that the festival would include a film about the Iranian American experience, "It really gives me a sense of being part of the greater Asian American community." Shokrian's film, *America So Beautiful*, set in Los Angeles during the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, was eagerly received by the audience.

In a town that features almost one film festival a month, the enthusiastic response to SFIAAFF makes it likely that the fest is here to stay. Yet some filmmakers may still choose to premier new work elsewhere. Margaret Cho may have gotten her own network show, and Charlie might have acquired his own Asian American angel, but as digital artist R. Ho told me, there was still a strong need for Asian American festivals: "Lucy Liu is an incredibly talented actress, but when she kung-fued her way into Charlie's Angels, we know who was controlling that script. It is the same with Margaret Cho. Yes, she got her own show based on her successful stand-up act. Yet, they did not give her a chance; they hired a team of mostly non-Asian writers who wouldn't let her use her own material. It is all about who has control. This festival does not 'ghettoize' us, we represent ourselves here, have her own voices heard, and make the community base stronger."

Erica Marcus has been working in film for the last 20 years. Fluent in Mandarin Chinese, she has line-produced narratives in the United States and Asia. Her doc, My Home, My Prison, *about one of the first Palestinians to initiate a dialogue with the Israelis, premiered at Sundance. She is currently completing a new film about youth in Lebanon.*

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Major funding for RFP 2002 provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)

The Environmental Film Festival

Letting a thousand flowers bloom

BY JANA GERMANO

IF FILM ENABLES US TO SEE THE world through another's eyes, then the 10th annual Environmental Film Festival lends us those eyes.

Using the city of Washington, D.C., as its stage, films were shown over an 11-day period in March at embassies, museums, environmental groups, international institutions, libraries, and community centers. This is an environmental film festival not only by theme, but also because of its ability to adapt so naturally into its urban environment—with 65 screens throughout the nation's capital actively involved in presenting the festival's message.

John Ankele and Anne Macksound's *Arms for the Poor.*

Because the festival isn't held in a central location, it introduces people to resources throughout the city, making it even more of a community event. According to the Festival founder, Flo Stone, "It's encouraging to go to these places and know that they're open to the public. Someone can come to a film and the next day go back to the Library of Congress or National Geographic."

If the term "environmental" makes you think of activists chaining themselves to trees, think again. The Environmental Film Festival offers 105 films ranging from serious, issue-driven documentaries, such as *Bill Moyers Report: Earth on Edge*, to art films like *Days of Heaven* (introduced by director Terrence Malick) and lighthearted animated works.

In 1992, Stone, a leader in thematic film festivals and the founder of the Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival, took advantage of the fact that Washington, D.C., didn't have a major film festival. She saw it as an opportunity to broaden people's access to quality films that would never be shown at local theatres. According to Rick Silverman, director of the Telluride Mountainfilm Festival, "Many of these films do not get picked up for wide distribution. We're not here to make film deals, but to bring films to [audiences]."

At the time she founded the festival, Stone felt that environmental films were becoming too strident, making it important to look at the topic of environmentalism through a broader and more overarching lens.

While the term "environmental" has traditionally been used to refer to the ecological impact of altering the environment, the film festival organizers lean toward environmentalist Barry Commoner's view: "The first law of ecology is that everything is related to everything else."

This broad-minded interpretation did leave some people musing on the connection of some of the films to the environment. After the screening at a local arts workshop of *Storm Over Tibet*—a 1952 film in which the filmmaker seamlessly matched footage he'd shot during a 1935 scientific expedition in the Himalayas with a fictional story—viewer David Franke said that although he'd enjoyed the film, "I couldn't see how this came in under the Environmental Film Festival."

Part of a two-film presentation shown at The Textile Museum in conjunction with the exhibit "Hidden Treasures of Peru: Q'ero Textiles," *Carnival in Q'eros* is a fly-on-the-wall ethnographic film in which a remote community of Peruvian Indians conduct their annual spiritual celebration to promote their livestock's fertility. Filmmaker John Cohen believes that his film comes in under the "environmental" umbrella because "People in this film, and whose textiles are on exhibit, live in touch with the land and nature and the Gods. Everything is part of everything else, the term 'environment' is just our word to cover all that...a term used in our specialized world."

One engaging film that lightly delivers the message that the earth is a small, finite place, and that one's actions have consequences, is *The Flight of the Stone*. It follows the orbit of a stone thrown in anger as it travels around the earth, astonishing both the film's subjects and its viewers. One can't help but marvel at the "how did they do that?" shooting technique or at this film's take on karma, what goes around comes around. Silverman introduced this short as one of the selections from the Telluride Festival. Another pick from Telluride was *Lost Animals of the 20th Century*, a haunting depiction of entire species destroyed by human progress and greed—once there were so many passenger pigeons in the United States that they blocked out the sun before the last one was shot in the wild in 1900.

The festival also offered the unique opportunity for the audience to become involved through postscreening Q & A periods with filmmakers, or an expert on a film's topic. "You want to set up an atmosphere where it's open and people will say what they're thinking," Stone explains. And there was certainly no shortage of audience participation.

Some questions concerned issues raised in the films, such as those revealed in *The Shaman's Apprentice* at the Natural History Museum. The film shows how the death of every Amazonian shaman amounts to an extinction of his or her botanical knowledge. When a viewer asked why the tribes are disappearing faster than the rainforest they live in, Silverman responded, "We disappear more quickly than the last vestiges that support us."

Other queries focused on the filmmaking process or a film's affect on public awareness. *The Hospital at the End of the*

World put a human face on an ecological catastrophe. Where once there was a seaside resort several hours flight time from Moscow, now there is a desert. Ever since the Aral Sea disappeared because the two rivers feeding it were diverted for cotton production, the busiest place in town is the tuberculosis infirmary. In response to a question on gauging the effectiveness of the film's message, director Geoff Bowie said that *The Nature of Things*, a best-selling CBC series where the program aired, is seen in 60 countries throughout the world. "The film has done something to build awareness, and many more people will eventually see it."

In some cases, it was the filmmaker who had the opportunity to learn from the audience. This was evident in the discussion following *On the Brink*, which will, upon completion, be part of the ongoing PBS series, *Journey to Planet Earth*. While the program aimed to explore how severe environmental deprivation increases hostilities around the world, audience members pointed out that this link wasn't effectively made, and suggested including more interviews to strengthen and personalize the issues. One viewer, familiar with the history of Latin America, argued that the real problem was not due as much to the scarcity of resources as to other factors, such as corruption, weak governments, and the unequal distribution of resources, none of which came up in *On the Brink*.

For one independent filmmaker, the festival offered useful contacts. *Yucca Mountain* posed the question of whether U.S. citizens should trust the declared safety of a government project—in this case, a proposed nuclear waste disposal site in the Nevada desert. After the screening, filmmaker Jon Sorenson was approached by representatives from the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Nevada Democratic Senator Harry Reid's office, and the Cornell Environmental Film Festival, all of whom were interested in showing the film.

The festival's unencumbered approach —many venues, several free screenings—is possible because the presenting organizations cover their own screening and operating costs. Moreover, sponsors, including the Ford Motor Company, the Cartoon Network, and four private foundations "donate the money to pull together a festival like this," Stone notes.

It's not a competitive but a collaborative venture between the festival office and the presenting organizations, which select and develop their own film programming. Sometimes the presenters approach Stone with a program and she suggests a better film on their topic of interest. "But we've never turned down a film," she says. The festival has no formal submission or centralized screening process.

While this leads to a festival that's inclusive, one that lets a thousand flowers bloom, the flip side is that it's neither selective nor exclusive. So what does this mean for the viewers? There were some acclaimed films, like Agnès Varda's *The Gleaners & I*, a look at French scavengers who pick over harvested fields, and which won Best Documentary at the New York Film Critics Circle. But while it was evident that passion about the issues was behind all the works, poetry—that which elevates a film above the realm of the ordinary—was much more elusive.

Matthew Testa's *Buffalo War*, shown at American University's Center for Social Media, however, was just such a transcendent film, with superior production values that also set it apart. A lyrical portrayal of the conflict between Native Americans, ranchers, government officials, and environmental activists over the killing of America's last wild buffalo is presented around the framework of the Lakota Sioux's 500-mile spiritual march across Montana. Rosalie Little Thunder, a tribal elder, explains that the Lakota aren't motivated by economics or politics, but rather a sense of sharing an "inseparable destiny with the buffalo. To those who like to control nature, the natural world can be threatening."

After the screening, the Center for Social Media presented to an overflowing crowd an informative panel of festival filmmakers, funders, and community outreach experts to discuss the use of film as a tool for social change.

Matthew Testa's *Buffalo War* is a lyrical examination of the conflict over the killing of the last wild buffalo.

Left: Marilyn and Hal Weiner's *On the Brink* will screen on PBS.

The Environmental Film Festival also used the opportunity created by its broad outlook and expansive aspirations to widen its impact. This could be seen through the presence of grade-schoolers at the multiple library screenings of the Dr. Seuss classic, *The Lorax*. As the children and other viewers left the screenings, they were given potted tree seeds to nurture. Along with those little pots, they also carried out the seeds of their future concern for the environment.

It's just another way that the festival helps to change the environment from being a singular issue to be viewed and assessed only through the eyes of environmentalists and experts, to one that needs to be considered interconnected and vigilantly watched by all of us.

Jana Germano is a freelance writer covering film and media issues. She can be reached at Jana@erols.com.

9.11 FILMS

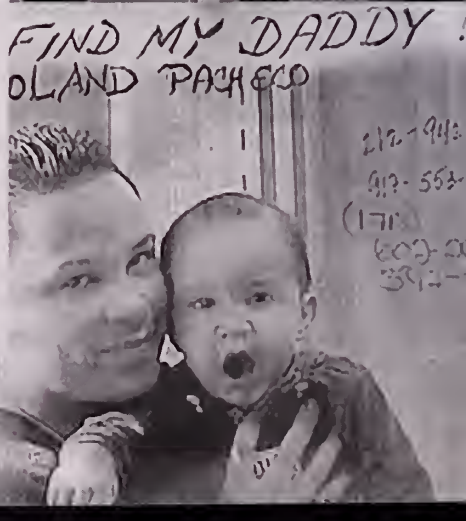
INDEPENDENTS GRAPPLE WITH INDELIBLE IMAGES

BY PAT AUFDERHEIDE

SEPTEMBER 11 WAS MADE-FOR-TV TERRORISM, designed not only for shock and damage, but for its symbolic impact and its screen spectacle. Independent filmmakers' responses to the events were immediate and ongoing. They have all had to grapple with their own shock, with the transgressive spectacle of the original events—and, increasingly, with the fact that many screen viewers now choose to avoid the subject on screen.

Production of films on the subject of September 11 has been abundant. Work has surfaced on broadcast, cable, festivals and the Internet. Veterans, neophytes, and amateurs have all made films and videos. "And I have the impression," said Garrison Botts, series producer for Thirteen WNET's *Reel New York*, "that the work is only just now surfacing. We can expect much more." Botts, with Kathy Brew as series consultant, has scheduled two episodes of the eight week series to show September 11-oriented material.

Television programmers have made other shifts in response to the horrifying events of September 11. On public television, Bill Moyers' news analysis series *NOW*, providing depth and perspective on



national and international news, was hustled into production, following successful town-hall style conversations hosted by Moyers. *NOVA*'s "Bioterrorism" was moved up on the schedule. *Frontline* programs on Osama bin Laden and Islam were rerun, and new *Frontline* shows on relevant subjects made. The Independent Television Service instantly commissioned and by December had on air 34 interstitials made by nine independent producers. The spots showcased diverse American voices, including an Arab-American scoutmaster and his scouts in Michigan and an 11-year-old Navajo girl in New Mexico.

On commercial broadcast television, CBS's screening on March 10 of French independent filmmakers' Gedeon and Jules Naudet's remarkable on-the-spot material from September 11 drew the largest audience for a non-sports program of the season. On cable, HBO Cinemax has aired Deborah Shaffer's *From the Ashes—10 Artists*, an hour-long doc commissioned by Austrian TV, and HBO has backed two longform docs, "In Memoriam: Sept. 11, 2001, New York City," which follows then Mayor Rudy Guiliani throughout the day of the attacks, and another on a family adapting to the death of a father.

But overall, schedules and ratings look more similar than different from September 10. At the February RealScreen Summit, a meeting of factual programming producers worldwide, the consensus was that audiences had adapted far quicker than programmers, and were demanding a return to pre-September 11 entertainment. In fact, Darren Ocampo from Court TV, which dabbled in docs on terrorism, reported there that low ratings and viewer apathy led Court TV away from the entire subject; niche cable channels, he commented, couldn't.

On screens at festivals and museums, however, the 9.11 sidebar has become de rigeur. Sundance Film Festival featured a collection of short and medium-length works. Other national and international festivals, including Amsterdam Documentary Film Festival (IDFA), Doubletake Documentary Film Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Oberhausen, and Aspen Shortsfest, have also done so. Museums, such as The Museum of Modern Art and the San Francisco Cinematheque, have featured collections of independent work.

Three initiatives spurred many artists to transform reactions into the films that are now being selected for fests and museums. San Francisco artists Jay Rosenblatt and Caveh Zahedi sent out to some 180 artists in their personal networks a call for work from 1 to 10 minutes long, and received about 65 finished pieces, of which 30 were selected for two programs. "We did it because we wanted to fight a sense of powerlessness and futility, and we were disturbed by the one-note quality of the news media," said Rosenblatt. "We never expected the volume of response or the amount of work it's been." The project, called *Underground Zero*, has run mostly on donated time and goodwill; it has shown in a variety of museum and festival venues.

Clockwise from top: artist Oscar Santiago and *From the Ashes* director Deborah Shaffer; Santiago presents ID at a TriBeCa checkpoint; one of thousands of post-9.11 flyers, from the Paper Tiger/IMC production *Turning Tragedy into War*; archival footage in Jay Rosenblatt's *Prayer*; protest performance in *From the Ashes*.

PHOTO CREDITS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): MICHAEL BERZ; MICHAEL BERZ; PAPER TIGER TV, NYC-IMC, BIG NOISE; FILMMAKER; MICHAEL BERZ

Simultaneously, Third World Newsreel sent out a call specifically targeted to producers of color, to address the issues of communities of color. Executive director Dorothy Thigpen said, "At our first staff meeting after the event, we realized that, as usual, mainstream media wasn't giving voice to a lot of people." The organization's own alumni and students participated, as well as members of The Black Documentary Collective, an organization coordinated by veteran producer St. Clair Bourne. Seventeen pieces have been completed, with more in the works. Like *Underground Zero*, the *Call to Media Action* project has been produced only with available resources. After a screening at Museum of Modern Art, it has also been seen in festivals and museums, and at community screenings.

The Internet-based documentary producers' group d-word, a project launched by AIVF board member Doug Block, quickly generated a collaborative project dubbed *War and Peace*. Individual filmmakers produced work under 10 minutes; 21 projects are in motion, nine of them complete and streaming on the website. The associated discussion thread records both filmmakers' intentions and audience reactions. The work has also been seen in festivals and community screenings.

> "WE REALIZED THAT, AS USUAL, MAINSTREAM MEDIA WASN'T GIVING VOICE TO A LOT OF PEOPLE"
> —DOROTHY THIGPEN

As well, a number of independent filmmakers have created work individually, drawing on their own resources. The capper of the Sundance sidebar was *The Making and Meaning of We Are Family*, by Danny Schechter and Patrice O'Neill. The feature length work tracks music and performance celebrities as they come together in New York and in Los Angeles to sing the durable Nile Rodgers tune "We Are Family" as a statement of unity and tolerance. Schechter, Rodgers and others called on longstanding ties to put together the event within a week after the attacks. After widespread audience enthusiasm, Schechter now finds himself frustrated by an MTV rejection of the Spike Lee music video ("It's too black for them," he says), PBS hesitancy, and European rejection ("It's too patriotic for them").

Deborah Shaffer obtained a contract for her hour-long documentary *From the Ashes—10 Artists* within days, as a result of a prior relationship Austrian television. Her producer called first to find out if she was ok, and then to ask if she could make a film about artists' reactions. The film debuted on Austrian television, and will be shown on Cinemax in the U.S. Members of Paper Tiger TV assembled, immediately after the events, a combination of media analysis and tools for further understanding of the issues, *Turning Tragedy into War*, made available on access cable and home video.

Others, having reflexively turned on their video cameras during the events, constructed mini-essays from that material. *First 24 Hours* is Etienne Sauret's record of the chaos and devastation of and around Ground Zero immediately after the event. Like other pieces of documentation by independent artists, it provides a sharp contrast to commercial TV news' high-intensity money shots of the events. Luke Joerger's *First Person-9.11* records the expectable banality of two New York artists' shock ("Oh, shit! Oh, shit!") as the day unfolded. Leon Grodsky's *Great Balls of Fire* documents the rants of a spare

change artist who keeps refraining to the title. Osama Al-Zain, a Palestinian graphic artist, created in *Reflection* a plea for tolerance, using images from an improvised memorial wall in Washington, D.C.

For many, the images of the Twin Towers falling were too potent to include in their work. Christopher Pavsek, whose *The One and All* is on d-word.com, said, "It's almost impossible to put the WTC images into a montage because the image is too overpowering—at least for now." Some crafted an essay or meditation from found or archived footage, either by necessity or by artistic choice. Jay Rosenblatt's *Prayer* is composed entirely of archival clips of religious rituals and Kris Samuelson and John Haptas' *The World as We Know It* uses material they had on hand from previous films to make the point that brutal war has been a constant of world affairs for a century, and will continue.

The iconic center and reference point for visual work has been the Twin Towers, whether they are shown or not. Very few works have referenced the Pentagon or the flight that crashed near Pittsburgh. Very little in this work deals with international issues or with Islam or terrorism in general, either. Concerns have been domestic, whether they have been highly personal (Bob Giraldi's lovely fiction short *Routine*, for instance, follows a newly widowed mother and her daughter through a day without Dad) or directly concerned with policy (Robert Edwards' *Voice of the Prophet*, a prescient interview with Rick Rescorla, head of security for a financial firm and a Twin Towers fatality, who describes terrorism as the warfare of the future). Some act as documentation of a moment (a vigil in Los Angeles, in David Driver's *A Strange Mourning*). And some tell crafted versions of "where I was when it happened," stories that make the leap between an individual's personal experience and an enormous and incalculably important public event. *Brief Encounter with Tibetan Monks*, by Paul Harrill, and Caveh Zahedi's *The World Is a Classroom*, both tell idiosyncratic tales that flesh out experience.

Some are concerned with the proper memorialization of the dead, and with the rituals of remembrance. Jason Kliot's *Site* simply focuses on the faces of those who come to pay their respects at Ground Zero, never turning the camera to show us what causes tears to well in their eyes, or makes them gnaw their lips. Scott Pagano's haunting *Everything Will Be Okay* uses found materials and image processing to create a meditation on a moment of shock and instability. Monika Bravo, one of the artists who had space on the 92nd floor of one of the towers, turned a visual poem on a stormy evening seen from her space, filmed the day before, into a memorial for another artist who died in the attacks (*September 10; uno nunca muera la vispera*).

A distinct difference between works by people of color and whites is registered in these works. In his call for work, St. Clair Bourne noted, "in talking with many people of color in LA, I kept hearing the phrase 'chickens coming home to roost' which referred to the military actions previously undertaken by the US government in many Third World countries. Frankly, I was surprised at the consensus of these random, unsolicited impressions." Both his and TWN's call stressed the need for alternative voices. The finished products, Bourne now notes, partake of the reportage tradition of the early Third World Newsreel: "I think that speaks to the immediacy of the situation, but also most of the people who did this were young, and they haven't experienced the range of possibilities in documentary form."

Works produced through Third World Newsreel emphasize themes of discrimination, tolerance and minority rights. Various interviewees in these works either express happiness at the destruction of the towers or find in that destruction a confirmation of their expectations. In *Salt Peanuts*, by Alonzo Speight and Simin Farkondeh, workers' rights are asserted as workers protest layoffs at USAir. Perhaps most illuminating and disturbing of the TWN collection is Mark Boulos' *Self-Defense*, an interview with a Mauritanian man who trained with the Taliban and still hopes to contribute to decontaminating the world for Islam. ABC, TWN's Thigpen says, has begged for the short film but wanted to use it merely for footage; it may now run intact on HBO.

Children's reactions became a vehicle for more general sentiments. For instance, Frazer Bradshaw's *The End of Summer* shows a California suburb empty of people while we listen to the voice of a small girl speculating on why the terrorists might have done it ("Maybe they were mad at New York?"), and whether it would help for us to say we're sorry. She ends up saying she just doesn't understand. "We got six or seven pieces featuring children," said Rosenblatt. "I think people were having trouble knowing what to say about what happened." Children in the TWN collection, by contrast, for instance in Shawn Batey's *Through My Eyes* and Yun Jong Suh's *We Too Sing America*, clearly express their fear that children in Afghanistan will be bombed, and that Muslim children in the U.S. will be persecuted.

In their variety, the post-9.11 works by independent filmmakers have a common feature: they permit us to explore the range and depth of reactions to the event, and they expose the conventions of commercial TV news, which created a few indelible, much-repeated images of the events.

The tapes go on being made, as new phases of life after September 11 evolve. Jane Brill's *The Bicycle Path* was made out of her shock that, after the extraordinary post-9.11 intimacy and generosity of New Yorkers, life returned to New York normal—someone stole her bike. Her tape retraces her bike path past Ground Zero, as she interviews people. "I realized I wasn't alone," she said, "that other people were also grieving over the loss of this shared experience of humanity that had touched us in the aftermath of the 9.11 tragedy. And that—ironically—gave me a new sense of hope."

Pat Aufderheide is a professor and director of the Center for Social Media at American University in Washington, D.C. She presented a forum on independent programming after 9.11 at the Aspen Shortsfest.

CONTACTS

SEVERAL OF THE PIECES MENTIONED ARE STREAMING ON KONSCIOUS: WWW.KONSCIOUS.COM

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL: WWW.TWN.ORG

D-WORD: WWW.D-WORD.COM/WARANDPEACE

PAPER TIGER: WWW.PAPERTIGER.ORG

FREE SPEECH TV

WHAT MEDIA DEMOCRACY CAN LOOK LIKE

"We are a voice for activists working independently of large media companies, to some degree in opposition to them," explains Free Speech TV founder John Schwartz. "We champion work that presents an explicit point of view, which means we do have a distinctly different vision than most television channels."

This distinctly different vision encompasses not just program content, but program distribution. After all, an engaged audience is the primary element of media democracy, and how much good can challenging programs accomplish if no-one can see them?

Free Speech TV traces its origins to the 1989 launch of The Nineties Channel, itself a visionary form of bringing television to the public. Realizing that few outlets would be eager to program political, often controversial work, Schwartz was able to create a home for activist media through leased access cable, which he used to offer the Nineties Channel full time in several markets. However, after media giant TCI bought out the original cable operator, they made it clear they weren't comfortable with the program content—and when the lease came up for renewal, they priced the Nineties Channel off the air by raising rates to an impossible level.

Schwartz and his colleagues shifted their attention to developing the nascent Free Speech TV. At the outset, FSTV licensed and packaged four hours of programming each week, distributing the package to 50 community and educational access channels. This allowed smaller community channels to program high quality, topical work, and to benefit from common promotional and outreach materials developed by FSTV. Each station used the material according to local needs: some ran only selections, others ran the package intact. The national schedule was completely random, which made it difficult to efficiently promote broadcasts or build educational activities or national actions around screenings.

Concurrent with packaging programming and working with local channels, FSTV also kept track of two rapidly developing forms of media: the Internet, and Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS). In fact, Free Speech Internet Television was one of the earliest companies to serve streaming media in a major way. The FSTV Web project is based on the theory that individuals use the Internet for entirely different reasons than television. It started streaming in 1998 and today hosts over 300 non-commercial sites and the internet's largest collection of progressive audio and video content.

Free Speech Internet Television staff helped develop the open source architecture that now forms the basis of dozens of international Independent Media Centers (www.indymedia.org). When media activists helped organize the original Independent Media Center at the Seattle WTO protests in 1999, the television and internet departments of FSTV collaborated to make history by helping to coodinate daily satellite feeds and video streams of independent reports from the streets and receiving hundreds of thousands of visits. Free Speech also collaborates on special projects such as providing live, alternative coverage of the 2000 presidential conventions, and has an ongoing relationship with Democracy Now (see next page).

On the traditional television front, FSTV was monitoring a provision of the 1992 cable act that required DBS providers to set aside 4-7% of their spectrum for non-commercial educational uses. In 1998 the FCC required operators to make good on this provision. With the track record of years of programming and bicycling tapes to cable channels, as well as a public support campaign led by celebrity champions such as Ralph Nader and Michael Moore, FSTV was able to demonstrate it was up to the challenge of delivering both content and audience, and secured a spot on the DISH Network.

Today that channel brings FSTV's content to five million subscribers, 24 hours a day. With this national reach the channel has been able to increase the volume of weekly programming to over 30 hours (which repeat eight to ten times a week), including original content such as the recent *World In Crisis* series, a current affairs program developed last fall to supplement the often superficial coverage by corporate media, and weekly "Action Alerts."

"To advance progressive social change, we need to do more than just feed informative programs to enlightened couch potatos," says Program Director Jon Stout. "We want to provide viewers with the tools they need to be more socially responsible and civically engaged."

Weekly programming remains eclectic within five thematic series that lend coherence to the schedule. The series do a good job summing up what type of programs you'll see on FSTV: Just Solutions (human rights programming), Earth Actions (environmental concerns), Unconventional Wisdom (documentaries that offer new ways of looking at our past and envisioning our future), American Voices (showcasing the diversity of our cultural experiences), and TV Guerillas (media literacy, culture jamming and using video for progressive ends). FSTV currently pays most producers a small (but symbolically important) licensing fee of $12.50/min. for non-exclusive rights over a six month window.

FSTV has recently worked to streamline operations and better integrate the sister Web and Television projects, and has expanded its staff. It continues to supply programing to local cable channels, now using a satellite delivery system rather than shuttling tapes. They are working with Jon Alpert and Downtown Community Television to develop a "cybercar" that will be able travel to communities for production and broadcast: a poignant marriage of the information and interstate highways.

Working with Indymedia Newsreal (http://satellite.indymedia.org), FSTV plans to sponsor public screenings and discussion of work circulated on home video or downloaded via DISH Network and screened by community groups in a variety of non-traditional spaces such as coffee houses and independent theaters. The goals are to employ all of the varied resources of FSTV to support activists and mobilize audiences, and to begin sowing the seeds for an alternative distribution network.

Original programming, cable and satellite broadcast, community outreach, and a platform for unlimited progressive voices on the web: FSTV is working on four fronts to advance progressive social change. "TV usually works from the top down," says Galatas. "If we're going to build a better world, it's going to be from the ground up."

For more info, see www.freespeech.org

Elizabeth Peters is director of AIVF and publisher of The Independent.

BY ANGELA ALSTON

SINCE SHORTLY AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH, DEMOCRACY Now!, already a well established radio show hosted by Amy Goodman, has been televised nationally. The show uses a groundbreaking method of distribution. Each day as the show is aired live (9 to 10am est on Manhattan Neighborhood Network), the show is simultaneously encoded into an MPEG2 file. Immediately following the show, engineer Chase Pierson FTP's the file to a server in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The transfer takes about an hour and a half over a T1 line. Once received at Cheyenne, the file is decoded by FreeSpeech TV's equipment to an NTSC, composite signal and bundled with FSTV's DBS programming package. A scheduler in Boulder, FSTV's home base, enters programming information into the electronic play list. Noon finds the show being nationally broadcast on the Dish Network, Channel 9415.

As far as Pierson knows, no other access show is distributed nationally on this scale, let alone on a daily basis. It hasn't been possible before. "We've piecemealed some existing technologies into a new application," he explained during an interview in the *Democracy Now!* (*DN!*) headquarters at Downtown Community Television (DCTV) in New York's Chinatown. And the equipment involved is surprisingly affordable: put together a Vela work station (a combination of encoder and FTP server, $8,000, a T1 line ($1,000/month), and a broadcast partner who can receive, and you're ready to go. *DN!* chose the Vela because FSTV already owned one, hence the MPEG2 CODEC. "We wanted to minimize the chance for errors," Pierson explains.

The system is definitely not without flaws. The file ends up being encoded several times. Because Echostar is a network provider, not a service provider, the company is not staffed to accept content from individual producers: *DN!* must be sent to the network as part of the FSTV bundle. The show is decoded by FSTV in Boulder, bundled with other content, then re-encoded at 2.5 megabytes per second for transmission over T1 lines to Echostar. FSTV rents space at Echostar's headquarters in Cheyenne, but Echostar's corporate policy does not allow other companies to network their own computers to Echostar's; hence the need for re-encoding. Echostar then decodes files received from FSTV to analog component signals, re-encoding them for uploading to the satellite. Its uplink is much faster than FSTV's, which is why the signal must be re-encoded yet again. Echostar is set up to encode approximately 150 signals at once. These signals are then multi-plexed simultaneously at five megabytes per second. Finally, the signal is decoded at receiving access stations or at the viewer's home.

By the time *DN!* reaches the viewer, image quality has suffered considerably as information is lost each time the file is compressed. Sometimes a delay is added as well, so the final product presents sound and image out of sync by as much as a second or two. FSTV is planning to invest in new equipment, with June 1st as the target date for getting the new equipment on line. The new equipment may decrease the loss of image quality.

THOUGH ONLY A REALITY SINCE SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR, A community-based news shows has been a long-time dream of media activist DeeDee Halleck. She began working to realize the dream with Deep Dish TV. Deep Dish started in 1986, and by now has produced 500 to 600 shows. Series produced by Deep Dish include three prison series, one on the crisis in Latin America, and a 1992 series on 1492—16 one-hour programs produced by Native Americans. All of the programming has aired on public access TV. "We wanted to show what public access could be," Halleck explained, "if the passion and the resources were both available." The next step was a news show, and Deep Dish TV approached Amy Goodman, host of WBAI's *Democracy Now!* radio show. "The thing about Amy is, you have an anchor—someone so knowledgeable, so on to the issues." And someone who already has a considerable following and reputation, albeit on radio.

The partnership began in Philadelphia, at the Democratic National Convention, when *DN!*, FSTV, Deep Dish TV and the Independent Media Center (IndyMedia or IMC) collaborated to produce the first ever live satellite-distributed protest coverage under control of a grassroots-based, independent media coalition. (See *The Independent*, 11/2000) On the basis of a promo piece created by taping at WBAI Radio in New York, about $40,000 was raised to produce *DN!* at the conventions. John Schwartz at FSTV kicked in another $70,000 to fund the daily satellite uplink, which consisted of the satellite time and a van equipped to communicate with the satellite. Deep Dish provided a network of stations set up for downlinking, a network extending from Ft. Wayne, Indiana to Somerville, Massachusetts to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

DN!'s part-time engineers, Pierson and Noel Rabinowitz, were the technical co-coordinators of the Philly set-up, then moved on to replicate it in Los Angeles for the Republican Convention. They produced two and a half hours of programming every day, one hour of *DN!* and 90 minutes of FSTV's "Crashing the Party." "Basically we put together a TV studio over a weekend," Pierson said with a smile. "It was very exciting," Halleck added. "We had 3,000 people show up for a town meeting in LA. We had to set up two overflow rooms. The whole thing depended on Chase. He was just fantastic, made a totally chaotic thing work."

In February 2001, Halleck raised $10,000 to get a regular production off the ground. So Pierson began looking for a location

Democracy Now! host Amy Goodman

to house the show. DCTV, with its long-time history of community-based media activism, seemed a natural fit. Manhattan Neighborhood Networks (MNN), New York City's public access station, already had space there.

In the summer of 2001, during power struggles at Pacifica, Pierson anticipated that host Amy Goodman might be thrown out her home at New York's WBAI. So he got the radio equipment in place at DCTV, planning on six months to purchase and configure the video equipment. But the events of September 11th intervened. The Thursday following, MNN staffer Rick Jungers locked a camera down in *DN!*'s radio studio, inserted a cable and went straight into MNN's TV1 line. The show started going out live, just blocks from Ground Zero. Amy and the show's producers slept in the studio, afraid that if they left to go home the National Guard wouldn't let them back into lower Manhattan.

After a few days, Pierson and Jungers set up two more of MNN's cameras and began to use a switcher. Other video personnel quickly volunteered to help out. Halleck operated camera from time to time. An ad hoc distribution system was quickly set up. Besides going live onto MNN, the show was dubbed at Deep Dish and sent air express to a number of access stations, and also encoded and FTP'ed every day at Music Media, thanks to the support of owner Lenny Charles and other members of the New York IMC. Gradually a regular crew emerged, including Israeli director Uri Gal-Ed, who brought the show deep experience in producing live television. Funders stepped forward to keep the show in production. "We're producing a totally historic, national alternative news show," Halleck marveled. "But we're under mainstream media's radar screens—it's amazing that no one's covered it."

At a time when most media outlets have been lining up to support the U.S. government, *DN!* is unique. Rita Lazar, whose brother was killed in the attack on the World Trade Center, was a guest on the show. She is an outspoken opponent of the war on Afghanistan. *DN!* produced an historic meeting between Lazar and Masuda Sultan, a young Afghan-American woman who lost 19 members of her family during the U.S. bombing. Reporters from other media outlets jostled each other to cover the event. Other stories *DN!* has broken include Marc Herold's documentation of the more than 3,500 Afghan civilians killed in the bombing. Herold, a professor at the University of New Hampshire, closely followed reporting in international news wires and major newspapers, combined this information with firsthand accounts, and put it all together into a single report presented on *DN!* in early December of 2001.

DN! has recently focused on covering the Israeli West Bank occupation's effect on the Palestinians, presenting in-depth interviews with Kristin Schurr, an American activist with the International Solidarity Movement, as well as reporters and Palestinian civilians in places like Jenin, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. *DN!* broke the news in the U.S. of the killing of 21-year old US citizen, Suraida Saleh, who was shot by Israeli soldiers as she sat in a car with her nine-month-old baby on her lap.

And, during the recent coup attempt in Venezuela, *DN!*, perhaps alone among American media outlets, refused to report the faked resignation of democratically elected president Hugo Chavez. Instead, *DN!* interviewed several experts, including journalist Greg Palast (BBC, *The Guardian*), who made a strong case for a deep U.S involvement in the attempt to oust Chavez. The theory is that Otto Reich, assistant secretary for Western Hemisphere affairs and a key player in the Iran-Contra scandal, along with other veteran cold warriors, helped stage-manage the attempted coup. Reich is a hard-line anti-Castro Cuban immigrant with a long history of covert activity.

Thanks to a partnership Free Speech TV has created with Echostar, access stations around the U.S. are being provided with low-cost satellite dishes that will allow them to download programming for broadcast. Two to three hundred dishes will be distributed, and in about three months, DN! will be viewable live in just about any household with basic cable service, a potential audience of several million households across the country.

For those access stations without satellite links, *DN!* is available the old fashioned way: on tape. Dub queen Michelle Guanca makes between 19 and 31 of copies every day, overnighting them around the country to access stations. The show can be seen in states ranging from California to Maine and points in between. Some stations cablecast the show every day; others run it two or three times a week.

Viewers are writing in to express their support. One from Philadelphia said: "I think the programming is the most intelligent show I have ever watched on TV." Another in Georgia wrote: "I just got a satellite dish and was disappointed that it was pretty much the same old stuff, but then I found y'all. It was like glory! I bless you." And from one in Massachusetts: "We want to express our profound thanks to you and your colleagues for the role that each and every one has played in making this happen. Your efforts will surely contribute towards changing our country from selfish, short-sighted interests towards the love and compassion of which humanity is capable."

For more information, see www.democracynow.org.

Since October 2001, Angela Alston has worked on DN!, *most recently as technical director. She's also a board member of AIVF. Her most recent shorts,* Tibetan Vigil *and* Invisible Girl, *are part of the D-Word collaborative War and Peace Project and are streaming online at konscious.com.*

CROSSING BORDERS

BY KEN MILLER

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TURN ON THE TELEVISION NEWS AND you will find yourself immersed in a torrent of information, most of it flowing free of context. While even the most casual viewer can receive up-to-the-minute news on the situation in Israel, Afghanistan, or Colombia, how many have heard of Sabra and Shatila, Massoud, or La Violencia? The historical perspective is, in general, completely absent. The range of contemporary points of view presented is, to be frank, not much better.

So first a little historical perspective: Human Rights Watch was founded in 1978 by a group of activists and lawyers who were concerned about the censorship and harassment faced by their friends and colleagues in the Soviet Union. The founding philosophy was quite simple—to make sure that, when censorship occurred, an independent monitor was watching and listening. In the years that followed, Human Rights Watch expanded its focus to include the Americas, Asia, and, eventually, virtually the entire globe. The group formed partnerships with like-minded organizations such as Amnesty International, and began to generate reports on a wide variety of issues, including many domestic concerns, such as equal rights for women, gay and lesbian rights, and the rights of prisoners.

Left: Lourdes Portillo's *Senorita Extraviada* will air on PBS in 2002; right: *Afghanistan Year 1380*, Lazzaretti and Vendemmiati's sequel to *Jung (War) in the Land of the Mujaheddin.*

A Human Rights Watch report serves as a tool for advocacy, allowing the group to use case studies and statistical information to apply pressure on governments and businesses to either change their policies or to break off dealings with those who benefit from human suffering. Yet Human Rights Watch organizers realized that those reports were almost exclusively read by a limited population of policymakers and analysts. The interest and influence of the general public was left largely untapped. So, in 1988, Human Rights Watch organized film screenings to coincide with its 10th anniversary. Out of that celebration, the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival was born.

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR BRUNI BURRES CITES *JUNG (WAR) IN THE Land of Mujaheddin* as a particularly strong example of the type of film showcased at the festival. "All of the films we show are really stories and story-based." she explains. "[It] helps outsiders connect to particular people and situations." With *Jung*, directors Alberto Vendemmiati, Fabrizio Lazzaretti, and Giuseppe Petitto followed war correspondent Ettore Mo and doctor Gino Strada as they attempted to construct a hospital to provide medical treatment to the war-torn Afghan population. Burres notes that people in the human rights field had been following the situation under Taliban rule in Afghanistan for years. The film provides this historical perspective, while telling a narrative (one that is, in this case, remarkably uplifting) that humanizes the situation. *Jung* is also beautifully filmed.

Many of the films being screened at this year's festival are, of course, topical. Several films deal with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, including a US premiere of *August*, a video diary by prominent Israeli filmmaker Avi Mograbi (see p. 64). Organized with the Film Society of Lincoln Center, this year's program also features *Afghanistan Year 1380*, a follow-up film from Lazzaretti and Vendemmiati, in addition to *Voice of the Prophet*, an eerie interview with Rick Rescorla, who had predicted a massive terrorist attack before he was killed in the World Trade Center collapse. Other films examine topical subjects that have recently fallen off the media radar, such as the war in the former Yugoslavia, the focus of *Good Husband, Dear Son* by legendary Dutch documentary filmmaker Heddy Honnigman; California's "three strikes" rule, which is examined from the point of view of three public defenders in *Presumed Guilty*; and the turbulence of contemporary Indonesia, which provides the back drop for the cinema-verite documentary *Eye of the Day*. Still other films probe issues that have received scant media attention, including Lourdes Portillo's *Senorita Extraviada (Missing Young Woman)*, which looks at the rash of murders along the Mexico-US border, where the bodies of several hundred women have been found in the desert.

For Burres, the selection criteria are clear: "[You] want to feature films that are strong pieces of art and [which] just compel you." At times, this has led to awkward conflicts with filmmakers who have made an aesthetically-unsatisfying film on a worthy subject, and who have accused the festival of "censorship" when the film was not accepted. Burres responds that "we've never taken a film [just] because of the subject." Nevertheless, subjects do tend to come up in cycles, as filmmakers both influence and are influenced by other media coverage.

Since the festival aims to broaden media horizons beyond the nightly news, gaining press attention is, in turn, vital to building a strong audience. It's a catch-22 the festival both battles and embraces, with timeliness and controversy often proving to be inadvertent allies. Andrea Holley, who coordinates the festival's travelling program (more on that in a moment), cites *The Trials of Henry Kissinger* (based on Christopher Hitchens's book-length indictment of the former Secretary of State), *Stealing the Fire*

LEFT TO RIGHT: C. CARRASCA, COURTESY OF ITVS; COURTESY OF THE FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER; SAME, HRWIFF

(about a German scientist who has been convicted of selling nuclear secrets to Iraq), and *Justifiable Homicide* (in which Jon Osman and *The Farm* director Jonathan Stack examine the case of two Hispanic youths shot by a group of detectives that included former members of ex-mayor Rudy Giuliani's security detail) as three films in the festival this year predicted to cause a media stir.

Thankfully, media coverage is only one method of drawing an audience. The festival works with filmmakers and distributors, many of whom are deeply-imbedded within the communities discussed on-screen, to do grassroots outreach. Ads in local and national foreign-language newspapers, not to mention fliers in cafes and community centers, have proven to be effective in the path. Building on Human Rights Watch's contacts with other activist groups, the festival has established partnerships with alternative media groups such as Women Make Movies, Paper Tiger TV, and AIVF. Though the festival remains headquartered in New York—with a successful subsidiary festival in London—Human Rights Watch has aggressively pursued national exposure for its films. One partnership, with mediarights.org, has led to an online festival of short films (available at www.mediarights.org/festival/presentation/). The online festival also provides a useful public venue for films that might get lost among the high-profile features in the main festival.

Ultimately, if Human Rights Watch can't bring people to the festival, then it's up to Holley to bring the festival to the people—acting on her belief that, "local advocacy work is human rights work." Films from the festival program travel to local universities, arts groups, and museums in 30 cities. Logistics play an important role in the programming since, as Holley notes, "because we aren't on the ground managing everything, what works best is to have a coalition of groups" supporting the screening.

The festival has also made significant inroads into high schools in New York, Boston, and the Bay Area. Since it's hard for teachers to find enough time within the school days for a screening and discussion, Burres notes that it's particularly important that the screening coincide with class curricula. An appearance by the filmmakers or the subjects of a film is "worth a million dollars," by Burres's tongue-in-cheek accounting.

Globally, films about children seem to be a trend when it comes to human rights-motivated filmmaking. This can be a tricky proposition for filmmakers, who run the risk of seeming simplistic or manipulative. In a flip side of this trend, the Human Rights Watch Film festival has collaborated with youth media advocacy and education group Educational Video Center to organize an advanced documentary filmmaking workshop for high school graduates. Participants in the six-month YO-TV program are paid a stipend and commissioned to make a film about a human rights issue. The films created through YO-TV are remarkable, both for their technical polish and their level of nuance.

As if the festival, online festival, travelling program, schools program, and partnership with YO-TV were not enough to dent the walls of public indifference, Human Rights Watch also assists the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights with its Witness program. In contrast to Burres's avowed preference for "films" over straight documentation, Witness provides cameras and basic technical instruction to activists and NGOs working in crisis situations (see page 38). Burres says that "Witness is going in and making issues of hotspots."

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL COMBINES ENTERTAINMENT, OUTREACH, AND ACTIVISM

Left: *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* is sure to be controversial; right: 12 year old Rami comes of age in war-torn Beruit, in Jean Khalil Chamoun's period drama *In the Shadows of the City*.

As Holley articulates, what binds all these programs together is that, "at [their] core...a lot of human rights issues are about access to information." Those concerned with democracy and human rights seek a world of open access, with a market for information that is as open as the trade in, say, sneakers. No crime would go undocumented and no victim would remain faceless or nameless. Thus, the hidden moral judgements that guide our selection of footwear or our gas consumption, would become matters of active participation.

Of course, this is not the case. As Burres notes, "With the digital camera and the home computer, more people can make pieces." But without an active audience the effectiveness of these films remains marginal, which can lead to frustration with a lack of short-term results. Burres cites an example from the 1990s, of Bosnian Serbs "who were angry that people were coming in and making films that they thought would make a difference, and still nothing made a difference." Yet, ultimately, outside forces did intervene. As Holley states, "half the battle is making people aware that they're unaware."

With *Jung*, the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival undertook the task of distributing the film, believing in the film's power to have an impact. But without a bigger staff distribution isn't an ongoing option. With an array of outreach and education measures, however, the small staff is certainly getting the word out—beyond that, the burden of choosing to pay attention rests upon the audience.

In addition to editing The Independent, Ken Miller makes short films and co-publishes the free quarterly arts magazine IN.

MADE YOU LOOK: WITNESS TURNS TEN

BY SANDY SPENCER

"HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES ARE WORSE WHEN VIOLATORS AREN'T afraid of detection." That's the considered opinion of Gillian Caldwell and the driving force behind Witness, the organization she heads.

An international human rights organization co-founded in 1992 by musician Peter Gabriel and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Witness provides local human rights groups around the world with video cameras and helps them incorporate their footage into advocacy campaigns. Work may be distributed locally, used as evidence, streamed on the Internet, archived by Witness, and even incorporated into longer works, depending on the goals of the partner group. Witness has equipped over 150 organizations in 50 countries since the organization's inception in 1992, and currently works with 80 active partners.

"Our partnerships last as long as our partners remain active and using video advocacy. So we have some that date back to the early days, 1994 and 1995, and we have some that phase in and out on an annual basis," Caldwell says. "Experience has taught us that our strongest partnerships are those initiated by local groups. As a result, we don't solicit applications." Although Witness received 40 new applicants for video equipment last year alone, only 10 became partners.

The range of locations of the partner groups reflects the severity of the world's human rights crises: Honduras, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Colombia, Burma, Rwanda, Algeria, Kosovo, Sierra Leone. The list is a familiar one. But a visitor to Witness's website (www.witness.org) only has to sample some of the images streamed there to be reminded how real and personal the violence perpetrated against men, women, and children in the name of political stability or to protect corporate profit can be.

Witness staff, L-R: Sam Gregory (Program Coordinator), Sandrine Isambert (video editor), Gillian Caldwell (executive producer), Ronit Avni (program associate), Ronen Hackim (office associate).

Productions like *Behind the Labels: Garment Workers on U.S. Saipan* bring the issue right home. A co-production of Witness and Oxygen Media, *Behind the Labels* exposes the cruel conditions under which immigrant workers manufacture clothing for big name American brands. The film reveals how The Gap, J. Crew, and others that bear the "Made in the USA" label don't provide the women who sew them the benefit of U.S. labor practices.

Witness partners typically receive up to $3,000 in equipment. In the beginning, the package might have included a Hi8 camera. Now it's more likely to be a Sony PC5 with tripod, batteries, and tapes. Witness's self-published training manual runs to over 80 pages and covers everything from video storytelling to use of B-roll. As pertinent are chapters on submitting materials to the U.N. and other human rights mechanisms.

To help each group maximize the potential of video, the non-profit also provides training for a full range of video production skills either at its offices in New York City or, if feasible, on site. Last year, Witness provided training for partners from Bolivia, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Burma, Honduras, and the U.S.

Video of rights abuses captured by partners has been used as evidentiary material in national and regional courts, at war crimes tribunals, and before commissions. Video testimony adds a powerful argument to written submissions to the United Nations or other treaty bodies, says Caldwell. But for most Witness partners the pieces they put together reinforce the grassroots efforts of their organizations to educate their own communities.

This 1997 video of a series of human rights abuses committed by the Bolivian government during implementation of anti-drug enforcement policy was one of the first NGO productions screened for the United Nations.

PHOTOS: WITNESS

With over 500 titles in its archive Witness can provide some powerful arguments for human rights advocacy. Getting the message out, however, remains the greatest challenge for all media-makers, whether their work is fiction, or, as in the case of Witness partners, hard fact. "The most compelling documentaries in the world are powerless if no one can watch them," Caldwell says.

Caldwell, 35, a video activist from early on, was heading up her junior high school's chapter of Amnesty International at age 12. She became a Witness partner herself during the making of *Bought & Sold*, a two-year undercover investigation of trafficking of women from Russia forced into prostitution. A graduate of Georgetown Law School, she became Executive Director at Witness in 1998.

Noting how the videotaped images of the Rodney King beating in Los Angeles gave the incident impact and immediacy that words could not, Caldwell says: "Witness empowers people to record injustice as it happens and makes us all eyewitnesses to human rights violations."

For more information or to view partners' work, visit Witness at their website, www.witness.org

Sandy Spencer is a documentary filmmaker and development director of AIVF.

JIMMIE BRIGGS: WITNESS

"WORKING AS A WRITER, I TEND TO BE A FLY ON THE WALL. WHEN I'M SHOOTING, I'M DRAWN INTO THE STORY. MY REPORTING GETS RICHER. THE CAMERA ENGAGES ME."

Many Witness partners are indigenous. It's a conscious choice on the part of the organization. Local activists are better able to calculate risks and spot trouble before it happens. In the case of Jimmie Briggs, access to his subjects outweighs any policy reservations Witness may have.

At time of writing, Briggs was on his way to meet with Tamil Tiger commanders in northern Sri Lanka. The trip requires him to trek ten miles into the bush beyond government lines before he meets with rebel guides who accompany him to the meeting point.

"I don't think about the dangers going in," he says. "It would affect the work I have to do. It's afterwards that it hits me." While filming in the Gulu district of northern Uganda in 1999, Briggs came under fire. "I was with the government troops. It went on for about half-an-hour," he remembers.

Briggs' subjects in Sri Lanka are the child-soldiers who make up over 50% of the rebels' ten thousand-strong forces. As in Rwanda where Briggs shot *Children of War*, Tamil children are recruited from villages and put into the front lines or serve as sex partners to older fighters. According to the Women's Commission, there are over 300,000 child-soldiers worldwide, some as young as 6.

Briggs will carry a Sony PD150 and a sound rig. He's wary enough of the potential dangers to take his name off the work he has listed in Witness' archives where he's identified only as an anonymous partner. But this is not his first time in rebel territory and he knows what to expect. "I use the camera as a shield. When I go back to look at the footage, that's when it's hard to look at."

USING GRASSROOTS DOCUMENTARY FILMS FOR POLITICAL CHANGE

OUTREACH TIPS FOR NONPROFITS AND ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

BY DAVID WHITEMAN

• USE DOCUMENTARY AS PART OF A LARGER STRATEGY. Documentaries are most effective when they are one part of a larger plan for social change. Be ready to provide audience members with avenues of constructive response.

• REMEMBER THAT PART OF THE IMPACT IS ON YOUR ORGANIZATION. Documentaries can educate group members and motivate them for further action.

• BE INNOVATIVE IN CREATING PUBLIC SPACES FOR VIEWING. Movie theaters and film festivals are usually not the most effective venue for reaching your target audience.

• COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ACTIVIST GROUPS; INVOLVE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS. Use the presentation as an opportunity to build coalitions and reach new audiences.

• BE AWARE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO CHANGE PUBLIC POLICY. Involve officials in the presentation and discussion of the documentary. Let community members know how they can affect local policy.

• USE THE DOCUMENTARY TO GET MEDIA ATTENTION. Have appropriate background material on the documentary, the event itself, and the issues. Enlist participants in the documentary as interview subjects for journalists.

• USE THE FILM TO NETWORK FOR FUTURE ACTION. Activists and organizers can also use the production and distribution processes to encourage the networking required for future action.

David Whiteman (whiteman@sc.edu) teaches political science and film studies at the University of South Carolina. His primary interest is the role of activist organizations in the planning, production, and distribution of film and video, and he is currently engaged in a research project funded by the MacArthur Foundation on the political impact of documentary film. This article was condensed from a longer piece running on www.mediarights.org.

OUTREACH REPORT: STORE WARS
WHEN WAL-MART COMES TO TOWN

BY MICHA X. PELED

EVERY DAY A NEW MEGA-STORE OPENS SOMEWHERE IN AMERICA. But in Ashland, Virginia, a group of citizens takes on the world's largest retailer, along with the town's establishment. *Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town* follows the controversy that tears the town apart, examining in the process the impact of big box stores on small town America.

Store Wars was co-produced by ITVS and broadcast on PBS in June 2001. Although this brought the program to a national audience, the filmmakers wanted to complement the broadcast with local screenings particularized for individual communities. They did this through an expansive and successful outreach campaign, partnering with grassroots groups and national organizations alike to draw attention to the myriad issues inherent in globalization.

In this article, director/producer Micha Peled describes the experience of working with one local activist group to present the film in their community, providing examples of what worked and what provided lessons for the future.

DP Allen Moore and director Micha Peled interview for *Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town.*

GOALS OF THE SCREENING

In each town we work closely with the local grassroots group that organizes the event and determines its objectives. In this case, the group wants to create their first opportunity to dialogue with the mayor and Town Council members on the pending Wal-Mart zoning application.

ONE MONTH BEFORE THE TRIP:

We focus on logistics: book a hall early, start looking for a donated video projector (expensive to rent), find out the press deadlines for the weekly and for event calendars. I read the local press articles about the proposed Wal-Mart mega-store.

THREE WEEKS BEFORE:

We discuss what our partners want to achieve in this event. Some groups see the screening primarily as an opportunity for internal strengthening—an opportunity to get their supporters jazzed and energized toward an upcoming public hearing or elections, to increase their activist base and mailing lists, or to gain visibility and launch fundraising drives. But this group has a different objective. They want finally an opportunity to dialogue with their mayor and Town Council members, who, until now, have all refrained from expressing their positions on this controversial issue.

The plan is to create a high-profile event that elected officials would feel they cannot afford to miss. The organizers find that state-level officials (state representatives, the director of the state's Planning Agency) are easier to get to the event, perhaps because they don't have to ultimately make the decision. When these people confirm their participation, the mayor and the city manager are magically able to free up their own schedules and join the panel.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE:

The group gets mailing lists from the local Peace and Justice Center and a labor union and send out 800 flyers. Ten posters I provided are put on shop windows and on campus. A press release is sent all over and I encourage the organizers to follow up with personal phone calls.

NIGHT BEFORE:

It's important to arrive at least a day in advance, so we can finalize the event's details together. At dinner we deal with questions such as: do we want to ask each panel member to make a brief opening statement, or go directly to Q and A with the audience? What should be the reaction to people who are being confrontational and try to put the mayor on the spot? At what point will someone from the group help the audience to "process their emotions" and make sure they leave energized for the upcoming petition drive?

My contribution is mostly to tell them how similar situations were handled by other groups, but it's important that the solutions are determined locally, as each situation is different. The local balance of power, the strength of the group and its alliances, the ego needs of various individuals on and off stage—all play an important role in making this a successful event.

DAY OF EVENT:

Local TV stations are always good for a brief news item about the out-of-town filmmaker and tonight's screening. We hit all three network affiliates, though their 6-o'clock reports come too late to draw more people to the event. Radio is more helpful because we're able to get on the air in the morning. In the afternoon there is the run-through (an absolute must) in the hall for the inevitable adjustments in the video projector and other technical details.

THE EVENT:

The draw is lighter than anticipated, but heavy in local officials. Organizers didn't want to turn away from the panel anyone with a role in the decision-making process, so the panel is packed with three state reps, one former state senator, a state planning agency official, the mayor and the city manager. Adding speakers from the citizens' alliance, the panel stretches all the way across the wide stage. A few Town Council members show up at the last moment and remain in the audience.

The film screening leaves some people visibly emotional, even teary-eyed. But the organizers feel so pressured by the huge panel that they skip the part of moving the audience from "angry" to "energized."

PHOTOS: ALLEN MOORE

I target my talk primarily to the local officials. I tell them about prevalent misconceptions I have seen in towns around the country. For example, the notion that if you believe in "free market" you don't stop Wal-Mart, while actually the world's largest retailer signals the end of free competition. I also talk about winning strategies for financially-strapped local municipalities, which embrace regional economic planning. Finally, I read a statement sent that morning from the Sierra Club anti-sprawl campaign.

The moderator is careful to limit each panelist to a five-minute presentation, but still it takes an hour before the audience can take part. Soon, a lively discussion is in full swing. For the first time, the mayor has to articulate his position.

The City Manager uses a lot of statistics to claim that the town has no choice but to take the new tax revenues the Wal-Mart store will bring. Some of the officials react positively to idea of regional economic planning in order to take away from retail chains the power to play one town against its neighbor. The panel enables the activists to explain their positions on an equal footing with their elected officials.

"Sprawl Buster" Al Norman, one of the subjects of Micha Peled's *Store Wars*.

WHAT WORKED

• Our main objectives were accomplished: thanks to the screening, the community established a dialogue with its elected officials. Activists feel that now they understand their town councilmen's positions and how to approach them. This is what one of them wrote: "We were learning a lesson about political discourse: that is, what political arguments would be most strategically useful, and what arguments would even be allowed. We were informed again and again by people knowledgeable about city politics, as well as by city staff themselves, that we would have to focus on issues that the Planning Board could legally consider, if we wanted to have an impact, and wanted to be heard. We learned to stay away from emotional presentations and to offer lots of quantifiable data and expert studies."

• The group felt that the film legitimized their critique of Wal-Mart. Until the screening any criticism had been dubbed by town officials as "Wal-Mart bashing." Now the credibility of a PBS film was conferred on such arguments.

• Signatures were gathered for the petition drive. New people expressed an interest in joining the group, including high school and college students.

• We are able to build up on this event. Residents of a nearby town organized a similar event and a local foundation became interested in supporting a state-wide tour.

The group that hosted the event wrote us a letter stating, "We have had great difficulty in our efforts to engage our elected city officials in any kind of serious public dialogue... I doubt very much that this much-needed dialogue with both city and state officials and staff would have taken place without this film."

LESSONS LEARNED

• Some important decisions about how the event will be conducted were ignored at the last minute. The panel was allowed to swell beyond practicality. Plans to make sure the film left the audience energized instead of angry were dropped under time pressures.

• The event was scheduled for 6:30, too early on a sunny Friday, when people want to benefit from the daylight and stay outdoors.

• Press work failed to get sufficient coverage and did little to draw a crowd outside the group's supporters. A more concentrated effort, with follow-up phone calls and e-mailing still photos is required. Every effort should be made to get TV news to cover it a day before the event, otherwise it's too late to help draw a crowd. Radio stations should be encouraged to conduct phone interviews with the filmmaker before arrival in town, so the information is on the air earlier.

• You can't assume the local activists know how to organize an event. They often tend to exaggerate the size of the crowd they can draw. Go over the logistical details, outreach and press work with them. Scheduling decisions about which day of the week and what time can make a big difference. Your experience with other towns will be very valuable to most groups in the planning process. At the same time, each group can teach you a few new tricks.

FINAL THOUGHTS

• One of the less noticed, but very important services ITVS provides is to support you in doing community screenings. They were very helpful during the small window till air date. It's rare to find funders willing to directly support this kind of activity.

• I'd like to encourage filmmakers to think about "life after broadcast." Not only because it gets their film out, but also because it's very satisfying. The list of PBS stations that aired this film is nine pages long, but there is nothing like being there and seeing an audience react. When people thank you and say you've told also the story of their town, it reminds you why you carry on in this crazy occupation (you can't really call it a "business," unfortunately).

For more information on Store Wars and the issues it raises, see www.pbs.org/storewars/ To purchase a video copy of the film, contact Bullfrog Films at 800-543-3764 or www.bullfrogfilms.com.

While director of Bay Area media watchdog group Media Alliance (www.media-alliance.org), Micha Peled began making television documentaries, all of which have aired on PBS and other international outlets. Store Wars *was awarded a Golden Gate Award from the SFIFF and was nominated for an IDA Distinguished Achievement Pare Lorenz Award.*

This article was originally published as part of the Producers Workshop at www.mediarights.org.

Internet Video

A primer for putting video online

BY GREG GILPATRICK

EXHIBITING VIDEO ON THE INTERNET can be a quick way to show your work to producers, festivals, and potential audience members. Although the quality cannot even begin to rival the picture and sound of home video or theatrical distribution, Internet video can provide a representation of your work 24/7. As soon as you understand a few relatively simple principles about Internet video distribution it should become apparent that putting a short piece of video on the Internet is a relatively easy task that could have far-ranging results.

Of course, the high-traffic entertainment destinations on the web such as shockwave.com and iFilm utilize highly technical, proprietary methods to optimize their video distribution. But for those who have a small number of short clips to exhibit on their own web site, this primer on Internet video distribution should get you on the way to showing your work on-line.

The Basics

Just about everything you see on the Internet exists as a file that resides on the hard drive of a server somewhere. A server is a computer running a special program that transfers files over the internet in a manner that can be understood by a web browsing application like Netscape or Internet Explorer. Most content on the web is sent from a server that uses the HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP), but sometimes video is sent with a different kind of server (more on that later). You can run your own server if you have the right software, but most individuals rent space on a server administered by an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Most web pages exist as files written in a language called HyperText Markup Language (HTML) that are comprised solely of text. HTML files contain some of the elements of a web page such as text and layout information and many times they reference other files such as images and video clips. If you were to create a simple web page with a still from your video, a short paragraph describing the story, and the clip of the video, the web page would be comprised of the HTML file with the text and layout information, the JPEG or GIF image file for the still, and a video file that contains the data that makes up the picture and sound of your clip.

The most basic and bare-bones web site with video requires these things:

1. An HTML file with a reference to your video file.
2. A video file in whatever format and resolution you choose to use.
3. an ISP that sends out the above elements to the rest of the world via the World Wide Web from a server.

Of course, you probably would want to spruce up the design of your site but the above recipe is the basic framework for almost all the video content you see on the Web.

Streaming vs. Download

Although most people use the word "streaming" to describe video they see on the Internet, technically not all video on the Internet streams. As I say earlier, most content on the Web is sent from servers using the HTTP method of delivery. Another method of delivery used by specialized video servers, called Real Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP), exists in order to stream video and audio content across the Internet. Content sent by RTSP servers is "streamed" while video files sent by the more common HTTP servers are merely downloaded by the viewer. The difference between the two methods is technologically significant and a rudimentary understanding will help you decide how to deliver your video.

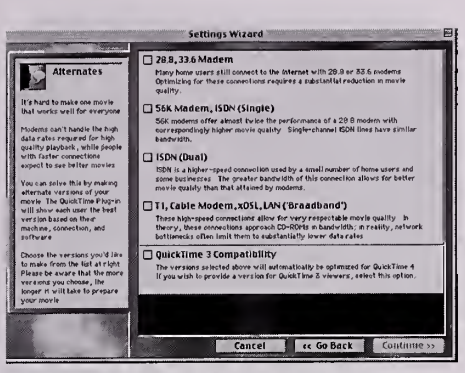
Streaming video from an RTSP server is sent as a continuous stream of data that is stored very briefly on the viewer's browser in a buffer, displayed by the player software and then emptied from the buffer. This method is best suited for long-format video or video that is live, such as a speech at a conference. Since the data from a streaming video does not accumulate in the viewer's browser it can theoretically continue to receive a stream indefinitely. Streaming video is useful for people distributing video similar to a news broadcast, like that of the Independent Media Centers (www.indymedia.org).

Video sent from an HTTP sever is downloaded and stored in the viewer's browser as one large file. Downloaded video is better suited for short pieces of video where image quality is important. Because the entire video file is stored inside the viewer's browser a long video in this format will eventually take up the memory available to the web browser and may cause the browser to quit unexpectedly. Downloaded video is only realistic for clips that are less than 5 minutes long.

A rough analogy of streaming and downloaded video would be that streamed video is similar to a broadcast from a TV station while downloaded video is similar to a tape from the video store.

Another important distinction between streamed and downloaded video is that a streaming server can be setup to automatically send video compressed to fit each type of Internet connection while downloaded video usually cannot. For example, if you are connected to the Internet by a 56K modem and watch a streaming video from an RTSP server, it may be able to send you a file that has been heavily compressed for users on a slow connection while someone connecting from a broadband connection would be shown a less compressed file. Typically, downloaded video requires the user to choose which size file they want to download. However, that is not necessarily a drawback to downloading video clips.

While streaming video has to match its compression so that it can playback close to real-time, downloaded video can take as long as it needs to to download and let you watch the video once it has finished. For that reason, downloaded video usually has higher image quality than streamed video. There is also the advantage of letting viewers choose how long they are willing to wait for which size and image quality they want. For example, when the *Star Wars Episode 1* trailer was released as a Quicktime download, many people



The CleanerEZ Wizard allows you to make basic compression settings for your video file.

opted to spend over 20 hours to download the highest quality version of it over their slow connections. Streaming video would not have allowed them that choice, forcing them to watch a heavily compressed version that matched their connection.

Compressing the video

Video on the Internet, by definition, is video that has been digitized and exists as a computer file. This article makes the assumption that you already have access to video that has already been digitized, edited, and exported as a computer file ready to be compressed for the Internet. If you want to put some clips on the Internet but the material only exists as a videotape or film print then you are probably better off enlisting a third party to digitize and compress your video for you. Although the cost may be significant to hire a professional to do the work, it would almost certainly be cheaper than buying your own editing system just to digitize and compress your video for one project.

The process of preparing video for the Internet involves exporting video from your editing application as an AVI or Quicktime file and then changing the specifications of the file so that it can easily fit within the bandwidth limitations of the Internet, a process called compression. Compression is the science and art of shrinking the data of a video file while keeping as much of the image and sound quality as possible.

Some non-linear editing software compresses video for the Internet from within the application itself. However, many people still turn to a separate application or ask someone with compression experience to compress their video for them. Most people who compress video for the Internet on a regular basis choose a specialized video compression application called Cleaner (formerly called Media Cleaner Pro) with a variety of sliders, checkboxes, and settings that allow for the compressionist to create the best looking video that fits within a target data size. Cleaner is designed for professionals and is priced for them too. Fortunately, Cleaner has a smaller sibling that is designed for regular people and is distributed freely with many popular non-linear editing applications. CleanerEZ does the same thing as the full version of Cleaner but does it with an interface that is a lot friendlier. CleanerEZ uses a "wizard" interface that compresses video files based on a few simple settings you select. CleanerEZ asks you questions about what type of server, which format to use, and what connection your viewer's have. Once you have compressed your clips, test them out yourself – over the Internet. If you are using a broadband connection, dial-up over a phoneline and test your video that way—you may be amazed by how slow it is. Also, if you are not streaming your clips consider putting up a big and a small version so that people on slow connections can see the clip without having to wait a long time.

Format

Three major formats dominate the world of video on the Internet. Real Network's RealPlayer, Microsoft's Windows Media Player, and Apple's Quicktime each have their own proponents who claim they offer the best quality and features but my own experience has shown that all three provide similar levels of image quality. Some technical differences exist between the different formats but the biggest reason to choose which format to use depends more upon what resources are available to you and your intended audience. If you can, provide a choice between at least two of the formats to allow your audience the greatest amount of flexibility.

Windows Media and Quicktime both have the advantage that they are included as part of the operating systems made by their respective manufacturers. People with Macs can view Quicktime content without having to add software while people with PCs running Windows can watch video in Windows Media format. Despite the apparent disadvantage RealPlayer has

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by not being included with an operating system, RealPlayer is the most popular format for delivering video over the Internet.

Since many of your viewers are not likely to have all three players installed, it is a good idea to include more than one type of format. Providing Quicktime along with either RealPlayer or Windows Media is a popular tactic because virtually all Mac users have Quicktime and most Windows users have both RealPlayer and Windows Media installed.

If you would rather only serve one video format, which one you choose should depend on what will be most convenient for your audience and which fits in best with the method of distribution you implement. Specifically, Quicktime has an advantage over both RealPlayer and Windows Media when delivered by download instead of streaming.

Video downloaded with Quicktime has the advantage of being able to start playing before it is completely downloaded while RealPlayer and Windows Media require the user to wait until the entire file has been downloaded before they can watch it. HTTP delivery of Quicktime is popular for demo reels, clips, movie trailers, and short films because it provides the high image quality of downloaded video along with the convenience of starting playback right away. For those with long videos, videos of live events, or continuous broadcasts streaming video is the way to go and RealPlayer is the most popular type for that. Be aware that any ISP can serve HTTP video, but not all ISPs offer streaming media servers—particularly not to lower-cost web serving options that you may have subscribed to. Your ISP's capabilities will be a factor in your decision to stream or provide clips for download.

Building and serving your web page

Once your video is compressed and saved as the type of file appropriate for the method of distribution you have selected, the next step will be to create the web page that will hold the video. Creating a web page that can hold a video clip is a little tricky to pull off with basic web editing tools such as FrontPage or Netscape Gold. Probably the easiest and most effective method for adding video to a web page is to use a multimedia oriented web development tool like Dreamweaver or GoLive. Both programs allow you to drag video content into your layout page and automatically program most of the settings in the page's HTML code. If you don't have access to those applications but have some HTML writing skill, I suggest finding a simple web page with the type of video content you plan to use and looking at the page's source code. The video file's information will be contained within either an <object> or <embed> tag and will contain information about the size of the picture and location of the file. Unfortunately, putting video in a webpage is still a relatively complicated procedure for the uninitiated so those without the software tools may want to hire a consultant or web designer to help them.

Once a web page is setup, you need to upload the page and video files to your web server in order for people to access the material. If you are using streaming media that requires an RTSP server, you may want to contact your ISP to find out exactly where the video file must go. If your ISP does not give you access to a server that can stream media, then you can still provide your files as an HTTP download. However, there are ISPs out there that explicitly offer streaming media servers as part of their services, such as Free Speech TV at www.freespeech.org.

One irony about video exhibition on the Internet is that you may not want to garner too much attention. ISPs usually set a limit on the amount of bandwidth used by your site and charge for however much you go over the limit each month. Video files take up much more bandwidth than regular web pages so they eat up that bandwidth much faster. If your material is very popular it may take you way over your limit in a short amount of time, leaving you owing an unexpectedly large sum of money to your ISP. Most ISPs provide tools to track bandwidth usage, and it is wise to check yours periodically to make sure you don't go over. Web sites that go over their bandwidth allotment that cannot pay their bills immediately are sometimes taken completely offline by their ISP. Be careful and make sure you don't lose your online presence!

Finding the best ISP depends upon what services you require and how much you are willing to pay. If your site is currently hosted as a free service then your options are probably limited to downloaded video, if any video content is allowed at all. For those on a budget who also have a Mac with Mac OS 9 or X installed, you might want to check out Apple's free iTools web hosting. iTools provides users with an "iMovie Theater" template that makes it easy to add Quicktime content to a webpage. See www.apple.com/itools for iTools services.

There are entire books written about the serving video over the web, but hopefully this article has provided a fair introduction to the process. Video serving is becoming more commonplace, and offers a great opportunity for media makers to show their stuff. It's good to know the basics, even if you feel you've gotten just enough information to convince you to work with a consultant!

Greg Gilpatrick [greg@randomroom.com] is a New York-based video/filmmaker and electronic media consultant.

FLASH!

If you are creating media specifically for the Internet, don't forget about Flash. Flash can deliver animation, music, and some video much more easily than a regular video file. Flash files generally load much faster than video files and are larger and more visually appealing on a web page. Flash authoring is also a good skill to have if you intend to work in interactive media. Flash can be authored with Macromedia's Flash or Director, Adobe's LiveMotion, ToonBoom Studio, and other illustration programs.

FreeSpeech TV offers deeply discounted web servers for AIVF members. See https://www.freespeech.org/cgi-bin/signup_premium.cgi?action=aivf

DOCUMENTARIES AND VISUAL EFFECTS

On the surface, the two concepts are the antithesis of each other. One is a form of filmmaking that documents the world while the other is a form of manipulating images in films so that the unreal can appear to exist. Yet the technology used in high-end visual effects at the companies that produce big-budget effects has been trickling down to the post-production products used by independents for a few years now. The result is that independent producers now have access to the same tools that megabudget films use.

Of course, that would seem to affect only narrative filmmakers but that's not the case. Visual effects technology also impacts documentary filmmaking. Effects technology can help clean up the image of old analog video, color correct footage, or stylize the use of stock photography.

Following are two examples of documentaries that made use of the latest technology in desktop visual effects. One is a low-budget doc about a New York neighborhood that needed to look good for television. The other is larger-budget documentary that used animation and effects to create a unique visual style. I performed the effects on one myself while the other was performed by a team of artists at a well-established post-production house, yet both were done with desktop computers with software that a filmmaker could go out and buy themselves without having to mortgage their house.

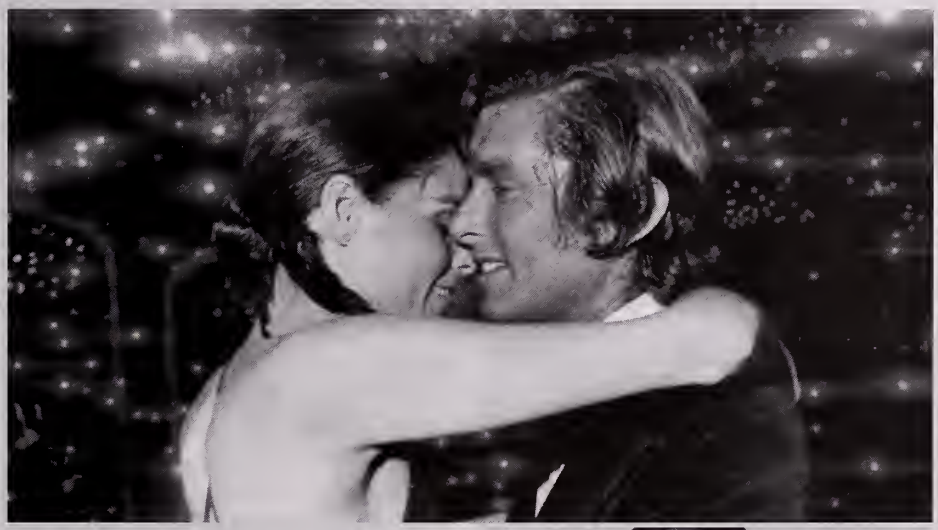
Manipulated Reality:

The Kid Stays in the Picture

DOCUMENTARIES ARE NOT USUALLY FILLED with advanced 3D animation and effects, and most people would think that digital manipulation of the picture of a documentary would seriously inhibit its effectiveness as non-fiction. Yet *The Kid Stays In The Picture*, a film based on the autobiography of producer Robert Evans, is a documentary filled with special effects and will soon be released theatrically by a major distributor—a rare feat for a documentary of any kind. Directors Brett Morgen and Nanette Burnstein worked mostly with period stills and films to fill in the visual details that accompany Evans' narration. Instead of using familiar motion control animation techniques (such as zooming or panning) to make the photos more interesting, the producers enlisted New York production company Edgeworx to compose the source material into collages and three-dimensional animations.

The film was originally created in Evans' home. There, Morgen and Burnstein collected and scanned photos to match the Evans's voice-over, which was edited down from the audio version of the book. Once the visual edit was complete, Edgeworx artists re-scanned and telecined selected photos and footage to match the resolution of High-definition video. These elements were then animated and sometimes had effects applied.

One technique used on the photos breaks the still into different layers that are then manipulated in three-dimensional space. This process creates the impression that the camera is moving inside the world of the photograph. Recent advancements in compositing applications like After Effects and Combustion allow for this "3D compositing" so that anyone with enough patience can perform a similar effect using Photoshop and a program that performs 3D compositing.



The kid plays with the picture: using desktop compositing tools, the filmmakers created different layers that when manipulated in three-dimensional space convey the idea that the camera is moving inside the world of the photo.

Other parts use more conventional methods of animating photos together, but the footage throughout definitely has the feeling of being manipulated. While it may lack the apparent authenticity of a more traditional documentary that relies upon unmanipulated archival material, the animation and effects for this production actually fit the tone of the film and by indicating that Evans' reality is not necessarily real, accentuate the unreliability of memory.

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Once Edgeworx took over, *Kid* was created entirely in High Definition format. Edgeworx producer Scott Klein has been working almost exclusively with high-definition video for over two years and had the appropriate experience to convert the various types of archival media used in the film to high-definition with an eye toward the eventual conversion to a film print for theatrical distribution. Klein feels confident that High-Def is the optimal format for mid-budget independents and to this end is now heading Definition, up a new company started by Edgeworx. Definition will provide consulting and production equipment for projects shooting and/or editing with High-Defintion video. Klein's plan is to come on board future productions during pre-production, so that any technical entanglements are addressed before production begins. In addition to consulting and post-production, Definition plans on renting out a package including a Sony HD camera.

The Kid Stays In The Picture debuted at Sundance last January and will be distributed by USA Films in July. It's the first production produced with the assistance of Definition and judging by what I saw, high-def has a lot to offer independent producers who can afford it.

For more info, see www.edgeworxs.com.

Visual FX Editing *On the Cheap*

"Don't worry, I'll fix it in post."

JOSH PAIS HAS LIVED ON EAST SEVENTH Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan nearly all his life. Pais, an actor who has appeared in several big budget movies and TV series, started to document his neighborhood's unique history and colorful residents in the early 1990's on a Hi-8 video camera. Shooting continued off and on for almost a decade and the end result is the recently finished feature length doc titled *Seventh Street*.

Along the way Pais replaced his Hi8 camera with a miniDV one and when it came time to edit, all the old analog footage was transfered to DV and edited in Final Cut Pro. Metro Channel, a local cable channel that focuses on programming about New York City, picked up the show for local distribution and provided finishing funds. Although it was great for Pais to have some of the movie's costs picked up by a distributor, having to prepare the video to meet the channel's technical standards added a hefty burden to the post-production process.

Pais contacted me about making several adjustments to the show's picture to make it technically and aesthetically acceptable for broadcast. Specifically, the video shot with the Hi-8 camera had what Pais called "glitches"—dropouts and hits on the original tapes that distorted the image with horizontal lines of static. Although most of the glitches were barely visible and would not distract the average viewer, there were some that obstructed a subject's face, were spread over several frames, or even obliterated more than half the frame. Along with fixing the glitches, color correction was required for almost all of the show's 80 minutes to bring it in line with the technical standards for broadcast and to just make it look better. After work had started on those two tasks, Pais also asked me to make a couple more cosmetic changes such as removing the shadow from a poorly placed mic.

All the FX work I performed on *Seventh Street* was done using Apple's Final Cut Pro 3 ($999 Mac) and Discreet's Combustion 2 ($4995 Mac/Win) on a PowerMac G4 running Mac OS X, For shots that only needed minor adjustments to color or corrections to luminance levels in order to meet broadcast standards, I used FCP 3's color correction tools. Combustion was used for the more complex color correction shots and for all the shots that required manipulation to remove glitches or shadows.

The process of removing the glitches was a relatively simple technique that involved replacing the portion of a frame with the line of static with the corresponding part of the preceding frame. Combustion has a built in paint system that allows you to paint over a video clip with the picture from another frame of the same clip. Since most of the glitches lasted for only one frame, I worked one frame at a time. I found the frame with the offending blemish and then chose a

Combustion's paint tools allowed Gilpatrick to remove the egregious mic shadow from producer Josh Pais's shirt.

nearby frame to paint over it with. As I painted a line across the frame over the glitch, the static was covered by the untarnished picture from the preceding frame. Usually the changes from one frame to another are insignificant enough that replacing a small part of one with another is not visible. If there was considerable action or camera movement within the frame I was still able to make the glitch less apparent, if not invisible, by selectively painting over parts of the glitch and blurring the areas I couldn't cover up.

Pais also asked if it was possible to remove a bump on his shirt from a lavalier mic in a shot where he is speaking to the camera. Usually, this type of shot would be difficult to fix but we were lucky because Pais wore a solid color shirt and he and the camera were mostly still during the shot. Since the color of the shirt and lighting over the spot with the bump did not change I was able to replace the area with the bump with the image from another part of the shirt with similar lighting. The process is basically the same as the one for removing the glitches except that it is copying from an area inside the same frame instead of a previous frame. Since he did move a little during the shot I had to animate the position and size of the overlaid image to match his position.

Most of the color correction work for *Seventh Street* was done in Final Cut Pro 3 but there were certain shots that required extra tools available in Combustion. For example, a few of the older shots had color problems beyond poor color balance. These shots were completely tinted with a color, usually yellow, that needed to be removed from the image before more subtle color correction could be done. Combustion's keyer (the tool used to remove the background from a blue or green screen shot) includes a tool to suppress a particular color from the entire image. After suppressing the color that tinted the image the picture looked more like a normal video image and I was able to refine the color with normal color correction tools.

Final Cut Pro and Combustion are not the only tools for this type of work. Most non-linear video editing programs include color correction tools. The method I used to cover up *Seventh Street*'s glitches is not a particularly complicated process in the world of visual effects. After Effects and Commotion are two programs I could have used instead of Combustion to cover up parts of the video. For work that effects only one frame, Photoshop could also be used effectively. After exporting the offending frame as an image, open it in Photoshop and make the changes you need. Edit the frame back into your clip and you have performed a visual effect.

The visual effects performed on *Seventh Street* were strictly utilitarian, employing subtle adjustments to make the picture appear more professional. These probably are not the tasks that come to mind when thinking of visual effects but these are some of the same basic techniques used to make big budget effects. Color correction and basic image manipulation are commonplace on documentaries destined for distribution. If you find that your own documentary lacks a visual professionalism do not despair : the prevalence of these relatively inexpensive tools make it more likely that you will find a colorist or FX artist who can make your picture look better within your price range.

Greg Gilpatrick [greg@randomroom.com] is a New York-based video/filmmaker and electronic media consultant

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DOMESTIC

AFI FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-17, CA. Deadline: June 5 (early); July 17 (final). Festival combines film programming w/ special events, capturing cultural diversity of L.A. while providing new filmmakers w/ avenue of exposure to film industry. Sections incl. Int'l competition, Doc competition, Shorts competition, New Directors for American Independents, European Film Showcase, Latin Cinema series, Asian New Classics, Window on the World. Entries must be L.A. premieres w/ no previous local TV/theatrical exposure. Festival receives wide print coverage in trades, LA Times, etc. & is open to public. Founded: 1987. Cats: short, doc, feature, animation, experimental. Awards: Juried Competition Prizes, Kodak Vision Award for Cinematography, Audience Awards in each category. . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Features (over 30 mins.) $40, shorts $30 (early); features $50, shorts $40 (final). Contact: AFI Fest, 2021 N. Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90027-1657; (323) 856-7707; fax: (323) 462-4049; afifest@afionline.org; www.afifest.com

ASPEN FILMFEST, Sept. 25-29, CO. Deadline: July 1. Aspen Filmfest is an int'l non-competitve showcase for narrative & doc features, as well as retros, family films, educational forums & directorial & other tributes. Neither films previously submitted not films aired on US television are eligible. Founded: 1979. Cats: feature, doc, family, children. Awards: Non-Competitive. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 70mm, Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: $35. Contact: Prema Trettin (Program Administrator), 110 East Hallam, Suite 102, Aspen, CO 81612; (970) 925-6882; fax: (970) 925-1967; filmfest@aspenfilm.org; www.aspenfilm.org

AUSTIN GAY & LESBIAN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 28-Sept. 6, TX. Deadline: June 30. aGLIFF is the oldest & largest fest in the Southwest. aGLIFF continues its mission to exhibit high-quality gay & lesbian, bisexual & transgender films & videos that enlighten, educate, & entertain all community. Founded: 1986. Cats: Feature, Short, Children, Doc, Experimental, Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", 3/4", DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Contact: Scott Dinger, 1216 E 51st, Austin, TX 78723; (512) 302-9889; fax: 302-1088; kino@agliff.org; www.agliff.org

BLUE SKY INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 26-29, NV. Deadline: June 30. The Festival has been dedicated to the discovery & exhibition of new talent w/in the independent world of filmmaking, playing host to many US & world premieres. The BSIFF standard is to showcase a variety of American independent & world cinema, incl. the award-winning features, shorts, & documentaries. Headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada, BSIFF is the largest film arts event in the state, w/ an annual screening schedule exceeding 100 films from such countries as the United States, Canada, Mexico Brazil, Japan, Korea, Singapore, India, Australia, New Zealand, England, France, Italy & Germany. Founded: 1998. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation, music video. Awards: Best Director's award totals $12,000 in postproduction services; non-cash prizes also awarded. Formats: 35mm, VHS, 1/2", DV, DVD, Beta SP, Hi 8, Hi8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25-$30. Contact: Hunter Sinclare, 4185 Paradise Rd., Ste. 2009, Las Vegas, NV 89109; (702) 737-3313; info@bsiff.com; www.bsiff.com

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Sept. 12-15, CO. Deadline: Early deadlines: April 15 (scripts); May 15 (films). Final deadlines: May 10 (scripts); June 10 (films). Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (early); $45 (final); Student: $35 (early); $40 (final). Contact: Marty Ferris, Box 718, Riverwalk Center, 150 W. Adams, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (970) 453-6200; fax: (970) 453-2692; filmfest@brecknet.com; www.breckfilmfest.com

CINELATINO! FESTIVAL, September 13-23, CA. Deadline: June 30. Organized by San Franciso-based Cine Acción, fest seeks film & video works that reflect the dignity & diversity of Latino, Latin American & Caribbean communities. Film & video works by and/or about Latinos in the US as well as works from Latin America & the Carribean encouraged for submission. Founded: 1992. Cats: Latin, doc, feature, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, Mini DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (incls. membership w/ organization). Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., 2nd floor, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135; fax: (415) 553-8137; info@cineaccion.com; www.cineaccion.com

COLOSSAL FILM CRAWL, september 12, SC. Deadline: June 29; late: July 20. The Colossal Film Crawl is an annual multi-venue film & video fest in Columbia, South Carolina celebrating short films & videos by artists in the Southeast. Coordinated by Free Times, the region's weekly newspaper, the fest seeks to encourage the growth of regional alternative & independent filmmaking by providing a needed venue & an expanded audience for these efforts. In its fifth year, the Colossal Film Crawl accepts entries from film & videomakers from South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, & Florida. Films & videos must be 30 min. or less. All Genres accepted. Founded: 1996. Cats: narrative, experimental, short, feature, animation, doc, music video. Awards: $1000 (Best of show; Best Editing) $250 Best Editing, Sound, Photo, Screenplay, Experimental. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10; late $15. Contact: c/o Free Times, 3105 Divine St., Columbia, SC 29205; (803) 765-0707 x129; fax: (803) 765 0727; www.free-times.com/

COLUMBUS INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mid-November, OH. Deadline: July 1. Competitive fest w/ screenings of selected winners, founded in 1952, is one of the older non-theatrical showcases in country. Accepts indie & corporate productions in 13 major divisions w/ about 10 cats in each (97 cats in all). Divisions incl. Arts; Entertainment; Business & Industry; Children & Youth; Education & Info; Humanities; Science & Technology; Social Issues; Health; Medicine; Religion; & Student. Founded: 1952. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation, script, children, any style or genre, student, youth media, TV. Awards: Chris Awards go to best of cat; 2nd place Bronze Plaques, Certificates of Honorable Mention & Silver Chris statuette (Best of Division) also awarded. Formats: CD-ROM, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $75 & up (professionals); $35-$50 (students). Contact: Judy Chalker, 5701 N. High St, Ste 204, Worthington, OH 43085; (614) 841-1666; fax: 841-1666; info@chrisawards.org; www.chrisawards.org

CONVERGENCE FILM/VIDEO/ANIMATION FESTIVAL, Sept. 12-15, RI. Deadline: May 1; June 1 (late). Fest is presented as part of the Convergence Int'l Arts Festival & is seeks shorts 60 min. in length or less. Live action & animated works in all genres. Work must have been completed w/in the past two years. Founded: 1997. Cats: doc, narrative, experimental, short, animation, student, installation. Awards: $500 Best of Show, plus additional awards. Formats: 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10; $15 (late). Contact: Festival, 65 Weybosset St., #39, Providence, RI 02903; (401) 621-1992; lynne@caparts.org; www.caparts.org

CORNELL ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, October 11-17, NY. Deadline: July 1. The fest is a week long, non-competitive program of 20+ screenings of features, docs, shorts & animation. Films must be enviromentally themed. All screenings incl. discussions either w/ the filmmaker or topical expert. Festival is by invitation, but submissions are encouraged. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: No awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. VHS NTSC only Include press photos. Include SASE for tape return. Entry Fee: no fee. Contact: Christopher Riley, 104 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; (607)255-4933; fax: (607) 255-0238; cjr20@cornell.edu; www.cfe.cornell.edu/filmfest

"FIERCELY INDEPENDENT" WOODSTOCK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 19-22, NY. Deadline: July 1. Annual non-profit fest fosters an intimate, reciprocal relationship between indie filmmakers, industry reps & audience members held in "the most famous little town in the whole world". Celebrating new voices of indie film w/ seminars, workshops, concerts & parties. Cats: feature, doc, short, music video, animation, student. Awards: incl. Best Feature, Doc, Short & Musical score. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25-$50. Contact: Meira Blaustein, Box 1406, Woodstock, NY 12498; (845) 679-4265;fax:(509)479-5414; info@woodstock-filmfest.com; www.woodstockfilmfest.com

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA, Nov. 7-14, CA. Deadline: June 7 (early); July 5 (final). FAF-sponsored, noncompetitive fest invites submissions of independent films & videos of any length, genre or subject by N. California media artists. Filmmakers residing outside of California may submit works under thirty min., as long as he/she is a member of Film Arts Foundation. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 35mm, DV, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (early); $20 (final). Contact: Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: 552-0882; fest@filmarts.org; www.filmarts.org

FIRSTGLANCE: LOS ANGELES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Early Nov., CA. Deadline: June 15. Fest

encourages both student & professional film & videomakers w/ all budgets. Festival's mission is to exhibit all genres of work (film, video & digital productions) from mainstream to controversial in a competitive casual atmosphere. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, doc, Mini doc (under 30 min), short (under 45 min), Short 2 (under 10 min), animation, experimental, student. Awards: Prizes incl. trip to L.A., fest tickets, fest t-shirt, "Best of Philly" prize package & prize money for student cat., movie gift certificate, entry into First Glance Philadelphia. Formats: DVD, DV, 8mm, super 8, DigiBeta, Beta SP, Beta, S-VHS, 1/2", 3/4", 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS (NTSC) & DVD. Entry Fee: $25 (students); $40 (professional). Contact: William Ostroff, Firstglance Films, Box 571105, Tarzana, CA 91356; (818) 464-3544; (215) 552-8566; wropro1@msn.com; www.newimaging.com or www.firstglancefilms.com

HAMPTONS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-20, NY. Deadline: May 11 (early feature/doc); May 18 (shorts); June 15 (final feature/doc). Annual fest for features, shorts & documentaries created "to provide a forum for filmmakers around the world who express an independent vision." Festival offers diverse programming w/ premieres by established filmmakers, breakthrough films by new directors, panel discussions w/ guests from the industry & the largest (cash valued) film fest prize in the U.S. Note: Entries accepted for Golden Starfish Award Features, Documentaries & Shorts, World Cinema (Out-of-Competition Features & Docs), Shorts (Out-of-Competition), View from Long Island, Young Videomakers & Student Shorts. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, short, doc, world cinema, films of conflict & resolution, student, youth media, family, children. Awards: Golden Starfish Award for Features, Documentaries & Shorts. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: shorts $25; features/docs $50 or $35 (early). Contact: HIFF, 59 Franklin St. Ste 208, New York, NY 10013; (212) 431-6292; fax: 431-5440; hiff@hamptonsfilmfest.org; www.hamptonsfilmfest.org

HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-25, IN. Deadline: June 15. Fest seeks features & shorts that "explore the human journey by artistically expressing hope & respect for the positive values of life." Founded: 1991. Cats: doc, short, feature, animation, experimental, student, family, children, any style or genre. Awards: Prizes totaling $100,000; $50,000 grand prize for dramatic feature. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (under 50 min.); $55 (50 min. & up). Contact: Jeffrey L. Sparks, 200 S. Meridian, Ste. 220, Indianapolis, IN 46225; (317) 464-9405; fax: 464-9409; info@heartlandfilmfest.org; www.heartlandfilmfest.org

LATINO FILM FESTIVAL(San Francisco/Marin/ Berkely), Nov 1-10, CA. Deadline: July 1. Annual competitive fest seeks works in any genre by or about Latino in the U.S. & int'ly. Fest showcases artistic or educational films by or about Latinos & expresses the cultural diversity of all Latino countries as a source of inspiration & empowerment. Works must have been completed in last two years. Founded: 1997. Cats: Feature, Doc, Animation, short. Awards: Best Short, Best Doc, Best Film by Women, Best Student Film, Audience Award. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $35 late entry. Contact: Sylvia Perel, Festival-Artistic Director, Dominican University of California, 50 Acacia Ave,, San Rafael, CA 94901-2298; (415) 454-4039; fax: (415) 454-4613; cinefest@latinofilmfest.org; www.latinofilmfest.org

LONG ISLAND GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, November 14-17, NY. Deadline: July 1; August 15 (late). Entry Fee: early deadline, $15; final deadline, $25. Contact: Stephen Flynn, PO Box 1477, Melville, NY, USA 11747; (516) 694-2407; fax: (631) 547-6651; sflynn@ligff.org; www.ligff.org

MAINE STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 13, ME. Deadline: June 1. The Festival sponsored by MAMA (Maine Alliance of Media Arts), is open to Maine residents 19 years of age & younger. Entries are accepted in all film & video formats & are divided into 3 cats: Pre-Teen Division (Grades K-6), Junior Division (Grades 7-9) & Senior Division (Grades 10-12). Founded: 1978. Cats: Any style or genre, Student. Awards: Senior Division Grand Prize Award is a $2,000 Scholarship to the Young Filmmakers Program, Int'l Film & Television Workshop in association w/ Rockport College, Rockport, Maine. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Huey, Fest Director , Box 4320, Portland, ME 04101; (207) 773-1130; hueyfilm@nlis.net; www.agate.net/~ile/mama.html

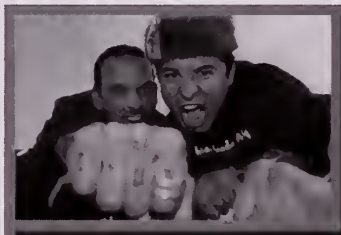
MILL VALLEY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 3-13, CA. Deadline: May 31 (early); June 30 (final). Invitational, noncompetitive fest screens films of all genres & lengths, & has become a premiere West Coast event. Entries must have been completed w/ in previous 18 months; industrial, promotional or instructional works not appropriate; premieres & new works emphasized. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Interactive, Children, Animation, Experimental. Awards: Audience & Jury awards for shorts. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, Multimedia, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $25 (final). Contact: Zoe Elton, 38 Miller Avenue, Ste 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256; fax: (415) 383-8606; info@finc.org; www.mvff.com

NEW YORK EXPO OF SHORT FILM & VIDEO, December 5-8, NY. Deadline: July 15. The fest is the nation's longest-running short film fest & seeks fiction, animation, doc & experimental film & video. Films/videos should be under 60 min. & completed in the previous 2 years. Student & int'l entries welcome. Cats: short, experimental, animation, doc. Awards: All films selected to be shown by teams of top professionals in the NY film community are considered Jury Award Winners. Gold, Sliver, Bronze & Best Debut awards are granted in each category, plus cash, filmstock & class instruction awards. Formats: 35mm, S-8 (shown in video projection), 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $45, for return of preview tape incl. $5. Contact: Ann Borin, Dir., 163 Amsterdam Ave., #107, New York, NY 10023; (212) 505-7742; fax: 586-6391; nyexpo@aol.com; www.nyexpo.org

NIGHT OF THE BLACK INDEPENDENTS, Aug. 5-6, GA. Deadline: July 7. An exhibition organization for filmmakers of the African diaspora, providing venues for film & video artists of African descent. It prides itself on exposing these films to audiences underserved by the mainstream industry, mainly through their annual fest held in Atlanta, Georgia. The two-day fest showcases Black talent in all genres from animation to science fiction. It is a competitive event that awards the best in each category w/ special honorable mention awards given to artist deserving special recognition. Prizes incl. cash prizes & in-kind services from industry businesses. Cats: Feature, Short, African-American, Doc, Animation, Student. Awards: Awards given in cats: narrative, doc, animation & student. Cash prizes & in-kind donations from industry businesses.. Formats: 1/2", Beta SP, 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Peggy Hayes, PO Box 77305, Atlanta, GA 30357; (404)318-9513; nightoftheblackindependents@mail.com

OHIO INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, November 5-10, OH. Deadline: June 1; July 1 (Final). Fest provides a unique networking & exhibition space for indie filmmakers & is a professional arts org. dedicated to supporting, growing & legitimizing indie filmmaking. Founded: 1994. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Best of the Fest. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 1/2", super 8, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (shorts under 15 min.); $30 (15 min. & over)—Late fees are doubled. Screenplays: $40; $60 (late). Contact: Annetta Marion & Bernadette Gillota, Executive Directors, 1392 West 65th Street, Cleveland, OH 44102; (216) 651-7315; fax: 651-7317; ohioindiefilmfest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com

OJAI FILM FESTIVAL, October 24-27, CA. Deadline: June 15 (early); July 15 (final). Theme: "Enriching the Human Spirit Through Film." Festival will highlight Mexican filmmaking, women filmmakers & films dealing w/ the pressures that threaten childhood in our modern world. Films



The San Francisco Treat

Started in 1985, The Film Arts Festival is the engaging result of the Film Arts Foundation's commitment to bring together works by Bay Area independent filmmakers. Boasting a landscape rich with talent, the four day festival has screened works by Academy Award winners Allie Light and Irving Saraf, plus films by acclaimed filmmakers Jay Rosenblatt, Marlon Riggs, and Craig Baldwin, to name just a few. Last year's festival kicked off at the Balboa Theater with Jim Mendiola's treasure hunt caper *Come and Take it Day* (photo), followed by screenings of more than 40 films at venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. See listing.

& videos on all subjects in any genre, however, are welcomed. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student, any style or genre. Awards: Best narrative feature; narrative short; Doc feature; Doc short; Animated film; Student film; Best Film exemplifing fest theme. Trophies, plaques, and/or certificates will be presented to the winners. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: $35 (35mm); $25 (all other formats); $20 (student, any format); add $10 for final deadline. Contact: Steve Grumette, Artistic Director, 10942 Encino Dr., Oak View, CA 93022; (805) 649-4000; filmfest@ojai.net; www.filmfest.ojai.net

ONION CITY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November 8-10, IL. Deadline: Early: June 14; Late: June 28. A fest dedicated to the art of experimental film & video. Cats: experimental. Awards: Cash awards for First, Second, Third place. Optional Honorable Mentions. Formats: DV, 1/2", 3/4", 16mm, 35mm, 8mm. Preview on VHS or film. Entry Fee: Early: $25; Late: $35. Contact: Festival, 5243 N. Clark Street, 2nd Fl, Chicago, IL 60640; (773) 293-1447; fax: 293-0575; programming@chicagofilmmakers.org; www.chicagofilmmakers.org

PALM SPRINGS INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 6-12, CA. Deadline: June 10. Annual competitive fest is one of the world's largest presenter of short films, screening 250 films from 35 countries in pervious years. Fest accepts works no longer than 40 min. & completed in the last 2 years. Founded: 1995. Cats: doc, short, animation, experimental, family, children, student, live action. Awards: Cash prizes of $2,000 (1st) & $500 (2nd) in each cat. 1st place winner becomes eligible for Academy Award consideration. Best of the Fest, $2,000; Palm Springs Int'l Future Filmmakers Award $15,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (student); $35. Late: $25 (Student); $50 (Non-Student). Contact: Festival, 1700 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Ste. 3, Palm Springs, CA 92262; (760) 322-2930; fax: 322-4087;info@psfilmfest.org; www.psfilmfest.org

PENNSYLVANIA FILM FESTIVAL, October 16-20, PA. Deadline: July 15 . Festival features Italian retrospective, world cinema, films for both mature & young adults, films for children, workshops & panel discussions. Festival seeks feature films & shorts in all cats, submissions for doc & music video competitions, films for children. Especially interested in dramatic films of interest to the college-age audience, incl. films about coming to age, love & sex, gender politics, etc. Cats: doc, feature, short. Awards: Awards & prizes to be determined. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DV, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (shorts under 15 min.); $25 all other. Contact: Bruce Thomas, 321 Spruce St. Ste. 607, Scranton, PA 18603; (570)941-3456; paff@epix.net; www.pafilmfest.com

PITTSBURGH INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, October 18-27, PA. Deadline: July 13. Festival has been providing Pittsburgh & the tri-state area w/ ten days of innovative, provocative, entertaining lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgendered films. Founded: 1985. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media, family. Awards: Best of Fest Short Film (under 30 min.)($500), Best Doc Film ($500). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee.. Contact: PILGFF, PO Box 81237, Pittsburgh,

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RESFEST DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. - Dec., CA, WA, IL, NY. Deadline: May 3 (early); June 3 (final). Annual nat'l/int'l touring fest seeks short films/videos exploring the dynamic interplay of film, art, music & design. The Fest showcases the best of the year's shorts, features, music videos, & animation along w/ screenings, live music events, parties, panel discussions, & tech demos. The underlying guideline for submissions is Innovation. The previous years the fest toured 14 cities int'lly. Cats: Doc, Experimental, Feature, Animation, music video, short. Awards: Audience Choice Award w/ cash prizes. Formats: DV, Beta SP, 35mm, DigiBeta (preferred), Mini DV (NTSC). Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL), Beta SP (NTSC), Mini DV (NTSC). Entry Fee: $20 (early), $25 (final). Contact: RESFEST, 601 West 26th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10001; resfest@resfest.com; www.resfest.com

SAN DIEGO ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, October 3-6, CA. Deadline: April 30, June 7 (late). Annual competitive fest, presented by the Asian American Journalists Association of San Diego,seeks short to feature-length narratives, docs, experimental, animation & mixed genre works made by or about Asian & Pacific Americans. Entry form avail. from web site. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, animation, mixed genre works, short. Awards: Awards incl. Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc, Best Experimental, and Best Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15; $25 (late). Contact: Entry Coordinator, c/o Duy Nguyen, 4395 70th St., Ste. 22, La Mesa, CA 91941; (858) 616-8525; info@sdaff.org; www.sdaff.org

SEATTLE LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-24, WA. Deadline: June 1 (early); June 30 (final). The Pacific Northwest's premier queer film fest, committed to screening the best in lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender film/video. Produced by Three Dollar Bill Cinema, whose mission is to provide community access to queer cinema & a venue for queer filmmakers to show their work. Founded: 1995. Cats: Feature, Short, Experimental, doc, animation. Awards: Jury selects best feature, doc, short, new director & female director ($500-$1000). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (early); $15 (final). Contact: Jason Plourde, Programming Director , 1122 E. Pike St., #1313, Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 323-4274; fax: (206) 323-4275; programming@seattlequeerfilm.com; www.seattlequeerfilm.com

SHORT ATTENTION SPAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Year round/ Traveling , CA. Deadline: June 30. Annual touring fest seeks short shorts (3 min. or less) for showcase traveling to 30+ venues throughout the U.S. & Canada. The Fest premieres in Georgia & California & tours to 30 cities in North America, Asia & Europe. Founded: 1992. Cats: entries acepted in all non-commercial cats: narartive, experimental, animation etc., (Commercial work & music videos accepted out-of- competition only). Awards: vary by year. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10. Contact: c/o Dreamspan, Entry Coordinator, 110 E. Clayton St. 4th Flr., Athens , GA 30601; fax: 706-548-7983; jason@dreamspan.com; www.shortspan.com

SIDEWALK MOVING PICTURE FESTIVAL, September 28-30, AL. Deadline: June 15. Program of over 60 films in three days, plus seminars & panel discussions. All venues located w/in one block of Birmingham's historic Alabama Theatre, allowing filmmakers to mix & mingle w/ fest patrons as the eat, drink, & listen to music while deciding what films to see next. Comprehensive, inexpensive film passes allow access to any & all Sidewalk venues (as seating permits). Founded: 1999. Cats: Feature, Short, Student, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: Awards sculpture designed by local artist, plus $1,000 cash for Best Feature & Best Doc Films; $500 cash for Best Short & Best Animated Films; $300 cash for Best Student Film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30 (shorts); $40 (features); student discount w/ valid ID. Contact: Erik Jambor, P.O. Box 590125, Birmingham, AL 35259; (205)324-0888;fax:324-2488; info@sidewalkfest.com; www.sidewalkfest.com

SUPER 8 SIDESHOW, August 21-24, CO. Deadline: July 15. one-of-a-kind fest seeks short films of all genres, shotpredominantly on Super 8 or 8mm film. All styles encouraged, but work must be submitted on vhs or mini-dv tape, & must not exceed 15 min.. Festival to incl. workshops, panels, & parties. Cats: doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: incl. cash, film stock & supplies. Formats: super 8, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS or mini-DV. Entry Fee: $15 (for one entry), $2 (each additional entry). Contact: Johnny Moorhouse/Trish, c/o Brainbox, 145 W. 67th St. Apt 4C, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-0990; tivie6@yahoo.com; www.thebrainbox.org

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 30-Sept. 2 , CO. Deadline: July 15. Annual fest, held in a Colorado mountain town, celebrates the art of film, selling out each yr. w/ over 5,000 film afficionados arriving from around the world. Cats: feature, short, student, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, Hi8, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (19 min. or less); $55 (20-39 min.); $75 (40-59 min.); $95 (60 min. & over); $25 (student films, any length). Contact: Festival, 379 State Street #3, Portsmouth, NH 03801; (603) 433-9202; fax: 433-9206; Tellufilm@aol.com; www.telluridefilmfest.org

TUBE FILM FESTIVAL, August 20 & 21, CA. Deadline: June 15. In conjunction w/ the X Games in San Francisco, this is a sports film/video fest soliciting worldwide submissions. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Ken Karn, c/o Outland Films, 2378 Fairglen Drive, San Jose, CA, USA 95125; (408) 266-0242; fax: 445-1335; chilek@aol.com; www.expn.go.com

UNITED NATIONS FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 24-27, CA. Deadline: June 10. Held at Stanford University, showcases doc films & videos dealing w/ UN-related issues: human rights, environmental survival, war & peace, etc. All genres & lengths. Founded: 1998. Cats: any style or genre, doc, feature, short. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", 35mm, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (up to 30 min.); $35 (longer than 30 min.). Contact: Jasmina Bojic, Stanford Univ., Main Quad Bldg. 40, Stanford, CA 94305;(650)725-0012; fax: 725-0011; info@unaff.org; www.unaff.org

VIRGINIA FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 24-27, VA. Deadline: July 1. Fest seeks independent works of all genres & lengths. Submissions must relate to a theme, which changes each year. Based at the University of Virginia, the fest

designs its program to resemble a comprehensive course on a cultural theme, engaging a broad audience of scholars, filmmakers, & students in discussions revolving around the year's theme. The fest features over 60 premiere, classic, independent, & experimental films & videos, plus numerous sidebar performances & exhibitions. Founded: 1988. Cats: Experimental, Feature, Animation, doc, short. Formats: CD-Rom, 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Tori Talbot, PO Box 400128, Charlottesville, VA 22904; 800-UVA-FEST or (434) 982-5277; fax: (804) 924-1447; filmfest@virginia.edu; www.vafilm.com

WORLD POPULATION FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, MA. Deadline: June 15. Secondary & college students eligible to submit works that address population growth, resource consumption, environment & common global future. Cats: drama,image/montage;docs of any length accepted in film, video & multimedia. Founded: 1995. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Animation, Short, Multimedia, Student, music video, youth media. Awards: Total of $10,000 in prizes awarded to best entries in secondary & college cats. "Best of Fest" VHS tapes made avail. to secondary schools & colleges & may be broadcast on MTV, Turner & PBS . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Multimedia, Beta, DV, Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Rawn Fulton, Executive Director, 46 Fox Hill Rd., Bernardston, MA 01337; (800) 638-9464; fax: (413) 648-9204; info@wpfvf.com; www.wpfvf.com

ZEITGEIST INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 14 / August 11, CA. Deadline: June 7. ZIFF is an irreverent film/video fest, held in San Francisco in the backyard of the Zeitgeist Bar (seats 300). Works can be in any category/genre "that can hold the attention of the average bar patron". Cats: short (15 min or less), . Awards: none. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee.. Contact: B Berzins, 199 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 786-9967; ikooking@yahoo.com; www.overcookedcinema.com

Foreign

ATLANTIC FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 13-21, Canada. Deadline: June 7. A nine-day celebration of film & video from Canada & around the world. In previous years the fest presented over 200 films w/ record attendence figures. The Festival showcases five main programming streams: Atlantic Focus, Canadian Perspective, Int'l Perspective, Late shift, & Frame by Frame. Founded: 1981. Cats: Any style or genre, Children, feature, doc, short, animation, TV. Awards: Cash prizes . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: $25 . Contact: Lia Rinaldo, Festival Director, Box 36139, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 3S9; (902) 422-3456; fax: (902) 422-4006; fest@atlanticfilm.com; www.atlanticfilm.com

BAHIA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 9-16, Brazil. Deadline: June 30 (Competition); July15 (Market). 'Por Um Mundo Mais Humano' (For a More Humanistic World) is motto of fest & market. The Fest is open to Ibero-American prods as well as non-Ibero-American prods about Latin Amer. subjects. Program incl. film & video conquest, retros, symposia & exhibitions, expositions. Market takes place during fest; objective is "to create an alternative space for commercialization & int'l distribution of exp. & ind. film & video prods." Market will disseminate promotional materials sent by participants. Cats: Any style or genre. Awards: Tatu de Ouro prizes in following cats: film/video doc; film/video-fiction; film/video animation/exp.; film/video made by non-Ibero-American about Latin America; plus Best Feature Doc; Best Dir.; Best Script; Best Photography; Best Editing; Best Sound. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (max length: 60 min.). Entry Fee: $50, payable to: CETEAD (market). Contact: Nelia Belchote, Festival Director, Campus Universitario de Ondina, 40.170-290 , Bahia, Brazil; 011 55 71 235-4392; fax: 55 71 336-1680; jornada@ufba.br; www.jornadabahia.cjb.net

BIENNIAL OF MOVING IMAGES, Nov. 2-11, Switzerland. Deadline: June 30. Biennial fest seeks artistic video works & artistic experimental films of all lengths & genres made in the previous year. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: $13,000 in cash prizes.. Formats: VHS, U-matic, Beta SP, DVD, 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Centre for Contemporary Images, 5 rue du Temple, Geneva, Switzerland CH-1201; 011 41 22 908 2000; fax: 41 22 908 2001; cic@sgg.ch; www.centreimage.ch/bim

CANADIAN INT'L ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL, October 10-13, Canada. Deadline: June 15. Open to professional & non-professional productions, competitive fest, founded in 1969, holds showings in several cities in Canada after main fest in Campbell River, BC. Entrants incl. amateur filmmakers, ind. filmmakers & preprofessional students of film. About 30 prods showcased. Entries must have been completed in previous 5 yrs. Founded: 1969. Cats: Short, Feature, Student, Doc, Experimental, Animation, Most Humorous, Natural Science, Canadian, youth media, music video. Awards: Awards incl. Best Overall Entry, Scenario, Doc, Natural Sciences, Animation, Experimental, Editing, Humor, Teen 16-19, Teen under 16. Max running time for entries: 30 min., except for features.. Formats: 16mm, 8mm, 1/2", , super 8, Beta SP, 35mm, S-VHS, DVD, Hi8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20-$50. Contact: CIAFF Ben Andrews FSCCA, Festival Director, PO Box 1010, STN. Main, Barrie, Ontario, Canada L4M 5E1; (905) 662-4406; fax: 733-8232; ciaff@canada.com; www.CIAFF.org

FILMFEST HAMBURG, Sept. 23-29, Germany. Deadline: July 15. The Fest is Germany's number one event for young Independent Cinema. The varied program of about 80-100 titles previews some Hollywood productions, but focuses primarily on independent films from all over the world. The Fest's main emphasis is promoting & presenting first & second time feature filmmakers w/ the First Feature competition, the Tesafilm Festival. Founded: 1969. Cats: feature, doc, animation, digital productions. Awards: Audience Award (30,000 DM, approx $13,535); UP! Coming Talent Award (10,000 DM, approx. $4,510). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Josef Wutz, Fest Dir., Friedensallee 44, 22765 Hamburg, Germany; 011 49 399 19 00 0; fax: 49 40 399 19 00 10; office@filmfesthamburg.de; www.filmfesthamburg.de

KYIV INT'L FILM FESTIVAL MOLODIST, Oct. 19-27, Ukraine. Deadline: July 1. Competitive fest, a.k.a. Molodist ("Youth" in Ukrainian), is focused on the work of young filmmakers. Festival programs first-films of all

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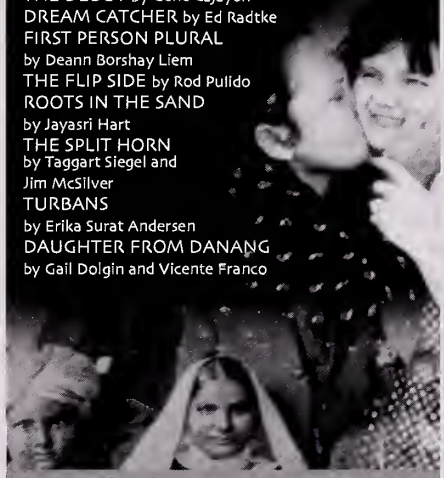

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genres & lengths. Cats: student, short, feature, doc, animation. Awards: Grand Prix award; Best Film in each category, Audience Prize.. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee.. Contact: Dom Kino, 6 Saksagansky St. Suite 115, Kyiv, Ukraine 01033; 011 380 44 246 6798; fax: 011 380 44 227 4557; molodist@oldbank.com; www.molodist.com

LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, August 1-11, Switzerland. Deadline: June 15. This major Swiss cultural/cinematic all-feature event, is known for its innovative programming & support of alternative visions from independent directors. Entries must have been completed w/in previous yr. Preferences for all sections given to world or European premieres. Educational, advertising & scientific films ineligible. Two representatives of each competition film are brought in by the Festival for 5 days. Founded: 1948. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Awards: incl. Golden Leopard together w/ Grand Prix of the City of Locarno . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Irene Bignardi, Festival Director, Via Luini 3a, CH-6600 Locarno, Switzerland; 011 41 91 756 2121; fax: 41 91 756 2149; info@pardo.ch; www.pardo.ch

MAKING SCENES QUEER FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, September 12-15 & 19-22, Canada. Deadline: July 1. Making Scenes provides an annual film & video fest that presents images of sexual diversity featuring queer works. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. VHS. Contact: Jose Sanchez or Daniel Grummisch, 2 Daly Avenue, Suite 250, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6E2; 613-566-2113; fax: 613-566-2113; scenes@magma.ca; www.makingscenes.ca

MIFED, November 3-7, Italy. Deadline: June 22. This annual event is one of the biggest int'l markets for TV & films. Over 80 countries, 2/3 of participants are prods. & distr. 27 film theaters, all w/ Dolby, more than 9,000 square mt. exhib & booth space. Facilities incl. commercial office space. After June 22 office space is subject to availability. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Varies.. Contact: MIFED, Foro Buonaparte, 65, Milan 20121, Italy ; 011 39 02 3030211; fax: 011 39 02 89011578; mifed@rassegne.it; www.fmd.it/mifed

MILANO FILM FESTIVAL, September 13-22, Italy. Deadline: July 1. Annual fest invites features (over 45 min.) films & Short (under 45 min.) films from anyone who'd like to "invent, build, & destroy new ideas of cinema." Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student. Awards: Awards incl. Aprile Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, DV, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry fees. Contact: Associazione Culturale Aprile, via V.Monti 32, Milano, Italy 20123; 011 39 027 13613; fax: 011 39 0245 480168; info@milanofilmfest.it; www.milanofilmfest.it

MONTREAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL/ IMAGE&NATION, September 19-29, Canada. Deadline: June 15. the Festival stands as a premiere event for showcasing gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgendered films & videos. Cats: feature, short. Contact: Katherine Setzer, 4067 Boulevard St-Laurent #404, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1Y7; 514-285-4467; fax: 514-285-1562; info@image-nation.org; www.image-nation.org

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 22-Sept. 2, Canada . Deadline: May 27-June 21 (shorts); June3-July 15 (Features). Only competitive fest in N. America recognized by FIAPF. Founded: 1977. Cats: feature, short, any style or genre. Awards: Grand Prix of the Americas to best film; Special Grand Prix of Jury, Best Director, Best Actress/Actor; Best Screenplay & Best Artistic Contribution (awarded to technician). Shorts compete for 1st & 2nd Prize. Second jury awards Prix de Montreal to director of 1st fiction feature; all 1st features in all cats eligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 70mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Serge Losique, Fest Dir., 1432 de Bleury St., Montreal , Quebec, Canada H3A 2J1; (514) 848-3883; 848-9933; fax: 848-3886; info@ffm-montreal.org; www.ffm-montreal.org

SAN SEBASTIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 19-28, Spain. Deadline: July 31. Fest attracts a number of international celebrities as well as wide selection of national and international press. Fest shows features only—narrative mostly, with a few experimental or experimental/documentary in parallel sections. Fest sections include Official Competition; Zabaltegi (open zone), section showing films from other fests, first films & films made by jury members; 3 retro cycles; selection of recent Spanish language films; films for children. In Official Section (18 features), only 35mm feature films, produced according to FIAPF regulations. West Coast Delegate: Berenice Reynaud; (661)255-1050 ext 2421;fax: (323)259-9897; East Coast Delegate: Mary Flanagan; (718)855-2203; fax: (718)797-1987; Delegatefor Latino cinema: Cathy Rivera Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Festival Director, Apartado de Correos 397, Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain 20080; 011 34 943 48 12 12; fax: 011 34 943 48 12 18; ssiff@sansebatianfestival.com, berenice3@earthlink.net,mtflanagan@erols.com, catyrivera@aol.com; www.sansebastianfestival.ya.com

VENICE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 28-Sept. 8, Italy. Deadline: June 30. Fest is one of the most prestigious in the world w/ several int'l sections. Competitive Venice59 & other sections to be confirmed. Founded: 1932. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, retro. Awards: Venezia 59: Golden Lion for Best Film, Special Prize for Best Director, Best Script, Best Actor, Best Actress, "Marcello Mastroianni" Award, for Best Actor or Actress. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, Experimental film sections also accepts BVU & Betacam video, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: La Biennale di Venezia Dept. of Cinema, CaíGiustinian-San Marco, 30124 Venice, Italy 30124; 011 390 41 521 8711; fax: 390 41 522 7539; das@labiennale.com; www.labiennale.com

Great Lakes Independent Film Festival

Call For Entries:
Deadline June 14

Categories
Narrative, Experimental
Documentary, Animation

For more info: www.greatlakesfilmfest.com

AIVF members can search a directory of close to a thousand festival listings at www.aivf.org/festivals

NOTICES OF RELEVANCE TO AIVF MEMBERS ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE AS SPACE PERMITS. THE INDEPENDENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH AND MAKES NO GUARANTEES ABOUT REPETITIONS OF A GIVEN NOTICE. LIMIT SUBMISSIONS TO 60 WORDS & INDICATE HOW LONG INFO WILL BE CURRENT. DEADLINE: 1ST OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G., JULY 1 FOR SEPT. ISSUE). COMPLETE CONTACT INFO (NAME, ADDRESS & PHONE) MUST ACCOMPANY ALL NOTICES. SEND TO: NOTICES@AIVF.ORG. WE TRY TO BE AS CURRENT AS POSSIBLE, BUT DOUBLE-CHECK BEFORE SUBMITTING TAPES OR APPLICATIONS.

Competitions

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: Offers the excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features, of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail hour to showcase local organizations and allow for a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 401 W. Ontario, Suite 208, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 863-3451; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: To bridge gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: first place $1,500; second place $1,000; third place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax: (310) 475 0193; awards@Hollywoodawards.com; www.Hollywoodawards.com

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: To provide new valuable outlets for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, btwn 90 & 130 pages. Rules & Requirement in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script loglines sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies by Writers Script Network for 6 months. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Winner's diploma posted on HSI website for 1 month. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; (800)-SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com

OHIO INDEPENDENT SCREENPLAY AWARDS: Call for entries for Screenplay Awards. All genres accepted. Winners receive cash, screenplay reading at the Ohio Independent Film Festival in Nov., subscription to SCR(i)PT magazine. Deadline (postmarked by June 1, 2002) late entry fee (postmarked by July 1, 2002). Contact: Ohio Independent Screenplay Awards (216) 651-7315; OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com for screenplay entry information.

ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: To promote the positive portrayal of gays and lesbians in film. Entering its 4rd year, the competition is open to all writers and offers cash awards & industry contacts to winners. Deadline: Sept. 1. Complete rules & entry forms available at website or by sending s.a.s.e to Cherub Productions, One In Ten Screenplay Competition, Box 540, Boulder, CO 80306; (303) 629-3072; cherubfilm@aol.com; www.screenplaycontests.com

SCR(I)PT MAGAZINE's OPEN DOOR SCREENWRITING CONTEST: This competition aims to discover, promote & recognize a talented ,new screenwriter by awarding them cash and an "open door" to the industry. Top 10 finalists are forwarded to a production company which will choose the winner and may contact any of the finalists to work in the future. Entry fee: $45. Deadline: Aug. 19. Contact: Open Door Contests, Scr(i)pt Magazine, 5638 Sweet Air Rd., Baldwin, MD 21013; (888) 245-2228; fax: (410) 592-3466; contests@scriptmag.com; www.scriptmag.com

SLAMDANCE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION 2001: Screenplays must not have been previously optioned, purchased, or produced (see entry form for other rules). 12 recognized. Prizes incl. cash, software, plus sub mission to a majorliterary agency & major studio. Entry fee: $45 - $55. Deadline: (early March 31) Final - June 15. Contact: Larry Hansen, Slamdance Screenplay Competition Director; (323) 466-1786; fax: 466-1784; screenplay@slamdance.com; www.slamdance.com

THE ANNUAL IDA AWARDS COMPETITION: Sponsored by Eastman Kodak, the IDA Awards recognize & honor distinguished achievement in nonfiction film & video. Winners honored at the Awards Gala on Dec. 13, 2002. The IDA screens the winning films at DocuFest on Dec. 14, 2002. Early Bird Deadline with discount May17. Final Deadline June 30. Entry forms available at www.documentary.org beginning March 15 or contact IDA at (213) 534-3600 x7446 or idaawards@documentary.org.

VIDEO CONTEST FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS: Now in its 15th year, is sponsored by The Christophers. The theme is One Person Can Make a Difference. Deadline: June 14. Cash prizes totaling $6,500 will be awarded. Winning entries will be aired nationwide via the Christopher Closeup TV series. Contact: 12 East 48th St., New York, NY 10017; (212) 759-4050; fax: 838-5073; youth-coordinator@christophers.org; www.christophers.org/contests.html

Conferences • Workshops

DIGITAL MEDIA TRAINING SERIES: DMTS is a video & DVD-based training series for film, television & web developers. The series provides high-end training tools that improve productivity & creativity for the end-user. DMTS training episodes feature the latest topics & technology, giving viewers access to working professionals & experts that they would not have in a traditional classroom setting, at a fraction of the cost. Contact: Rafael, (877) 606-5012; info@magnetmediafilms.com; www.digitalmediatraining.com

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Summer seminars & institutes for college & univ. teachers. Seminars incl. 15 participants working in collaboration w/ 1 or 2 leading scholars. Institutes provide intensive collaborative study of texts, historical periods & ideas for teachers of undergrad humanities. Info & appl. materials are available from project directors. Contact: (202) 606-8463; sem-inst@neh.gov; www.neh.gov

KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE

IMAGE FILM & VIDEO CENTER

Dedicated to bringing important films to southeastern audiences, The DREAM Series (Developing Racial Equality Through Arts and Music) serves as an educational tool for the Atlanta community by tackling issues such as racial prejudice and social injustice. Supported by the nonprofit organization IMAGE Film & Video Center, the series has garnered tremendous success thanks to the partnership with the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, which houses the free screenings. Past works have included *Corrections* by Ashley Hunt and *Ralph Bunche: An American Odyssey* by William Greaves. Currently the series is looking for challenging social issue documentaries to screen. See listing.

Films • Tapes Wanted

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA: Located in Madison, WI Electric Eye is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits redistributed from screenings back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30-90 minute works that are creative, witty or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts - 10 minutes or less - any genre to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; for more information go to www.prolefeedstudios.com

FLICKER FILM FESTIVAL: A bi-monthly super 8 and 16mm show which features 12-16 new short films by local filmmakers at the Knitting Factory. Film grants, super 8 stock and $50 worth of super 8 processing are also raffled off at the show. Find out more at www.flickernyc.com

JUPITER OUTDOOR CINEMA: Located in downtown Berkeley, CA, is seeking independent film, video, and animation for upcoming fall season. All genres, lengths, and categories accepted. Selected works will be featured in Jupiter Outdoor Cinemas weekly program which is promoted, listed, and reviewed in local print. Great opportunity for artists to gain exposure and promote material. Submit on VHS or DVD. Include bio, artist statement, still

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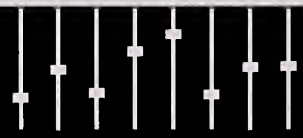

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photos, and other promotional material. Submissions not returned. No submission fee. Send to Jupiter, c/o Michael Addicott, 2181 Shattuck Ave, Berkely, CA 94704. Contact: Michael Addicott, (510) 652-0564; adone@pacbell.net.

MAKOR: Continues its on-going Reel Jews Film Series that showcases the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs and/or works-in-progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration and network building. For more info, call Ken Sherman at (212) 601-1021 or e-mail me at kensherman@makor.org.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals from programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS Web page from content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Senior Director, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295. Email: cjones@pbs.org. Web: www.pbs.org/producers.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: Is a quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are sought. Incl. synopsis of work, artist's bio & contract info. Deadline ongoing. Tapes are unable to be returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curate exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

STREAMING CINEMA: Traveling showcase of Internet film & multimedia stories, announces a Call for Entries for its 2nd annual program. The tour will kick off in Philadelphia in May & travel to several venues in U.S. & Europe. Streaming Cinema 2.0 will include juries, competition & audience awards, as well as special screenings of European web film & online children's animation. Cats: fiction, non-linear narrative, doc, animation & cell shorts (works made for wireless devices). Seeking: short films, video, docs, animation, multimedia & interactive work made specifically for Internet. Submissions can be made via URL, emial or CD-rom in Quick Time or MPEG format. For registration forms and more info, contact: info@thebitscreen.com; www.streamingcine.com

SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Is looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature length non-fiction productions in all areas of the special interest or instructional fields, cutting edge documentaries and children and family programming. Also seeking feature length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural theme products wanted, both fiction and non fiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; (315) 454-5608; email: webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

THE DREAM SERIES: Seeks challenging social issue documentaries that promote frank community discussions about issues of racial prejudice and social injustice that fall under the Martin Luther King, Jr. legacy. Selected works are screened for this on-going monthly series at the MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta, GA and promoted, listed and reviewed in local print. Formats: VHS, Beta. Send non returnable VHS screeners to Mark A. Smith, IMAGE Film & Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Suite N-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; mark@imagefv.org

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a non-profit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, please visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

THE SHORT LIST: The showcase int'l short films, airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc; contact: fax (619) 462-8266 or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting edge television station from Nantucket Island Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to: Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935

THE VIDEO PROJECT: A leading educational distributor of videos, seeks environment and educational films and videos to aggressively market to the educational market. Contact us with finished projects or rough-cuts. The Video Project, 45 Lusk Alley, San Francisco, CA, 94107. www.videoproject.net; video@videoproject.net

WORKSCREENING/WORKS PRODUCTIONS: Is currently accepting submissions of feature and short documentaries and fiction films for programming of it's upcoming inaugural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include a SASE. Contact: Julian Rad, Works Productions/ WorkScreening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com

YELLOW HOOK CINEMAFEST: Ongoing film series seeks submissions from local filmmakers. 45 min. and under for weekly screenings. Please send VHS only with contact info to Kevin Kash c/o Three Jolly Pigeons, 6802 3rd Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11220.

Publications

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: Is a new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. Sanctuary is devoted exclusively to creative work–thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

TO SUCCEED AS AN INDEPENDENT you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. Whether through our service and education programs, the pages of our magazine, our web resource, or through the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while reminding you you're not alone.

About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

AIVF Online

Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

Insurance & Discounts

Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports over 20 member-organized, member-run regional salons across the country, to strengthen local media arts communities.

Advocacy

AIVF has been consistently outspoken about preserving the resources and rights of independent mediamakers. Members receive information on current issues and public policy, and the opportunity to add their voice to collective actions.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

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Includes: one year's subscription to *The Independent* • access to group insurance plans • discounts on goods & services from national Trade Partners • online & over-the-phone information services • discounted admission to seminars, screenings, & events • book discounts • classifieds discounts • advocacy action alerts • eligibility to vote & run for board of directors • members-only web services.

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JOINT MEMBERSHIPS

Special AIVF memberships are also available through AIVF Regional Salons as well as many local media arts organizations — for details call (212) 807-1400 x236.

LIBRARY SUBSCRIPTION

Year's subscription to *The Independent* for multiple readers, mailed first class. Contact your subscription service to order or call AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x501.

With all that AIVF has to offer, can you afford *not* to be a member? Join today!

Mail to AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl, New York, NY 10013; or charge by phone (212) 807-1400 x 503, by fax (212) 463-8519, or via www.aivf.org. Your first issue of *The Independent* will arrive in 4-6 weeks.

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MEMBERSHIP RATES (see reverse for categories)

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Resources • Funds

ALLIANCE OF CANADIAN CINEMA TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS: ACTRA announces new, innovative program that supports indigenous Canadian productions & aims to increase volume of Canadian-made films. ACTRA represents over 16,000 film, TV and commercial performers across Canada and wishes to bring these performers to independent film. Contact: Indra Escobar, (877) 913-2278.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS: Provide grants to support educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact: Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202-4921; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis/

CCH MEDIA PROGRAM PLANNING GRANTS: Provide up to $750 to support development of major grant proposal & to pay for background research, consultations w/ humanities scholars & community reps, travel & similar activities necessary to develop proposal. Before applying, consult w/ CA Council for Humanities staff. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: CCH, 312 Sutter St., Ste. 601, San Francisco, CA 94108; (415) 391-1474; www.calhum.org

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in NYC, Richmond, VA & Austin, TX offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super-8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX, 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the Foundation's 2 major programs (Human & Community Development; Global Security & Sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact: John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org

LOW COST SOUNDTRACK SONGS: I have pro and indy film song credits. Professionally produced punk, rock, pop, alternative, dance, love songs. Road Rash Music (ASCAP publisher) e-mail jwall@cox.rr.com

NEH SUMMER STIPENDS: Support 2 months of full-time work on projects that will make a significant contribution to the humanities. $5,000 stipend to support faculty & staff members of schools, colleges & universities; scholars & writers working in institutions with research or educational collections; scholars & writers working in institutions with no connection to humanities; scholars & writers working independently. Visit website or write to the NEH for application & information on eligibility. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: NEH Summer Stipends, Room 318, National Endowment for the Humanities, 110 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Wahington, D.C. 20506; stipends@neh.gov; www.neh.gov/grants/onebook/fellowships.html

OPEN DOOR COMPLETION FUND: Funding is available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants with public TV projects in final post-production phase. Full-length rough-cut must be submitted. Awards average $20,000 & NAATA funds must be the last monies needed to finish project. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Review process takes approximately 1-3 months. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428; mediafind@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org

PORTLAND, OREGON FILMMAKING GRANTS: Digital Media Education Center of Portland, OR is announcing an open call for submissions for Avid Film Camp program. AFC affords a boost to indie feature directors looking to complete their films, while offering Avid-authorized training to career editors. Films will also receive free Pro Tools audio finishing & Avid Symphony Online editing. Submissions need to be feature-length projects w/ shooting completed. Projects accepted on a rolling basis. Contact: Deborah Cravey, Digital Media Education Center, 5201 SW Westgate Dr., Ste. 111, Portland, OR 97221; (503) 297-2324; deb@filmcamp.com; www.filmcamp.com

TEXAS FILMMAKERS' PRODUCTION FUND: Is an annual grant awarded to emerging film & video artists who are residents of Texas. Grants range from $1,000 to $5,000 for regionally produced projects for any genre. In Sept. the Fund will award $50,000 in grants ranging from $1,000-$5,000. Deadline: July 1. Appl. avail. at Texas Filmmakers' Production Funds, 1901 East 51st St., Austin, TX 78723; (512) 322-0145 or www.austinfilm.org

THOUSAND WORDS FINISHING FUND: Considers projects by first or second time feature filmmakers looking to create intelligent, innovative, and challenging films. The $500,000 fund is available in varied amounts for editing, sound mixing, music rights, and other post-production costs. Selected films will also receive assistance in film festival planning and distribution. Narratives, animation and works-in-progress may be submitted. Application forms can be downloaded at Thousand Words' website: www.thousand-words.com. Contact: finishingfund@thousand-words.com or Thousand Words, 9100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 404E, Los Angeles, CA 90212. (310) 859-8330, fax, (310) 859-8333.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS: One of the largest multidisciplinary contemporary arts centers in the Midwest, invites proposals for solo, group & curate visual arts exhibitions for the 2002/2003 season. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: UICA Race St. Gallery, 41 Sheldon Blvd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; (616) 454-7000; fax: 459-9395.

CCH MEDIA PROGRAM PLANNING GRANTS: Outright funds of up to $20,000 for film and radio documentaries that explore California-related topics and issues of contemporary relevance. Before applying, contact, Sarah Ashcroft, Programs Manager at (415) 391-1474 x 314. Deadline: Oct. 1. For information got to www.calhum.org.

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ANDREW DUNN, Director of Photography/camera operator Arri35 BL3, Aaton XTRprod S16, Sony DVCAM. Experience in features, docs, TV & industrials. Credits: Dog Run, Strays, Working Space/Working Light. (212) 477-0172; AndrewD158@aol.com.

AVID EDITOR W/ SYMPHONY, recently relocated to Burbank. excellent rates, both off- and online. Looking to form long-term relationships with independents. Call Charlene for info and reel at (818) 563-1426 or email PeregrineFilms@aol.com.

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BRENDAN C. FLYNT: Director of Photography w/ many feature & short film credits. Owns 35 Arri BL3, Super 16/16 Aaton, HMIs, Dolly, and Tulip Crane. Awards at Sundance & Raindance. Call for quotes & reel at (212) 208-0968; www.dpFlynt.com.

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DOC WRITER: Sharon Wood available for treatments, scripts, narration, and proposals. Good collaborator, one-offs or series. Credits incl. Paragraph 175 (HBO), KPFA On the Air (POV), And Then One Night (KQED). (415) 282-5317. WoodSL@aol.com.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in The Independent & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

EXPERIENCED LINE PRODUCER available to help with your Breakdown, Schedule, Day out of Days and/or Budget. Specialty is low budget but high quality. Email AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates and references.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition, & educational projects of media). Successful proposals to NYSCA, NEA, NEH, ITVS, Soros, Rockefeller, Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation. Fast writers, reasonable rates. Wanda Bershen, (212) 598-0224; www.reddiaper.com; or Geri Thomas (212) 625-2011; www.artstaffing.com.

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AIVF members can search all benefit, classified, and notice listings with the AIVF interactive resource directory at www.aivf.org/listings

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UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL AIVF EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT OUR OFFICES (SEE BELOW). RSVP REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS. (212) 807-1400 X301 OR INFO@AIVF.ORG.

MAESTRO! SAN DIEGO

May 31 & June 1

MAESTRO! is a tour of community-based activities presented by a partnership of AIVF, NAMAC, and local media arts organizations.

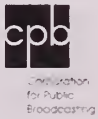
MAESTRO! offers a unique meeting ground for artists, providing peer organizations and members of the community a chance to forge connections and build on existing relationships and resources.

Media Arts Center San Diego presents a weekend of activities, including NAMAC's Think Tank Gathering of Media Arts Organization Leaders and public screenings of work. AIVF workshops include:

- AIVF's DV to 35mm Transfers: A Comparison of Labs
- Funding Your Documentary
- AIVF's Self-Distribution Toolkit: Engaged! Advice on Getting Your Project Out There

Complete details will be posted on www.aivf.org/maestro. Find out more about Media Arts Center San Diego at www.mediaartscenter.org.

Meet & Greet: SENIOR PROGRAMMING STAFF: PBS & CPB



When: Thurs., June 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Cost: Free/AIVF members; $10 general public.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to find out how PBS and CPB work with independent producers, including the type of content they look for and advice on how to put your best foot forward when presenting your project.

Here is your chance to have your questions about the PBS labyrinth answered face to face! Reps in attendance include: Cheryl Jones, Alyce Myatt and Gustavo Sagastume from PBS, and Cheryl Head, Sandie Pedlow, and Dorothy Petersen from CPB.

ANNUAL PITCH TO PUBLIC TELEVISION SESSIONS

On Friday, June 7, twelve producing teams will meet with members of the greenlighting staff from the national PBS and CPB to discuss their nonfiction projects in depth, receive valuable feedback, and explore their project's broadcast possibilities. These meetings are an invaluable way for producers and PBS/CPB to establish relationships with one another.

Pitch to Public Television is offered every spring. For submission information, visit: www.aivf.org/ resources/tips/pbssessions/

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY HOURS: TUES.-FRI. 11-6; WED. 11-9

The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.-Fri. 2-5p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

SUSTAINING YOUR VISION: A Discussion in Three Parts

AIVF's Premiere Master Class Series

When: June 8 and 15, beginning at noon
Where: The Screening Room
54 Varick St., one block below Canal St.
Cost: $75/general public; $40/AIVF members (includes entire program and box lunch). Screening-only tickets: $20 general public; $15/AIVF members.
Contact: 212/807-1400 x301 or www.aivf.org.

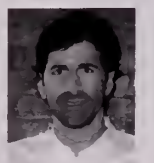
Sustaining Your Vision is an opportunity to learn from accomplished feature film producers and directors via their triumphs, strategies, and war stories. Case scenarios will inform producers at all levels on ways to sustain their creative vision through technique and craft—and a little business savvy, too.

Sustaining Your Vision includes a screening of a feature film, an intensive Breakout Session with the film's producers dissecting an aspect of the film and its creative process, and a networking reception. lunch). All sessions moderated by independent producer, Amanda Doss.

Realizing Your Independent Vision with Gary Winick and *Tadpole*

Saturday June 8

Filmmaker Gary Winick will talk about his creative methods during the creation of his latest film, *Tadpole*. Topics include working with the writer through several script drafts, finding and casting talent, character development and motivation with actors, and troubleshooting on the page and on the set.



Gary Winick is a theater and film director and producer who currently heads up InDigEnt, a digital filmmaking collective. Other directing credits include

The Tic Code and *Sam the Man*. Producing credits include *Personal Velocity* (winner, 2002 Sundance Grand Jury Prize), and *Chelsea Walls*.

Tadpole follows a precocious high school sophomore in his pursuit of the love of his life. This 2002 Sun-dance award-winning digital video feature stars Sigourney Weaver, Bebe Neuwirth, and John Ritter.

Sharing Your Independent Vision with Jim McKay and *Our Song*
Saturday, June 15

Whether you work with a distributor or self-distribute, this discussion promises invaluable insight and advice. Topics include negotiating the deal, developing a marketing strategy, getting publicity, defining outreach options, and audience development.

Jim McKay is a film- and videomaker and co-founder, along with Michael Stipe, of C-Hundred Film Corp. McKay co-wrote, directed, and co-produced *Girls Town*. Other credits include co-producer, *American Movie* and *The Sleepy Time Gal*; producer, *Spring Forward*, *La Boda*, and *Stranger Inside*.

Our Song follows three friends, Lanisha (Kerry Washington), Maria (Melissa Martinez), and Joycelyn (Anna Simpson) through the hot August streets of Brooklyn, New York, as they endure rigorous rehearsals with their sixty-piece marching band. In between, they bide their time shoplifting, daydreaming, flirting with boys, and confronting the rising tensions within their own friendships. (An IFC Films release)

Sustaining Your Vision was made possible by The Chase Foundation, The Academy Foundation, Sony Electronics, and Forest Creatures Entertainment. Special thanks to First Person Singular.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

State of the Arts NYSCA

The Academy Foundation
The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
The Chase Manhattan Foundation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Sony Electronics

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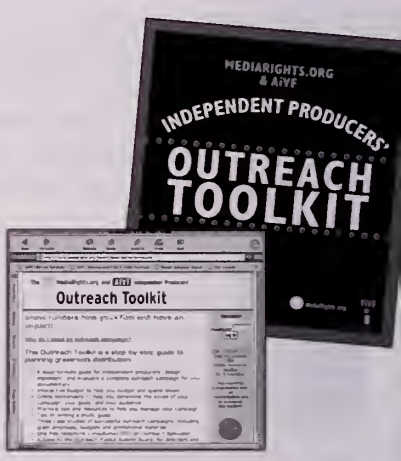

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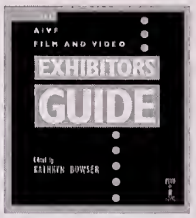

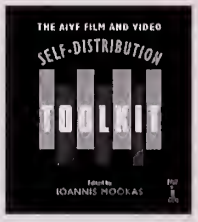

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Contact: (518) 523-3456; www.lakeplacidfilmforum.com.

This panel discussion explores the current landscape of independent film, including how filmmakers manage to get their films made outside the studio system, compromises that they must make, and whether alternatives exist—or can exist—within the Hollywood system. Panelists include moderator Ira Deutchman, Eamonn Bowles, Ray Silver, Campbell Scott, and Mark Urman.

Take this opportunity to meet AIVF membership director Priscilla Grim, who will introduce the panel. AIVF's Albany Salon, Upstate Independents will also be present throughout the event, so stop by their table and say hello!

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ON View

BY JASON GUERRASIO

THEATRICAL

Sunshine State (Sony Pictures Classics, June 21) Dir: John Sayles

The best way to describe *Sunshine State* is ordinary folks dealing with ordinary problems. Focusing on a handful of people living in a small town called Delrona Beach, in Florida (hence the title), the film deals with issues ranging from racism to local businesses being overtaken by corporate realtors. Heading this ensemble cast is

John Sayles's *Sunshine State*

Edie Falco (Marly), whose character has been stuck in Delrona Beach running the hotel/restaurant handed down to her by her grumpy old father (Ralph Waite). There's also Desiree (Angela Bassett), who's spent most of her life trying to stay away from the town. She returns to make peace with her mother and confront the man who drove her away so many years ago. Though the acting is entertaining; writer/director/editor John Sayles doesn't give us much of a story to wrap ourselves up in. The film simply meanders back and forth from character to character, dealing with their dilemmas but offering no resolutions. Many of the characters appear once or twice and then are never heard from again, leaving this viewer frustrated. The cinematography is beautiful, though, and the intercutting with Alan King and his group of merry golfing buddies discussing the ever-changing surroundings they live in is a welcome comic relief.

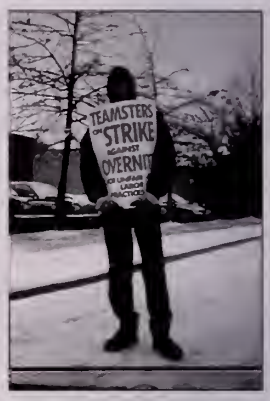
TELEVISION

Independent Spirits (PBS, June, check local listings) Dir. Sybil Delgaudio

This one-hour documentary portrays the lives of two of the most significant artists in animation, Faith and John Hubley. Fiercely independent, Faith and John were unfazed by their commercial counterparts, including big name "factory line" animators like Disney. The team simply forged ahead, making social, political, and personal works that were dear to their hearts. The result being dozens of rousing animation films that inspired generations of indie animators. The most fascinating part of the doc comes when Faith talks about the team's collaboration with jazz legends Quincy Jones and Dizzy Gillespie. Jazz, considered as unorthodox an art form as animation, brought a whole new dimension to the style and beauty of the couple's works. *Independent Spirits* poignantly reveals how Faith has carried the torch since John's death. Driven to make one animated feature a year, Faith proves that John wasn't the talented one of the duo (though many critics thought so). The film includes clips of Faith and John's films, and although some look crude in comparison to today's digital animation standards, they show the enormous creativity that made John and Faith a unique pair.

American Standoff (HBO, June check local listings) Dir: Kristi Jacobson

Academy Award winning filmmaker Barbara Kopple produced this eye-opening documentary on a labor dispute that remains unresolved to this day. *American Standoff* chronicles the strike against Overnite Transportation (the largest non-union trucking company in the United States) by 3,000 workers who are attempting to unionize by joining the Teamsters. Three years in the making, the film skillfully captures the workers' struggle for representation, as well as their despair when they see their jobs being given to strike breakers. As the strike weeks turn into months and then into years, the workers begin to question the union's tactics and motives. Overnite's intransigence highlights the Teamsters' weak position—a terrible blow for a union that was once extraordinarily powerful during the reign of James Hoffa. Now under the leadership of James Hoffa Jr., the union is working hard at polishing its image, long tarnished by the organization's connection to underworld criminal activity. Archival footage and superb fly-on-the-wall camera work vividly highlights the workers' dilemma of having to fight for one's rights and feed one's family simultaneously, as well as the uphill battles unions face today.



Kristi Jacobson's *American Standoff* documents an ongoing labor dispute.

T-Shirt Travels (PBS, June, check local listings) Dir: Shantha Bloemen

T-Shirt Travels takes a look at what happens to secondhand clothing that's dumped in charity bins all over the United States and then sold and traded in Africa. At a time when many African countries are struggling economically, the one thing that has flourished is the selling of used American clothes. The film captures the life of Luka, a young boy in Zambia who sells, trades, and wears secondhand clothing. We watch as Luka travels 10 hours one way to get the clothes and then makes the arduous 10-hour journey back to his hometown to sell them. The underlying current running through *T-Shirt Travels* is Zambia's enormous debt, and why the country is in such dire straits. Images of excited children wearing clothing that Americans casually discard reveals more than just Zambia's financial duress; it points to our own greed.

Jason Guerrasio is an intern at The Independent.

LEFT: D. STEVENS / SONY PICTURES CLASSICS; RIGHT: MARY WOODS

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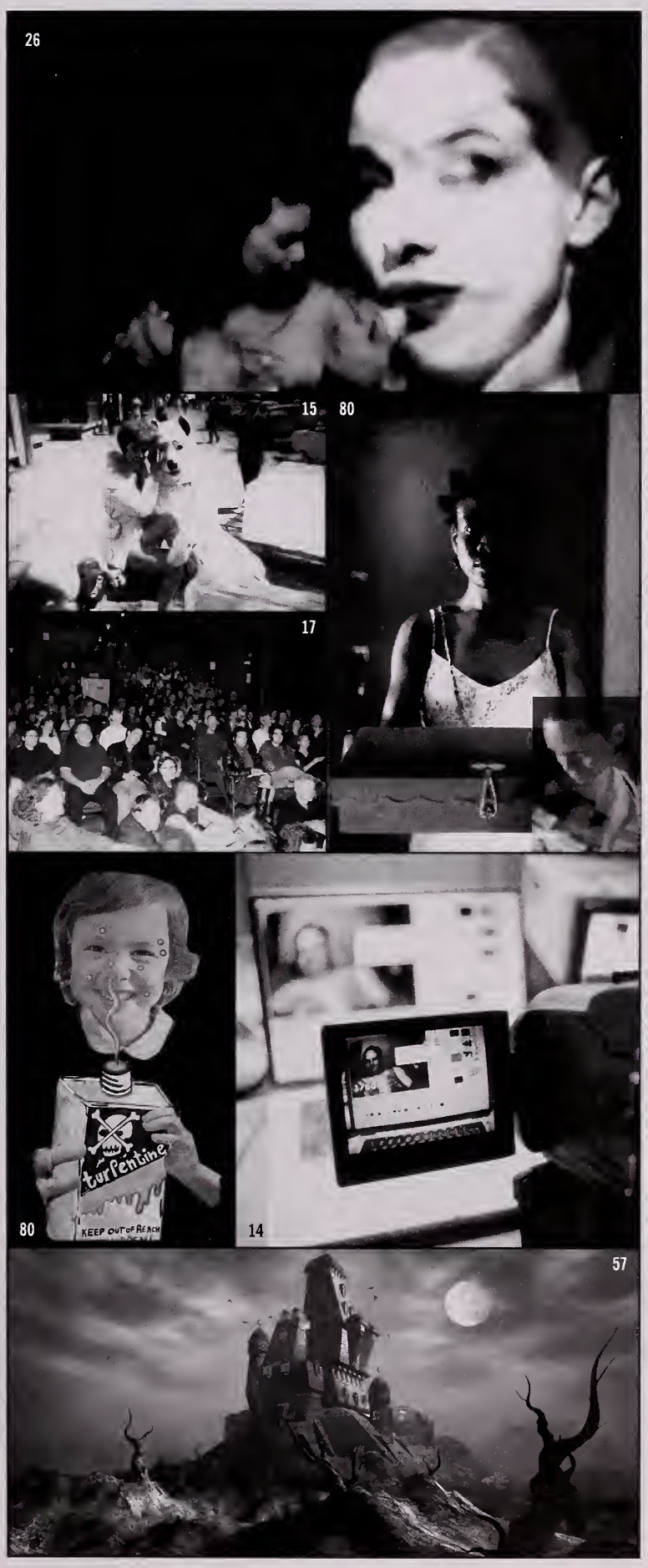

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A page from Astria Suparak's diary; Columbia University grads at work (Joshua Sanchez).

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James Fotopoulos's film/video abstraction *Christabel*; Taqiyya Haden as *Ophelia* in Abiola Abrams's modern opera; process shot from Wolfgang Hastert's *Click Me Darling*; rendered composite animation from Brian Taylor's *Rustboy*; collage from *The Strange Shorts of Martha Colburn*; a Blinding Light!!! crowd in action (Alex MacKenzie); *Joe P. Bear* is headed for heartbreak in Matt McCormick's found footage piece.
Photos: courtesy filmmaker, unless otherwise specified.

About the cover:
Here & Elsewhere, Kerry Tribe's 2002 two-channel video document (and comfy cushion installation) deconstructs performance, participation, and Godard. See page 42.

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Dear Reader,

One of the perennial attractions of film school—beyond the utopian vision of a well-equipped creative playground—is the opportunity to learn in the company of your peers.

My early film education was at Boston Film/Video Foundation, where I volunteered and assisted class instructors; a small production house where my equipment scheduling and checkout duties were supplemented by the opportunity to observe online edits; and Somerville Community Access, where I operated camera and cued tapes. When I decided to go fast track I applied for graduate film school, and despite my naivité (would I have applied had I realized the odds?), I was admitted to several programs and carefully selected the most appropriate match (i.e., the least expensive option).

Throughout my work in film it has been my earlier practical experience that best served me, but there is no doubt that my graduate study imparted skills, opened doors, and introduced me to a group of peers with whom I continue to work. There are a lot of reasons to go to film school: and many to not go. We hope the cluster of film school articles we've assembled will help you visualize the environment that will best foster your own creative vision.

And creative vision is, after all, the centerpiece of this issue. It's been totally awesome to turn over our annual experimental spotlight to guest editor Miranda July. Her traverse of the border between high art and popular culture informs her own work and is well evident in her evocation and illumination of a young, varied, and vibrant community of experimentalists. The section becomes a work of art in its own right: check it out!

I've gotten so much pleasure from editing the last five issues of *The Independent*. And it sure has been an awful lot of work. I'm proud—and relieved—to turn it over to the capable hands of Maud Kersnowski, who you will meet in September. As a writer for *Metropolis*, *Silicon Alley Reporter*, and indieWIRE, her work always seeks out the cultural impact of the subjects she addresses. We know she'll bring renewed clarity, vision, and depth to these pages.

Yours in independence,
Elizabeth Peters, publisher/acting editor

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Into the Woods...

Crossover's Studio A fosters mind games

BY LYNN PHILLIPS

NOW THAT ELECTRONIC GAMES CAN GROSS higher than Hollywood films, industry "creatives" are increasingly penetrating the joystick zone to work on stories like "shoot Nazi/junkie/alien scum," or "crash car into wall again." But in the absence of the Xbox version of *The Crying Game*, indie filmmakers are left to wonder, do they have a place in the digital revolution beyond the anomaly of BlairWitch.com?

Marc Weiss, the founder of Web Lab—a non-profit think tank and online laboratory for social and artistic experiments in new technology—took the question on. "At Sundance 2000, dot-commers promised to make indie filmmakers rich by streaming films on the web," he recalls. "But who's going to sit and watch a 90 minute film on a computer?" Indie filmmakers, he figured, need to understand—and even expand upon—what new media does best: empower and connect users. At the same time, digital culture might benefit from a firmer grasp of how traditional narrative engages audiences.

To encourage dialogue and possible collaboration between indie talent in both film and interactive media, Weiss and Web Lab teamed up with Canada's Banff Center, Sundance, and the DGA to organize what came to be known as "Crossover." From hundreds of applications they assembled a handful of filmmakers that included Henry Bean (*The Believer*), John Cameron Mitchell (*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*), and Alan Berliner (*The Sweetest Sound*). This past February, the chosen indies were tossed together with a similarly selected mix of digital artists, Web designers, game-developers, and other digerati of various sexes, ethnicities, and points of origin to create a five-day confab dubbed "Studio A."

Studio A was staged in the lush sprawl of the White Oak Plantation near Jacksonville, Florida. Run by the Howard Gilman Foundation as a retreat for politics and the arts, the plantation is also used by ecologists to breed endangered creatures like rhinos and okapi. White Oak's benevolent manipulations of nature, added to its overall aura of Gatsby-esque optimism (pool! open bar! hot tub! bowling alley!), gave Studio A participants a fertile environment in which to think about immersive story-telling.

And think they did. Forty-three copyright-conscious creative egos in one room rarely produces dialogue, let alone real give-and-take. Yet, armed with its many skills in fostering interactivity, the Crossover team was able to goad Studio A participants into forming an instant community, one that generated dozens of ideas for further exploration and possible collaboration.

For now, the fate of these projects is uncertain. Shortly afterwards, Brian Clark, GMD Studios founder and Studio A-er, along with director Brian Flemming, and others, launched *Nothing So Strange*, a DV mockumentary. The film, predating Studio A, but much in its spirit, is about public response to the assassination of Bill Gates (complete with integrated, interactive Web sites). As an ingenious participatory tool of social criticism, the project was widely praised. Its critical success won't, however, make Studio A's other new media innovations any easier to finance.

So, while narrative loves a crisp conclusion, Studio A initiated process, not answers. Filmmakers like David Kaplan (*Little Red Riding Hood*) interested from the outset in online gaming, emerged with collaborative projects which they must seek to fund in a ferociously competitive market. Others acquired primarily an expanded sense of options. "I got a much, much clearer sense of the possibilities for the interactive project I hope to create," reports *Seeing Red*'s Julia Reichert. AIVF's own Liz Canner left with new ways of approaching media that will resonate for years. "I imagined a more interactive, engaged form of documentary film making," she writes, and also "ways to use new media tools to enhance democratic participation and empower the user."

Crossover participants enjoy their classroom *à plein air*.

Making these visions economically viable is the challenge. While the goals set in Studio A are bright and exciting, the practical path to most of them remains nearly as hard to map as the *Blair Witch*'s tangled wildwood.

Lynn Phillips wrote on staff for "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," was editor-in-chief of Vaguepolitix.com, and a participant of Studio A.

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ITVS's Electric Shadows

BY KEN MILLER

AFTER A DECADE FUNDING PROJECTS FOR public television, the Independent Television Service has expanded into new media with Electric Shadows, a series of interactive projects for the web. Launching this summer, Electric Shadows debuts with two projects, entitled "Face to Face" and "Circle of Stories," which can be viewed on pbs.org.

Established by Congress to generate programs that "involve creative risks and address the needs of underserved audiences, especially children and minorities," ITVS has brought the voices of marginalized communities to television-viewers during its decade-long existence. A sampling of current projects airing on PBS includes *Senorita Extraviada*, which looks at an ongoing series of murders along the U.S.-Mexico border, and *T-Shirt Travels*, about the economic effects of second-hand clothes being sent to Africa.

Electric Shadows aims to continue and expand upon ITVS's history of socially-conscious programming, and marks a continued collaboration with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which provided funding. ITVS convened filmmakers and new media experts to help determine the forms the project should take, eventually deciding that the web provided a perfect forum for what program director Claire Aguilar calls "cultural storytelling."

In "Face to Face," filmmaker Rob Mikuriya uses the experience of Japanese Americans during World War II to examine the political difficulties currently faced by the Arab-American community. Mikuriya employs the interactivity of the web by having users click elements and phrases from one narrative to lead into another narrative, creating a nonlinear, thematic form of storytelling. The program will debut on the web on August 15, at www.itvs.org/facetoface.

"Circle of Stories," by Jilann Spitzmiller and Hank Rogerson, employs a slightly more familiar web format: four Native American cultural figures are presented through audio, video, photos, and animation. Discussion groups allow viewers to react to what they have seen. Both projects were created with the assistance of Portland web design company Second Story.

Assiniboine elder Rosella Archdale is the storyteller from the North in Jilann Spitzmiller and Hank Rogerson's *Circle of Stories*.

PHOTO: PHILOMATH FILMS

According to ITVS' Wilson Ling, at this time Electric Shadows is still a "pilot project." So the popularity and critical reception of these two projects may determine the shape and scope of any future web-based documentary efforts.

Focus on Good Machine

BY KEN MILLER

EARLIER THIS SPRING IT WAS ANNOUNCED that Universal Pictures had acquired indie stalwart Good Machine, a move that many considered the last gasp of the 90's "indie" film movement. But Good Machine co-founder James Schamus is of the opinion that the term should have died out a few years back. He says, "Two years ago at the Independent Spirit Awards I told people they were being self-congratulatory for irrational reasons. Why should you define yourself by the source of financing?"

The new Good Machine remains essentially the same company, with two independent, though highly interconnected entities: Good Machine International has been renamed Focus, while Ted Hope, Anthony Bregman, and Anne Carey will continue to operate a production entity.

Schamus maintains that much of the confusion over the Universal Pictures deal stems from misapprehension over what Good Machine was in the first place, and all the parties involved insist that the deal does not mark a substantial change in their working relationships. Bregman

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elaborates, "Good Machine has always worked on a consensus basis." As a result, independent films produced by Schamus, Ted Hope, or Bregman were first offered to Good Machine for distribution, but often ended up being distributed outside the company.

"For a long time we've operated with a [series of] first look deals," explains Carey. With Universal's acquisition of Good Machine International, "now we have a first look deal with our former partners." Funding from Focus will go towards basic overhead expenses for Good Machine, but Bregman maintains "There's no corporate connection besides the first look deal."

For Hope, Bregman, and Carey, the future is clear. "I think the production end will keep doing what it has always done," Carey says.

As for the films Focus will produce and distribute, Schamus expects they will fall in the range of "million dollar films to the Hulk." Schamus describes Focus films as, "Good movies [that] define themselves primarily by the ways they push the aesthetic envelope. They can also be good by [just] being good." Under the deal, Schamus says, "In terms of style, we can work on Todd Solondz and also on *Crouching Tiger*—that's a very wide and comfortable range to be in."

To Schamus, the most important aspect of the deal is the opportunity Focus now has to compete with Miramax on the international market. Returning to the theme of his Independent Spirit speech, he says, "Especially in the American independent community, we are so U.S.-centric. This deal represents something to directors such as [Pedro] Almadovar, [Zhang] Yimou, [Alphonso] Cauron.... To them, globalization has upsides we don't see, such as keeping a foreign accent on independent film."

He notes that these directors are hugely popular in many other countries, but are often marginalized in the parochial U.S. media market. Thus, the international distribution arm is a cornerstone of the company's business. "Our films have to appeal to smart viewers the world over," says Schamus. "We can use those strengths to bring more daring product domestically."

Ken Miller is managing editor of The Independent.

FILM SCHOOL UNRAVELED

BY JOSHUA SANCHEZ

When I entered Columbia University's Film Division in the Fall of 1999, the school's reputation as a major emerging talent pool was just beginning to blossom. That year Columbia alum Kimberly Pierce's haunting *Boys Don't Cry* was released to critical acclaim and indie box office success. I vividly remember watching the 2000 Academy Awards with a room full of my fellow Columbia film students. We sighed with pride and envy as Hilary Swank stood to receive her Oscar. And when we actually caught a glimpse of Kim Pierce, her blue hair flashing across the screen for one microsecond in front of a billion people, we started to clap. She was one of us. It gave us hope that one day our stories would be told to the world.

This dream of cinema stardom brings many ambitious, aspiring filmmakers—myself included—to film schools across the globe. But while film school affords its students many opportunities, it also has many major drawbacks. For me, the benefits have far outweighed the disadvantages.

The film school experience affords the opportunity to devote two or three years, at least, solely to the craft of filmmaking. One of the best things about attending a reputable institution is that you immediately have access to some of the brightest minds in the business; I have had the opportunity to take classes taught by Tom Kalin, Christine Vachon, James Schamus, Lodge Kerrigan, Michael Hausman, and Richard Peña. My skill level as a filmmaker has risen dramatically with their help and mentorship.

A fellow Columbia student agrees, "I definitely would go back to film school if given a chance. I wouldn't have been able to focus on film for two years any other way. I also wouldn't have become close with a group of filmmakers who I trust to give me constructive feedback on my work." His point resonates loudly with me. It is difficult to better yourself as a filmmaker if you do not have strong feedback on your work at all times. In most film schools, your classmates will become your biggest assets. You will work with them to get better as a filmmaker, and they will help you in your career after school as well.

This is not to say that once you get into a good film school that you enter into some magic kingdom, where a three picture deal is just around the corner. I am one of 70 students in my class alone, not to mention the 280 others in my division. There is competition for attention, money, power, and—as in the real world—there is never enough to go around.

Most of us have gone into severe debt funding our educations, as I am sure is true to varying degrees for students at each of the top film schools across the country. It is just plain expensive to live in New York or Los Angeles. Add your tuition and film costs to that and the numbers start to add up to astronomical figures. One of my fellow students writes, "[There is] a huge, huge, huge bill waiting that terrifies me." I think the prime misconception about the benefits of going to film school is that you get access to lots of free equipment. Think about spending $60,000 going to film school just for the equipment, versus spending the same amount of money making two moderately-budgeted short films on 16mm.

It is a widely held belief amongst film students that only big-budget shorts receive support and recognition amongst faculty and administration. But the element that levels the field, regardless of how much money you have, is a good story. Learning how to construct a good script and translate that to the big screen is invaluable, and there is always hope that a well-written, clearly-shot film will get attention no matter what its budget. Two of the biggest directors to come out of Columbia, Pierce and *High Art*'s Lisa Cholodenko, received few accolades for their smaller-budgeted short work in film school. When you strip away all of the in-school gossip about who gets what and why, you are left with the fact that film school is a stepping stone into a competitive industry, and what is going to get you attention is the quality of the work itself.

I would go so far as to say that the only reason to go to film school is to learn how to tell a better story. Writing and directing a good film requires dedication and support. I seriously doubt that I would have made as much progress in so little time if I had not had the feedback on my writing and directing skills made available to me in film school. This seems to be the consensus of my peers as well. One student comments, "Shooting (or other technical aspects of filmmaking) is something you can just go out and experiment with. With writing, you can practice and strengthen it on your own, but not necessarily learn it without being taught at least the basics of storytelling."

If you think of film school as a very small microcosm of the film business, then you will be able to appreciate how learning to survive in this sometimes brutal environment can actually do you some good in your career. You learn how to pitch your stories, get producers interested in your work, strategically plan what you are writing, make the most out of your film budgets, and most importantly, hustle for that all mighty dollar that will make it all happen in the first place. One student states, "Film school opens the doors and gives people a name to associate you by. This can give you an advantage in a job or internship when competing with others who did not go to film school."

This sink or swim approach to film school can function more practically than you might think. In my case, I've been able to pitch myself as freelance video editor, Final Cut Pro consultant, and interactive designer with the skills I learned in film school. These skills have helped me pay bills and fund my film projects.

Many of the world's great film artists attended big film schools. Many swear against it. The fact of the matter is that film school can be the perfect place for someone to develop their skills or a complete nightmare. As I begin my first thesis film this fall, I ask my fellow film students and myself: Are we better filmmakers for going to film school? Will film school help us to achieve our dreams of becoming successful filmmakers? Will we get to tell those stories we've been dying to tell? The answer, like that of so many major questions in life, is a resounding...hopefully.

Joshua Sanchez, josh@trans10.com, is a film and media maker currently working on his MFA at Columbia University's Film Division.

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Matt McCormick

Assembling an underground community

BY BRIAN LIBBY

LATER THIS YEAR SOME OF THE LEADING voices in American experimental film will gather for one of the country's premier festivals to exclusively celebrate this largely clandestine art form: Miranda July, Animal Charm, Bill Brown, Sarah Marcus, Craig Baldwin. Yet it's not happening in New York, Chicago, or another media center, but Portland, Oregon, which has arguably become to experimental film what nearby Seattle once was to independent rock.

The current vibrancy of Portland's experimental scene is due in large part to Matt McCormick, who, in between making award-winning films of his own, has over the last several years assembled underground cinema's disparate and often surreptitious artists here. McCormick began by curating the popular Peripheral Produce screening series, a haphazard succession of shows held in the city's warehouses, punk clubs, and decaying second-run theaters. "In Portland we have a great thing going on," McCormick says.

The Subconcious Art of Graffiti Removal **explores the subversion of seeing.**

The Portland Documentary and Experimental Film Festival (PDX) event in December will comprise numerous screenings hosted by a string of nationally recognized filmmakers. "We are looking for artistic, quirky, and challenging work that documents contemporary culture, historic oddities, and generally unclassifiable phenomena," the online entry materials tell prospective entrants. The PDX Festival will also reprise last year's Invitationals, a popular if low-key competition between filmmakers.

McCormick's Peripheral Produce screenings were born from his time spent in punk rock bands during the mid-1990s. Seeing how musicians and scenesters had formed their own community independent from and (more importantly) unconcerned with mainstream popular media and culture, McCormick began screening his and fellow filmmakers' work as a way of cohering Portland's underground media community. This has continued with his video distribution business, Rodeo Film Company, which takes work to audiences all over the world. As Peripheral Produce shows grew in both popularity and regularity, McCormick found it was helpful for connecting experimental fans and his fellow artists, but also for his own development as a filmmaker.

"When I just go see a movie, I don't really pay that much attention to the audience," says McCormick. "But with a show that I've curated, by the time it reaches the audience I've seen the work so many times already that I've got it memorized," says McCormick. "So my attention is on them, to see if they react to the same things that I did originally, or if they discover other qualities that I've missed. It's the best thing that could have ever happened to my own filmmaking."

Indeed, McCormick's award winning films acutely balance and intertwine the abstraction and dissonance of experimental work with a knowing sense of humor, which he says comes from observing the rhythms of an audience. "The relationship between a movie and its audience goes two ways," he says. "People appreciate having a chance to smile, even if that's not ultimately what the piece is about. It's just like a conversation: One that starts with a handshake and a smile is going to be a much better conversation than one that starts with a silent stare."

McCormick's most well known work, last year's *The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal*, is the perfect articulation of this. A documentary about the unwittingly Rothko-esque public murals created by painting over graffiti, the film has been a mammoth success on the festival circuit, including Sundance, Rotterdam, and New York. "A lot of people think it's completely a joke, and tell me it was the funniest thing they've ever seen," McCormick says. "Then there are other people who take it very seriously. And the truth probably lies somewhere in between."

Same goes for 1999's *Sincerely, Joe P. Bear*, a bittersweet love letter made from found footage of a man in a polar bear suit pulling a scantily-clad woman around on a giant ersatz piece of ice. (The footage came from a mother lode of old reels McCormick rescued from a Portland TV station, which also provided fodder for his 1999 film *The Virotonin Decision*, winner of Best Experimental Film at the New York Underground Film Festival.)

"To this day I have no idea what was originally being filmed," McCormick recalls. "But there was something about the body language and the look on the bear's face that had this really intense emotional quality to it. It all just kind of hit me at once that this bear was in for a heartbreak." The film features voice-over narration of a breakup letter, culled from unsent letters McCormick had written around the time *Joe P. Bear* was made.

And while it's been largely overshadowed by *Graffiti Removal*, McCormick's most recent film, *Going to the Ocean*, is another meditative yet droll collage. Alternating original infra-red nighttime footage of Portland's ocean-bound freighters with some salvaged old home movies of senior citizens frolicking at the beach during sunset, the film beautifully reaffirms McCormick's matchless style. While his proficiency intensifies with each frame (no wonder he's a sought after camera operator for local TV commercial and movie sets), and McCormick has expressed a growing interest in narrative filmmaking, don't look for this proud film punk to go Hollywood anytime soon.

"You go to Sundance and some of these big festivals, and it's really obvious that many of these people are there to meet the right producer and sell their film or their script," McCormick says. "But then when you go to someplace like the New York Underground Film Festival, or hopefully now the PDX Film Festival, you really do see people who make stuff because they love it."

See www.rodeofilmco.com

Brian Libby is a film critic for Willamette Week *in Portland and has also written for* The New York Times, Salon, *and* Metropolis.

Wolfgang Hastert

A cyber-bystander's strange love

BY NEIL KENDRICKS

When San Diego-based documentary filmmaker Wolfgang Hastert talks about his new film, *Click Me Darling*, he frequently refers to himself as a "cyber-bystander." This catchy description takes on an added resonance once the viewer watches the film's eclectic mix of oddball characters candidly describing their desires, fears, and what exactly inspired them to search for the love in the most unlikely places.

"The magic is simply pushing the people in the right direction," says Hastert, who lives and works with his illustrator-animator wife Blair Thornley. "Being with them; making it a beautiful situation where they can open up and tell you wonderful stories."

His 75-minute film, commissioned by the French/ German arts and culture channel ARTE, examines the phenomenon of modern romantics looking for that special someone in the online wilds of cyberspace. Here, the information super highway becomes a virtual playground where people are free to reinvent themselves with the click of a computer mouse, in order to find their ideal mate.

But *Click Me Darling* isn't so much an expose about this recent trend of online dating, as it is a darkly comic character study of the individuals who share their funny and sad stories as Hastert's digital-video camera bears witness.

"I have a knack for talking to people," Hastert says. "People tend to trust me. But for each person, you have a different strategy."

Trust is essential for any documentary filmmaker to create the necessary ambience for subjects to feel free and uninhibited enough to reveal their personal quirks and idiosyncrasies. Like his other documentaries, Hastert's film offers an unconventional look at modern life in a state of flux as seen through the eyes of his subjects.

While each person's story is unique, all of the subjects in Hastert's cyber-fish bowl share the common desire to fill a void in their lives. Along the way, his camera enters their homes as well as wanders through online chat rooms to beg the question of just how far some people are willing to go to find love and happiness.

In the past, Hastert's curiosity about what makes us human has lead to surreal portraits of artistic outsiders (Edward Hopper in *The Silent Witness*, Surrealist photographer Paul Outerbridge in *Woman With Claws*, and Appalachian photographer Shelby Lee Adams in *The Picture Man*) to cinematic tours of the cultures built around dieting (*Big Stories*) and underwear (*Underwear Stories*). QuickTime clips from his various films can be seen on his Web Site, www.wolfganghastert.com.

According to Hastert, all of his films are ultimately about the human condition. So it was only a matter of time before the filmmaker would be drawn to the strange menagerie of human specimens found on the Internet. Afterall, this is the perfect environment for any self-described "cyber-bystander" whose stock in trade is discovering fresh stories to tell in interesting ways.

Screens within screens in Hastert's *Click Me Darling*.

Interestingly, Hastert has managed to film most of *Click Me Darling*, as well as his previous films, in San Diego, even though all of his documentary work have been pieces made for ARTE via his long-time, working relationship with the TV channel's commissioning editor Olaf Grunert. In this respect, his prolific body of work proves that independent filmmakers don't have to be in Los Angeles or New York, in order to make movies. For Hastert, all that is necessary is access to film and video equipment and the ability to find compelling stories about fascinating people.

"(ARTE) hires me, not as a director– they hire me as a production company," Hastert explains, "ARTE farms out productions, so they give you a contract and you have to bring them the finished piece."

Throughout *Click Me Darling*, Hastert juxtaposes the more orthodox interview footage of his subjects with distorted images of pixilated talking heads and cropped bodies glimpsed on computer monitors. In the film, Hastert even makes a brief appearance as one of the anonymous faces gathering on the periphery of the Web's ever shifting virtual community.

These pixilated faces crop up periodically throughout *Click Me Darling* as an aesthetic device that establishes the film's odd ebb and flow. Hastert's editor, Carol Martori, mixes these Web-cam POVs of people participating in online chat rooms directly with the director's in-person interviews, shot of digital video. As Hastert cross-cuts between the different stories, the combining of personal disclosures with bursts of cyber imagery mimics the nonlinear manner in which many people surf the Web, skipping from one place to the next and back again.

The film centers on the online conversations that Hastert's subjects and fellow Web browsers bang out of their keyboards. The subjects' choice of words in their meticulous descriptions of themselves, however, often clashes with how they are perceived by others. It's in this gray area between self-perceptions and reality that the filmmaker often finds his most poignant and revealing moments. Towards the climax of *Click Me Darling*, some of Hastert's subjects succeed in finding companionship, while others continue the quest for their elusive other half.

Hastert says, "This film is all about words, writing, and people talking about what they are searching for."

Neil Kendricks is a San Diego based artist, filmmaker, and writer who is currently working toward his Master's at SDSU's Television, Film, and New Media program.

Harry Dodge, Silas Howard, & Steak House

By Hook or By Crook

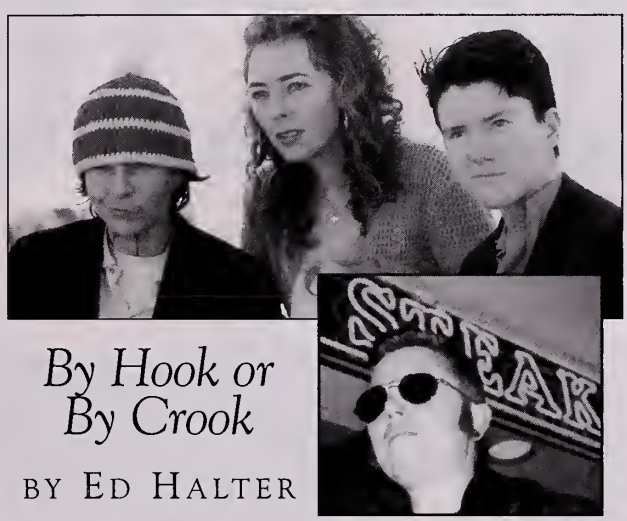
BY ED HALTER

SET IN THE DIVE BARS AND MEAN streets of San Francisco, *By Hook or By Crook* is a gritty butch lesbian buddy movie with a heart of tarnished gold. Forgoing the stereotypical romance narrative of most queer indies, this digital feature tells the story of Shy, a sweet-faced grifter who forges a friendship with a bewhiskered barfly named Valentine. Add to this a bit of crime, plus a little soul-searching, and *By Hook or By Crook* serves up a winning antidote to mass-market gay cinema. Heartfelt and hard-hitting, it's a melodrama served straight-up, no chaser, in a dirty thrift-store shot glass.

The title refers to the main character's hard-scrabble, makeshift lives, but it just as well describes the film's own do-it-yourself production ethos. Harry Dodge, an award-winning solo performer and visual artist, teamed up with longtime friend Silas Howard, of queer-core punk band Tribe 8, with the idea to make a feature film. Both were central figures in San Francisco's thriving lesbian cultural scene, having founded and run performance space The Bearded Lady Coffeehouse and Truckstop for almost a decade. "We wanted to make a movie with people that looked like us in it," says Howard, "dykes that look kinda like guys, butches, third-gender, or what-have-you—that would hopefully kick around video store shelves for a while."

The pair's first concept was to do an all-lesbian, *Rambo*-style action picture, but after a few screenplay drafts, "the characters were just terrible and flat," remembers Howard. "Our plot twists weren't really that twisty. And so we realized that we should just write a movie about what we really care about, and that was friendship. About finding bravery and courage in your life, and how friendship can be transformative." After a seven-day "lock-down" session and additional dialog from actor Stanya Kahn, who plays Valentine's girlfriend, the two had a screenplay that gave a new spin to the conventions of classic buddy pictures like *Midnight Cowboy* or *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*.

Although the two had some film experience—Dodge appears in a supporting role in John Waters' *Cecil B. Demented*, and Howard provided the voice-over for Jenni Olson's award-winning experimental short *Blue Diary*—they had never produced a feature. Soon, Howard and Dodge enlisted the help of local filmmaker Steak House as a third producer, whose raunchy comedy short *Lez B. Friends, a Biker Bitch Hate Story* played numerous underground and queer film festivals worldwide. Steak's company, Steakhaus Productions, took on the project as their first digital feature.



Top: Harry Dodge, Stanya Kahn, and Silas Howard; inset: Steak House.

"Because it was a story about two really butch girls—one of them having a beard—no movie stars, no Hollywood sort of thing, it was really hard for me to raise money in the beginning," says House, but support got rolling once they started selling shares of the film. "We were able to sell shares through friends, and friends of friends, and ex-girlfriends' families...And then once there was footage, I was able to raise a fair amount of money otherwise." They assembled a crew that included DP Ann Rossetti, who shot 1994's groundbreaking *Go Fish*, and got advice from veteran producer Annie Imhoff, who has worked with low-budget masters Bruce La Bruce and Lars Von Trier.

After months of shooting and editing, *By Hook or By Crook* premiered as a work-in-progress to a sold-out audience at the San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival in June 2001. Howard was initially nervous that their complex, sometimes shady characters might rankle the notoriously opinionated Castro crowd. "I guess I thought that all those other gay people that I pegged as more 'gaystream' were gonna watch this movie and reject it," she says. But instead, the film received a ten-minute standing ovation.

"People were just crazed," reports Dodge. "We had all kinds come up to us afterwards, 12-year-old butches and 80-year-olds. We had big macho straight guys say, 'I didn't think I was gonna like this movie...but then I realized, hey, this is like my sister Rosa, and then I realized, hey, these are a couple of guys I could relate to!" Adds Howard, "This one really young punk girl came up to me and said, 'I've been waiting my whole life for this movie.' And I looked at her and thought, 'Hell, it took me half of your life to *make* this movie.'"

Post-San Francisco, *By Hook or By Crook* screened in its final form in Sundance's American Spectrum. It went on to South By Southwest, where it nabbed an audience award, and various gay and lesbian festivals the following summer. In June, it made its television premiere on the Sundance Channel.

Now, the group is eyeing foreign, theatrical, and video distribution. But regardless of what happens, they're planning on touring punk-rock style. Sandi Dubowski's community-based distribution model for his doc *Trembling Before G-D* has provided some inspiration, as well as the Howard's own experiences touring with her band. "We're all making independent cinema, which is cool, but until we have a real independent distribution machine, we've got to just get the art to the people." Adds Howard, "I mean, something's gotta give. There's so many beautiful movies, and you know Miramax and Fine Line are not going to pick them up. So something's gotta break, and I think the digital format really is gonna help that a lot."

For more info, see www.steakhaus.com/bhobc

Ed Halter is director of the New York Underground Film Festival, and programmed this year's Robert Flaherty Seminar.

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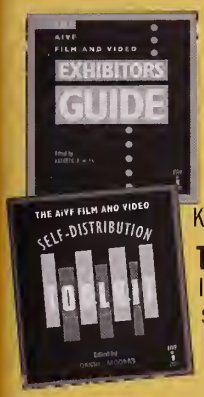

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O CANADA!

Vancouver's Indie Spirit

BY JAMES ISRAEL

VANCOUVER MAY OFTEN BE KNOWN AS Hollywood North, but it boasts an impressive underground film scene that harbors good ol' D.I.Y. spirit. With great exhibition spaces, strong local film festivals, and solid resource organizations, Vancouver has the soil and sun to help the seeds of indie cinema grow.

BLINDING LIGHT!!!

A beacon for underground filmmakers

"WE'RE THE ONLY FULL-TIME UNDERGROUND screening space in North America," says Blinding Light founder, Alex MacKenzie. This 110-seat microcinema that screens alternative, underground, and obscure film / video works was founded in 1998. "I was personally frustrated by the lack of venues for the kind of work I and others were making, and so decided to do something about it," explains MacKenzie.

Blinding Light's six nights a week schedule is diverse. "A lot of the shows combine oddball industrial and educational films with experimental work, the idea being to pull the audience in with the oddball factor and then pleasantly surprise them with artists' work they would not normally have sought out," says MacKenzie.

With screenings of works from well known filmmakers such as Miranda July, Bruce LaBruce, and Greta Snider, Blinding Light is definitely a hot spot in the underground film world, but perhaps more importantly, it provides a haven for filmmakers who are not as established. Blinding Light's open submission policy states: "We are always looking for new works to screen, and you don't have to be an indie hero to make it happen!" Their monthly "Bring Your Own Film Night" screening provides the filmic equivalent of an open mike for emerging talent. MacKenzie says, "We have many folks who come religiously and make work specifically for these nights. In a matter of twelve months they have a dozen short works to their credit!"

"Only through regular and constant programming of this kind of work will the public gain an awareness and understanding of the importance, significance, and breadth of work being made in this area of artistic production," he concludes.

For more info about the venue and how to submit your own underground masterpiece, see www.blindinglight.com.

A recent crowd at Blinding Light!!! Cinema in Vancouver.

PHOTO: BLINDING LIGHT

PRAXIS & CINEWORKS

Offering helping hands to Vancouver filmmakers

VANCOUVER FILMMAKERS DON'T HAVE TO look far for help on everything from workshopping their screenplay to renting inexpensive equipment for their documentary shoot.

Praxis Centre for Screenwriters is a screenwriter's dream, offering a screenplay library with original scripts and screenwriting books, as well as screenwriting courses. Their biggest draw is the Praxis Screenplay Competition, a biannual lab which offers the opportunity to receive detailed feedback from industry professionals and help with the next step towards production. Some well-known films whose scripts went through the lab are Mina Shum's *Double Happiness*, Scott Smith's *Rollercoaster*, and Thom Fitzgerald's *The Hanging Garden*.

To make the competition even more valuable to the first-time indie screenwriter, the scripts remain anonymous until the last stages of the competition. As Praxis literature explains, "It doesn't matter whether you're an experienced pro or a construction worker writing on weekends—the quality of your script and your potential as a writer are all that count."

"Twenty feature films have been made from scripts workshopped at Praxis," says Director Patricia Gruben. "We've done a lot to get local screenwriters out from their garrets and into a forum where they are able to meet each other and connect with producers."

Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society is another valuable local resource that offers a wide array of services, ranging from low cost production equipment and editing suites to nuts-and-bolts workshops on topics such as "Budgeting for Short Films" and "Production Design for Low Budget Films." They also offer programs on the creative aspects of filmmaking such as making personal, point-of-view documentaries.

To further facilitate independent visions, the annual Cineworks Production Fund (deadline in June) offers a $20,000 grant in goods and services each year to local independent film productions.

Productions receive $12,500 for eligible expenses and $7,500 for Cineworks in-house equipment and/or facility rentals. And to top it off, they have a monthly discussion forum, "The Cinematic Salon," where filmmakers or craftspeople shares film clips and discuss telling their stories and getting their films made. Cineworks also helps get films seen. They recently had screenings at Blinding Light Cinema and DOXA—the Documentary Film & Video Festival.

"Cineworks success stories are numerous," says Executive Director Meg Thornton. "Asghar Massombagi's *Khaled* was included in the Toronto International Film Festival Group's 'Top Ten of the year,' and Bruce Spangler's *Protection* did well at the box office, as well as receiving critical acclaim. Look out for Ileana Pietrobruno's *Girl King,* which will be released soon and has been accepted into film festivals in Toronto, New York, and San Francisco."

For more information on Praxis and Cineworks, visit www.praxisfilm.com and www.cineworks.ca.

OUT ON SCREEN

Vancouver Queer Film and Video Festival returns

THE VANCOUVER QUEER FILM AND VIDEO Festival celebrates its 14th year this August with close to 200 films by, for, and about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people of British Columbia.

"Last year we opened with *Paragraph 175*, Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman's powerful examination of the Nazis use of a 19th century penal law to persecute homosexuals. The year before, the original *Queer As Folk* was featured—well ahead of the hype," noted Jeremy Hainsworth, the festival's publicity and communications coordinator.

The festival is run by Out On Screen, a non-profit society that "exists to celebrate the media arts as a powerful tool of communication and co-operation among diverse communities, by promoting the production and exhibition of films and videos."

For information on this year's festival, visit www.outonscreen.com.

Blinding Light Cinema's founder Alex MacKenzie has cultivated Vancouver's experimental edge.

VANCOUVER RESOURCES

Flourishing film community connections

"VANCOUVER HAS A LARGE AND VARIED independent film community and many film organizations flourish here," says Cineworks Executive Director Meg Thornton. Here is a sampling:

Pacific Cinematheque is Vancouver's premiere arthouse cinema. They also host the Jewish Film Festival and DOXA (Documentary Film and Video Festival), have a film reference library (with emphasis on Canadian cinema) and a 16mm print archive, offer media education for elementary school teachers and students, and run the Travelling Picture Show, which circulates independent films to communities throughout British Columbia. www.cinematheque.bc.ca

Video In is an artist-run access center operated by and for independent video makers, experimental video artists, and media/community activists. They offer educational workshops, screenings, and production equipment. www3.bc.sympatico.ca/video-in

The Documentary Media Society is devoted to presenting independent and innovative documentaries from Canada and around the world to Vancouver audiences, both to broaden the audience for documentary film and video, and to broaden the definitions of documentary. DOXA is a biannual international documentary that will next be presented in May 2004. www.vcn.bc.ca/doxa

Women in Film and Video Vancouver: Non-profit society of professional women founded to support women involved in the British Columbia film, video, and television industries. They provide networking opportunities, educational workshops, and mentorships with film industry professionals. www.womeninfilm.ca

Vancouver Film Office: For questions about and assistance in shooting within Vancouver's busy, billion (Canadian) dollar a year film industry. www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/engsvcs/projects/filmoffice

Vancouver International Film Festival (September 26 to October 11, 2002) One of North America's larger international film festivals and Vancouver's largest fest for independent films from all over the world. www.viff.org

Vancouver Underground Film Festival (November 21-24, 2002, submission deadline September 6, 2002) Vancouver's alternative festival for all works cutting edge, underground, and obscure. www.blindinglight.com/vuff.htm

James Israel is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker. He also provides information services for AIVF, and edits AIVF's newsletter, SPLICE!

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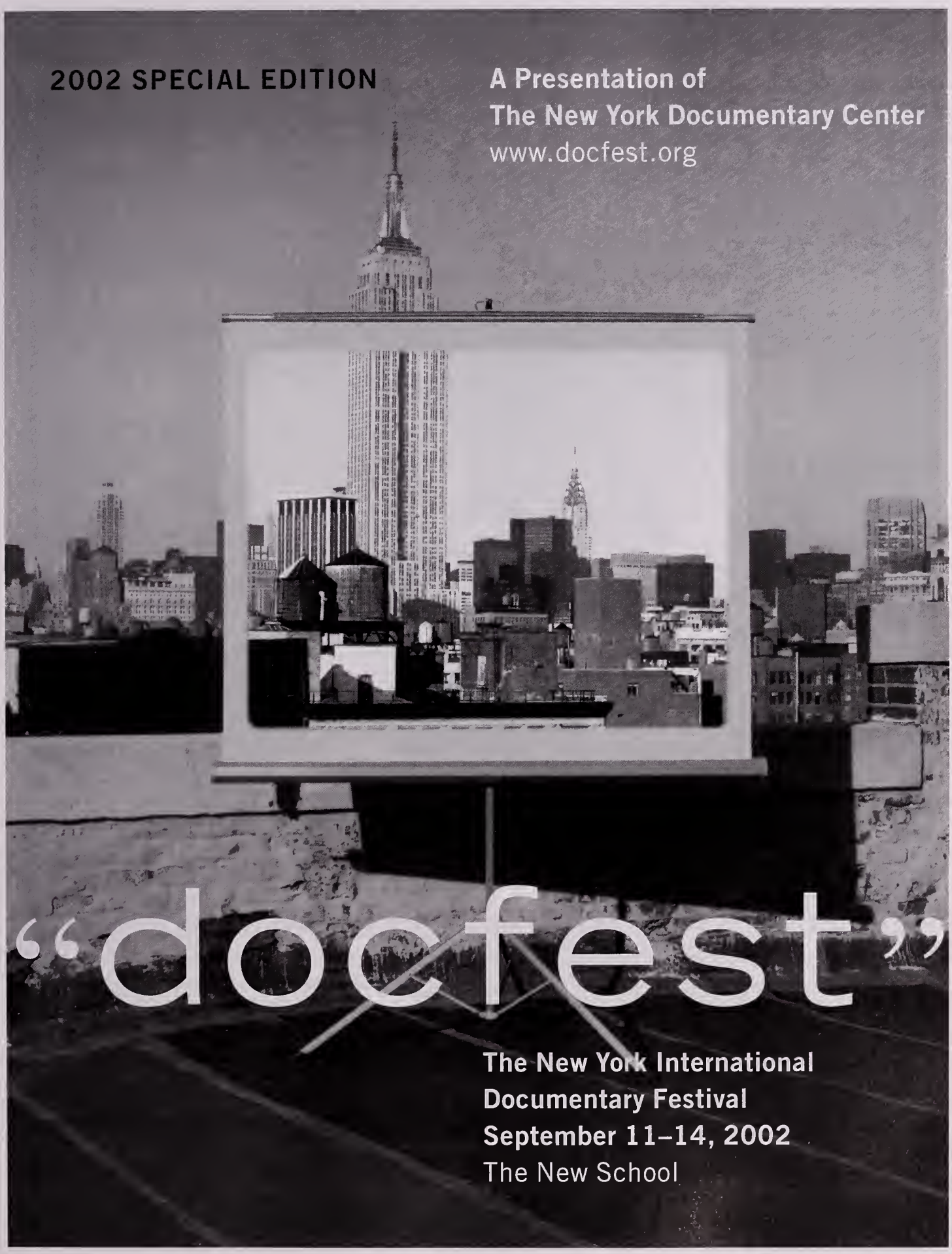

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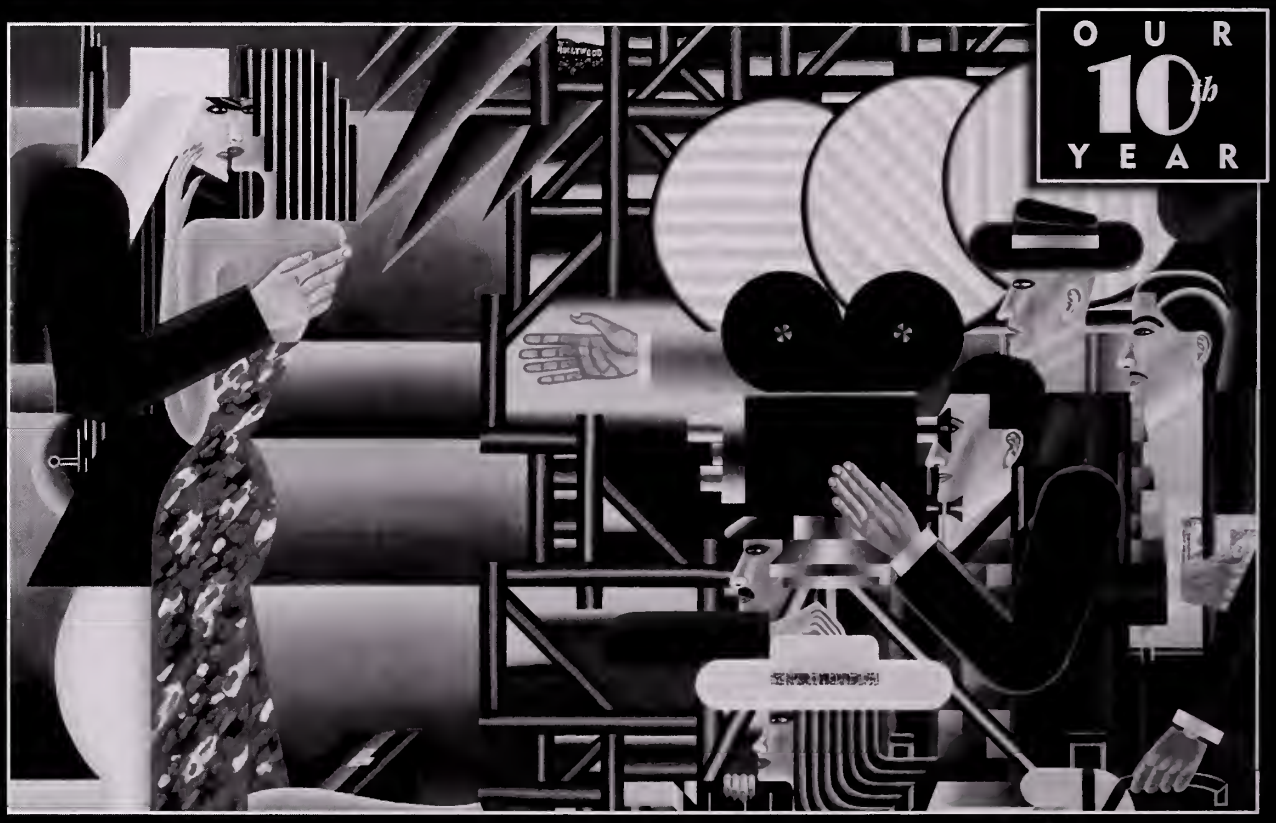

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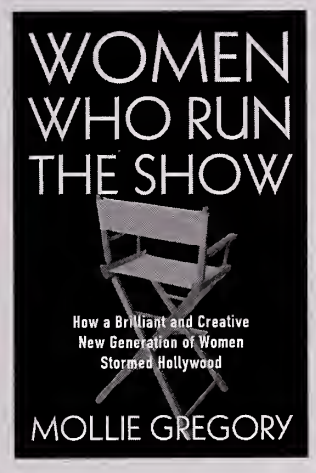
Books

Women Who Run The Show: How a Brilliant and Creative New Generation of Women Stormed Hollywood
By Mollie Gregory
©2002, St. Martin's Press
www.stmartins.com

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

FILM AND TELEVISION SPEAK with a male voice. Seriously: in 2001, according to a study by Martha Lauzen, 235 of the top 250 Hollywood movies were directed by men. Considering the early accomplishments of film pioneers Alice Guy Blanche, Lois Weber, Marion Wong, and Mary Pickford, exactly what have we gained over the past century?



Writer, producer, film consultant, and frequent lecturer Mollie Gregory wants us to reflect on this question. "What we failed to say yesterday, no one will know tomorrow," she explains in the introduction to *Women Who Run The Show*. This oral history documents the advance of women in Hollywood as it has played out over the past thirty years, following the period Gregory calls "the long desert" which began when women's influence first began to wane in the thirties. Gregory began conducting interviews in 1997, and has woven the stories of 130 women of various backgrounds and achievements into a complex, first person narrative of the individual and societal struggles that have slowly increased the access and influence of women in Hollywood.

There are other books that cover this ground, but only a few. Linda Seger's 1996 *When Women Call the Shots* also addresses women's developing influence, while personal histories such as the late Julia Phillips's *You'll Never Eat Lunch in this Town Again* (1991) and Linda Obst's more sober *Hello, He Lied* (1996) document individual struggles and triumphs. Unlike Seger's book, which organizes its observations by area of influence, Gregory has drawn her history as a decade-by-decade campaign. She situates each section within its decade (do you remember that until legislation in 1973, "Help Wanted" classifieds were segregated by gender?) and allows her subjects to tell the stories that up until now noone had seemed to want to hear.

An earlier incarnation of this book was called "*Creating Equality*." The change in title reflects Gregory's shift of focus from the battle to the footsoldiers, and the emphasis on presenting their varied voices is both a strength and a weakness. This history is alternately inspiring and unsettling. At times the stories become too arcane, as if the self-absorption of Hollywood has blunted the imaginations of those who have dwelled there too long. Nonetheless, Hollywood's cultural authority is such that it's imperative that women's values and visions be represented. Props to the women "who run the show"—and let's hope there is room for many more in the future.

Women of Vision
Histories in Feminist Film and Video
edited by Alexandra Juhasz
©2002 U. of Minnesota Press
www.upress.umn.edu

BY KEN MILLER

IT'S RIGHT THERE IN THE title, that dreaded word: "Feminist." Relevant, dated, loaded with meaning. But what meaning is *Women of Vision* editor Alexandra Juhasz searching for?

Juhasz, a filmmaker and professor at California's Pitzer College, is to some degree interested in all of the above. The book is a companion piece to a documentary that she directed in 1998, a snapshot and a summation of a moment in history that she admits has passed, but which she hopes will inspire and influence future filmmakers. So, much as "Queer Cinema" came to signify a style of filmmaking (for better or worse), Juhasz is arguing for the importance of "Feminist Filmmaking" as a movement.

> **"Did you know that no woman has ever won the Oscar for Best Director, and that only two have ever been nominated? That 94% of the writing awards have gone to men? ... Hollywood likes to think of itself as cool, edgy and ahead of its time, but it actually lags way behind the rest of society in employing women and people of color in top positions. 96% of major films are directed by males. No woman has ever won an Oscar for Cinematography or Sound. Even 85% of the make-up awards have gone to men."**
>
> **(www.guerrillagirls.com)**

Thus, not all women directors make the cut: Valeria Soe? Yup. Katherine Bigelow? Nope. Some inclusions and omissions seem a little more arbitrary: Why Cheryl Dunye (*The Watermelon Woman*), for example, but not Rose Troche (*Go Fish*)? Well, maybe this is because Juhasz is Dunye's partner and served as producer for *Woman*. Yet perhaps that omission also hints at a predilection of the genre: academic filmmaking is *in*, popular narrative is *out*. (Dunye is the only filmmaker who comes close.) A filmmaker such as Shu Lea Cheang, making feminist porn (remember when that was hot in academic circles?), would seem like an equally ambiguous non-

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inclusion, though it must be said that she is referenced extensively.

Enough about who is not in the book. Juhasz acknowledges that her category and terminology is ambiguous: several of the subjects interviewed would prefer not to be labeled "feminist" at all. More to the point is the book's creation of an archive, documenting both methods and intent. To this end, historians such as Pearl Bowser, who has worked to unearth long-forgotten African-American "race" movies, and administrators such as Kate Horsfield, director of the Video Data Bank are included along with filmmakers. The idea is to provide a context for the movement, in addition to discussing its cinematic output.

As for the interviews themselves, it must be said that they will largely be of interest to those already familiar with the filmmakers. While the book includes in-depth introductions to each interview subject—describing not only their output, but their relationship to broader trends in academia and filmmaking—much of the writing is too academic to be immediately engaging. Too much emphasis is placed on placing the interview subjects within the context of the book's overall thesis for the reader to get an easy grasp of the substance of their work. Perhaps this is why many object to the prospect of being labeled; as Valerie Soe mentions, it has sometimes been easier for her to make films based on her identity (as a female, "ethnic" filmmaker), than to get viewers to recognize her unique style of filmmaking.

Juhasz warns in the introduction that she intends *Women of Vision* to be self-reflexive, since dismantling the myth of objective distance is a tenet of feminist cinema. Yet thankfully, her presence as an interviewer is relatively non-invasive. Her questions are largely general, such as "Who do you owe" and "What is your history," which allows for the subjects to provide some of the self-description lacking in the interview introductions. As a downside, this loose framing for the discussions can sometime leave the reader feeling like the third party to an overheard chat. The people are interesting, the tone is amicable, but the substance and terms of the debate is illusive.

Women of Vision does serve as an introduction to an under-discussed group of filmmakers. But the interaction is fleeting and too often, one leaves feeling as if it would be hard to recognize these artists at the next encounter.

Ken Miller has curated programs of short films for Anthology Film Archives and is acting editor for The Independent.

Looking for a book to spend a stolen summer afternoon with?

These are some of the dog-earred tomes on the bookshelves of AIVF staff and board members. Visit www.aivf.org/discussion to see comments on these and other books, and to share your own summer reading recommendations!

Rich Media, Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times, Robert W. McChesney

Persistence of Vision, John Gaspard and Dale Newton

Ways of Seeing, John Berger

Camera Lucida, Roland Barthes

Art and Fear, David Bayles and Ted Orland

My Year of Meats, Ruth Ozeki

Cassavetes on Cassavetes, Ray Carney

Out of the Shadows: Asians in American, Roger Garcia

Expanded Cinema, Gene Youngblood

Film at Wits End: Eight Avant-Garde Filmmakers, Stan Brakhage

In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing, Walter Murch

A Critical Cinema: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers, Scott MacDonald

Notes on the Cinematographer, Robert Bresson

Alice Doesn't, Teresa De Lauretis

Hollywood, Charles Bukowski

The Power of Myth, Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers; edited by Betty Sue Flowers

Projections: Film-Makers on Film-Making, John Boorman and Walter Donohue

Aspen Shortsfest

BY PATRICIA THOMPSON

Executive Director of the Aspen Shorts Film Festival Laura Thielen overlooking the town of Aspen.

April in Aspen, Colorado, is a time of transition. The encircling mountains begin shedding their white mantle of snow, ski lifts shut down, skiers ship out, and the conversation changes. Instead of snow conditions, the topic is film, and the action shifts to the center of town, where lively crowds pour into the Wheeler Opera House to partake in the Aspen Shortsfest, now the premiere short film festival in the United States.

Founded in 1992 as a spin-off from the Aspen Filmfest, this event has been steadily gathering steam. Since 1995, when Laura Thielen left the San Francisco International Film Festival to come on board as executive director, the festival has grown from two days to six and the program from 24 films to 70. The roster now includes filmmakers from around the world, and this year the beautifully restored Victorian opera house was reverberating with accents from England, Scotland, Belgium, France, Japan, Australia, and Greece. It's like an Olympic Village for filmmakers.

But the goal of Thielen and her team isn't growth for growth's sake. "There's a difference between enlargement and enrichment," explains Shortsfest competition coordinator George Eldred. The festival has taken great efforts to find a delicate balance–expanding to the point where they're on the radar of American filmmakers and international entities that fund or program shorts, while staying small enough to preserve the festival's intimacy and informality. They're now at a point where they're on people's wish list and have, in effect, the whole world to cherry pick. By capping the festival at 70 films, they maintain a highly selective lineup, with each two-hour program packed with goodies.

...the festival organizers have been steadfast about their mission, which is to highlight the art and craft of short film. This is not an industry event, nor is it headed in that direction.

But as they've grown, the festival organizers have been steadfast about their mission, which is to highlight the art and craft of short film. This is not an industry event, nor is it headed in that direction. "It's so hard for short filmmakers to get noticed," says Thielen. "We're here to celebrate their artistry. Many may never make another film. Some do—for instance, Todd Field and Serena Rathbun. They've said their favorite festival ever was Shortsfest in 1995, when they showed *Nonnie & Alex*, because it validated what they did creatively."

Field, of course, went on to hit his stride with *In the Bedroom*. But first-time directors and calling-card films are in the minority here. Significantly, more than two-thirds of Shortsfest's filmmakers already have at least one work under their belt. Here you'll find people like Anja Breien, a Norwegian director who has 10 features to her name and simply had a hankering to craft a short film between jobs. There's New York restaurateur and director Bob Giraldi (*Dinner Rush*), who together with cinematographer Allen Daviau (*E.T.*) created the first dramatic film about 9/11, *The Routine*, a five-minute piece shot in Giraldi's devastated neighborhood. And there are numerous filmmakers with day jobs, like Dirk Belien, a portfolio manager in Belgium and father of four. He has somehow found the time to create a body of shorts, including *Gridlock*, a seven-minute comedy about the repercussions of a misdirected cell phone call, which picked up the prize for Best Short Short. And, of course, there are festival stalwarts like Jay Rosenblatt, a prolific film artist who has been making found-footage shorts for over 20 years, and animators like Sheila Sofian, who just received a Guggenheim. Shown here was Sofian's *A Conversation with Haris*, a nonfiction animation on painted glass about a Bosnian child's thoughts on the war in his homeland.

"Short films parallel the discipline required to write short stories," said veteran cinematographer John Bailey during an all-day panel on collaboration. "You have to be concise and have a singular thing you want to say. Unfortunately, there are so many features that have less to say than a ten-minute short." While heads nodded, Bailey went on to voice another common sentiment: "I'm impressed by the number of works shot on film, including 35mm." Indeed, this surprised many observers, as did the polish and professionalism of so many of these shorts. Speculating about the reason behind this, Bailey continued, "Many of these films tell their stories through images, rather than dialogue, because dialogue requires a certain amount of time to develop character."

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Robert Bradbrook's *Home Road Movies*, winner of the Aspen Shortsfest 2002 award for Most Innovative Animation.

He went on to wax eloquent about *Lurch*, a 20-minute short by German director Boris Hars-Tschachotin, which was indeed a standout. An almost wordless film, it takes place in the bowels of a natural history museum, and follows the titular character on his lonely rounds as he refreshes each reptilian specimen jar with formaldehyde. The film had audiences groaning out loud as *Lurch* literally develops a taste for his work, but in addition to its lurid comedy, *Lurch* was a feast for the eyes. Filmed in glossy 35mm, it was a visual chamber piece for glass beakers, pale liquids, and ghostly creatures in their watery graves, and DP Sebastian Edschmid deservedly won the prize for best cinematography ($2,500 of film stock from Kodak). As Bailey said, the film demonstrates how "the sheer dimensionality in detail and visual power can translate to strong emotions. I try to imagine what *Lurch* would have looked like on digital, and I'm convinced it wouldn't have had the same impact."

There's a telling pattern behind this 35mm work. For the most part, it's happening in countries that offer some kind of state support for short films—namely Europe, Australia, and Canada. These countries "tend to do more care and feeding of young talent," confirms Thielen, who adds that "a lot" of festival entries were made with support from television stations. The BBC logo, in particular, was emblazoned on numerous credits. Channel 4, Arte, and Canal Plus, as well as various film commissions, are among the other institutional players that make foreign directors' lives a tad easier. Lacking this kind of support, U.S. filmmakers tend to shoot by any means possible, which often translates to reaching for a digital camera.

Despite these differences, directors from both sides of the ocean bonded over the slights they receive when it comes to broadcast slots. British director Robert Bradbrook, who received Channel 4 support for his wonderful live-action/animation mix *Home Road Movies*, noted wryly that "my film was shown at 1:30 a.m.–for parents of kids who can't sleep. It's the same the world over."

Filmmakers had ample opportunity to vent, compare experiences, and listen to seasoned veterans during panels and informal presentations throughout the week. These mentoring events—a strand instituted by Thielen—included an informative discussion on low-cost ways to shoot film. Moderated by Kodak's Steve Garfinkel, the guests included Nancy Schreiber and Amy Vincent (two of the six women in the 240-member American Society of Cinematographers), as well as actor-turned-shorts-director Peter Riegert. The benefits of small group discussions were evident here, with the 20 people in the room bouncing specific questions back and forth and getting concrete answers. On the issue of short ends, for

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE FILMMAKER

instance, panelists detailed a better alternative—Kodak's willingness to offer special deals on rolls of 'nonconforming' film (e.g., a perfectly good stock printed without edge numbers or with labeling mistakes). Or one could hear advice on how to shoot dailies when the budget or producers won't allow it. (Schreiber recommended shooting a short 200-foot roll every couple of days to print and check.)

Weightier issues were addressed during an excellent three-hour lecture by American University professor Patricia Aufderheide on the response of mediamakers to 9/11. Presenting clips from 22 films and seven web sites, Aufderheide sorted through the initial reaction, comparing what we see from untrained "folk artists," media artists, TV programmers, and independent filmmakers. To date, much of the work falls under the rubric of "Me and the Event." Within that, responses vary from a flat-out nuke 'em sentiment to something more ambiguous, complex, and analytical among independents. But we're still a long way from any kind of historical perspective. As Aufderheide noted, the first major film on the Holocaust, *Night and Fog*, wasn't made until 1955. *The War at Home*, on Vietnam, appeared only in 1979. *History and Memory*, on the Japanese internment camps in the United States during WWII, didn't materialize until 1991. "Two decades from now," Aufderheide predicted, "we could be looking at a work of art that synthesizes this stuff for us." (See *The Independent*, June 2002.)

In the meantime, shorts directors like Jason Kliot (*Site*), Jay Rosenblatt (*Prayer*), and Robert Edwards (*Voice of the Prophet*) are attempting to process the incomprehensible, and their works are appearing at venues like Shortsfest. As Thielen observes, "If there's something on people's minds, it will show up here."

Timeliness is just one attraction of Aspen Shortsfest. Camaraderie among the 45 guests is another. The leisurely schedule—with time for outdoor play in the Rocky Mountains between the thrice-daily screenings—is yet another. But the biggest enticement is the sheer excellence of programming. Without question, one can find gold in them thar hills.

Patricia Thomson is the former editor-in-chief of The Independent.

When They're Bad, They're Better:

The Ninth New York Underground Film Festival

BY IOANNIS MOOKAS

LESS A FILM FESTIVAL AS WE KNOW ONE TO be than a blazing Catherine Wheel that rolls over downtown Manhattan every spring, disgorging cinematic fireworks and leaving audiences gasping in its wake, the New York Underground Film Festival clocked its ninth year with a wicked vengeance. Still true to its trashy origins, NYUFF's programming has also grown increasingly sophisticated over the past three or four years, as the festival has emerged at the forefront of an international media scene encompassing other underground festivals throughout North America. Under the guidance of astute and enterprising festival director Ed Halter, NYUFF has evolved into a premier venue for not only "underground" but experimental and documentary cinema as well, a critical esteem doubtless reflected in Halter's invitation to program the 48th Flaherty Seminar this past June.

Of course, any festival's success ultimately depends on its audience, and after the precipitous drop in attendance that struck most New York City film venues and festivals after last September 11, it was extremely heartening to see throngs of NYUFF loyalists turned out in force—in breathlessly demimondaine style—for underground royalty like Nick Zedd, who unsheathed *Lord of the Cockrings* in one of the festival's many standing-room only shows. By closing night, it felt as though a larger corner had been turned—that the audience's ecstatic embrace of NYUFF was also a battered community's display of self-confidence regained.

Lest that sound too deadly earnest, worry not. NYUFF's unifying motif this year was a heavily ironic starz-'n'-stripes ballyhoo that extended from staffers' flag lapel pins to an ultra-arch mock advertisement for the National Rifle Association in the festival catalogue ("NRA proudly salutes the 9th NYUFF: keep shootin'!"). The twisted patriotic theme lent unusual cohesiveness to the programming, with a particularly trenchant slate of socially conscious documentaries, including Vladimir Gyorski's Dogme-certified drug policy probe, *Resin*, and Josh Koury's harrowing portrait of terminally alienated youth, *Standing By Yourself*. Truly extraordinary was Garrett Scott's *Cul de Sac: A Suburban War Story*, a chilling X-ray of the despair in poor white suburbia that drove a troubled veteran on a suicidal rampage through the streets in a stolen army tank. The film ambitiously frames its psychological autopsy and class analysis within the historical context of Southern California's aerospace industry-fueled development and decline.

Ghost world: A Samuel Taylor Coleridge fragment inspired James Fotopoulos' abstract video/film hybrid, *Christabel*.

Incongruously, the touted festival opener, Suki Hawley's and Michael Galinsky's *Horns and Halos*, was not as auspicious. It begins with a nifty premise: a maverick writer's muckraking exposé of Dubya's coke-snorting youth, dropped by a mainstream publisher under pressure from the feds, is reissued by a punkish Lower East Side small press, only to be caught in the same web of treachery. Rather than the profile in courage implied by this outline, however, *Horns and Halos* sinks into a study of competing manias: the obviously disturbed author's paranoid delusion vies with the publisher's pathological narcissism, losing sight of the compelling allegations and failing to pursue the political implications of the book's suppression. Conventionally structured, the film musters dramatic tension but stumbles on unresolved questions about its subjects' reliability, and leaves the viewer feeling that resistance is futile—not the kind of message we need in these politically embattled times.

More to the point was *Investigation of a Flame*, by Lynne Sachs, a gorgeously crafted experimental documentary recounting the odyssey of the Catonsville Nine, a group of Vietnam War protesters, including celebrated clergymen Daniel and Phillip Berrigan who, one fine day in 1968, liberated hundreds of selective service records from a Maryland draft office and incinerated them with homemade napalm. *Investigation*'s radical veneer belies the after-schoolish wholesomeness at its core, for the committed pacifism of its subjects exemplifies a venerable American tradition of nonviolent civil disobedience—the principled breaking of imperfect human laws in adherence with higher moral ones. There's little to add to the chorus of praise that followed MoMA's Documentary Fortnight screening of *Investigation* last December, but it's nonetheless a film to rave about, as well as reckon with.

While much of the NYUFF's 2002 programming was of a high order, perhaps the single most distinctive vision on display

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NYUFF

was *Christabel*, the new feature by Chicago auteur James Fotopoulos, whose *Migrating Forms* and *Back Against the Wall* set previous festivals ablaze. A prickling sensory shroud draped on the bones of an unfinished Coleridge poem, *Christabel* eliminates narrative to achieve an extreme concentration on the figurative: bodies—smeared portraits, slab-like torsos, ghostly effigies—intersecting and dissolving and reconstituting against an auditory shell of astringent, densely layered white noise.

Posing a serious perceptual challenge to any viewer, *Christabel* conveys the exhilarating sense of an artist grappling with his media, bending it to new shapes and purposes. NYUFF's premiere screening kicked off a nationwide retrospective tour, including dates at the Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, Chicago Filmmakers, and San Francisco's Other Cinema. If at first this seems lavish for a still-emerging artist (all of 26), Fotopoulos's unflaggingly prolific output and consistently surprising experiments more than justify it.

But Fotopoulos is only the most dazzling of a host of noteworthy emerging talents championed by NYUFF, many of whom were well represented in this year's edition. Outstanding were Bobby Abate's *One Mile Per Minute*, screened in the memory-and-mourning program, "Six Months Later"; Brian Boyle's animated Shrub satire *State of the Union*; Julie Covello's lively music doc *Prohibited Beats*; NYUFF 2001 laureate Naoko Nozawa's *The Money Center*; and local favorite Xan Price, who rang the festival out with *Nitwit*. Exceptionally good was Chris Jolly's *Abstract Pornographic Film*, which insouciantly pokes fun at the most humorless of genres with unassuming formal brilliance. And sheer starburst virtuosity elevated Stom Sogo's two mind-altering shorts, *Ya Private Sky* and *Periodical Effect*, to another plane altogether.

Celebrity alums were on hand too, with a hugely enjoyable program of new videos by George and Mike Kuchar, organized by wunderkind curator Jonathan Lees. Interestingly, the best work was Mike's, particularly *Grip of the Gorgon*, a fully realized drama acted with startling conviction by underground darling Philly. In its final scene, Philly picks up some greasy dude in the stairwell of her building, and after luring him inside her apartment, spreads herself expectantly on the bed. He approaches, stops short, and then turns abruptly to leave, at which she bellows after him, "You fucking cunt tease!" (Now, who can't identify with that?) By contrast, brother George's videos seemed overly winsome and—of all things—tame. Where is the maker of *Unstrap Me*, *Carnal Bipeds*, and *KY Kapers*?

Several of NYUFF's most appealing shows were produced by guest curators like Lees, who also packaged a smartly chosen three-feature tribute to the late raunch maestro, Al Adamson. "Keep In Touch," curated by Astria Suparak and Lauren Cornell, featured such highlights as Jacqueline Goss's *The 100th Undone*, a whip-smart, unsettling and oddly touching reflection on the genome, cloning advances, and the "post-human" future. Seth Price's hilarious *Triumf* deflates American frontier mythology and macho bluster with an inspired rant, while its picture-perfect autumnal tableau sports the most vivid foliage to be found this side of a Sirk melodrama. Other selections by Leslie Thornton, Stephanie Barber, and Zakery Weiss attested to the curators' gossamer touch with heavyweight artists and themes.

Josh Koury's unflinching portrait of terminally alienated upstate New York youth, *Standing in Vineyard*

By contrast, "Eternal Return," organized by the Robert Beck Memorial Cinema, was all gravity, setting contemporary near-death shorts alongside historical "found" films, such as Stanley Swanz's gemlike *The White Rose*, from 1943, and a mesmerizing travelogue of Algiers shot in the 1920s. Among the living, Zack Stiglicz's sulfurous, effectively creepy *God the Pugilist* summons an ancient Mayan deity ravenous for human sacrifice, and mordantly suggests that gringo tourists make the perfect fodder. In Jeanne Liotta's pine-fresh *Muktikara*, pastoral impressions of a serene, wooded lake subtly swell to cosmic proportions in a manner recalling Brakhage's *The Child's Garden* and *The Serious Sea*. How can you not love a film that closes with the Sanskrit glyph for "om"?

Even the less coherent guest-curated programs yielded treasures. "Experiments In Terror," organized by J.X. Williams of Other Cinema, was excessively padded with low-camp trailers for horror potboilers of yore, but also offered two complementary standouts. A scattering of shadows gleaned in the dark cellar of cinema's archive, David Sherman's brooding and exquisite *Turning the Sleeping Machine* conjures an atmosphere of authentic dread. Placed virtually side-by-side with *Turning*, Kerry Laitala's like-minded *Journey Into the Unknown*, excellent though it is, seemed, unfairly, to pale by comparison. Both these films should be seen, albeit in more distinct contexts.

NYUFF's expansive, highly varied programming defies easy synoptic summary, but taken together its 2002 installment constitutes an exemplary cultural intervention into our present reactionary climate. The festival's ninth edition also finished at something of a crossroads, poised to gain even greater currency yet faced by the challenge of reconciling newfound stature with an authentic connection to its grassroots base. NYUFF has moved from strength to strength, however, and its continued ability to leverage critical attention for "marginal" film- and videomakers while satisfying its rapt, ribald audiences bodes well for the festival and for the independent media field.

Ioannis Mookas has contributed to Afterimage *and* Cineaste, *and edited the* AIVF Self-Distribution Toolkit. *He is director of MIX: The New York Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film/Video Festival.*

The Last Great Place:

The Taos Talking Picture Festival

BY CARA MERTES

Chris Eyre (left) and Drew Lacapa do some interactive viewing of Disney's *Pocahontas*.

DRIVING INTO TAOS FROM ANY direction is startling. There's a low road from Sante Fe, and the High Road from the hill towns. The Sangre de Cristo Mountains lace the horizon in a delicate but fierce pattern, and the mid-waters of the Rio Grande River carve a majestic path through red rock, sage, and cedar on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. Taos Mountain forms a majestic backdrop, though this year's extended drought has left its peak shockingly bare of snow and water levels seriously below normal. The beauty here is seductive and legendary, and it is a primary ingredient in one of the country's most unique and successful regional film festivals, the Taos Talking Picture Festival.

Known as TTPix, the festival just completed its seventh, and in some ways most ambitious, program. With ambition comes success, as well as new difficulties, as the festival itself experienced this year. With close to 8,200 people attending and a new ticketing system in place, getting in to see movies was a frustrating experience for many, and it is clear many of the smaller venues just don't meet the demand anymore. Nevertheless, judging from the 17 premieres and 46 film programs, as well as the responses to a range of panels and discussions, the festival was a rousing success.

Long dedicated to combining the art of storytelling with the work of media analysis, TTPix has retained a steady focus on creating unusual, even eccentric festival experiences. Witness this year's awards ceremony, where the work of the Bolivian indigenous video collectives CEFREC and CAIB were honored in tandem with internationally renowned director Bruno Barreto (*Doña Flora and Her Two Husbands*), followed by the well-known Taos land grant award, where 5 acres of land near Taos are awarded to a deserving filmmaker—this year to Ralph Ziman, director of *Zookeeper*. Two Eagle Awards for supporting a vibrant media environment went to the film *The Ad and the Ego* and to the *P.O.V.* series on PBS (for which I am CEO). Filmmaker Jeff Wadlow's *tHE tOWeR oF BaBBLe* received the award for best short film. Also awarded were creative partners Maggie Renzi and John Sayles, who hosted a retrospective of their work at the festival.

True to Taos' tradition of cultivating artists, each award is created and awarded by a Taosiño artist

True to Taos' tradition of cultivating artists, each award is created and awarded by a Taosiño artist, and given to the recipient by the artist, which makes for some unpredictable presentations and some interesting sculptures doubling as awards. The most surprising appearance was by new part-time Taos resident Julia Roberts, who gleefully presented the Maverick Award to good friend Susan Sarandon, who, as part of the fun, had called good friend Goldie Hawn to fly in for the weekend. As Artistic Director Jason Silverman commented, it's not likely you'll see this grouping anywhere else.

It's not the first time celebrities have mixed with the local scene during the festival. Elizabeth Taylor and Amy Irving have come to the festival, but not even this year's critical mass of celebrities put a dent in the atmosphere of casual eccentricity that pervades Taos. And what binds the guests and many of the local audiences together is an urge to see something different than the usual media offerings; something that challenges the status quo and tells you something that you haven't heard before. The festival feeds this kind of appetite.

THE TWO MAIN BRANCHES OF THE festival, the Media Forum and the festival film program, have similar mandates: to serve the region's audiences, not industry interests, and to carve a niche as a festival that straddles community, education, and entertainment successfully. That has made Latino, Native American, and Southwestern-themed media central to the programming. It has also meant bringing regional teens here in droves, by creating the now nationally-known Teen Media Forum, with 120 students from schools in 13 states attending panels, screenings, and workshops this year. The magic here is that all of this has been done so creatively, and while the programming quality can be irregular, the festival's heart is usually in the right place.

Media Forum producer Dan Marano explains. "The goal has always been to foster multi-generational civic dialogues that tend to focus on the impact of moving images on culture. In any given year we tend to look to Hollywood, at Hollywood, and much further afield to find scholars, storytellers, and filmmakers that have something to share and a desire to foster a healthy and participatory democracy."

This year at the Media Forum, that impulse translated into a series of well-attended presentations by PR watchdog John Stauber, author and teacher Jack

PHOTO, THIS PAGE: ERIC J. HEDLUND, *THE TAOS NEWS*; OPPOSITE: COURTESY OF FESTIVAL

Shaheen (*Reel Bad Arabs*), popular culture and advertising experts Liz and Stuart Ewen, and Native American artists Chris Eyre and Drew Lacapa, who presented what Marano hopes will be the first in a series of "Talking Couch" performances, modeled on the cult favorite Mystery Science Theater.

Eyre, the Native American director of the acclaimed *Smoke Signals*, spearheaded the development of the first Talking Couch performance with TTPix Artistic Director Jason Silverman. Sitting on a couch munching on popcorn, he and co-commentator Lacapa offered wry commentary, pointing to long-standing stereotypes of Indians in Hollywood films as clip after clip was projected showing Native Americans as war-mongering savages. Late in the reel, the clips become more nuanced, as increasingly complex portrayals of Native Americans emerge in films like *Little Big Man* and Eyre's own *Smoke Signals*. Though clearly a rough draft for a finished performance, it had its moments, particularly in the dialogue afterwards with the audience. The concept holds promise, with New York's Smithsonian Museum of the America Indian as a likely next stop.

Author Jack Shaheen, as part of his Forum presentation, also showed a reel of film clips that revealed an equally virulent set of stereotypes of Arabs, specifically Arab Muslims. For the 3.5 million Americans of Arab descent, the post-September 11th world is decidedly more hostile. The point was the same in both discussions: stereotyping in the media is dangerously effective and people need skills to understand how stereotypes operate. For those groups who are the subjects of such portrayals, the impact is immediate and felt daily in small and big ways. Conversely, those who are not the part of a group that has been targeted negatively by the media not only don't feel the sting, they enjoy the story and often don't even see how it works by creating false hierarchies and damaging impressions.

Marano is keenly aware of this, and the festival has long maintained a commitment to showing and discussing Native American media and, increasingly, indigenous media from around the world. Silverman notes that, "It's legitimate to describe it as a movement—with Chris Eyre, Sherman Alexie and Randy Redroad and James Fortier, along with established filmmakers like Loretta Todd and Victor Masayesva Jr. and the various video collectives from Brazil, Mexico, and Bolivia." Eyres' *Skins* and Alexie's *The Business of Fancy Dancing* were both premiered at the festival to enthusiastic audiences.

Hitting his marks, legendary DP Haskell Wexler strikes a pose with TTPix fest staff.

Marano adds, "It's no news that Indian people have long been excluded from participating in American media. Unlike Canada, for instance, there is no significant national agenda here to help foster an indigenous media, and we see it as part of [TTPix's] mission to give indigenous media some much needed breathing room and screen time." Also part of the mission is to ensure easy popular access to the festival, and to this end, about 30% of the tickets are issued free.

For the future, TTPix staff are being even more ambitious, citing plans to expand already-existing year-round programming with a much expanded teen production and media literacy training component. By all signs, the festival will succeed at this too, in no small part because, as Festival Founder Josh Bryant said at the awards ceremony, "Taos is truly one of the last great places."

Mertes is currently the Executive Director of P.O.V., and a long-time advocate for independent film and media literacy, two hallmarks of the TTPix.

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Philadelphia Film Fest 2002

BY ROBERT M. GOODMAN

ON THE UNSEASONABLY COLD NIGHT of April 4th, the 11th Annual Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema (PFWC) kicked off its fifteen day run with the Philadelphia premiere of *Strut!* Max Raab's documentary, the Audience Award winner at last year's Hampton Film Festival, celebrates the Mummer's Parade. If you're not from Philadelphia, the one hundred year tradition of mummery requires explanation. On New Years Day, working men—longshoremen, carpenters, truck drivers, etc—and a few women take to the streets to strut—do a cakewalk—in elaborate costumes, the men often cross-dressing as women, to banjo music. Organized in string bands, comics, and fancy brigades, they perform to the crowds along the route to City Hall. There the judges award cash prizes and neighborhood bragging rights.

Max L. Raab's *Strut!* celebrates Philly's unique—and slightly odd—Mummer's Parade.

Filling the seats for opening night were the film's subjects. Mummers on stage in full regalia serenaded the crowd with "Oh Dem Golden Slippers" and other favorites before the film. The opening night party, on the 50th floor of a local office building, was all the more interesting because the hoi-poloi mixed with folks from the neighborhoods. The views of the city, outside and in, were spectacular, and everyone partied together until late.

PFWC is actually a series of festivals with Centerpiece screenings, Contemporary World Cinema, American Independents, Documentary Tradition, Philadelphia City Paper Festival of Independents, and Danger after Dark sections. The Next Frame Student Filmmaker's Festival is now a permanent part of the festival. Less so are this year's Eastern European Cinema, New Korean Cinema, and Cinema of the Muslim Worlds sections. There was a lot to choose from, with four World Premieres, 11 North American premieres, 11 US premieres and 19 East Coast premieres out of the 156 fiction and 19 nonfiction features shown. PFWC and the Philadelphia Independent Film and Video Association (PIFVA) ran seminars. The winner of the Set in Philadelphia screenwriting competition was announced: Hal Borden for *I'd Rather Be in Philadelphia*.

A series of special award presentations draw recognizable names and audiences to the festival. This year's American Independents Award winner was John Sayles, and a retrospective of his 1980's era films were screened. Ken Russell picked up TLA Video's Phantasmagoria Award and screened his latest effort *The Fall of House of Usher*. Russell wrote, produced, directed, and starred in this miniDV feature, making its North American debut. Loosely based on Poe's story and set in an Orange County, California backyard, its excessive nature was no surprise. Stylistically, the acting and technical quality almost reached bad porno levels. Better examples of his work, *The Devils and Tommy*, were also shown. The Artistic Achievement Award for Directing and for Acting went respectively to John Schlesinger and Jill Clayburgh. PFWC showed *Midnight Cowboy* and *Never Again*, a 50-something romantic comedy starring Clayburgh and Jeffrey Tambor, which had its East Coast premiere.

The New Korean Cinema section programmed by Travis Crawford provided many of the festival's highlights. *Bungee Jumping of Their Own*, *My Sassy Girl*, and *Secret Tears* were engaging, character-driven stories unlike anything from Hollywood. The cinematography in *Secret Tears* was outstanding—every frame beautifully composed and true to the story. The World Cinema section stand-outs were *Late Night Shopping*, an English indie about four 20-somethings looking for love, with dead-on dialogue and engaging characters, and *Little Senegal*, the most compelling drama I saw. Rachid Bouchareb's beautifully photographed epic about Africans and the their relationship to African-Americans was enhanced with outstanding performances from Sotigui Kouyaté and Sharon Hope.

The Festival of Independents opened with *Snipes*, a $10 million hip-hop drama, made in Philadelphia by Philadelphians. Its charms included the cinematography by Alex Buono, the sound track, and the performance of Sam Jones III as Erik Triggs, a teenager on the fringes of the music business trying to realize his dreams. Unfortunately, the editing buried a potentially good story with unnecessary music video and low-budget action clichés, which didn't dissuade the sell-out crowd of cast and crew. A festival sponsored party for *Snipes* at a local club featured a crowd that was younger and hip-

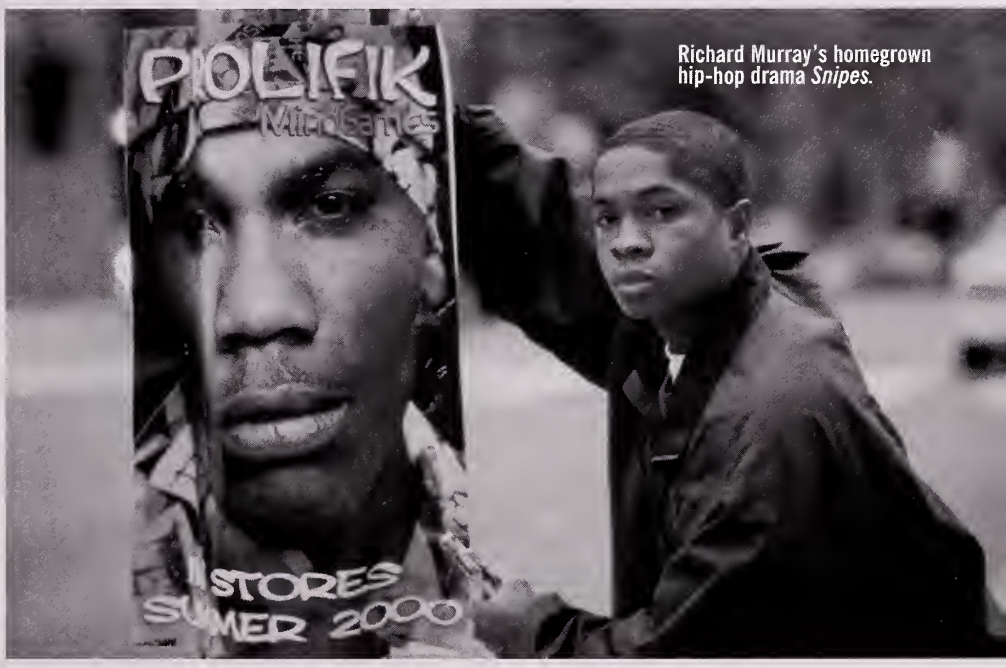
PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PHILADELPHIA FESTIVAL OF WORLD CINEMA

per than at opening night, but the above-the-liners' brief appearance and quick departure lowered the temperature dramatically. *Snipes* later won Best Feature and the Technical Achievement Award at the Fest Indies.

Scott Johnston, programmer of The Philadelphia City Paper Festival of Independents, roused the audience at every screening with his unbridled enthusiasm for the filmmakers. He later told me, "The Festival of Independents is about regional filmmakers and regional filmmaking. All of my choices were good films that represented the area and reflected well upon the filmmaking being done here." Of the five features in this section, one was a documentary. Two fiction features were having their world premieres: *Emmett's Mark*, starring Scott Wolf and Tim Roth and shot in Philadelphia, was writer/director Keith Synder's feature debut. Snyder shows some promise, though this amalgam of a police thriller rarely got beyond second gear. The other local indie premiere showcased scantily clad, big-breasted women with guns. Of more interest, the five programs of thirty-one locally produced shorts. Kimi Takesue's *Heaven's Crossroads* took home the Fest Indies' Best Documentary Short award. Karl Staven's *In the Future* won for Best Animation. Matthew Weiss's *Mean People Suck* grabbed the Best Narrative Short award and Mike O'Reilly's *In the Shadow of the Shortest Saint* won Best Experimental Short.

There were few highlights in a documentary section comprised of safe choices anointed elsewhere. *Absolut Warhola*, a German documentary making its North American debut was a noteworthy exception to the rule. Directed by Stanislaw Mucha, this light-hearted, observational doc treats its subjects—Andy Warhol's relatives in rural Slovakia—with respect, even though they are completely clueless about Warhol and the world in which he lived.

The other documentary selections were recent Sundance films or docs winding down their festival lives. John Katz and Joan Saltzman, his wife, program the documentary section, and I asked Saltzman about their choices. "After 9/11, it wasn't business as usual. We still used the criteria of telling a good story in a dramatic way and with good technical values but we felt we couldn't show anything without a [current] focus." How are documentary filmmakers treated at this festival? "Philadelphia has a following of people who love docs. Filmmakers find that this is a good place to come. In Philadelphia, you get to be seen by an urban audience on a large screen. Films like *Daughter from Danang*, *Blue Vinyl*, and *Devil's Playground* that played Sundance are usually hard to get, but things are going well for us."



Richard Murray's homegrown hip-hop drama *Snipes*.

The festival wound down with a closing night party and awards announcements: Best Feature went to *Very Opposite Sexes* a French film making its North American debut; Best Director to Yugoslavian Darko Bajic for *War Live*; Best First Film to Ali Shah-Hatami for *Shrapnel in Peace*; and a Special Jury Award for *Emmett's Mark*. *Runway* won for Best Documentary and *Strut!* received a Grand Prize from the programming staff. *Atanarjuat*, *The Fast Runner* and *Blue Vinyl* won the Audience Awards for Best Feature and Best Documentary.

After the ceremony, I asked Raymond Murray, President of TLA Entertainment, who became artistic director last year, how the festival has changed under his leadership. He responded, "It's been transformed from an issues and politics-oriented regional festival to a much wider programmed one with more films, a wider variety of films, more parties, and has become a more Philadelphia-centric festival. We have local curators, local judges, and more films from area filmmakers. There's less reliance on including New Yorkers to somehow validate the festival's worth. In 1999, the festival attracted 18,000 people. This year we attracted almost 45,000 people, making Philadelphia among the largest and fastest-growing film festivals in the United States."

What are Murray's plans for next year? "First, change the name to the streamlined, Philadelphia Film Festival. Next year we won't make as many changes as this year. We'll just keep what's working and tinker a bit." Always optimistic, Murray concluded, "I believe that the festival has reached a new plateau. I won't be satisfied until Philadelphia becomes the East Coast festival to showcase films—a goal we've gotten closer to this year."

To meet that goal the 12th edition of the Philadelphia Film Festival needs to develop a stronger curatorial focus. Filmmakers will find Philadelphia in spring to be among the world's most charming cities. The challenge, in a festival of this size, is preventing your film from getting lost among the blossoming trees.

Robert M. Goodman is a filmmaker, author, and indie consultant. Send your comments to robert@stonereader.net.

Creative Capital

GRANTEES 1999–2002

Founded in 1999, Creative Capital Foundation is a national nonprofit organization that supports artists pursuing innovative approaches to form and content in the media, performing, and visual arts, and in emerging fields. As of 2002, Creative Capital will have supported the work of 158 artists with grants totaling $2.8 million, plus access to advisory support and assistance through our Artist Services Program. Information on guidelines, application deadlines, and funded projects is available online at www.creative-capital.org.

Emerging Fields

Steve Badgett	Chicago, IL
Betty Beaumont	New York, NY
Cindy Bernard	Los Angeles, CA
Natalie Bookchin	Los Angeles, CA
Sawad Brooks	Brooklyn, NY
Josely Carvalho	New York, NY
Maya Sara Churi	New York, NY
Patrick Clancy	Kansas City, MO
Alison Cornyn / Sue Johnson	New York, NY
Leah Gilliam	New York, NY
Tana Hargest	New York, NY
Kelly Heaton	Boston, MA
Jessica Irish	Los Angeles, CA
Miranda July	Portland, OR
Eduardo Kac	Oak Park, IL
Heidi Kumao	Ann Arbor, MI
Steven Kurtz	Pittsburgh, PA
Suzanne Lacy	Oakland, CA
George Legrady	Santa Barbara, CA
Sharon Lockhart	Los Angeles, CA
Jennifer McCoy / Kevin McCoy	Brooklyn, NY
Prema Murthy	Brooklyn, NY
Mark Napier	New York, NY
Sabrina Raaf	Chicago, IL
Marie Sester	San Francisco, CA
John F. Simon, Jr.	New York, NY
Eddo Stern	Los Angeles, CA
Ray Thomas	Loudonville, NY
Helen Thorington	Staten Island, NY
Faith Wilding	Pittsburgh, PA

Media

Peggy Ahwesh	New York, NY
Craig Baldwin	San Francisco, CA
Roddy Bogawa	New York, NY
Steven Bognar	Yellow Springs, OH
Bill Brown	Lubbock, TX
Ellen Bruno	San Francisco, CA
Erica Cho	Los Angeles, CA
Portia Cobb	Milwaukee, WI
Adam Cohen	Brooklyn, NY
Jem Cohen	Brooklyn, NY
Ricardo Dominguez	Brooklyn, NY
Todd Downing	New York, NY
Sandi DuBowski	New York, NY
James Duesing	Pittsburgh, PA
Kevin Everson	Charlottesville, VA
Jeanne C. Finley / John Muse	San Francisco, CA
Vicky Funari	Vallejo, CA
Joe Gibbons	Malden, MA
Sam Green	San Francisco, CA
Vanalyne Green	Chicago, IL
Barbara Hammer	New York, NY
Jon Jolles	Baltimore, MD
Lewis Klahr	Los Angeles, CA
Rachel Mayeri	Los Angeles, CA
Leslie McCleave	New York, NY
Jon Moritsugu	San Francisco, CA
Bill Morrison	New York, NY
Chris Munch	Los Angeles, CA
Spencer Nakasako	San Francisco, CA
Diane Nerwen	Brooklyn, NY
Suzan Pitt	Los Angeles, CA
Joanna Priestley	Portland, OR
Reynold Reynolds / Patrick Jolley	New York, NY
Erik Saks	Los Angeles, CA
Scott Saunders	New York, NY
Jeffrey Scher	New York, NY
Philip S. Solomon	Broomfield, CO
Elisabeth Subrin	Brooklyn, NY
T. Kim-Trang Tran	Los Angeles, CA
Ela Troyano	New York, NY
Chel White	Portland, OR
David Wilson	Culver City, CA
Caveh Zahedi	San Francisco, CA
Marina Zurkow	New York, NY

Performing Arts

Homer Avila	New York, NY
Sujata Bhatt	Los Angeles, CA
Djola Branner	Minneapolis, MN
Maureen Brennan	Brooklyn, NY
Ronald Brown	New York, NY
Nick Cave	Chicago, IL
Jane Comfort	New York, NY
Fred Curchack	Richardson, TX
Brian Freeman	San Francisco, CA
Janie Geiser	Los Angeles, CA
Joe Goode	San Francisco, CA
Joanna Haigood	San Francisco, CA
David Hancock	St. Peter, MN
Rennie Harris	Philadelphia, PA
Shelley Hirsch	New York, NY
Dan Hurlin	New York, NY
Vijay Iyer / Mike Ladd	New York, NY
Jon Jang	San Francisco, CA
John Jasperse	New York, NY
Daniel Alexander Jones	Springfield, MA
Lisa Kron	New York, NY
John Leaños	San Francisco, CA
Ralph Lemon	New York, NY
James Luna	Pauma Valley, CA
Kari Margolis / Tony Brown	Minneapolis, MN
Bob Massey / David Wilson	Silver Spring, MD
Richard Maxwell	New York, NY
Meredith Monk	New York, NY
Jennifer Monson	Brooklyn, NY
Tracie Morris	Brooklyn, NY
Cynthia Oliver	Urbana, IL
Jarrad Powell	Seattle, WA
Daniel Roumain	New York, NY
Amelia Rudolph	Kensington, CA
Carl H. Rux	Brooklyn, NY
Rafael Sanchez	New York, NY
Andrew Simonet	Philadelphia, PA
Elizabeth Streb	New York, NY
Sekou Sundiata	Brooklyn, NY
Basil Twist	New York, NY
Donna Uchizono	New York, NY
Victoria Vazquez	Brooklyn, NY
Richard Winberg	New York, NY
Yasuko Yokoshi	Brooklyn, NY
Pamela Z	San Francisco, CA

Visual Arts

Xenobia Bailey	New York, NY
Conrad Bakker	Champaign, IL
Erika Blumenfeld	Santa Fe, NM
Chris Burnett / Michael Rees	Rochester, NY
Gaye Chan	Kailua, HI
Mel Chin	Burnsville, NC
Tony Cokes	Providence, RI
Elena del Rivero	New York, NY
Chris Doyle	Brooklyn, NY
Sam Easterson	North Hollywood, CA
Matthew Geller	New York, NY
Maria Elena González	Brooklyn, NY
Fred Holland	New York, NY
Martha Jackson-Jarvis	Washington, DC
Wendy Jacob	Cambridge, MA
Shannon Kennedy	New York, NY
Hirokazu Kosaka	Torrance, CA
Zoe Leonard	New York, NY
Zhi Lin	Seattle, WA
Catherine Lord	Los Angeles, CA
Jeannette Louie	West Orange, NJ
Mary Lucier	New York, NY
Beverly McIver	Chandler, AZ
Kay Miller	Boulder, CO
Franco Mondini-Ruiz	New York, NY
Jyung Mee Park	Fairfax, VA
William Pope.L	Lewiston, ME
Alex Rivera	New York, NY
Jason Salavon	Chicago, IL
Joseph Scanlan	Brooklyn, NY
Sue Schaffner / Carrie Moyer	New York, NY
Dread Scott	Brooklyn, NY
Paul Shambroom	Minneapolis, MN
Arthur Simms	Long Island City, NY
Bently Spang	Billings, MT
Mary Ellen Strom	New York, NY
Christine Tarkowski	Chicago, IL

May 22, 1985

When I grow up I'm going to be a Artist & Sintist.

THE INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO MONTHLY

EXPERIMENTAL FILMMAKING 2002

GUEST EDITOR: MIRANDA JULY

Fales Speakers Bureau

CECILE STARR
~~STARFILMS~~
50 WEST 96th STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10025

(212) 749-1250

Jan. 6, 1979

SHIP TO •

SOLD TO • WOMEN'S IND. FILM EXCHANGE
for film series at The Museum of the City of New York
Oct. - Dec. 1978

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO.	DATE SHIPPED	OUR ORDER NO.	SHIPPED VIA	TERMS	SALESMAN

QUAN. ORD'D	QUAN. SHIPPED	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
		film rentals:		
		"DAYBREAK EXPRESS" (shown at Oct. 22nd program, not announced in program)		$15.00
		"WASH" (by Cathey Billian, rental paid by C. Starr, by check, in advance)		15.00
			TOTAL	$30.00

Receipt. W.I.F.E. Archives, Fales Library, NYU.

LET'S WALK TOGETHER:

THE TEXT ON PINK IS MIRANDA JULY'S HAND IN YOURS

When I was about nine my dad said he wanted to show me some cartoons I was excited to see them but suspicious. Were they "cartoons" in the same way that lima beans were "like ice cream"? Would they be funny? Would Mickey be in them? This was my first exposure to Kenneth Anger's *Lucifer Rising* I was deeply, profoundly bored. I was not receptive to the experimental nature of Anger s work Next he showed me a Stan Brakhage film densely layered with moth wings. Equally completely boring Not impressed This is the snobbery that the children of cultural pioneers can afford. It seemed obvious to me – moth wings, of course My dad kept these experimental movies in a cardboard box with the other 8mm films, his home movies of me and brother. But it is the things we take for granted that effect us most. A roof over my head, of course loving parents, of course, moth wings, of course And these things taken for granted, which vary radically (between families, between countries, between eras in time) form the kind of impenetrable haze that is THE WAY THINGS ARE Memory is very reluctant to open up and show us how it came to be this way. And more often than not, we don't ask this of memory because we feel we are at its mercy – it has created us It is, unfortunately, an elite position to stare back at memory and realize that we are its creators, we built it and it is an ongoing project Very very occasionally they will send us home from school with an awkward note telling us the bare minimum· It turns out slavery was not such a good idea but we fixed that. And we, the mothers and fathers of our past, pale with moment of horror. There were things I didn't know? Asbestos?

But ladies and gentleman, I preach to the choir. THE WAY THINGS ARE is your cloth you sew and gather and pleat with our memories strung thru the eye of your needle. So I won't spend too much time describing your couture, your experimental movies and your mainstream movies and your indie-digi-whatever movies. Let's try instead to punch at the fabric. We will think about what is remembered and what is real and what is created in order to become remembered, that is, real.

First let s hear from Mike Kelly, an archivist at NYU's Fales Research Library and Special Collections. Part of this library's mandate is to archive the writing and artistic culture of the post 1975 "downtown" (NY) scene. Some of you were probably part of that scene. It's Mike's job to remember it; he is in a position to know how easily we forget. If he or his co-workers decide that something isn't important enough to save, it may be gone forever The ten people who were there that night will die. "What do you see when you imagine the 1970s?" asks the film scholar of his

W.I.F.E.

By Mike Kelly

The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin holds the archive of David O. Selznick – 5,000 boxes filled with appointment books, audio recordings, awards, balance sheets, call sheets, clippings, correspondence, journal vouchers, ledgers, memos, minutes, music, notebooks, photographic prints and negatives, props, scrapbooks, scripts, and telegrams. If there was ever any doubt about whether the man who made *Gone with the Wind* would be forgotten, the materials stored in this literary fortress deep in the heart of Texas ensure that future generations will know the name of Selznick. How much was Margaret Mitchell paid for the film rights to her novel? What actresses auditioned for the role of Scarlet? How many hours of labor did it take to produce the Curtain Dress? These are the facts that will be remembered because the papers on which they are recorded can be located in the archive. Dozens of books, and perhaps hundreds of articles have already been drawn from these 5,000 boxes of documents. The raw materials for any future history of Selznick and his films are in these boxes in Texas.

The Fales Library and Special Collections of New York University holds the archives of the Women's Independent Film Exchange –12 boxes filled with correspondence, business records, newspaper clippings, promotional catalogues, flyers and programs. It is not as well known as that of David O. Selznick, but it is equally safe and accessible in a university library. The W.I.F.E. archive was donated to NYU in the early 1990s by its founder and primary caretaker, Cecile Starr. In 1953 Cecile Starr was the home movies editor for *House Beautiful*. In 1977 she founded W.I.F.E. – an informal group of women filmmakers, writers and teachers who collaborated on a variety of projects designed to bring greater visibility to films made by women. The W.I.F.E. archive can tell us as much about its remarkable creator as it can about the larger history and culture it documents.

In May of 1978 W.I.F.E. had 25 members who each paid membership dues of $3. By this time W.I.F.E. had also received cash gifts amounting to $65.50. Grants were applied for, many denied, some granted. A connection with Mrs. Billie Nelson of the Museum of the City of New York resulted in a series of six film programs on Sunday afternoons in the fall of 1978. Four programs for adults titled *Views: A Sampler of Films by and About Women and Minorities* were shown at the museum free of charge, along with two additional programs for children. The films shown ranged from *In the Street* filmed in the late 40s and released in 1952, to *A Sense of Pride – Hamilton Heights* filmed in 1977. The program notes indicate that by October 1978 W.I.F.E. could boast of 60 dues-paying members. This short series would be followed by many others which are extensively documented in the correspondence, receipts, and printed (more often photocopied) flyers and programs in the 12 boxes at NYU.

The smallest scraps in the archive convey the dedication of Cecile and her comrades. An invoice for the rental of *Wash* by Cathey Billian includes a note "rental paid by C. Starr, by check, in advance: $15." A letter from Billie Nielsen has a note attached: "*247 seats*" – the capacity of the space at the museum. Hand-written notes about where to send the checks, who can or can't make it to the screening, irate letters from filmmakers disgruntled by poor projection, and tantalizing film titles raise more questions than the archive can answer. I want to see *Bronze Zoo* which, according to a letter from October 13, 1978, "follows Shay Rieger's developing a bronze yak." Has anyone seen *Kittens are Born*? *Elizabeth Swados: The Girl with the Incredible Feeling*? *Hats, Bottles, and Bones*? This list could go on and on. Some folders in the archive contain nothing but catalogues and checklists – some hand-written – of films made by women.

In addition to screenings which continued throughout the 1980s at a variety of venues, Cecile Starr launched a major research project: Pioneer American Women Filmmakers. Cecile set out to collect materials – to construct an archive – about women who began making or directing films in the United States prior to 1970. Forms were sent to women around the world who were asked to contribute whatever they could: magazine and newspaper articles, photographs and stills, letters and manuscripts, programs and posters, personal recollections, or any other information, advice, or evidence. A substantial portion of the W.I.F.E. archive at NYU is made up of the materials collected in response to these inquiries. In addition to the raw materials, the archive contains dozens of articles Cecile Starr has published on women's film history based on the Pioneer American Women Filmmakers files. Her articles are the print equivalent of a Joanie 4 Jackie chain letter tape – send Cecile the story of your life and she will combine it with the stories of nine other women and send them all out into the world in a book, article, or lecture. Look for her works in your local library.

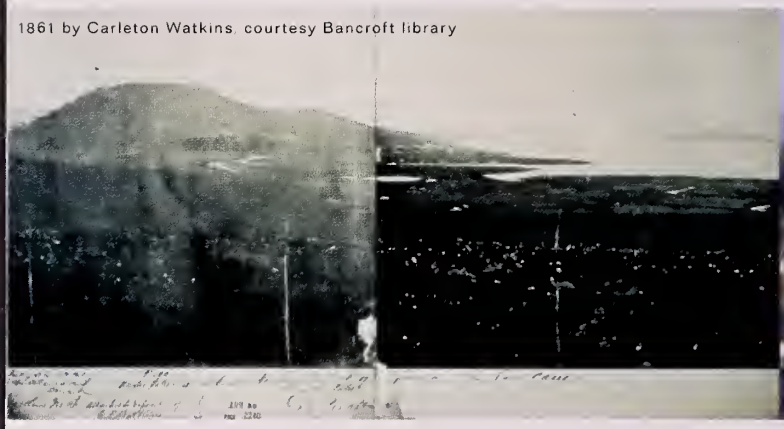
Archives and libraries collect and organize things: books, papers, photographs, sound recordings, 8mm film, videotape, and so on. Editing film and video also involves organizing things: pieces of film, video clips, actors, props, sound recordings, and so on. While the goal of a filmmaker is to tell a story, the goal of the archive is to enable an infinity of stories to be told. The paragraphs above hardly scratch the surface of the stories contained in the W.I.F.E. archive and my own brief account of it will be different from anyone else's. The raw materials in those boxes, and in any archive, must be approached the same way you approach the 30 hours of unlogged footage that will become your movie. Without someone to organize the pieces and share them with the world, your story, or Cecile's story, or anybody's story will disappear. ■

Mike Kelly is the Assistant Curator of the Fales Library & Special Collections at New York University. He reads other people's mail for a living. <mike.kelly@nyu.edu>

WOMEN FILMMAKERS PLUCKED AT RANDOM FROM THE W.I.F.E. ARCHIVE:

WANDA TUCHOCK, VIOLA LAWRENCE, MAVIS LENAUER SMULL, JUNE MATHIS, VERNA FIELDS, LAURA SKY, KATE CAMERON, ELEANOR PERRY, ZINA VOYNOW, LELA SWIFT, MADELINE ANDERSON, LIANE BRANDON, ELINOR BUNIN, SHIRLEY CLARKE, NELL COX, JOHANNA DEMETRAKA, ELLEN HOVDE, FAITH HUBLEY, NANCY LITTLEFIELD, JACKIE RAYNAL, LILLIAN SCHWARTZ, KATHERINE STENHOLM, RUTH ORKIN, OSA JOHNSON, BARBARA KOPPLE, IDA LUPINO, CLEO MADISON, STEPHANIE ROTHMAN.

ten-year old daughter. "I don't see anything," she replies. [from Kerry Tribe's *Here & Elsewhere*] One wants to be able to take these things for granted so that we can move on. Honestly, we do not want another generation of boys scratching film. And yet, I did not know about W.I.F.E. until last month. Seven years ago I started a video distribution network for women called Joanie 4 Jackie; it sounds eerily similar to Cecile Starr's network. Hundreds of women participate in Joanie 4 Jackie today, and none of us, not one of us, has ever heard of W.I.F.E.



1861 by Carleton Watkins, courtesy Bancroft library

1996 by Robin Grossinger

PARTIAL TRUTHS; COMPLETE MISCONCEPTIONS; OUT & OUT LIES
A CONVERSATION BETWEEN RICK PRELINGER & ROBIN GROSSINGER

We join Rick and Robin as they discuss the San Francisco Bay Area landscape, where they both live.

Rick Prelinger is an archivist, writer and filmmaker. He owns Prelinger Archives, a collection of "ephemeral" films based in New York and San Francisco. He has partnered with the Internet Archive to make 1,300 films from the collection available online for free. He has taught in the MFA program at the School of Visual Arts in New York and lectured widely on American cultural and social history and on issues of cultural and intellectual property access. He sits on the National Film Preservation Board as representative of the Association of Moving Image Archivists.

Robin Grossinger is a landscape ecologist at the San Francisco Estuary Institute (www.sfei.org/HEP), and is a member of the art/science team Stillhere (www.stillhere.org). His graphic stories about landscape history were exhibited last year at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and he is working on an exhibit about George Russell's photos to be held at UC Berkeley's Townsend Center in the Fall.

RG: There's almost a subculture of people conceptualizing what this area used to look like before it was developed. It's almost a trend.

RP: To what extent is that nostalgic? Or is it a feeling that can be harnessed in more productive directions, rather than simply looking back and aching for a lost past?

RG: Right. I don't know. I think part of it is the desire for more information to sort of cut through what sometimes I think of as a very well packaged landscape. It's chopped up into a big grid and all the signage and the names and everything is distracting you from the actual place.

RP: Urban software, they call it. But along with that there also seems to be a voluntary retreat from externality and from the outside, from unpredictable outside stimuli. A lot of people really just want to cocoon with a machine – computer, television – and live an essentially interior life.

RG: But then on the weekends people seem to love to go to parks or historical sites – but it's true, these things are usually not about the place they live or where they spend their time. I wonder, how do you get that texture, which I think people love – that's at least part of the reason why people watch these biography shows or read all these popular history books – but how does that texture become part of one's day to day life? Which I think is what is important about the stuff that you put out there and information we try and make available.

RP: Right... but returning to nostalgia a little bit, and the sense of individual memory versus mass marketed memory. One reason I'm interested in ephemeral material and trivial evidence from way back, evidence preserved only by accident, is because you get a more complete picture of how things were. It doesn't have a voice of an authoritative narrator or a caption that tells you what to think. It gives you a more complete picture of the feeling of life in the past and the value for me there is that memory can also be predictive. And when you talk about the texture of everyday life the past itself, not just memory, could also be predictive. I mean it's very possible that when we look back at the way things were in the twenties, thirties, forties, fifties in terms of everyday experience we might one day end up in a similar situation. For example, what we read today in old behavior training films as stifling conservatism and radical limits on individual freedom might not just be a phenomenon of the past, but an attribute of our future. So I tend to not to like to look at the past as all over with, as frozen like in a museum, because we could easily return to yesterday in some ways.

RG: So that's related to nostalgia, but different. It raises the question for me, why am I so compelled by these things, for example I've been fascinated by this series of photographs by a sort of semi-professional photographer, an amazing character who had an airplane in the twenties in San Francisco and took all these photographs of the Bay Area.

RP: What was that person's name?

RG: George Russell, a fairly unknown figure who I think was the first person in the Bay area who was doing any real aerial photography, essentially.

RP: Not the first person to take a camera up in a plane – because I think there were earlier ones? Last night I just saw a Lumiere film from around 1896 shot from a rising balloon, showing the ground and spectators receding from view.

RG: More like the first long-term, regional aerial survey. He created a new category for the phone book which was called Photographers—Aero. He must have been hired to take shots of early industrial areas like the Berkeley shoreline and the Ideal cement company in the South Bay. I probably spend way too much time with his photographs, kind of merging into them.

RP: Can you describe that?

RG: Well, they're crisp, they're black and white, somewhat idyllic, so you can sort of project your memories onto them. You kind of put yourself back there, you try to do the *Somewhere In Time* thing. Because you can recognize enough elements: you've seen that factory, that road, it's tantalizing. You can almost start to feel like you're there. But that never completely works and what ends up happening is a little more complicated. It's almost like *the photograph starts looking back at* you as you start to see yourself looking at it. I find myself wondering: what am I looking at so intently, what am I looking for? And then I realized that the photographs and maps I studied the most were

There are all different kinds of archives. Andy Warhol threw his daily detritus into boxes which now sit in the Andy Warhol Museum. Long before The Osbournes, he understood that we are suckers for this shit. For Real. Pixar alone will keep the reality-TV market alive, skin that sweats may soon gain retro chic. But do not forget, this is just the aesthetic of real. *Real* real is watching 4-hour diplomacy conferences on CSPAN2 instead of the news on FOX. It's very boring for most people. But luckily, for people like Mike Kelly and Rick Prelinger (An archivist of ephemeral media) it's consuming. Before you read the interview between Rick and Robin (a landscape ecologist who also makes quasi-factual graphic stories inspired by his research), take a moment to

made by similar male characters who were obsessive documenters of the landscape, who created these excessively accurate and detailed, inexplicable bodies of work. The similarities to myself are pretty obvious, and I suspect it's a way of exploring my own identity, by working with these images and characters. That's what a novelist does, but I think it's also what we all do with the past, it's our source of images – real or imagined – with which to build our own identities, you know, whether it be Spanish-style Safeway buildings or World War II *Greatest Generation* mythology.

RP: When I look at a picture from the fifties, I pick up a magnifying glass and I want to know what's in the middle and what's on the periphery and what's the experience like of sitting in that convertible in the fifties and driving down the street with different kinds of designed objects surrounding you, and not only that, what did the air smell like?

RG: A good photograph sort of stops you in your tracks. It does something that we have trouble doing for ourselves which is stopping and absorbing a scene in life. And so it can be kind of meditative. I actually had this thought when I was on a meditation retreat and I was just looking at things so closely, noticing all the details and I felt like I was in a photograph.

RP: It's funny. Photographs have turned into privileged media forms for people who have time and the inclination to focus down and let their minds take in the detail rather than people that are running, running, running to the next thing. I don't know if that's a little bit simplistic but in some ways, you know the populist means of presenting a place or environment now is much speedier. You go bang, bang, bang, get easy to grab shots and you've set up a place. There are class overtones to this. Slower, more contemplative media is quite often focused towards people with time on their hands to engage in close observation. That's kind of a perversion of older, more traditionally meditative observation, which wasn't necessarily reserved for the powerful.

RG: As a scientist, I'm always interested in the accuracy issue. How do you think about that with the information you collect?

RP: You know, there are levels of authenticity around memory. I'm not sure that authenticity and memory belong to the same realm. Many memories I would consider almost documentary and totally real and authentic are also heavily determined by dreams and fantasies and childhood images. I think I can remember back to the late fifties and early sixties, but it's getting a little harder to distinguish my memories from how this period has been represented and photographed in words and in sounds, so it's all kind of pretty relative.

RG: Unless you're in a court trial. It's kind of interesting I guess with the DNA testing which has thrown a lot of seemingly solid cases. It shows that even some memories which seemed really solid just were way off.

RP: People were blinded by their prejudices.

RG: Yeah, hate seems to invent all kinds of complicated things. There are a lot of social reasons that are constructed and end up being accepted. It's sort of thrown into question a whole level of assumption about memory.

RP: So, in other words when you do rephotography and you juxtapose something that you shot or has been recently shot against an image of the same area from way back, or when you overlay a new map over an old photograph, what you're doing can't necessarily be called objective. But it opens up the place or the subject in question in ways that aren't necessarily predictable. It alienates the familiar and throws the commonplace up for grabs.

RG: Yeah, exactly. It sort of perforates it. You get glimpses through it. Not necessarily a complete picture, but it complicates it. That's where I sort of struggle between the scientist and what the artist is allowed because you know I'm supposed to give the objective truth as a scientist and usually people rely on me to make my "best call" and "that's the way it was." And yet, I'm also equally fascinated by or problematized by the fact that that map was made by a particular guy working with particular agency and the more closely you look you find some guys worked harder, some guys worked less hard for whatever reason, showed different things, you know and everything becomes mediated through a person.

RP: And yet we want continuity, just like in movies where we create narrative where nothing is really continuous or clear, because people have this desperate need to create narrative, bridge gaps. The minimum you need to create narrative is two frames, and people will find a way to make a plausible story out of almost any two frames.

RG: And a nice ending.

RP: I also think that when people look at the landscape they want to bridge gaps. They don't want to see contestation and conflict.

RG: And so you tend to make a simpler story. It's scary how easy it is to do that. After years of looking at a certain map and making a whole analysis and, you know, presentation based upon it, and then I realize whoa, what about this whole aspect? There are actually all these little elements that don't really make sense in that nice interpretation. I've just decided that there is always another story. There's always another level to it. You think you've kind of figured something out but than there's always way more.

RP: I just saw a bumper sticker that said: "I can't explain it, but it's true."

RG: Yeah, right. What was the one I saw yesterday? "Jesus loves you. Everybody else thinks you're an asshole." Maybe that's not as relevant.

RP: Well, in both of our practice, even though we're really interested in documentation and we place great value on documentation, it's also faith-based work because art and artifice are right up there on the same level as the documentation.

RG: It is, yeah.

RP: Not to cut into your day job or anything.

RG: I was actually worried about that at first and when I started creating the graphic stories, I would put all these caveats on the website explaining different possible interpretations and I started making categories called: Partial Truths; Complete Misconceptions; Out and Out Lies. I tried to classify it by different interpretations or misinterpretations, almost in a scientific way.

RP: Anything to keep people from asking yes-type questions, simplistic queries to which the only answer can be yes.

RG: We want such perfection.

RP: And yet, you know, I think people don't ask enough of utopia anymore. And that's something that just continually bugs me. People are content to accept a utopian vision that sort of stops with your new cellphone with instant text messaging. People really have given up on grand illusions of utopia.

RG: Yeah, and that's pretty recent, huh?

RP: It is recent, part of the fallout from World War II. What happened was in the '30s there were many grander and more radical visions of utopia but instead of utopia we had a war, and then everything was directed towards providing stuff to meet a pepped – up demand for consumer goods, and that was the end of utopian thinking as we know it except for the space program and that didn't last. But the sense of wanting to transcend time in landscape is of course incredibly utopian. It's a private exercise. It's tremendously freeing as you know. I'm not a professional landscape commentator. I'm an amateur, but I do have a strong sense that being able to contemplate places and think about how they have changed over is incredibly empowering. And almost everyone's personally experienced that kind of thinking.

RG: Yeah, I guess it fills the void. For most of human existence we would live in a place for a long time and you could have generations of family and shared memory explaining how things came to be and what happened where and why this is the way it is. Continuity has a powerful ability to root people in their landscape, while at the same time they track and accept changes around them. You know, even here, in the more rural parts of the Bay Area, there are people in their sixties, seventies, eighties who have seen much of the change happen and can actually describe it. That was where the cattle grazed, this was put in in the seventies, the creek used to flow over here. ■ <rgew@lmi.net>

think about that big huge photo at the bank (or city hall, or wherever you saw it). The one that shows the exact place you are standing, only 100 years ago. Remember how you tripped out and tried to find the place where Walgreens was and quickly you were confused, because the land itself seemed different, bigger. And when you stepped outside into the daylight you had a dizzy moment of feeling it: that big land is under here. I am standing on it. This is the place Rick and Robin are coming from, that dizzy moment.

Let us talk now about Anne Frank, because I think we have really missed the point with her. It's totally fine to make a movie and re-make it and make a play and an Anne Frank Festival, etc., but when are we gonna start

WE COULD BE HAPPY NOW

Emma Hedditch interviewed by Miranda July

London-based artist Emma Hedditch makes videos and collections in the context of self-initiated residencies, often for women-only organizations, including the film and video distribution network Cinenova. In May 2001 she launched "and i will do anything to get girls into my bedroom," a video distribution project for European women. Her work focuses on the politics and practices of working together. In April Emma was invited to Warsaw, Poland to a contemporary art centre called The Castle. She decided to program five screenings of women's film and video over a weekend, and to orchestrate a three-day video-making workshop with people from the city. A few weeks later she went to Malmo, Sweden, where continued her adventure in making movies with audiences. Miranda July asks her about the sojourns.

How did you kick off the workshop in Warsaw?

In the first screening I proposed to the audience (most of whom had come to be part of the workshop) that we embark on a number of things. One would be to try and help each other to make some videos, another was to research women that had made films and videos in Warsaw, not just artists – all kinds of video making. In some ways I am more interested in the woman who learned how to use a video camera as part of her job, like people that record traffic congestion in major towns, or in big industrial plants where somebody is monitoring certain manufacturing. I also want to find out things like who was the first person to own a video camera in Warsaw, or the first woman. So we would try and make a sort of list or scrapbook about our findings and that would be something we could share together. That list would also include us. The other part of my plan was to make a compilation tape for women who had already made videos; an "and i will do" Warsaw-specific tape. I am working on that now. The main point of all of this was to throw things into their hands, and say: you have everything here, and I want to know about it eventually.

Did you feel that all of this was possible from the moment you began?

I knew that if I was going to get people to do something I also had to get them to like me, so there was a lot of energy going in to just motivating myself and sort of sensitizing myself to different people's desires. But yes I knew it was possible, because people came forward, and sort of said reassuring things.

Who were these people, the people at the workshop?

The group ended up being mainly women, between the ages of 16 and 35 I think. Three of the 16 year-old girls were supposed to be studying for exams and had taken the weekend off to come especially to the workshops, one was from a small village out of Warsaw. Some of the other women were students, or worked in temporary administrative jobs, and a couple of women were filmmakers, at film school. The two men were mainly keen on helping out with making things work technically, and gave a lot of support.

So tell me about how the days went.

Each day we would meet at 11 until 1 to plan our day, drink some coffee and discuss our ideas. During afternoons we would go out and video our ideas. Two of the teenagers wanted to meet me at their friend's house, another teenager with a very tall sister. I ended up leaving them with my camera and when we met later that day, they were totally blown away by what they had done, sort of uncontrollable with excitement. Meanwhile another part of the group was out with Iga, who had an idea about making a video about shoes, but only had a day because she had to work in the restaurant at the museum on the other day. Kasia, who was a linguistics student, I had originally met her right at the beginning. When Ula the curator introduced me as "the leader," she sort of looked at me up and down and said "You don't look like a leader." She asked me if she could make a video with all of our help, that would be something like a comment on the idea that I was leading the workshop. In that video everybody had to stand staring at me when I was talking and then I would sort of panic and run out of the room, and the whole group would chase after me, and then we would come back and I would sort

Girl eating still from video by Aga Rasinszka, other stills from "We could be happy now," a video made by Emma Hedditch in collaboration with Asa Maria Begtsson, Astrid Goransson, Gertrud Alfredsson and Cecilia Sering

handing out the fucking blank diaries to girls? If we love her bravery so much how come girl power had to be re-invented and sold to girls as makeup? Why aren't I one of many people collecting amateur videos made by young women (the Joanie 4 Jackie project)? My feeling is that maybe people are afraid of being BORED. Anne's diary was a page-turner, but how likely is it that a video made by a girl in some suburb is going to be as good? Look folks, there are whole channels devoted to *ads about stain removers*. You've already been to boring and back, you'll be able to handle it. Boring is deceptive, remember how bored I was by the moth wings. The things we take for granted effect us most. I want my (un-conceived) daughter to take Joanie 4 Jackie for granted, to roll her eyes at me, before building some bizarre thing out of light. And "boring" changes, as what we take for granted changes. "A glass of water" will no longer describe something dull when wars are fought over water. Mike Kelly tells an anecdote from the Fales Library: "We started collecting cookbooks to support the Food Studies program here. Most of the librarians reacted positively, but some were disgusted and puzzled that we were wasting our time on such crap. One such curmudgeon made a remark about "what's next? are you going to start collecting Chinese takeout menus? I have a big stack I'd be happy to donate." My answer is yes, and in fact someone has offered us a collection of Chinese menus going all the way back to the late 1800s. One Chinese menu from 1950 doesn't have a ton of research value, but a pile of menus from a 100-year period certainly does."

So you have to risk being bored, you have to distrust it and recognize that fear of boredom is often just fear of the unknown. You have to ask questions of people that have never been asked before. We move on now to U.K.-based artist Emma Hedditch. She started a european sister project to Joanie 4 Jackie. But like me, she found that many of the women she was most curious about were not making movies, [see also Jess Hilliard, *above* for more on missing movies]. She had to facilitate the production of these movies in order to archive them. So now we are talking about "amateurs"

of make a speech that would be as if I didn't understand what they wanted from me, and they would just look lost. We made it. It was pretty good fun just running around a museum as a big gang. On the last night, we all got together, and people could invite their family and friends to the screening, and we all watched each other's work. Eventually Kasia shook my hand, it was like I had passed the test.

That sounds incredible.

Yes, but thinking about it now I probably gave people too much of a free reign and some of the time it was confusing, but I love just observing the ways in which different people take on these kinds of challenges, myself included. I do think there needs to be a structure, maybe if i was giving more assignments. I like the way you talked about how you were taking people out of the audience at your shows and making a movie with them.

Well it seems like you applied that realization in Malmo, tell me about that. It was a different approach?

In Malmo I asked if people from the town could make certain shots for a video that I would edit together. This is almost the same as the project we did together in New York, and I did that in a workshop in Odense in Denmark.

But when we did it in NY it only kind of worked.

In Malmo I made the shots quite directed, and I gave quite strict technical advice, but the actual actions were simple although some people had gotten the list from New York, and said this one was harder. I thought it was really fun to think that they had a "difficult list." The four shots that four women made were: A person playing a musical instrument, A family dinner, with particular attention to the food, close ups of the meal and faces, A girl putting up posters in her bedroom, and somebody constructing something. Each clip became a kind of manifestation of the idea of singularity or the illusion of singularity in the action, but actually what we were doing was making something together. It's sort of interesting to me to think about parallel lives, and particularly humanity and feelings, because there are these common sort of psychic levels that we can find, where we just feel willing to take a risk, fall in love, give time energy and things to. I don't want to turn this into anything more than that, I don't want those videos to become more than a demonstration of those interrelations. The people that came to the screening were for the most part in the videos. The one girl who shot the video of the family dinner was totally excited, and stayed for the whole evening, whilst her dad and brother went home.

What do you think is propelling you to create art that is made, in part, by the viewership?

These different projects have all these different outcomes, but are essentially the desire on my part to be part of human relations, and actions. The human relations can be put on show, but they are very much in the act of doing and participating. And also, there is this amazing potential energy in cinema audiences. Sometimes it disturbs me when you have all been there together watching the same thing, and then that you just leave. What I try to do is make more space within the screening for people to interact.

Everything changes when the movie comes on that they made.
Almost like asking each other "How was your day?"

That's where it begins isn't it? With an acknowledgment that we are curious about each other. Sometimes you have to remind people that they are not only interesting, but also interested, in the other people in the audience and in their lives.

I know and when you remember that and say it or do it, it becomes really powerful, and kind of infectious, but in a way that feels within our own very real set of circumstances, what we are capable of as ourselves. ■ <emma@andiwilldo.net>

A MISSING MOVIE REPORT

By Jess Hilliard

Jess Hilliard is a musician, writer, drawer and filmmaker who is currently employed by Hollywood Video, the one off of NE 15th in Portland, Oregon. He has a lot of time to think when he is at work, and much of that thinking is about movies. The ones that aren't on the shelves. Here's a list of movie ideas that Jess thought up during just fifteen minutes at work:

"Ok, here's one movie idea. It would simply involve making scary-sounding titles with sci-fi themes, and putting these in the place of titles for existing movies, like *Sleepless in Seattle*, or *Tin Cup*. The rest of the movie would be exactly the same, but it would start with titles that would suggest scary sci-fi themes, such as, *It Wants Your Brain*, or something like that. Either that, or I would make my own short, mundane films of people doing ordinary things, but with a scary title, and with a premise that they are all aliens from some other dimension – meanwhile, they'd just be drinking coffee and talking, but the excitement would be in knowing that they are 'not from this place' – and that, though it won't, their skin COULD come off at any moment. Another idea is a cooking show, but the chef doesn't actually cook – all the food is stuff that is made by pre-chewing existing food, spitting it out and shaping it into other kinds of foods, and then serving it. The idea here is that chewed-up and spit-out crackers could be molded into some kind of nice-looking patty, and scattered with garnish to make it look professional, and then given a fancy-sounding name like *Tinkle Town Delight*. And kind of along those lines would be *Miss Busstop, USA*: a beauty pageant held at bus stops. There wouldn't have to be a winner, and the contestants wouldn't have to be female, or even aware of the contest. Or sometimes all it takes is a great title. Such as *Roswell*: a documentary on alien activity in the town, but not the Roswell in New Mexico – this would have to be a different Roswell, in some other place that happens to have the same name as the famous Roswell. Preferably a place that has no local lore or weird legends or sightings. Just a place named Roswell. Another really short movie will be about a band that meets, forms, plays their first 'show' (some kind of classic rock jam) and breaks up – all within less than an hour of meeting each other at a guitar store while trying out the guitars and effects pedals, which gets them kicked out of the store, causing their 'break up.' Another documentary: Hypnotists that have 'dueling hypnosis' contests with each other, and also two artists who have 'dead heat' sketching competitions with one another. And at some point, the hypnotists and artists can have 'inter-category' heats with each other such as trying to hypnotize the artist before he finishes the sketch of the hypnotist trying to hypnotize him, etc. I would also like to *film the making of a dog circus*, in which I create a dog circus from dogs I have rescued from the street and the pound, teaching them tricks they are already prone to do – jumping up on furniture, peeing on the carpet, etc. We would all wear matching outfits, and they all would have really elaborate names like *Mr. Mau Mau Face*, *Sir Barksalot*, and *Pappy*." ■
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making archives, which is kind of gray zone, especially if the amateur archivist is a professional artist. Let's not get hung up on this, let's just say there can be many different kinds of archives depending on who is making the decisions. And it is vitally important that new kinds of people put themselves in charge of what is collected, displayed and remembered. After I had been collecting girl-made movies for awhile, I started to collect collections of movies compiled by girls: The Co Star tapes. This series aimed to explain the role of a curator in a way that

From *Soft Office*, Harrell Fletcher, 2000

AGAINST CREATIVITY

(or maybe it's just time we all re-read some of Harvey Pekar's "American Splendor")

By Harrell Fletcher

Of course it's ridiculous to be against creativity, and I'm not really against it. But I do think that trying to be creative is all wrong. The results of attempting to be creative are usually so empty: intentional weirdness, metaphor, violence, drama, unnecessary obscurity, etc. This condition infects all categories of what we think of as creative work, film, art, writing, everything. So to counteract my own creative tendencies I decided to let other people determine what some of my work would be about. Not creative types, no, I work with people who have more on their minds than just becoming famous.

One aspect of what I do is make movies with regular, non-star type people. I've worked with employees at a huge corporation in Minnesota to make movies about things that happened to them in their office building. They wrote scripts about getting stuck in the revolving front door, the copy machine not working, having frustrating phone conversations, and one about a mouse giving birth on someone's desk behind their computer. I shot videos of the employees acting out these scenes, and then had screenings of the finished movies for the people who had participated in them and their co-workers. I was documenting events that had actually happened, but had to be re-created so that they could be collected.

My friend Elizabeth Meyer and I made a series of short movies with developmentally disabled adults in San Francisco and showed them on a cable access channel. John Mckenzie and I would walk around and he would film only American cars, and non-white people (sort of in a loose alternating pattern), while identifying which category things fell into with an in-camera voice-over. By making his movie John created a little archive of what he found interesting in the neighborhood. Michael Loggins made a documentary about one of his favorite subjects, pigeons of San Francisco. All aspects of pigeons were covered and discussed in his movie. With David Jarvey we made a video using a blue screen that placed him and his friend Chris Johanson into an episode of Star Trek. David explained his Down's Syndrome through events that occurred in this particular episode. The video entitled *The Forbidden Zone* was shown at a museum in San Francisco, but more importantly David has a copy that he watches at home whenever he wants to.

Right now I am working on a documentary series about the activities of a gas station. A weekly episode of the documentary will be projected onto a white wall next to the gas station. For another project I've asked people all over the world to re-create and video, (with my instructions), compliments that they give to strangers, the final result will be turned into a feature-length movie. I just shot a documentary about a three year old boy named Mason who believes he has lost his magical powers, but is really good at riding his bike with training wheels. Jess Hilliard and I are working on the production of a video shot by a porn crew with real porn actors, but they don't ever have sex, instead buffed tattooed guys actually help high school girls with their homework, clean people's pools, and are generally helpful in other ways.

Sure, there's some trying to be creative in what I do, but I like to downplay it. Really what I'm interested in is learning about and helping various people recognize things that are amazing about their own lives. ■

Harrell Fletcher works collaboratively and individually on interdisciplinary, site-specific art projects that explore the dynamics of social spaces and communities. <hfletcher@earthlink.net>

kicked the academia out of it: If you know what you like, you have what it takes. That is, I asked them to think of themselves as curators, so that I might expand the collection and its usefulness to girls. [See Astria Suparak, *right*.] Emma's collaborations with her audience could be seen as documentary or educational outreach, except that she retains a kind of creative authorship that would be inappropriate for either of these fields, or for an archivist. But that's the trick, to find personal reason for being interested in living. Like Robin identifying with the character of the photographer as he studied the photographs, we do better work when we are implicated. We are more dedicated. So don't feel like a pervert for getting off on something, it is all about getting off. It took me a long time to understand that what I loved most about the movies I collected through Joanie 4 Jackie was not always the content of the films themselves, but the personalities of the girls who sent them to me. Their letters and the way they thought of themselves was fodder for characters I later created in my own movies and performances. This was how I used my "archive." There is not one way.

A NEW ROMANTIC T.V. SOUND: ASTRIA SUPARAK

The reason that everyone tries to sell to teenagers is that teenagers are HUNGRY PEOPLE. And just as insecure, self-conscious people often make wildly good art, so do hungry people make good curators. We are all experts at giving the thing we want most. So what would happen if a teenager applied her channel-surfing skills to programming? Astria Suparak was nineteen when she started showing movies at her college, Pratt in Brooklyn. She had spent her first years in NY majoring in drawing and quietly watching the moves of curators like Bradley Eros and Brian Frye. She wondered if she could be their peer, as a very young woman without a film background. She decided that she could not because let's face it, she was totally hot and had *nothing* and therefore she was very likely to get fucked if she risked having idols. So she aspired instead to the dj style, looking for the arc of the set, feeling the audience energy, and staying on the fly with it all. At age twenty-four Astria has curated all over the U.S. and Europe, testing out new programs at NY's best venues and then touring with them like a kid with a band. She comes to you: museums and galleries, universities, independent/underground film festivals and micro-cinemas, as well as public places like bars, community centers, and living rooms. Just imagine what the young girls who watch her shows think – hunger, desire and the power to choose are suddenly instruments like guitars and video cameras. And it all starts with a list in a diary. Here Astria gives us her lists, four programs she's curated in the last few years and the feelings that were in her heart and soul when she was making them. [See also a page from Astria's diary, *cover*.] ■ <a@astriasuparak.com>

DIRGES AND STURGEONS

Curated for Anthology Film Archives, NYC.

YACHT: Young Artists Challenge High Technology (for a Total eclipse of the heart). These new videos from America and Europe have tying threads of: the use of high (?) technology or the idea of "future" in a lo-fi way, dopplegang/replication, instant nostalgia as the residue of planned obsolescence, states of limbo. Plus lately I've been thinking about mating. Of the incessant struggle to be a self-sufficient, independent, biospheric thing, then seeing someone hot and wanting ass. And then when that doesn't work: the introduction of another that is based on yourself: rearing children, cloning. Perpetuation and conditioning to perfection, like practicing a script.

Seth Price. **GAME HEAVEN.** 2001
Animal Charm. **SLOW GIN SOUL STALLION/LIGHTFOOT FEVER.** 1996.
Lawrence Elbert. **WHITNEY: MAMA'S LITTLE BABY.** 2000.
Pierre Yves Clouin. **THE LITTLE BIG.** 1999.
Jacqueline Goss. **THE 100TH UNDONE.** 2001.
Miranda July. **GETTING STRONGER EVERY DAY.** 2001.
Bjorn Melhus. **DAS ZAUBERGLAS.** 1999.
Seth Price. **INDUSTRIAL SYNTH.** 2001.

SOME KIND OF LOVING

Curated for Joanie 4 Jackie's Co-Star Series.

I was thrilled to be able to reach young girls through Joanie 4 Jackie, to reach what I was when I first heard of what was then called Big Miss Moviola: angsty Southern Californian teen desperately trying to find ANYTHING different from clean Hollywood fakery, and stumbling across punk rock's d.i.y. ethos, feminism, self-determination and sexuality. The works in SOME KIND OF LOVING are what would have helped me in my 1980s – early '90s childhood and adolescence: evidence of women's ambivalence, apathy, passion and pain towards identity and sexuality, memories and fantasy. Plus good raw cunnilingus. The works have a rough home-movie aesthetic so the viewers can figure out how to make their own movies.

(current touring program differs from tape)
Jennifer Reeder. **LULLABY.** 1999.
Miranda July. **THE DRIFTERS.** 2002. (Audio)
Kirsten Stoltmann. **SELF-REFLECTING.** 1998.
Karen Yasinsky. **DROP THAT BABY AGAIN.** 1998.
Jane Gang. **FINE LINES.** 1998.
Miranda July. **ATLANTA.** 1996.
Stephanie Barber. **LETTERS, NOTES.** 2000.
Peggy Ahwesh. **MARTINA'S PLAYHOUSE.** 1989.
Miranda July. **THE DRIFTERS.** 2002. (Audio)

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Curated with Lauren Cornell for
The New York Underground Film Festival 2002.

Have you ever danced at home alone, in front of a mirror? Have you ever continued a kiss that you were bored of? Or thought about having a kid, out of the sheer curiosity with what it would look like? These works are all so brazenly aware of their own representation, those fake gestures symbolizing love, and the self-proclaimed identity of "artist." On the other hand, this is a Science Fair. We're interested in breeding and practicing our (dance) moves until perfection is reached, and by golly you're either with us or against us. Young people, always forward!

Matthew Wolf. **DEAR AUNTIE.** 2002.
Zakery Weiss. **UNTITLED.** 2001.
Seth Price. **TRIUMF.** 2000.
Leslie Thornton. **HAVE A NICE DAY ALONE.** 2001.
Jim Finn. **EL GUERO.** 2001.
Miranda July. **THE DRIFTERS.** 2002. (Audio)
Jacqueline Goss. **THE 100TH UNDONE.** 2001.
Monsieur Delmotte. **CE QUI EST FAIT LE MAL EST FAIT.** 1998.
Stephanie Barber. **DOGS.** 2000.
Miranda July. **THE DRIFTERS.** 2002. (Audio).
Bjorn Melhus. **NO SUNSHINE.** 1998.

A NEW ROMANTIC T.V. SOUND

Curated for The New York Underground Film Festival '01.

I've been re-learning the 1980s, a time that I was too young to think properly. Twenty years of knowing Billy Jean was not Michael J's lover, how suburban-home brown carpet gets matted, the density of a Capri Sun and the text commands for pre-video computer games. And when I put together this program I was re-listening to music that I grew up with and thinking about New Wave (specifically the British New Romantics) – how it was electronic and the attitude was lukewarm and distant, but the lyrics/hair/clothing were romantic and fluffy. There is also an influence of 1960s body-based performance art as another extension of the self-reflective theme. The aesthetic for the program was stripped-down, raw and grainy, like Sixties minimalist art blended with big Eighties video pixels. The title comes from a Duran Duran song.

Gedi Sibony. **OUT TO REACH.** 2000.
Kirsten Stoltmann. **SELF-REFLECTING.** 1998.
Zakery Weiss. **COMMUNICATION.** 2000.
Kirsten Stoltmann. **TRUE CONFESSIONS OF AN ARTIST.** 1994.
Karen Yasinsky. **DROP THAT BABY AGAIN.** 1998.
Cheryl Weaver. **PEDESTRIAN ERRORS.** 2000.
Tony Conrad. **THE CLANDESTINE NAUTICAL CARNALITY OF SHORT I.** 2000.
Dara Greenwald. **BOUNCING IN THE CORNER #36DDD.** 1999.
Seth Price. **AMERICAN GRAFFITY.** 2001.
Stephanie Barber. **LETTERS, NOTES.** 2000.
Naomi Uman. **PRIVATE MOVIE.** 2000.
Brian Frye. **IN LOVE WITH LOVE.** 2000.

Robin and Mike would never be called exploitative. Mike doesn't consider the W.I.F.E. archive his art project and Grossinger is obsessed by images of *land* taken by *men* (we don't yet recognize the slow, almost pornographic violence of cartography). Their titles and/or topics protect their interests. But let's remember that it won't always be so clear, the seemingly dry world of archives is actually pretty wet. The Diary of Anne Frank is after all, a girl's diary, a very private thing. I want to suggest though, that **the person who asks a brand new question has a unique relationship to the answer.** Artist Harrell Fletcher asks John McKenzie, who is developmentally disabled, "Why are you interested in future generations?" Mc Kenzie replies, "I don't like the Beatles because they were born in the 40s and they were stronger then. The people born in the '40s make me feel sad." While Harrell did not write this astute

KERRY TRIBE'S HISTORY/DETOUR

By Rita Gonzalez

From Here & Elsewhere, by Kerry Tribe

What one may assume about a moment in history past, about its fibrous creases, its smells and its sounds, is certainly difficult to assess. Documentary film attempts to return the viewer to a moment in time, either through "direct" observation or through thick description by an authentic subject, a firsthand accountant. Kerry Tribe is a young artist working (presently in Los Angeles) and grappling with documentary's assumptions of historical accuracy. Tribe's interest is in the partial truths of documentary and the "documentary" disclosures of fiction. Her work in video and film, as well as her more performative public inquiries, draws an amorphous shape of the historical moment, one misshapen by the inflections of memory and forgetting.

Tribe comes to her practice through a theoretical/praxis documentary – what Catherine Russell has described elsewhere as "experimental ethnography." Feminism, post-structuralism, and the critical tendencies of postmodernism all feed modes of experimental ethnography, challenging the tenets of documentary's sobriety and authenticity. Recently Tribe completed a double-projection video installation entitled *Here & Elsewhere*, an evocation of Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville's twelve part experimental television series FRANCE/TOUR/DÉTOUR/DEUX/ENFANT (1977-78).

FRANCE/TOUR/DÉTOUR/DEUX/ENFANT has been described by critic J. Hoberman as, "a typically bizarre and hilarious meditation on childhood as an institution." Godard and Miéville labeled their documentary project, "a study in twelve movements," and each "movement" was composed by a particular ideological or philosophical query posed to two eight-year olds, Camille Virolleaud and Arnaud Martin. Colin MacCabe points out that Miéville was chiefly responsible for Godard's sustained address of the image's function in day to day life. Yet as Hoberman notes, Godard and Miéville ultimately produced a "bizarre" interjection in the lives of the children. The staccato title of the twelve part series is a succinct example of what Gilles Deleuze has described as Godard's authorial "stuttering." To stutter is to fall in a place in language, to temporarily be put out of the flow. What Tribe accomplishes in her own take on Godard is a similar stuttering, and like Godard's, it is a stuttering-through of received ideas and images.

Tribe's highly evocative title, *Here & Elsewhere*, gives us the push and pull of her relationship to Godard and Miéville, to their authorship, and in a larger part, to their own documentary stance. What is contained "here" in this video diptych is the "elsewhere" of a number of framing contexts, including Tribe's selection of ten-year old Audrey Wollen (daughter of film scholar/arts curator Peter Wollen and writer Leslie Dick) to fill in for the role of Camille Virolleaud. In a sense, the transformation of Godard and Miévilles' work shows through in the intense personalization in Tribe's project – the way in which the video comes close to family portrait.

response, you would not be reading it if he had not asked the question and published it in a series of monographs devoted to disabled artists. Harrell considers this and other archive-like collections to be *his art*. He is renouncing creativity in a kind of blatant disregard for the tensions around authorship. I think we are lucky that he signs his name. No such luck with most of the people who have defined archives, and therefore history, memory, and THE WAY THINGS ARE.

This messy territory between creators and fact-organizers is actually a good place to stand if you are interested in Truth, which can't be extracted joylessly or without art. Just as Emma invites the audience to shoot her movie Harrell invites people to help him make his art. What they both have in common with the archivists is a desire to see images made by people who (unlike themselves) are not self-consciously creative. As Rick said to Robin: "One reason I m interested in ephemeral material and trivial evidence from way back when is because you get a more com-

The interrogator in *Here & Elsewhere* questions the young girl with philosophical queries on the nature of photographic representation, the differences between "being" oneself and "playing oneself" before a camera, as well as staggering questions on history and memory. The astonishingly mature Audrey Wollen answers all these questions with absolute aplomb. "Do you remember the last time, when we talked of existing and existence?" Her father asks this in his crisp British accent, leaving the impression that these interrogative exercises are common occurrences in the household.

Tribe's attempt is always careful, hers is an integrative research project, yet also an artistic intervention. Worked into the project are her own concerns: how can she reiterate the political insistence of the series in a "here" so removed from the "elsewhere?" Considering Tribe's own "elsewhere," her own formation as daughter of a constitutional law scholar and a feminist involved in politics, there is no doubt that shades of her own experience are "documented" here. Tribe, like a number of artists contemplating the role of the political in contemporary art, feels the need to position their own work and lives in relation to their parent's generation. The experiment of *Here & Elsewhere* intends to re-present the documentary format in the installation environment. Tribe provides a room filled with over-sized pillows that evokes a 1970s rumpus room (think of the decor of the rumpus room in Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm*). The double projections border one another but at times glide together synchronously, at times careen into one another. Tribe's dual cameras are constantly diverting information and extending time and space. The movement creates what Tribe has noted to be a "panorama that could never have a fixed point of view."

Tribe's documentary fictions shatter the flow of the real, testimonials are exposed as "auditions" and the spontaneous, telling gesture is assessed as a documentary performative code. The veracity of interview transcription is questioned in her early work *The Audition Tapes (Another Home Movie by Kerry Tribe)* [1998]. While in the more recent *Double* [2001], Tribe casts young actresses to play "Kerry Tribe," a recent New York transplant. Roberto Rosselini once said of his films, "Things are there. Why manipulate them?" Tribe says of the "things" that make up documentary and fiction, that truth is actually "here and elsewhere."

THE WOLF MOVIE

By Karen Yasinsky

I have been reading quite a bit about animal behavior. Dogs mostly because I have two dogs and one is a combination of alpha female (super tough in the dog world) and very nervous. So I have to be very careful with her around running children, other dogs, loiterers, people wearing those synthetic exercise suits that go swish, swish when they walk. That is what led me to learn more about animal behavior, to understand and hopefully curb aggressive behavior with her. Her name is Ed.

In my readings I realized that man is the most violent species; I think I always suspected this to be true. It has to do not only with premeditated cruelty dealing with power and wealth but also the inexplicable kind of aggression that works towards no survival end. One reason for aggression that humans share with Ed is fear. In reading about dog behavior I read a few books on wolves and all of these books dealt with several species of wolves' extinction. In North America we have been unusually thorough in our killings of wolves. When you think about the natural world and its balances you wonder how natural is man. There is a good book about this by Loren Eiseley, "The Firmament of Time."

I love the old mammal dioramas at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. They are so beautiful in their design and the colors are like Kodak film colors from the '60s. Unfortunately their dated look may lead to an updated installation like the Hall of Diversity with too many video monitors and visual directives and chaotic sound. Not natural at all. When you walk through the hall of the North American mammal dioramas it is somewhat dark and very quiet. It allows you to believe in the constructed landscapes and large stuffed mammals, their wildness and survival. The area where the gray wolf is located it is totally dark. I don' t know if they are saving on electricity, striving for a veracity in time of night in which one would be likely to encounter a wolf or an embarrassment over the text which refers to them as "predators in need of control."

-continued

plete picture of how things were. And like Robin retracing the path of the aerial photographer, Kerry Tribe [*above*] re-enacts documentary, distilling the truth with fiction. What did it feel like to be real, to be there when it happened? Was it more or less meaningful than the moments we can create with our retroactive understanding? The aerial photographer was just up there in the clouds, flying around, there is nothing inherently accurate about that. Or about Godard and Miéville's documentary project, (which Kerry transforms in *Here & Elsewhere*). The accuracy comes when you cast your own shadow across the image. When you stare too intently at the photograph, or in the dark hall of the Natural History Museum, when you catch your own reflection in the glass around the wolf exhibit. *Come alive*.

On a recent trip home my father brought out the box of experimental and home movies. When I was putting the box back in the attic I discovered a new collection I had never seen before. It was every note that everyone in my

I recently finished a series of drawings about a girl hunter and wolves and this will be the subject of my next film. I work with stop-motion animation with characters that I build myself. In their construction I get an idea of their personality. In the film I want the sets to suggest the dioramas from the Natural History Museum. Sometimes I get ideas for my films from my drawings and sometimes vice versa. In this film a girl is hunting with her face covered by a mask that is a breathing apparatus attached to tanks on her back. She is stalking a couple of wolves and does not notice the man that appears, watching her. He's wearing a suit and carrying a small briefcase but he only watches, does nothing to indicate any of his thoughts or plans. The girl eventually kills a wolf and then notices the man watching her. This changes everything. She feels judged for the first time and therefore feels shame. She takes off her mask and we see she has no eyes. This film will be installed as a large back projection inset in a wall, covered by glass – a mammal diorama that has come to life, telling a different story. ■

Karen Yasinsky makes movies, drawings and paintings. This year she received a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Philip Morris Emerging Artist Award through the American Academy in Berlin.

Karen Yasinsky, *Hunted*, 2001, 2 panels, carbon line on paper, 12-1/2" x 45"

family has ever left for each other. These are the notes that are left on the kitchen table as children and husbands and wives move back and forth between the job/school and the house often missing each other only by minutes. Like the Chinese menus, one such note might not have a ton research value but hundreds of them over a course of a lifetime certainly does. I read my mom's first sweet notes to my dad saying sorry for blowing up, with hearts doodles. And then seventy similar notes over the course of the next twenty years. I noticed that I began my own series of apologetic notes around age eleven. My brother's messages were filled with ridiculous jokes until exactly age 14 when suddenly he could only afford "Back at 3" or just "Out." My dad didn't leave any notes, he just saved ours. I read long into the night, making myself almost sick with the dizzy feeling of Time. I knew where I was, I could feel the shape of the ground under the house, the slow fall into battle with good intentions, the steady insistence of love. ■

Miranda July makes movies, performances, stories, audio works and combinations of these things. In 1995 she founded Joanie 4 Jackie, a network that helps women and girls see each other's movies. Her video *Nest of Tens* was included in the 2002 Whitney Biennial, in addition to a sound installation commissioned for the show. She's currently working on a feature film and a series of sound and video pieces for radios and museums. She lives in Portland, Oregon. <mjuly@joan e4jackie.com>

FOR FURTHER INQUIRY:

www.nyu.edu/library/bobst/research/fales *The library where the W.I.F.E. archive is.*
www.warhol.org/collections/archives.html *Sometimes they find old food in this archive, infested with bugs.*
www.prelinger.com *The Prelinger Film Archives.*
www.stillhere.org *The art/science team. And guess what? Robin Grossinger is Miranda July's big brother.*
www.mtv.com/onair/osbournes *Example of a reality tv show.*
www.annefrank.com *Still relevant.*
www.andiwilldo.net *Emma's projects and collections, including drawings by her mother and sister.*
www.cinenova.org *You will be surprised at how vast this collection of women-made movies is. What will happen to it?*
www.harrellfletcher.com *Harrell's projects and collections.*
www.astriasuparak.com *Curator Astria in needlepoint.*
www.meca.edu/learning_love *An archive that you can participate in.*
www.creativityexplored.org *A place where disabled people make art.*
www.joanie4jackie.com/oberhausen/index.php *An archive of girlhood longing.*
www.joanie4jackie.com *Women exchanging movies.*
www.mirandajuly.com *More on your host.*

Designed by Brijean Brennan, brijeanb@hotmail.com

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Paul DeMarinis
Torch Song

Laura Dunn
Mayim

Jeanne C. Finley and John Muse
Age of Consent

Janie Geiser
Magnetic Sleep

Perry Hoberman
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Spotlight on Experimental Film

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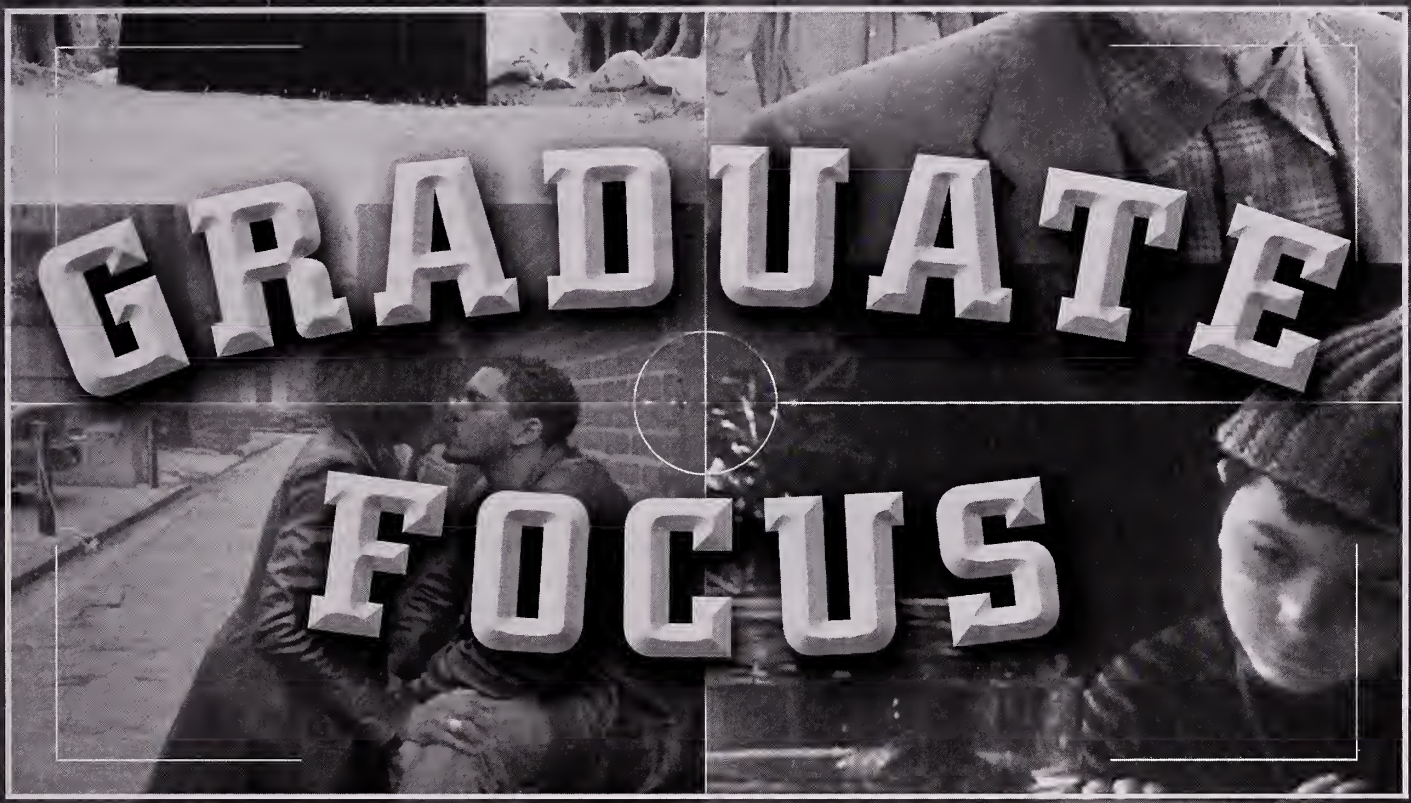


GRADUATE FOCUS

BY TAMARA KRINSKY

YOU DID IT. YOU WENT THE CONVENTIONAL ROUTE, got that "useful" degree in philosophy, English, or sociology, walked down the aisle to much Pomp and Circumstance and then hit the real world. Only…a year, three years, ten years later, the siren song of the film industry began calling your name. Directing, writing, producing—the big question became not whether you would pursue your dream, but how…

For many, a grad school film program is the answer. For some, the cocoon of a structured program provides for a variety of needs—including time for creative exploration, acquisition of technical knowledge, and the opportunity to fully immerse oneself in the film medium—without the pressures of an industry environment. For others, grad school provides a necessary, practical transition into the film business after time working in a different industry.

Moreover, while many graduates end up working in the industry in a different area than that in which they obtained their degree, they still find their graduate experience valuable. Adam Fratto (USC) currently works as a development executive in Los Angeles. "I'm glad I did the Production program because now I know how to make a movie—technically, aesthetically, intuitively." Monice Mitchell (Columbia College Chicago) concurs, "Columbia put a camera in my hand on the first day of class. I'm a writer, but now I know what it takes to do production."

Should you choose to go the grad school route, make sure you do so with your eyes wide open. After all, being unsatisfied and in six-figure debt is an experience that's best avoided. Do your research, and know what you want to get out of your program. Some schools encourage exploration between writing, directing, and production, while others expect you to have your concentration chosen at the time of entrance. Dave Kneebone, who is currently finishing up the M.A. program at Stanford, feels that, "You need to go into it knowing what you're hoping to achieve, such as alumni contacts or an immersion in education. If you just want to make a film, you should skip paying tuition and just go make a film."

Talk to current and former students to find out about the tone on campus, the availability of equipment, the quality of the faculty, and the hidden costs in your education. Also, have realistic expectations. Said Brian Gerber (AFI), "People go through the program and expect to be given the golden key that opens every door in Hollywood. Film school is just the beginning—it takes a LOT of hard work."

ALMOST ALL THE GRADUATES I SPOKE WITH MENTIONED THE importance of the group of people they met while in school when it came to finding work after graduation. Gerber explained, "You go through the trenches with these very talented people, shooting student films, etc., and there's a bond there that's invaluable later on." Consequently, it's important to try to find a program that has students who will support the kind of films you want to make. Don't choose a program known for producing commercial filmmakers if you want to do experimental work.

Many current and former students also mention the importance of fostering relationships not just with classmates, but with the faculty as well. Kel Symons (AFI) takes this advice one step further, saying, "Intern, volunteer, learn as much as possible, because you're going to need it all when school's over if you're serious about making a career in the film industry. It seems each year there are more and more people trying to find a way into Hollywood.... Today, everyone wants to write the Great American Screenplay instead of the Great American Novel. Jobs in production and development are scarce, so make sure you can give yourself as much of an edge as possible."

Following is a listing of some of the top graduate-level film programs. The list is neither exhaustive nor complete, but rather a sampling of programs of varying size, locations, focus, and teaching methodologies. No program is "the best"—just the best for you.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE (AFI)
THE AFI CONSERVATORY

Degrees and duration: M.F.A. in five semesters.

Cost: $23,100 per year, plus production costs.

Incoming class size: 140 (28 directors, 28 producers, 28 cinematographers, 28 screenwriters, 14 editors and 14 production designers).

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Narrative storytellers. Cornerstones of the program are hands-on immersion, creative collaboration and the use of cutting-edge technology. *"Definitely mainstream...or more to the point, commercial."*

Curriculum: Students, known as Fellows, must enter the Conservatory in one of six disciplines (see above). Fellows then work in teams to create and produce their projects.

Facilities: The school is located on an eight-acre campus in the hills overlooking Hollywood and features a sound stage, screening rooms, digital media labs, and a research library that houses an extensive historical collection of books, transcripts, videos, DVDs, scripts and film artifacts.

Copyright: AFI retains the copyright to student work.

What sets it apart: The conservatory environment; the hands-on, learning-by-doing approach; and the emphasis on learning from working filmmakers. AFI is a place for people who want to learn narrative storytelling and who already know on which area they want to focus.

Best thing: *"The screenwriting program allowed me the opportunity to develop my work with other creative people in a workshop environment."*

Gripes: *"The school has a policy of not allowing films to be shot on film during the first year, only DV." "They didn't really prepare many of the students in how they were going to find a job after getting out of school...maybe this was less so for the more 'technical' disciplines...but directors and especially producers leave the program without many prospects of finding work in their chosen fields."*

Contact: Admissions, AFI Conservatory, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (323) 856-7628; www.AFI.com.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE–CHICAGO
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN FILM AND VIDEO

Degree and duration: M.F.A. in four to six years (three years curriculum, plus thesis).

Cost: $11,000 per year, plus production costs.

Incoming class size: 12 to 14 students accepted per year.

Previous page: Student film stills, clockwise from top left: Robin Larsen's *Out of Habit*; Yasemin Kasim's *We Missed Our God*; Nacel Reedus's *In Between*; *Heo* from Syracuse University; Jennifer Perchulla's *The Hunger*; Robin Larsen's *Out of Habit*.

OPPOSITE: COLUMBIA FILM FESTIVAL; PREVIOUS PAGE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: UCLA, UCLA, SYRACUSE, FSU, FSU, TEMPLE

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Emphasis on independent filmmakers. *"Very technical—they produce a lot of DP's and independent directors, as there's an emphasis on cinematography and storytelling. They also produce a lot of great documentaries. Not as many writers, though."*

Curriculum: A concentration must be chosen upon entrance. The program recognizes and supports the inseparability of technique and content, and emphasizes the interpretive, conceptual role of the writer/director.

Facilities: Ranges from traditional film technologies to the newest digital technologies. Classrooms, editing suites, and screening rooms take up almost an entire city high rise building. Additionally, there are sound and lighting stages in other buildings.

Copyright: Students retain the rights to their work.

What sets it apart: All students make their own thesis films; the diversity of stylistic approach and subject matter; a supportive, cooperative creative environment; big city resources but livable and affordable.

Best thing: *"The ability to play a variety of roles. I was allowed not just to be a writer/director, but to be a grip and a gaffer, which became important later on when I was directing projects after school."*

Gripes: *"At the time I was there, the equipment wasn't in the best condition, the facility was disorganized and there were very strict rules for [access]. I think this has changed in the past few years." "Columbia fosters very personal filmmaking which is the total antithesis of what Hollywood wants. It doesn't give you the business end of what film is about."*

Contact: Columbia College Chicago, 606 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 344-6731; http://filmatcolumbia.com/GraduateProgram/gradindex.html.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY (NY)
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS–FILM DIVISION

Degree and duration: M.F.A. Four semesters of full-time study, after which the student remains matriculated, at greatly reduced tuition, while creating a thesis project (and the optional "non-thesis film" if desired). It is possible, but not recommended, for screenwriters to graduate in four semesters.

Cost: $24,000 per year, plus production costs and New York's costs of living.

Incoming class size: 65 students per year.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Emphasis on film as a storytelling medium.

Curriculum: There is a common misconception that because Columbia is an Ivy League School, the program is based in theory, but only about 10% of the program is history/theory coursework. The M.F.A. is a film production program. An area of concentration must be specified towards the end of the first year in either writing, directing, or producing.

Facilities: Sound stage; screenwriting facility; equipment for Super 16mm, 16mm, digital video, SVHS, and VHS filming, location sound recording, and film editing; lighting and grip equipment; screening room.

Copyright: Students retain the rights to their work.

What sets it apart: A remarkably integrated faculty of accomplished screenwriters, directors, producers, and film historians/critics. All students who wish to do so can leave with a polished screenplay and a finished film. Students have won the Student Academy Award Gold Medal four times in the last five years.

Best thing: *"A great writing school." "Great professors who are working in the business."*

Gripes: *"Expensive." "The competitiveness and politics of getting placed in the school's film festival." "Work outside the narrative spectrum doesn't get a lot of support."*

Contact: Columbia University, Film Division, 513 Dodge Hall, 2960 Broadway, New York, NY 10027; (212) 854-2815; film@columbia.edu; www.columbia.edu/cu/arts/film.

Evan Camfield's Columbia University student film *Thousand Dollar Shoes*.

EMERSON COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL AND MEDIA ARTS

Degree and duration: M.A. Two years, depending on course load and summer studies, or up to five years maximum.

Cost: $660 per credit.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Bills itself as a media arts program rather than as a film school.

Curriculum: Media theory is an integral part of the program. Most students seem to prefer crossing over into two or more areas of production, therefore the program is very flexible.

Facilities: Students work in digital video. Digital production equipment includes a range of camcorders from the consumer level to professional DVC Pro. Digital post-production equipment includes Media 100 and Avid DV Express stations. Computer Animation courses are taught using Maya software. A new television facility with two all-digital TV studios is currently being built.

Copyright: Students retain the copyright. Emerson requests classroom, library, and promotional usage rights.

What sets it apart: The focus on digital and new media, based on a foundation of media aesthetics and theory. Specialization in taking students who have earned undergraduate degrees in other fields and giving them an intense, accelerated production experience.

Contact: Dr. Jane Shattuc, Graduate Program Director, Emerson College, Dept. of Media and Visual Arts, 120 Boyleston St., Boston, MA 02116; (617) 824-8858.; jane_shattuc@emerson.edu.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MOTION PICTURE, TELEVISION AND RECORDING ARTS–THE FILM SCHOOL

Degree and duration: M.F.A. in two years, 12 months a year. Everyone graduates on time. No one remains behind.
Cost: $2600 per semester in state; $8800 per semester out of state (three semesters per year for six consecutive semesters).
Incoming class size: 24 students admitted per year.
Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Independent and studio filmmakers.
Curriculum: The program is geared towards production rather than theory. There is an opportunity for concentration on an area (film production or screenwriting), but all students learn all aspects of film production.
Facilities: The school operates two sets of studios, both of which include state-of-the-art-production and post-production equipment.
Copyright: The State of Florida holds the copyright on films produced in the program. Screenplays which are not produced in the program remain the property of the writer.

FILM SCHOOL DETOX: A CONSUMER GUIDE

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

Film schools embody the most mythologized sector of academia. They retail dreams. They sell success. They market creativity. Sometimes dubbed "the artist's MBA," film schools have undergone massive transformations since the 1970's. They have mutated from outposts for creative dissidents into pre-professional programs.

Film schools represent some of the most competitive academic programs. Ithaca College, where I teach, accepts approximately a third of its applicants. Despite what most high school students might envision, high test scores, class standing, and excellent writing skills trump DV *Star Wars* tributes for admission. The application process may be where the myths about film school begin, but it's certainly not where they end.

MYTH #1: FILM SCHOOL EQUALS A HOLLYWOOD JOB.

Film school remains higher education. And that means intellectual exploration, engagement, and inquiry that unsettles rather than satiates. Instead of a job, think of a life in cinema. With runaway and international co-production, Hollywood is no longer a production mecca. Cinema exceeds Hollywood.

MYTH #2: FILM SCHOOL WILL TURN YOU INTO THE NEXT STEVEN SPIELBERG.

The film industry is a pyramid: broad at the bottom and limited at the top. Your chances of directing a feature film are about as good as your odds of becoming an Olympic athlete—it's a long haul requiring discipline, risk-taking, and abandoning luxuries like health insurance. Besides, Spielberg dropped out.

MYTH #3: FILM SCHOOL IS FOR VISUAL PEOPLE.

As a film student, you need to read more than images: you need to embrace ideas. That means reading and writing. Just remember the legendary MGM producer, Irving Thalberg, who in the 1920s instructed studio employees to read several books a week, watch films from all over the globe, and read more than one newspaper.

MYTH #4: FILM SCHOOLS PROMOTE INDUSTRY INTERNSHIPS MORE THAN COURSEWORK.

If you privilege Xeroxing actors contracts for a film company for free, then you're certainly not earning money for your own film projects. You've also thrown away any other postgraduate opportunities that could actually launch you into the film business, such as gaining undervalued legal and business skills.

MYTH #5: FILM SCHOOL IS JUST A PLACE TO MAKE YOUR MOVIE.

If you treat your degree like a studio, you've robbed yourself of the one thing college can deliver that the industry can't: time to ruminate, see films, and argue. You'll also flunk out.

MYTH #6: FILM COURSES EQUAL JOB TRAINING.

A good cinema course should squeegee your brain, disposing of preconceptions and old ways of seeing. If you want a technical job, skip college and apprentice yourself to a craft union.

MYTH #7: FILM SCHOOLS ARE ONLY AS GOOD AS THEIR GEAR.

You want a degree, not an equipment rental house. Digital video and laptop editing have rendered the gear issue moot. The most important gear: inspiring faculty.

Dr. Thomas W. Bohn—longtime Dean of the Roy H. Park School of Communications at Ithaca College—explains the purpose of film school this way: "To push the envelope of contemporary filmmaking through the creative application of intellectual enthusiasm." Dean Bohn's comments suggest, perhaps, that incoming students have it backwards: it's not how successfully schools reproduce film industry employees, but how successfully they push students to imagine realities, dreams, and fantasies that can change film as we know it.

Patricia R. Zimmermann is professor of cinema and photography at Ithaca College. Her most recent books are Reel Families: A Social History of Amateur Film *(Indiana, 1995) and* States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies *(Minnesota, 2000).*

What sets it apart: All filmmaking costs (including those for the thesis film) are provided by the State of Florida—students must only fund minimal production design expenses. Students have won over 600 of prizes, awards, honors, and featured screenings at national and international films screenings, and in worldwide student competitions.

Contact: Film School, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306; (850) 644-7728; clugo@filmschool.fsu.edu; http://filmschool.fsu.edu.

FSU's Coca Cola prize winner *Movie Magic*.

NYU
KANBAR INSTITUTE OF FILM AND TELEVISION AT THE TISCH SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Degree and duration: M.F.A. in approximately three years, depending on thesis.

Cost: $15,000 per semester. On average, additional costs have been estimated to be: $1,000–$2,000 (first year); $4000–$8000 (second year); and $10,000+ (third year, with thesis film).

Incoming class size: Fewer than 40 accepted each year.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Independent.

Curriculum: A hands-on production program. Students are required to perform all crew positions, and write and direct their own work.

Facilities: State-of-the-art facilities include 50 linear editing rooms, five non-linear editing rooms, 25 film and video screening rooms and theaters, a cinema studies archive, three film soundstages and ample 16mm Arriflex cameras, grip and electric packages.

Copyright: Student retains copyright.

What sets it apart: International recognition of the program. The New York City location—the city is a unique background against which to both learn and to shoot. The independent bent of the program. Students learn film top-to-bottom because of the hands-on approach—students are producing films every year, starting in the very first semester.

Best things: *"I think the strength of NYU's grad program is the way we're all forced to do all the tasks. For example, even though I'll never be a cinematographer, I'm a better editor because I had to learn the camera."*

Gripes: *"Everything about getting a job was clandestine. I was laughed at for asking about resumes and salaries in class. Instruction was solely on the art of cinema...creating a false sense of importance of every student project...since being the teacher's pet seemed the only way to get contact phone numbers, assistant jobs, etc."*

Contact: The Film and Television Department, Graduate, NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY 10012; (212) 998-1780; www.nyu.edu/tisch/filmtv/.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN DOCUMENTARY FILM AND VIDEO

Degree and duration: M.A. in two years.

Cost: $27,000 full time tuition for the first year. Students pay part-time tuition the second year; course assistantships are available.

Incoming class size: 10 students.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Non-fiction film and videomakers. This program is inappropriate for students interested in feature filmmaking.

Curriculum: Students learn the method of documentary through their own productions, collaboration on the projects of their classmates and rigorous critiques of works-in-progress. *"You leave with a full skill-set so that you can work in any area of documentary filmmaking.... It's both the most archaic and [the most] progressive program. You begin editing 16mm film on a bench and end with using After Effects on Final Cut Pro and doing DVD authoring."*

Facilities: A substantial inventory of equipment used in doc production, including a variety of 16mm and DV cameras; Nagra and Sony DAT sound recorders; Avid and Final Cut Pro nonlinear editing systems; and KEM, Moviola, and Steenbeck film console editing systems. Studio and projection rooms.

Copyright: Students retain copyright.

Robin Larsen's comedic *Out of Habit*.

What sets it apart: A small graduate program devoted exclusively to non-fiction filmmaking. Students get to work in both film and video. Program is collaborative rather than competitive and there's a strong alumni network. The school receives a lot of support from the vibrant San Francisco filmmaking community.

Best things: *"The community of like-minded filmmakers. Stanford likes to accept people who aren't right out of undergrad, who have had some life experiences, and the people are truly incredible."*

Gripes: *"The program is only two years. A third year might leave time for more job training or internships." "The cost of the program—*

PHOTOS: LEFT, FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY; RIGHT, UCLA SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND TELEVISION

if you want to produce on film, you can end up paying thousands of dollars for your thesis film, on top of tuition."

Contact: The Graduate Program in Documentary Film and Video, Dept. of Communication, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-2050.; (650) 723-1941; fax: (650) 725-2472; krawitz@stanford.edu; www.communication.stanford.edu.

Syracuse student Beth Boggia's animated *Spell*

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

THE FILM PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ART AND MEDIA STUDIES IN THE SCHOOL OF ART DESIGN IN THE COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Degree and duration: Three year, sixty credit M.F.A. After Summer of the third year, facilities are no longer available.

Cost: $26,000 per year, plus production costs.

Incoming class size: 5

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: The department is part of an art school, therefore film is viewed as an expressive medium and students are urged not just to repeat commercial models.

Curriculum: Includes both production and theory.

Facilities: Linear and non-linear editing stations, an animation studio, sound mix and transfer studios, a 16mm optical printer, film library, a lighting studio where small sets can be built, two auditoriums for video and 16mm projection. There are no 35mm facilities.

Copyright: Technically, Syracuse owns it, but they usually let the student do what they want with their projects. They do keep a print in their collection.

What sets it apart: The program is small and intimate. Students are responsible for the entire process of filmmaking: the creation and development of a concept, production, post-production. Students are in a department that includes video computer graphics and photography, and are encouraged to take classes in these areas.

Contact: Owen Shapiro, Film Program, Syracuse University, Shaffer Art Bldg., Syracuse, NY 13244; (315) 443-2214; ojshapir@syr.edu; www.syr.edu.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS & THEATER

Degree and duration: M.F.A. intended as a three year degree, but most students take an average of four years to complete.

Cost: Cost per credit hour: $369, residents; $534, non-residents. 9 hours is considered full-time enrollment. Financial support is available (teaching stipend and tuition remission).

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: The country's foremost program in alternative film and video. Special attention is paid to the contemporary documentary, independent narrative, and works arising out of both an artistic and social consciousness.

Curriculum: A creative synthesis of both production and theory.

Facilities: Three television studios, Super 16, sync 16mm and silent 16mm cameras; all models of digital video cameras; sound field equipment; sound recording and post-sound facilities; a graduates-only editing center; new media workstations; animation stations. 16mm black and white processing lab. Work is underway on a state-of-the art broadcast and performance space.

Copyright: The student retains the copyright to all work produced, but the school maintains the right to screen the work for educational and promotional purposes.

What sets it apart: Financial support: students can afford to attend the program without going into exorbitant financial debt, which encourages a more diverse student body.

Best thing: *"Very dedicated, approachable teachers." "I was shooting and learning production almost immediately."*

Gripes: *"The equipment access policies seem are really restrictive and don't always seem to have the students' best interest in mind."*

Contact: School of Communications and Theater, Room 344 Annenberg Hall, 2020 13th St., Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122; fmafilm@temple.edu; www.temple.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

SCHOOL OF CINEMA-TELEVISION

Degree and duration: M.F.A. in three years

Cost: $900 per credit, plus living expenses and production costs.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Emphasis on the auteur filmmaker—the writer/director. *"Almost no one directs something he or she hasn't written, so people in the writing school rarely saw their films produced." "Writing classes are taught with the standard three-act structure." "After school specials with Dreamworks production values."*

Curriculum: Six main areas of study within the school: Critical Studies, Film and Television Production, Screen and Television Writing, Animation and Digital Arts, Peter Stark Producing Program, and Interactive Media.

Facilities: Television production center; post-production building; center for digital arts; scoring stage; sound stage; cinema-television library; center for the study of documentary.

PHOTO: COURTESY SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY; OPPOSITE: UCLA SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND TELEVISION

Copyright: Retained by USC.

Best thing: *"The toys are fabulous–that's where all the money goes! They don't ask their famous alums to donate money for scholarships—they ask Zemeckis, Speilberg, and Lucas for equipment." "It opened a lot of doors for me—I had a thesis film that did really well and the school helped manage the resulting attention." "A great network."*

Gripes: *"Unless you can pay for school outright, the burden of the cost counteracts the creative impulses you develop, so you can't explore when you get out of school." "They don't teach you how to survive in the industry, how to make a living once you get out." "USC models itself after a Hollywood studio.... Like a studio, they are very eager to churn out product and very quick to pick their favorites."*

Contact info: University of Southern California, Office of Graduate Admission University Park, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0913; (213) 740-8358; www.usc.edu/schools/cntv/overview_f.html.

UCLA
SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND TELEVISION

Degree and duration: M.F.A. in two to three years, depending on the program.

Cost: $7,000 for California residents, $17,500 out of state.

Incoming class size: Varies. 1998 acceptances: Production/Directing: 21; Screenwriting: 25; Producers Program: 15; Animation: 19.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Independent filmmakers. The program guides students towards developing a personal, artistic point of view. The Producers' Program focuses less on the line producer role, and more on the creative producer, with an emphasis on development and working with writers.

Curriculum: An area of concentration (Animation, Production/Directing, Production/Cinematography, Screenwriting, Producing) must be specified upon application. While students do collaborate with one another, there is less emphasis on team-based work than at other programs. Students are encouraged to initiate their own projects. Screenwriting and producing students tend to focus on features; directors tend to focus on short films.

Facilities: Three sound stages; three television studios; equipped remote video truck; professionally staffed scenic, costume, and prop shops; animation lab; numerous post-production resources for sound, editing, etc.

Copyright: Students retain the rights to their work.

What sets it apart: The emphasis on the individual filmmaker and on the creative relationship between writers and producers. Producers are encouraged to be entrepreneurial and find projects they can take out into the world. The Producers Program focuses on giving out very pragmatic, current information about how the industry works, utilizing 200–400 industry guest teachers per year. 90% of the faculty members are industry professionals, including studio and agency heads, prominent entertainment attorneys, heads of production, etc.

Best thing: *"I learned tons about how to work with actors and how to write well for actors." "You had total creative freedom and you owned your own films."*

Gripes: *"They don't connect you very well to the industry." [From a student in the Directing program.]*

Contact: UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, 102 E. Melnitz Hall, Box 951622, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1622; (310) 825-5761; Fax: (310) 825-3383; www.tft.ucla.edu.

UCLA grad Robin Larsen's comic short *Out of Habit*.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
DEPARTMENT OF RADIO TV FILM

Degree and duration: M.F.A. in three years.

Cost: Instate, $1,706 per semester; out-of-state, $3,816 per semester.

Incoming class size: 10-12 each year.

Focus/type of filmmaker produced: Independent filmmakers.

Curriculum: Students do not pick a concentration. The scope of the program insures that students become proficient in all areas of film production. The program provides extensive studio and technique courses focused on video, film, and convergent-media production. The department offers a separate Master's Degree in Screenwriting.

Facilities: Three multiple-camera color television studios, three motion picture sound stages, four audio production studios, and 24 video and film editing stations. Extensive video and film equipment for field work, and professional grade computer-controlled, post-production equipment, including digital sound mixing.

Copyright: Students retain the copyright.

What sets it apart: Small classes, individual attention, excellent facilities and a faculty dedicated to students. Each student directs his/her own pre-thesis project (Year Two) and thesis project (Year Three). Austin has a vibrant artistic community that supports independent filmmaking.

Best Thing: *"The equipment."*

Gripes: *"There isn't a coherent focus on teaching people how to tell stories. Writing and theory are totally separate from practice."*

Contact: Maureen Cavanaugh, Graduate Coordinator. (512) 471-3532. Fax: (512) 471-4077; maureenc@mail.utexas.edu; www.utexas.edu/coc/rtf.

Tamara Krinsky is a freelance writer/actress, and the Associate Director of the Film Program at HBO's U.S. Comedy Arts Festival.

SHOP FOR WORKSHOPS

ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO PAY YOUR DUES

BY MICHELE MEEK

LET'S FACE IT: FOUR YEARS AND SIX FIGURES FOR A FILM DEGREE IS NOT FOR everyone. So, is there a faster, cheaper, (better?) way to break into the film industry? Well, unless you're blessed with Hollywood parents, you're still going to have to pay your dues—quite literally. If you don't opt for a pricey degree, consider taking a few workshops to help you build the experience and connections you'll need for the "real world." As the sage Sir Claus Moser once said, "Education costs money, but then so does ignorance."

As opposed to the academic approach of most universities and film schools, individual workshops tend to be strictly career-focused: places where you can learn the practical tools and skills to launch your own filmmaking career or land an industry job. Workshops range from comprehensive 1-year programs (costing around $20,000), in which you finish having actually produced your own film, to individual classes (ranging from $35–$3,500) where you can learn or hone a specific skill. The subjects range from technical know-how, such as camera basics, lighting, editing, screenwriting, and sound design, to more intangible concepts such as directing actors, finding a job, and fundraising and marketing for films. Many schools draw instructors from the pool of top local talent.

Here, we've listed a few workshops around the country, but there are many more. To find what's in your area, visit your local access or media arts center, search the Internet, or flip through reference books at the library. If you happen to be a flat broke wannabe filmmaker, consider volunteering, which often enables you to take classes at a reduced cost or even for free.

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION

Students learn technical skills, as well as directing, writing, and lighting. Courses can be taken individually or for credit through a partnership with Northeastern University. As part of its JOB series, BF/VF gives practical advice and a networking opportunity for those aspiring to be anything from an Assistant Director to a Location Manager. BF/VF has wisely joined forces with local PBS affiliate, WGBH, to offer a workshop that matches students' skills to jobs in broadcast production and helps them prepare to interview at the station. It doesn't guarantee a job, but it's an unusually good start. More info at www.bfvf.org or (617) 536-1540.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION

This San Francisco not-for-profit provides new filmmakers both a training ground and link to the community. Seminars are divided into different tracks: Production, Post-Production, Screenwriting, Producing, Documentary, Experimental, and Masters Classes For Experienced Makers. Discounts are available for members, who also gain access to low cost equipment rental, informational resources, technical assistance, and fiscal sponsorship opportunities. More info at www.filmarts.org/seminars/ or (415) 552-8760.

FILM & TV CONNECTION

Places each student in a movie studio, television station, editing facility, camera house, or commercial production company, where he or she learns from working professionals. The difference is that, rather than getting paid, you pay to learn. The program has an extremely high rate of job placement, since participants are already in the field and making contacts. Applications are required. More info at www.film-tv-connection.com or (800) 755-7597.

THE INTERNATIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION WORKSHOPS [FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE MAINE WORKSHOPS]

Students choose from 150 one and two-week workshops and master classes; bundle classes for a 4-week or one-year filmmaking program; or earn an Associate of Arts or Master of Fine Arts degree through Rockport College. Workshops foster the total-immersion feel that intensifies learning and builds camaraderie among students and teachers. The courses tend to be pricier than some, but you get what you pay for: for example, you can train on 35mm cameras. Scholarships and extended payment plans are available. More info at www.theworkshops.com/filmworkshops/ or (877) 577-7700

THE LOS ANGELES FILM SCHOOL

Making the most of its location, by recruiting Hollywood industry veterans to lead workshops and including visits to major studios. Students may opt for either a one-year full-time Immersion Filmmaking Program or individual courses through a partnership with UCLA's Extension's Entertainment Studies. One of their more original programs is the hands-on 6-week Digital Filmmaking Program, wherein students create a series of short digital films—a great way to build a demo reel. More info at www.lafilm.com or (323) 860-0789

MOTION PICTURE INSTITUTE OF MICHIGAN

A one-year evening program, divided into three semesters and a summer session. The coursework covers all aspects of independent and commercial film production; students graduate with completed projects in their hands and receive job placement assistance from the administration. More info at www.mpifilm.com or (248) 723-5735

NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY

Despite its name, NYFA hosts workshops in locations well beyond its Union Square, New York location, by partnering with educational institutions in Paris, London, Tokyo, and Los Angeles. Classes range from four weeks to one year in length, and students should expect to be busy: at least 10 hours a day, six days a week. It's definitely a commitment, but the long hours provide a crash course in living like a filmmaker. More info at www.nyfa.com or (212) 674-4300.

NORTHWEST FILM CENTER SCHOOL OF FILM

In addtion to membership, screenings, and film festivals, the Center also serves both emerging and professional film and video makers with a variety of evening and weekend workshops. Enrollment in the optional Certificate Program enables students to complete a tailored sequence of courses within the curriculum. The Center maintains a strong commitment to media in education, shown through two of its most unique programs: a Media Arts Academy for Teachers where participants learn to use media arts in the classroom and the Filmmakers-in-the-Schools Outreach Program, a series of workshops for young people and teens. More info at www.nwfilm.org or (503) 221-1156

ROBERT FLAHERTY FILM SEMINAR

An annual week-long retreat each spring that brings together filmmakers, scholars, and students who watch and analyze films in an intimate setting. Built around seven days of morning-to-night screenings, the Seminar provides an unusual opportunity to study film in an intensive yet non-academic environment. Flaherty is presented by International Film Seminars, who last year inaugurated the Digital Flaherty Digital conference and currently plans to offer regional programs year-round. More info at www.flahertyseminar.org or (212) 608.3224.

Michele Meek is the founder of NewEnglandFilm.com and BuyIndies.com, a catalogue for hard-to-find films. She can be reached at michele@buyindies.com.

AFFORDABLE VISIONS

New options for indies working with desktop 3D

BY GREG GILPATRICK

YOU JUST FINISHED YOUR LATEST SCRIPT and it could be a cinematic masterpiece: but it contains several elements that will not be easy to film without a huge budget. You are not willing or able to join the filmmaking establishment that could grant you the huge budget to make your screenplay into cinematic reality–but you can't envision shooting the film with the resources available to you. What can you do except put the script in a drawer and forget about it? You have a great story, a little money, a reasonable amount of intelligence, and a lot of time to make a–there must be a way you can make your movie. There is: 3D animation.

3D animation isn't exactly synonomous with independent filmmaking but the two have more in common than you would expect. 3D animation allows for a person to work outside of the established production system and create their own work. There are thousands of independent artists around the world who create their own 3D animation movies and distribute them through festivals, the Internet, video, and broadcast. The world of 3D animation is far broader than the big studios. Independent filmmakers should no longer write off computer animation as only the province of Hollywood extraveganzas.

From the outside, the art of 3D animation looks dauntingly complex and difficult to master. Many filmmakers may avoid 3D animation simply because of the highly technical nature of its production process. These individuals should remember that although 3D animation is an art born from technology, so are film and video.

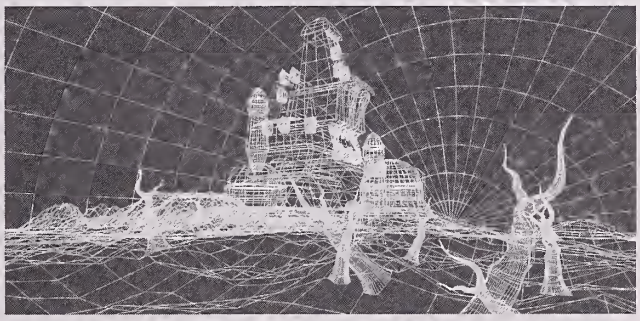
To be a successful filmmaker today often requires the mastery of several pieces of equipment and software that use cutting-edge technology. If you are capable of editing with non-linear editing systems or perform other creative tasks with computers then you probably can learn the basics of 3D animation. In some ways, creating 3D animation is very similar to traditional filmmaking. In fact, most 3D animation programs use the filmmaking paradigm as the basis of their interface—you set up your scenes with "spotlights" (that may have "barndoors") and view your scene through a "camera."

Several factors over the past year have made 3D animation much more inviting to independent filmmakers. Product cost, education, communities, and the state of technology have evolved to the point where it is reasonable for someone completely new to the field to acquire and learn how to use the primary tools of 3D animation.

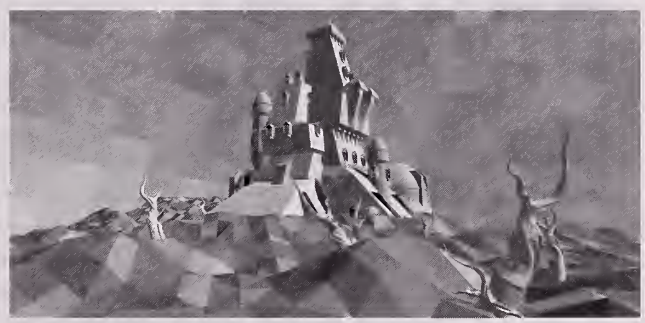
The biggest news in the world of 3D animation recently is the major change in pricing on some of the most high-end animation products. Leading the pack of price cutters is Alias|Wavefront, whose Maya software is used to create some of the highest profile 3D animation in the world. This software used to start at $7,500 for Maya Complete, the entry-level version that includes most of the features of Maya. Maya Complete now sells for $1995—still a large sum of money but it is now within the realm of possibility for small studios and independents who want to create professional 3D animation. Following suit is Lightwave 3D, which dropped in price from $2,495 to $1,595. These two products represent some of the most complicated tools in the 3D animation business and while they may not be right for someone starting out, these price cuts are good for artists of all levels because the lower-priced and mid-range 3D products must now improve features and reduce prices.

In addition to cutting the prices of their products, many companies are now releasing "learning editions" of their applications to allow people to try out and learn their application before purchasing it or looking for a job where they use it. Maya, Lightwave, Electric Image Universe, and SoftImage XSI are some of the programs now offered in "Learning Edition" form.

Of course, one should have some knowledge of the techniques and concepts of 3D animation before proceeding with



The stormy opening of Brian Taylor's *Rustboy*. The computer model is shown here rendered in wireframe. The sky area is a large dome around the scene.



Here the scene is rendered as flat shading, allowing Taylor to test his initial animations and speed up the process.

The finished scene with full lighting and textures. Taylor later added weather effects such as rain and lighting.

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an expensive purchase of high-end 3D software. Luckily, we are in the midst of a renaissance of education and training in the art of 3D animation. At the forefront of this training revolution is a company called DV Garage, who sells a 3D training program called 3D Toolkit. I reviewed the 3D Toolkit in the November 2001 issue of *The Independent*. You may want to check that review out for a full description of the product. In a nutshell, the 3D Toolkit is a step by step guide to the basics of creating 3D objects and animating them. The tutorials are video clips narrated by Alex Lindsay, a former 3D artist at Industrial, Light, and Magic. Lindsay's instruction clearly lays out the basic concepts upon which 3D animation is based. Making the 3D Toolkit an especially attractive buy is its inclusion of a working 3D animation program, Electric Image Animation System. By including an established animation package along with the training materials, the 3D Toolkit empowers you to create your own animations without needing to purchase anything else.

Of course, you will need more than training videos to learn enough to make a digital masterpiece. Part of the learning process requires communicating with your peers and those who have more experience than yourself. Many 3D animators have turned to the web to communicate with each other. DV Garage has forums on their website (www.dvgarage.com) where questions about nearly every aspect of 3D production are answered by a knowledgeable commmunity. One web site I have found to be very informative is cgchannel.com, which each day posts general news concerning 3D and also has a lively forum where people post images of their work and ask for criticism. Someone could easily spend hours just looking at the different types of content people create and learning from the criticism and tips people have in response.

Another way to learn about 3D animation is to read some books devoted to the subject. *The Art of 3-D Computer Animation and Imaging* by Isaac Victor Kerlow (J Wiley & Sons, 2000; www.wiley.com) covers nearly every aspect of 3D production. From the most basic technical concepts to the latest advances in image rendering, Kerlow explains the steps of producing 3D content for films, video, stills, and video games. Although the book feels like a dry scientific textbook at times, it is an excellent primer for someone who wants at least a basic knowledge of the concepts of 3D animation.

For those who have already begun to create 3D images and animation and now want to learn the techniques that professionals use to create photorealistic or highly stylized images, I highly recommend the "[digital]" series of books from New Riders (www.newriders.com). Books in this series, written by prominent 3D artists, go beyond simple explanations of terminology and techniques and instead illustrate how these techniques are employed on projects. Speaking for myself, there were many concepts that I had a theoretical understanding of but was unsure of when or how they should be used until I read these books. *Digital Lighting and Rendering* by Jeremy Birn covers the lighting of 3D scenes and demonstrates that, as in lighting for film, lighting is an extremely important aspect of 3D production. *Digital Texturing & Painting* by Owen Demers shows how to create realistic and unique textures and colors for your 3D models by paying attention to real-world objects and taking cues from other artforms. *Digital Character Animation* by George Maestri helps identify how people move and how to apply that to 3D animation.

3D animation is no longer just for the Dreamworks and Pixars of the world. For example, take a look at Scottish animator Brian Taylor's website, rustboy.com, where he documents his process of single-handedly creating a short film using a computer and software that are far from high-end. The stills and short sequences of *Rustboy* are stunning and indistinguishable from the content made by teams of animators with the most high-end equipment.

I suggest that anyone interested in 3D check out rustboy.com, cgchannel.com, download the "learning edition" of a program that looks interesting to them, and get to work.

In the next issue of *The Independent* I will provide a more in-depth look at the tools needed to produce 3D, as well as reviews some of the most popular 3D applications.

Greg Gilpatrick (greg@randomroom.com) enjoyed the process of advancing his animation skills while researching this article.

Video Software Updates

BY GREG GILPATRICK

DVD STUDIO PRO 1.5

DVD STUDIO PRO SOMETIMES seems like the ugly duckling of Apple's media applications. Apple heralded the inclusion of DVD burning "SuperDrives" in its PowerMac G4s as a revolution for regular people who want to put their wedding videos on pristine DVDs using iDVD, but it has seemed a little confused about to whom they are marketing DVD Studio Pro. Indeed, iDVD performs the functions that most independent filmmakers want to employ DVDs for: dubs for dailies, logging, and festival entries.And when it comes time to create a high-quality interactive DVD, many filmmakers end up taking their work to facilities that specialize in DVD authoring.

However, DVD Studio Pro is a good program. Particularly for the Mac, there is little else in this price range that allows individuals to create their own DVDs with just about every feature that you would find on slickly produced big-budget DVDs.

DVD Studio Pro 1.5, released this past April, does improve upon version 1.0—but not by much. In fact, the manual is even the exact same book that came with the earlier version. As far as I can tell, the major feature introduced by this new version is that it works in Apple's latest operating system, Mac OS X. Considering that Apple has touted how easy it is for developers to convert their applications to system ten versions, I wonder if Apple may be overcharging for the upgrade.

For those who use Final Cut Pro 3, this version adds the ability to set chapter and compression markers in fcp and have them imported directly into your DVD project. This is a welcome feature and could potentially save a lot of time for those who work with both programs on a regular basis.

A few extra goodies are now bundled with Studio Pro. DVD Studio Pro 1.0 required the purchase of a separate application to create a Photoshop format file for menus. DVD Studio Pro 1.5 includes a free copy of Corel Photopaint for that purpose so that there is no longer the hidden cost to create menus. There is also a free copy of Bias Peak DV for mixing audio files, though this is also included for free with Final Cut Pro 3.

This is not a stellar upgrade but it does introduce some helpful features. If you already use DVD Studio Pro, I suggest upgrading if you use it in conjunction with Final Cut Pro 3 or want to use it on Mac OS X. If you do not already own DVD Studio Pro, this version makes it a more attractive purchase by including software that you previously had to buy separately.

DVD Studio Pro 1.5 by Apple Computer.
For Mac OS 9 and Mac OS X.
$999 (upgrade $199)
www.apple.com/dvdstudiopro

AFTER EFFECTS 5.5

AFTER EFFECTS IS THE MOST well-known and widely used compositing application in the world. For a long time, After Effects was the only game in town if someone wanted to use a compositing application that cost less than a fortune. Secure in the knowledge that they had the only serious desktop compositing system, folks at Adobe were slow to add features and updates. However, Discreet's Combustion and Pinnacle's Commotion now offer some serious competition, with features very similar to, and sometimes better than, After Effects. To better compete, Adobe responded with version 5.0, and has now released 5.5 which offers better handling of 3D compositing features and a handful of other minor enhancements.

Many video producers are aware of After Effects and know that it will be used on their productions at some point but are ignorant of what the application actually does. Its most popular use is the compositing and animation of still and video elements, along with various post-production tasks like color correction. 3D compositing is the process of taking 2-dimensional objects, such as video frames from your editing application, and manipulating them in 3D space. AE 5.0 was sometimes frustrating as a compositing tool because it only provided one view at a time, allowing you to sometimes get "lost" in the 3D space of your composite. AE 5.5 fixes that problem by allowing multiple views, such as from the top, side, and camera, at the same time. However, now these multiple view windows clutter an already complex interface. While using AE 5.5 for 3D compositing, I had no less than six different windows open at a time, which means that using After Effects with two computer monitors is now almost a necessity.

After Effects comes in two flavors, the Standard version and the Production Bundle version. While I reviewed the Standard edition, the Production Bundle includes a few extra filters and tools such as a motion tracker and special filters to add effects to 3D animation, of which the new Z-depth filters look to be the most promising. These depth-map filters add the ability to employ effects that depend on the depth of the scene inside your 3D image. For instance, you can add a depth of field type blur that only blurs distant objects in your 3D scenes. These filters are only really of interest to those who work with content made in 3D animation programs.

Both configurations of AE 5.5 add several workflow features to rendering, file import, filter selection, and expressions. None of these features is revolutionary but they do improve the process of using After Effects.

After Effects 5.5 does not add any significant new tools but it does nicely upgrade existing features, and the upgrade price is reasonable. If you do not already have a compositing system but are interested in buying one, you still can't go wrong with After Effects. You will not find another compositing program with as many features for less than the cost of the standard version. And for those new to the motion graphics and compositing field, After Effects remains the way to go because of the peripheral benefits of a comparatively huge community of users and large selection of quality training materials.

After Effects 5.5. by Adobe Systems.
For Windows (98, ME, 2000, XP) and
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$649 for Standard Version,
$1499 for Production Bundle.
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www.adobe.com

Greg Gilpatrick (greg@randomroom.com) is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant.

BY BO MEHRAD

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DOMESTIC

ANGELUS AWARDS STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL, November 2, CA. Deadline: July 1. College/Film School competition aims to "recognize & showcase student films of uncommon artistic caliber which explore the complexity of the human condition w/ creativity, compassion & respect." Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student. Awards: $10,000 Grand Prize. Animations, Doc & Audience Impact.. Formats: 1/2", 3/4", S-VHS. VHS, 3/4" (NTSC only). Entry Fee: $25. Contact: Monika Moreno, 7201 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90046; (323) 874-6633; fax: 874-1168; info@angelus.org; www.angelus.org

AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 10-17, TX. Deadline: July 15 (early); Aug. 15 (final). Fest is dedicated to the writer as the heart of the creative process of filmmaking & uncovers outstanding, emerging writers, fostering their development through panels, workshops & master classes conducted by professionals. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, short, student. Awards: $1,000 (feature), $500 (short & student short), airfare & accommodations to attend AFF, AFF Bronze Award & special LA screening of the winning films for industry professionals. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (early); $50 (final). Contact: AFF, 1604 Nueces, Austin, TX 78701; (800) 310-FEST/ (512) 478-4795; fax: (512) 478-6205; austinfilm@aol.com; www.austinfilmfest.com

BEARDED CHILD UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, August 16-17, MN. Deadline: August 2. Non-conventional fest presents innovative short films that defy the traditional boundaries of the mainstream. We return all fees & materials if your entry isn't programmed. Awards: Audience & Jury awards, plus oddball prizes for runner-ups.. Formats: 1/2", Hi8, S-VHS, 16mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (no fees for Int'l entries). Contact: c/o The Rief Center, 720 Connifer Drive, Grand Rapids, MN, USA 55744; beardedprogeny@hotmail.com; www.beardedchild.moviepage.com

CHICAGO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 4-18, IL. Deadline: July 31. Annual event is the oldest competitive int'l film fest in N. America spotlighting the latest work in int'l & independent cinema by featuring both established int'l directors & new directors. Cats: feature, short (under 30 min.), short (30-60min.), experimental, short animation, short doc, student narrative, student doc, student experimental, student animation. Awards: Gold Hugo, for best feature film in int'l competition; separate prizes for docs, student films & shorts. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 70mm, 3/4", U-matic, 1/2", DigiBeta. Preview on VHS . Entry Fee: $100 (feature); $80 (doc feature); $40 (short under 30 min.); $50 (short 30-60 min.); $30 (student). Late fees: $20-$100. Contact: Cinema/ Chicago, 32 W. Randolph St., Ste. 600, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 425-9400; fax: (312) 425-0944; info@chicagofilmfest.com; www.chicagofilmfest.com

CONEY ISLAND UNDERGROUND SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 21-22, NY. Deadline: Aug. 1; Aug. 14 (late). Fest is open to filmmakers working in all genres & formats & is especially (although not exclusively) looking for Coney Island-related material & sideshow, amusement park, freaks & oddities, performance art, burlesque, carnival, midway & circus content. All entries must be 30 min. or less. The Festival's unique program takes place at the legendary Sideshows by the Seashore venue. Cats: doc, experimental, animation, music video, comedy, drama, youth media. Formats: 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS or Beta SP. Entry Fee: $15; $20 (late). Contact: Rob Leddy , c/o indiefilmpage.com, Bowling Green Station, Box 228, New York, NY 10274; (212) 696-6689; indiefilmpage@yahoo.com; www.indiefilmpage.com

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, Jan. 10-11, 17-18, NY. Deadline: September 1. This touring fest is the oldest annual int'l dance film/video event in the world. Co-sponsored by Film Society of Lincoln Center, fest incl. photo exhibits, workshops, live performances. Cats: experimental, doc, animation, narrative & performance. Founded: 1972. Cats: Experimental, Feature, Short, doc. Awards: cash prize for "Best of Festival." Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30. Contact: Dance Films Association, Inc., 48 W. 21st St., #907, New York, NY 10010; (212)727-0764; fax: (212) 727-0764; dfa5@ earthlink.net; www.dancefilmsassn.org

DENVER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 10-20, CO. Deadline: July 15. Annual invitational expo of film presents approx. 150 films over 10 days & plays host to more than 75 film artists. Founded: 1978. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, children, short, family, student, new int'l releases, cutting-edge indie fiction films. Awards: Awards incl. Lifetime Achievement Award, the John Cassavetes Award, the Krzysztof Kieslowski Award for best European film, & the People's Choice Awards for most popular feature-length fiction & doc films. In addition, a number of int'l film artists are honored w/ tributes. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL). Entry Fee: $20 (students) /$35. Contact: Denver Film Society, 1725 Blake Street, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 595-3456; fax: 595-0956; dfs@denverfilm.org; www.denverfilm.org

D.U.M.B.O. SHORT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-20, NY. Deadline: Sept. 3. Film & video event is part of the annual D.U.M.B.O. Art Under the Bridge Festival & is designed to showcase the work of independent & experimental film & videomakers living in NYCís five boroughs. Works must be 30 min. or less. Founded: 1996. Cats: short, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: D.U.M.B.O. Arts Center, 30 Washington St., Brooklyn, NY 11201; (718) 694-0831; mail@dumboartscenter.org; www.dumboartscenter.org

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA, Nov. 7-14, CA. Deadline: June 7 (early); July 5 (final). FAF-sponsored, noncompetitive fest invites submissions of independent films & videos of any length, genre or subject by N. California media artists. Filmmakers residing outside of California may submit works under thirty min., as long as he/she is a member of Film Arts Foundation. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 35mm, DV, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (early); $20 (final). Contact: Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: 552-0882; fest@filmarts.org; www.filmarts.org

H.P. LOVECRAFT FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-20, OR. Deadline: Aug. 1. Purpose of fest is to "promote the works of H. P. Lovecraft through cinematic adaptations by student, amateur & professional filmmakers." Organizers hope fest will further the goal of H. P. Lovecraft being taken seriously as a writer & that his work be more faithfully adapted to film. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, music video. Awards: Best of Show; Best Lovecraft Doc; Best Short; Best Animation; Best Feature. Formats: 1/2", Beta, DV, 8mm, 16mm, 35mm, S-VHS. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Beyond Books, Box 8521, Portland, OR 97207; (503) 282-3155; submissions@hplfilmfest.com; info@hplfilmfest.com; www.hplfilmfest.com

HAWAII INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 1-10, HI. Deadline: July 15; Aug. 5 (late). Annual fest is dedicated to promoting cross-cultural understanding among peoples of Asia, N. America & the Pacific region through the presentation of features, docs & shorts dealing w/ relevant subject matter. In the past, fest has presented over 100 films across six islands to over 57,000 people. Fest is the U.S.'s only statewide film event. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Golden Maile Award for features & docs; Audience Award; Cinematography Award; Hawaii Film & Videomaker Award. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL/ Secam). Entry Fee: $35; $50 (late). Contact: Festival, 1001 Bishop St., Pacific Tower, Ste. 745, Honolulu, HI 96813; (800) 752-8193 (U.S.); (808) 528-3456 (int'l); fax: 528-1410; info@hiff.org; www.hiff.org

LATINO FILM FESTIVAL (San Francisco/Marin/Berkely), Nov 1-10, CA. Deadline: July 1. Annual competitive fest seeks works in any genre by or about Latino in the U.S. & int'ly. Fest showcases artistic or educational films by or about Latinos & expresses the cultural diversity of all Latino countries as a source of inspiration & empowerment. Works must have been completed in last two years. Founded: 1997. Cats: Feature, Doc, Animation, short. Awards: Best Short, Best Doc, Best Film by Women, Best Student Film, Audience Award. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $35 late entry. Contact: Sylvia Perel, Festival-Artistic Director, Dominican University of California, 50 Acacia Ave,, San Rafael, CA 94901-2298; (415) 454-4039; fax: (415) 454-4613; cinefest@latinofilmfest.org; www.latinofilmfest.org

MANHATTAN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 23, NY. Deadline: July 31. Annual fest will be held on 4 screens inside in Union Square Park as well as a Live Broadcast to "Pressure Nightclub" above Bowlmor Lanes on University Place at 7 pm. The event is free to the Public to attend. Festival is the largest one night film event in NYC. Films can be no longer than 12 min. in length. Festival Selecion comittee will allow one to two min. leeway on the length. Founded: 1988. Cats: short, any style or genre. Awards: 54,000 feet of 35mm film; complete 35mm camera pkg; all processing/developing/prints/

dailies . Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV, DigiBeta, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30. Contact: Nicholas Mason, c/o The Gershwin Hotel, 7 East 27th Street, New York, NY 10016; (212) 613-5878; msfilmfest@aol.com; www.msfilmfest.com

MARCO ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL, October 16-20, FL. Deadline: August 1; September 1 (late). Southwest Florida's premier fest is located on a tropical island paradise along Florida's Gulf Coast. Annual fest showcases foreign & U.S. indie films, hosts informative panels, tributes, student film competition, screenplay competition, along w/ special celebrations & events. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation. Awards: Audience, Special Jury, Student, Screenplay, Lifetime Achievement, Crystal Palm, Humanitarian, & Spirit. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (short); $40 (features); $20 (screenplay); & $15 (student). Contact: Vicki Kelber, Artistic Director, 601 Elkcam Circle, B-6, Marco Island, FL 34145; (941) 642-FEST (3378); fax: (941) 394-1736; info@marcoislandfilmfest.com; www.marcoislandfilmfest.com

MELBOURNE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL, Sept. 13-14, FL. Deadline: July 5. Fest is aimed at promoting local filmmakers & local interest in film. Several community organizations have pledged their support incl. The Space Coast Filmmakers, Inc., FMPTA, & Alliance/IFP-South. All funds raised go to charity, Unconditional Love, Inc., a local HIV treatment center. Cats: feature, doc, short. Preview on VHS (NTSC) & DVD. Contact: Terry Cronin, program chairman, 1399 South Harbor City Blvd., Melbourne, FL 32901; TCRonin2@aol.com; www.3boysproductions.com

MICROCINEFEST, October 31-November 4, MD. Deadline: July 31. Annual fest turns audiences on to ambitious, low-budget, underground films & seeks films w/ "substream/ psychotronic bent that display creativity, originality, entertainment & a wise use of funds." Founded: 1997. Cats: any style or genre, short, animation, experimental, feature, doc, music video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP, super 8, 8mm, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (30 min. & under); $25 (over 30 min.); films 7 min. & under, mutiply number of min. by $2. Contact: Skizz Cyzyk, Box 50098, Baltimore, MD, US 21211; (410) 243-5307; bfink@bcpl.net; www.microcinefest.org

MILWAUKEE LESBIAN & GAY FILM & VIDEO FEST, October 3-6 & 10-13, WI. Deadline: July 10. Contact: Carl Bogner, Dept. of Film, Mitchell Hall B69, 3203 N. Downer Ave, Milwaukee, WI, USA 53211; (414)229-4758; fax: 229-5901; crlelbog@uwm.edu

NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL, October 10-17, LA. Deadline: June 1 (regular), July 1 (late). Annual fest features premieres, classic film retros, panel discussions & gala events. Entries of all lengths & genres, incl. music videos, welcome. Entries must be completed after Jan. 1998. Top prize of $5,000 given to Judges' Award winner. Top films receive the LA Lumiere & LA Lagniappe. Founded: 1990. Cats: Any style or genre, Animation, Doc, Experimental, Short, Feature, Student, Music Video. Awards: Top prizes vary from yr. to year; past winners have received FinalDraft Pro software, cash prizes ($500-$1,500). Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8, 1/2 " S-VHS, 35mm, super 8, Beta, 3/4" video, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (U.S)/$45 (int'l); $55 (late). Contact: NOFF/Competitive Division, 843 Carodelet Street, #1, New Orleans, LA 70130; (504) 523-5271; fax: (208) 975-3478; info@neworleansfilmfest.com; www.neworleansfilmfest.com

NEW YORK EXPO OF SHORT FILM & VIDEO , December 5-8, NY. Deadline: July 15. The fest is the nation's longest-running short film fest & seeks fiction, animation, doc & experimental film & video. Films/videos should be under 60 min. & completed in the previous 2 years. Student & int'l entries welcome. Cats: short, experimental, animation, doc. Awards: All films selected to be shown by teams of top professionals in the NY film community are considered Jury Award Winners. Gold, Sliver, Bronze & Best Debut awards are granted in each category, plus cash, filmstock & class instruction awards. Formats: 35mm, S-8 (shown in video projection), 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $45, for return of preview tape incl. $5. Contact: Ann Borin, Dir., 163 Amsterdam Ave., #107, New York, NY 10023; (212)505-7742; fax: 586-6391; nyexpo@aol.com; www.nyexpo.org

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, Dates TBA, NY. Deadline: July 11. The New York Film Festival is an annual fest which aims to demonstrate the development of int'l film art & contemporary trends in content, form & style. The Festival is non-competitive. No prizes are awarded. As a special event of the Festival, Views from the Avant-Garde takes place in the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center, a program of non-narrative experimental films of any length demonstrating innovative cinematic technique. Works must have originated on 16 or 35mm film. Video not accepted. Founded: 1962. Cats: feature, doc,

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short, experimental, animation, student, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS or Print. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee.. Contact: Sara Bensman, c/o Film Society of Lincoln Center, 165 West 65th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; fax: (212) 875-5636; sbensman@filmlinc.com; www.filmlinc.com

NIGHT OF THE BLACK INDEPENDENTS, Aug. 5-6, GA. Deadline: July 7. An exhibition organization for filmmakers of the African diaspora, providing venues for film & video artists of African descent. It prides itself on exposing these films to audiences underserved by the mainstream industry, mainly through their annual fest held in Atlanta, Georgia. The two-day fest showcases Black talent in all genres from animation to science fiction. It is a competitive event that awards the best in each category w/ special honorable mention awards given to artist deserving special recognition. Prizes incl. cash prizes & in-kind services from industry businesses. Cats: Feature, Short, African-American, Doc, Animation, Student. Awards: Awards given in cats: narrative, doc, animation & student. Cash prizes & in-kind donations from industry businesses.. Formats: 1/2", Beta SP, 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Peggy Hayes, PO Box 77305, Atlanta, GA 30357; (404)318-9513; nightoftheblackindependents@mail.com

OHIO INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, November 5-10, OH. Deadline: June 1; July 1 (Final). Fest provides a unique networking & exhibition space for indie filmmakers & is a professional arts org. dedicated to supporting, growing & legitimizing indie filmmaking. Fest exhibits works-in-progress, mixed format work (e.g., 16mm w/ accomp. soundtrack on cassette) & work in non-trad mediums (i.e., video & super 8). Accepts feature films & videos, perf art, visual art & installations; all genres. Founded: 1994. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Best of the Fest. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 1/2", super 8, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (shorts under 15 min.); $30 (15 min. & over)—Late fees are doubled. Screenplays: $40; $60 (late). Contact: Annetta Marion & Bernadette Gillota, Executive Directors, 1392 West 65th Street, Cleveland, OH 44102; (216) 651-7315; fax: 651-7317; ohioindiefilmfest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com

OJAI FILM FESTIVAL, October 24-27, CA. Deadline: June 15 (early); July 15 (final). Theme: "Enriching the Human Spirit Through Film." Festival will highlight Mexican filmmaking, women filmmakers & films dealing w/ the pressures that threaten childhood in our modern world. Films & videos on all subjects in any genre, however, are welcomed. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student, any style or genre. Awards: Best narrative feature; narrative short; Doc feature; Doc short; Animated film; Student film; Best Film exemplifing fest theme. Trophies, plaques, and/or certificates will be presented to the winners. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: $35 (35mm); $25 (all other formats); $20 (student, any format); add $10 for final deadline. Contact: Steve Grumette, Artistic Director, 10942 Encino Dr., Oak View, CA 93022; (805) 649-4000; filmfest@ojai.net; www.filmfest.ojai.net

OUT ON FILM (THE ATLANTA GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL), Nov. 6-10, GA. Deadline: August 23; August 30 (Image members deadline). Atlanta's noncompeititive gay & lesbian film fest accepting works of all lengths & genres that were completed after Jan of last 2 years & feature gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender themes. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, experimental. Awards: Audience Award. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 ($10 for image members). Contact: Paul Marchant, IMAGE Film Cntr, 75 Bennett St. NW., Ste. N-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225; fax: 352-0173; afvf@imagefv.org; www.outonfilm.com

OUTTAKES DALLAS: THE ANNUAL GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, November 8-14, TX. Deadline: July 31. Dallas is home to one of the largest & most active lesbian & gay communities in the United States. With this support & interest, OUTTAKES hosts the works of filmmakers from around the world. The fest incls. a series of exciting & unique events incl. theme parties & workshops. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DV, 1/2", S-VHS, DigiBeta, Hi8, DVD, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Festival, 3818 Cedar Springs Rd, 101-405, Dallas, TX 75219; (214) 676-7751; films@outtakesdallas.org; www.outtakesdallas.org

PENNSYLVANIA FILM FESTIVAL, October 16-20, PA. Deadline: July 15 . Festival features Italian retrospective, world cinema, films for both mature & young adults, films for children, workshops & panel discussions. Festival seeks feature films & shorts in all cats, submissions for doc & music video competitions, films for children. Especially interested in dramatic films of interest to the college-age audience, incl. films about coming of age, love & sex, gender politics, etc. Cats: doc, feature, short. Awards: Awards & prizes to be determined. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DV, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (shorts under 15 min.); $25 all other. Contact: Bruce Thomas, 321 Spruce St. Ste. 607, Scranton, PA 18603; (570)941-3456; paff@epix.net; www.pafilmfest.com

PITTSBURGH INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, October 18-27, PA. Deadline: July 13. Festival has been providing Pittsburgh & the tri-state area w/ ten days of innovative, provocative, entertaining lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgendered films. Founded: 1985. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media, family. Awards: Best of Fest Short Film (under 30 min.)($500), Best Doc Film ($500). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee.. Contact: PILGFF, PO Box 81237, Pittsburgh, PA 15217-4237; (412) 232-3277; fax: (412) 422-5829; pilgff@aol.com; www.pilgff.org/

PUTNAM COUNTY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 7-8, NY. Deadline: August 31. This regional film/video fest celebrates community media-making. Filmmakers submitting must either reside in Putnam County, New York or project must have some connection to Putnam County. Includes Gala Awards Ceremony & Dinner. Founded: 2001. Cats: trailers, works-in-progress, feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Awards: various. Formats: 16mm, S-VHS, Hi8, 8mm, DV, Beta SP, 1/2". VHS. Entry Fee: $25 under 59 min. $35 over 60 min.. Contact: Maryann Arrien, Festival Director, 93 Wiccopee Road, Putnam Valley, NY 10579; (845) 528-7420; fax: (same); braintrust@usa.com; www.putnamvalley.com

REEL JEWS FILM FESTIVAL: October 21-31, 2002, NY. Deadline Aug. 15. The MAKOR Screening Room is accepting features, documentaries, shorts, and works-in-

progress. No restrictions on submissions all films accepted regardless of theme or format. MAKOR, a program of the 92nd St. Y, presents quality arts, entertainment and educational programming. The festival and the screening room are entering their third year. No entry fee. Contact Ken Sherman, Director of Film & Media, MAKOR, 35 W. 67th St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 601-1021; ken.sherman@makor.org

SAN DIEGO FILM FESTIVAL, September 18-22, CA. Deadline: June 1; July 1 (late). San Diego's first & only competitive fest showcasing the best in American & Int'l narrative features, docs, & shorts. Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (features/docs); $25 (shorts); $45 (features late); $35 (shorts late). Contact: Robin Laatz, Executive Director, 7974 Mission Bonita Drive, San Diego, CA 92120; (619)582-2368; fax: 286-8324; info@sdff.org; www.sdff.org

SAVANNAH FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 26-November 2, GA. Deadline: July 1. Festival presents the best of domestic & int'l independent filmmakers & supports a student competition dedicated to the encouragement & celebration of student productions. Festival incls. special screenings, lectures & panel discussions by industry professionals, critics & filmmakers. Cats: feature, short, animation, doc, student. Awards: Award winners are selected by judges from all competitive films & videos in the fest; professional & student works are judged separately. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40; $20 (students). Contact: Festival, c/o Savannah College of Art & Design, Box 3146, Savannah, GA 31402; (912) 525-5051; fax: 525-5052; filmfest@scad.edu; www.scad.edu/filmfest

SCREAMFEST HORROR FILM & SCREENPLAY COMPETITION, October 17-20, CA. Deadline: August 15. Fest is a mix of films, sketch comedy, & contests for best costume & loudest shriek. Festivities take place at the Vogue Theatre in Hollywood. Cats: feature, short, animation. Contact: Rachel Belofsky, fest producer, 13547 Ventura Blvd., Ste 420, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423; screamfestla@aol.com; www.screamfestla.com

SEATTLE LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-24, WA. Deadline: June 1 (early); June 30 (final). The Pacific Northwest's premier queer film fest, committed to screening the best in lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender film/video. Produced by Three Dollar Bill Cinema, whose mission is to provide community access to queer cinema & a venue for queer filmmakers to show their work. Founded: 1995. Cats: Feature, Short, Experimental, doc, animation. Awards: Jury selects best feature, doc, short, new director & female director ($500-$1000). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (early); $15 (final). Contact: Jason Plourde, Programming Director , 1122 E. Pike St., #1313, Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 323-4274; fax: (206) 323-4275; programming@seattlequeerfilm.com; www.seattlequeerfilm.com

SLAMDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 18-25, CA. Deadline: Aug. 30(early); Oct. 11 (final); Anarchy online section has year-round rolling deadline; Screenplay comp: June 15. Started by 3 filmmakers in 1995, fest's primary objective is to present new indie films by new filmmakers. Fest runs concurrent w/ Sundance Film Festival &

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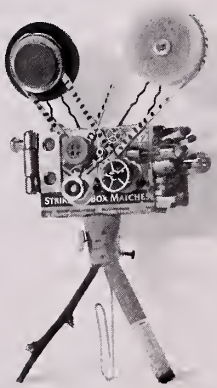
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takes place in the heart of Park City, Utah. Fest shows features, shorts, docs, foreign features, animation, video, digital, streaming. Films showcased attract industry interest & several have received distrib. & agency rep. Founded: 1995. Cats: Short, Doc, Feature, Animation, Experimental, Any style or genre. Awards: Awards: $70,000 worth of prizes awarded last yr. for jury & audience awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, DVD, Web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20-$55. Contact: Brent Clarkson, 5364 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA, USA 90038; (323) 466-1786; fax: 466-1784; mail@slamdance.com; www.slamdance.com

STOP, LOOK & LISTEN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, NY. Deadline: July 31. Fest dedicated to music related shorts & features Cats: feature, short, doc. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Matthew Seig, Two Boots Pioneer Theater, 155 E. 3rd Street, New York, NY 10009; pioneertheater@twoboots.com

SUPER 8 SIDESHOW, August 21-24, CO. Deadline: July 15. One-of-a-kind fest seeks short films of all genres, shotpredominantly on Super 8 or 8mm film. All styles encouraged, but work must be submitted on vhs or mini-dv tape, & must not exceed 15 min.. Festival to incl. workshops, panels, & parties. Cats: doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: incl. cash, film stock & supplies. Formats: super 8, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS or mini-DV. Entry Fee: $15 (for one entry), $2 (each additional entry). Contact: Johnny Moorhouse/Trish, c/o Brainbox, 145 W. 67th St. Apt 4C, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-0990; tivie6@yahoo.com; www.thebrainbox.org

TAMPA INT'L LESBIAN & GAY PRIDE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 3-13, FL. Deadline: July 31. The Fest considers all genres of any length by, about & of interest to lesbians & gay men. Fest is "committed to presenting culturally inclusive & diverse programs" of video & film. Founded: 1991. Cats: Gay/Lesbian, Any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Margaret Murray, PO Box 18445, Tampa , FL 33679; (813) 879-4220; fax: 932-7329; mmurray@pridefilmfest.com; www.pridefilmfest.com

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 30-Sept. 2 , CO. Deadline: July 15. Annual fest, held in a Colorado mountain town, celebrates the art of film, selling out each yr. w/ over 5,000 film afficionados arriving from around the world. Program consists of approx. 40+ film events, tributes, seminars, filmmaker conversations, picnics & parties. Open to all professional & non-professional filmmakers working in all aesthetic disciplines: doc, narrative, animation, experimental, etc. Features & shorts of all styles & lengths are eligible for consideration provided they are premieres. Cats: feature, short, student, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, Hi8, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (19 min. or less); $55 (20-39 min.); $75 (40-59 min.); $95 (60 min. & over); $25 (student films, any length). Contact: Festival, 379 State Street #3, Portsmouth, NH 03801; (603) 433-9202; fax: 433-9206; Tellufilm@aol.com; www.telluridefilmfest.org

VERMONT INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 24-27, VT. Deadline: July 10. Fest devoted to presenting images & issues for social change. Categories: War & Peace, Justice/Human Rights & Environment. Fest is accompanied by other film & video events at a variety of venues. Cats: War & Peace, Justice / Human Rights, Environment. Awards: Awards given in each cat. . Formats: Digital, 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Hi-8, 8mm, DV, Hi8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $65. Contact: VIFF, One Main St., Ste. 307, Burlington, VT 05401; (802) 660-2600; fax: 860-9555; viff@sover.net; www.vtiff.org

VIRGINIA FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 24-27, VA. Deadline: July 1. Fest seeks independent works of all genres & lengths. Submissions must relate to a theme, which changes each year. Based at the University of Virginia, the fest designs its program to resemble a comprehensive course on a cultural theme, engaging a broad audience of scholars, filmmakers, & students in discussions revolving around the year's theme. The fest features over 60 premiere, classic, independent, & experimental films & videos, plus numerous sidebar performances & exhibitions. Founded: 1988. Cats: Experimental, Feature, Animation, doc, short. Formats: CD-Rom, 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20. Contact: Tori Talbot, PO Box 400128, Charlottesville, VA 22904; 800-UVA-FEST or (434) 982-5277; fax: (804) 924-1447; filmfest@virginia.edu; www.vafilm.com

WILLIAMSTOWN FILM FESTIVAL, October 18-27, MA. Deadline: Aug. 15. A non-competitive, boutique fest which showcases independent features & shorts to highlight film in the Berkshires, a part of America celebrated for world-class theater, art, music, & dance. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta, super 8, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25. Contact: Steve Lawson, PO Box 81, Williamstown, MA 01267; (413) 458-9700; fax: (413) 458-2702; filmfest@lycos.com; www.williamstownfilmfest.com

WINSLOW INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, October 24-27, AZ. Deadline: July 1, August 9. Annual fests celebrates the revival of the historic Route 66 town of Winslow, Arizona. Fest showcases films from all genres & subject matter. Fest also features a panel discussion of Hollywood filmmakers. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, native american. Awards: Best Feature, Best Doc, Best Native American Film, Best Doc Short, Best Animated Film, Best Narrative Short. Preview On VHS. Entry Fee: $40 (US), $45 (Int'l); Late: $50 (US), $55 (Int'l). Contact: Jennifer Lee, Festival Director, C/O La Posada Hotel, 303 E. Second Street, Winslow, AZ 86047; info@winslowfilmfestival.org; www.winslowfilmfestival.org

INTERNATIONAL

AJIJIC, MEXICO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, November 19, Mexico. Deadline: August 15. Emphasis is on new & yet-to-be discovered directors, actors, screenwriters, & producers, but they encourage all filmmakers & production companies to submit feature films, short subjects, incl. animation, & documentaries. Cats: Short, Feature, Doc, script, animation. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Robin Lawrason; 011-52-376-6-0351; fax: 011-52-376-6-1920 (during business hrs. ask for a tone in order to send fax.); info@ajijicfest.org; www.ajijicfest.org

BAHIA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 9-16, Brazil. Deadline: June 30 (Competition); July15 (Market). 'Por Um Mundo Mais Humano' (For a More Humanistic World) is motto of fest & market. The Fest is open to Ibero-American prods as well as non-Ibero-American

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

TO SUCCEED AS AN INDEPENDENT you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. Whether through our service and education programs, the pages of our magazine, our web resource, or through the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while reminding you you're not alone.

About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

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Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

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Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

Insurance & Discounts

Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

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prods about Latin Amer. subjects. Program incl. film & video conquest, retros, symposia & exhibitions, expositions. Market takes place during fest; objective is "to create an alternative space for commercialization & int'l distribution of exp. & ind. film & video prods." Market will disseminate promotional materials sent by participants. Cats: Any style or genre. Awards: Tatu de Ouro prizes in following cats: film/video doc; film/video-fiction; film/video animation/exp.; film/video made by non-Ibero-American about Latin America; plus Best Feature Doc; Best Dir.; Best Script; Best Photography; Best Editing; Best Sound. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (max length: 60 min.). Entry Fee: $50, payable to: CETEAD (market). Contact: Nelia Belchote, Festival Director, Campus Universitario de Ondina, 40.170-290 , Bahia, Brazil; 011 55 71 235-4392; fax: 55 71 336-1680; jornada@ufba.br; www.jornadabahia.cjb.net

EURO UNDERGROUND, Nov. 14-Dec. 22, Euro Tour: Krakow, Poland; Sofia, Bulgaria & Berlin, Germany. Deadline: July 19. Festival seeks Underground, Experimental Media Arts/Doc/Short Films for their fall European exhibtion Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short, Animation, performance video, installation, youth media. Awards: Prizes incl. post-fest exhibition in Europe, Southeast Asia, South America & America. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Super 8, PXL, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30. Contact: Festival, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave, Ste 142, Chicago, IL, US 60647; (312) 437-2237; fax: (773) 292-9205; info@euroundergound.org; www.euroundergound.org

FANTASTIK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 21-29, Sweden. Deadline: July 31. The only int'l film fest in Scandinavia totally devoted to the cinema of the fantastic: science-fiction, fantasy, horror, & thriller. Cats: feature premiere/competition, shorts premiere/competition, video. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Melies d'Argent/Best European Fantastic Film (feature, short), Audience Prize (feature, live-action short, animation short). Formats: Beta, 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee: No entry fee (selected shorts have to pay their own freight). Contact: Magnus Paulsson, Stora Varvsgatan 11K:1, Malmö, Sweden 211 19; 011 46 40 12 46 66; fax: 011 46 40 12 22 64; info@fff.se; www.fff.se

FILMFEST HAMBURG, Sept. 23-29, Germany. Deadline: July 15. The Fest is Germany's number one event for young Independent Cinema. The varied program of about 80-100 titles previews some Hollywood productions, but focuses primarily on independent films from all over the world. The Fest's main emphasis is promoting & presenting first & second time feature filmmakers w/ the First Feature competition, the Tesafilm Festival. Founded: 1969. Cats: feature, doc, animation, digital productions. Awards: Audience Award (30,000 DM, approx $13,535); UP! Coming Talent Award (10,000 DM, approx. $4,510). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Josef Wutz, Fest Dir., Friedensallee 44, 22765 Hamburg, Germany; 011 49 399 19 00 0; fax: 49 40 399 19 00 10; office@filmfesthamburg.de; www.filmfesthamburg.de

HAMBURG LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, October 15-20, Germany. Deadline: August 2. Festival seeks work of all lengths & genres. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Awards: All entries less that 30 min. in length will compete for a $1,200 cash prize.. Formats: super 8, 16mm, 1/2", 35mm, S-VHS, U-matic, PAL. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Querbilk E.V., Schanzenstrasse 45, , Hamburg, Germany D-20357; 011 49 0 40 348 06 70; fax: 011 49 0 40 34 05 22; mail@lsf-hamburg.de; www.lsf-hamburg.de

INTERFILM BERLIN, Nov. 5-10, Germany. Deadline: July 15. Fest is the int'l short film event of Berlin. Films & videos no longer than 20 min. are eligible. There is no limit as to the yr. of production. Founded: 1982. Cats: doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, children. Awards: 25 prizes given. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, 1 min. shorts. Preview on VHS (PAL/SECAM/NTSC). Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Heinz Hermanns, Tempelhofer Ufer 1A, D 10961 Berlin, Germany; 011 49 30 693 29 59; fax: 49 30 25 29 13 22; interfilm@interfilmberlin.de; www.interfilmberlin.de

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL OF WALES (WELSH FILM FESTIVAL), November 21-29, Wales. Deadline: August 24. Founded: 1988. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Festival, Market House, Market Road, Cardiff, Wales CF5 1QE; 011 029 20 406220; fax: 011 029 20 233751; enq@iffw.co.uk; www.iffw.co.uk

INT'L MOUNTAIN & ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL GRAZ, Nov. 14-16, Austria. Deadline: July 2. Fest seeks mountain, adventure & nature films in five competitive cats: docs on climbing expeditions & alpine history; films about rock & ice climbers; adventure films that show exceptional achievements by people in their natural environment; nature & environmental films related to conservation, protection & preservation of nature; & works w/ ethnological themes or about the preservation of alpine culture. Founded: 1986. Cats: doc. Awards: Cash & in-kind prizes. Formats: DV Pro, 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, M II. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Robert Schauer, Schonaugasse 3, A-8010, Graz, Austria; 00 43 316 814223 0; fax: 00 43 316 814223 4; mountainfilm@mountainfilm.com; www.mountainfilm.com

KYIV INT'L FILM FESTIVAL MOLODIST, Oct. 19-27, Ukraine. Deadline: July 1. Competitive fest, a.k.a. Molodist ("Youth" in Ukrainian), is focused on the work of young filmmakers. Festival programs first-films of all genres & lengths. Cats: student, short, feature, doc, animation. Awards: Grand Prix award; Best Film in each category, Audience Prize. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee.. Contact: Dom Kino, 6 Saksagansky St. Suite 115, Kyiv, Ukraine 01033; 011 380 44 246 6798; fax: 011 380 44 227 4557; molodist@oldbank.com; www.molodist.com

MAKING SCENES QUEER FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, September 12-15 & 19-22, Canada. Deadline: July 1. Making Scenes provides an annual film & video fest that presents images of sexual diversity featuring queer works. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. VHS. Contact: Jose Sanchez or Daniel Grummisch, 2 Daly Avenue, Suite 250, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6E2; 613-566-2113; fax: 613-566-2113; scenes@magma.ca; www.makingscenes.ca

MANNHEIM-HEIDELBERG INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-16, Germany. Deadline: August 9. Specialized on

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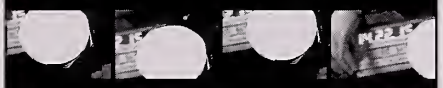

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MILANO FILM FESTIVAL, September 13-22, Italy. Deadline: July 1. Annual fest invites features (over 45 min.) films & Short (under 45 min.) films from anyone who'd like to "invent, build, & destroy new ideas of cinema." Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student. Awards: Awards incl. Aprile Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, DV, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry fees. Contact: Associazione Culturale Aprile, via V.Monti 32, Milano, Italy 20123; 011 39 027 13613; fax: 011 39 0245 480168; info@milanofilmfest.it; www.milanofilmfest.it

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 22-Sept. 2, Canada . Deadline: May 27-June 21 (shorts); June 3-July 15 (Features). Only competitive fest in N. America recognized by FIAPF. Founded in '77, large & int'ly known fest boasts audiences of over 400,000 & programs hundreds of films. Features in competition must be 70mm or 35mm, prod in 12 months preceding fest, not released commercially outside of country of origin & not entered in any competitive int'l film fest (unreleased films given priority). Shorts must be 70mm or 35mm & must not exceed 15 min. Cats: feature, short, any style or genre. Awards: Grand Prix of the Americas to best film; Special Grand Prix of Jury, Best Director, Best Actress/Actor; Best Screenplay & Best Artistic Contribution (awarded to technician). Shorts compete for 1st & 2nd Prize. Second jury awards Prix de Montreal to director of 1st fiction feature; all 1st features in all cats eligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 70mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Serge Losique, Fest Dir., 1432 de Bleury St., Montreal , Quebec, Canada H3A 2J1; (514) 848-3883; 848-9933; fax: 848-3886; info@ffm-montreal.org; www.ffm-montreal.org

NETHERLANDS FILM FESTIVAL, September 25-October 4, The Netherlands. Deadline: July 1. Annual fest is a nat'l film fest & ONLY Dutch films can be entered. Fest has a small Foreign Affairs section, for which foreign films w/ a considerable Dutch aspect (actors, director, producers, subject, etc.) will be invited. Cats: feature, short, doc, TV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry Fees. Contact: NFF, Box 1581, 3500 BN, Utrecht, The Netherlands; 011 31 30 230-3800; fax: 31 30 230-3801; info@filmfest.nl; www.filmfest.nl

OTTAWA INT'L STUDENT ANIMATION FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-20, Canada. Deadline: July 15. Competitive biennial fest for film & video, founded in 1976, is N. America's largest & oldest animation fest. Fest features noncompetitive Int'l Panorama, retros, tributes, children's program, numerous workshops & social events in addition to competition. Entries must have been completed since June 30 of preceding 2 yrs. Craft entry cats incl. animation, design, story, music &/or sound, animation, media, object, computer drawn, mixed media, exp. or unusual technique. Competition for independent & commissioned work. Entrants should specify one of following cats: prods under 50, first films (student films welcome), films for children, graduate student films, educational, promotional works (commercials, PSAs), music videos, TV specials, TV series, animation for Internet, studio showreels. Fest shows about 115 new works as well as another 400 in retros. Founded: 1976. Cats: Animation, Children, Experimental. Awards: Grand Prize of Fest for Best Indie & Best Commissioned Film, 2nd & 3rd prizes, Cat Prizes, Special Jury Prize. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Canadian Film Institute, 2 Daly Ave., Suite 120, Ottawa , Ontario, Canada K1N 6E2; (613) 232-8769; fax: (613) 232-6315; oiaf@ottawa.com; www.awn.com/ottawa

OURENSE INT'L INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 9-16, Spain. Deadline: July 31. The Ourense fest accepts works in all genres, formats, & languages to compete for cash prizes incl. the CALPURNIA Awards for Best Film, Best New European Director, Best Short, & Audience Award. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Grand Prize 1600.000 pts. Best Direction 1000000 pts. Public Choice 900000 pts. Best European Film 500000 pts. Best Short 400000 pts. Public Choice Short 200000 pts.. Formats: 35mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Patricia Iglesias, PO Box 664, Ourense, Spain 32080; 011 34 988 224 127; fax: 34 988 249 561; oufest@ourencine.com; www.ourencine.com

REGUS LONDON FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-21, UK. Deadline: Aug. 2. Fest, run continuously since 1957, is largest non-competitive & invitational film fest in Europe. Cats: short, animation, feature, doc, any style or genre, children. Awards: Fipresci Int'l Critics Award (first feature prize), The Sutherland Trophy (first/second feature). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, S-8, 3/4", super 8, 70mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Sarah Lutton, Nat'l Film Theatre, South Bank, Waterloo, London, United Kingdom SE1 8XT; 011 44 20 7815 1322; fax: 44 20 7633 0786; sarah.lutton@bfi.org.uk; www.bfi.org.uk

RENDEZVOUS WITH MADNESS FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 8-17, Canada. Deadline: July 5. Annual fest exploring the myths & realities of mental illness, addictions & mental health issues through their portrayal in film. Programs may be followed by Q&As or panel discussions. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student, youth media, family, children, any style or genre, silent. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, super 8, 8mm, Hi8, DV, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Joanne Huber, Workman Theatre Project, 1001 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6J 1H4; (416) 583-4339; fax: (416) 583 4354; info@rendezvousw/madness.com; www.rendezvousw/madness.com

SAINT HILAIRE DU TOUVET INT'L HANG GLIDING FILM FESTIVAL, September 19-22, France. Deadline: July 15. Fest seeks films related to parasailing, hang gliding, paragliding, freefalling, parachuting, hot-air & gas balloons, muscular flying, sail planes, base jumping, kites &

all forms of non-motorized flying (incl. films concerning bird flight & wind). Max. length 30 min. Cats: any style or genre, short. Formats: Beta SP, Beta, 1/2", DVD, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Festival, Tourism Office, 38660 Saint-Hilaire du Tovet, France; 011 33 4 7608 3399; fax: 33 4 7697 2056; info@coupe-icare.org; www.coupe-icare.org

SAN SEBASTIAN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 19-28, Spain. Deadline: July 31. Held in an elegant Basque seaside city, San Sebastian is one of most important film fests in Spain, in terms of "glitter" sections, facilities, attendance, competition, partying & number of films. West Coast Delegate: Berenice Reynaud; (661) 255-1050 ext 2421;fax: (323) 259-9897; East Coast Delegate: Mary Flanagan; (718) 855-2203; fax: (718) 797-1987; Delegatefor Latino cinema: Cathy Rivera Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Festival Director, Apartado de Correos 397, Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain 20080; 011 34 943 48 12 12; fax: 011 34 943 48 12 18; ssiff@sansebastianfest.com,berenice3@earthlink.net, mtflanagan@erols.com, catyrivera@aol.com; www.sansebastianfest.ya.com

SÃO PAULO INT'L FILM FESTVAL, Oct. 18-31, Brazil. Deadline: Aug. 12. Recognized by FIAPF, this annual competitive fest presents 2 major sections: Int'l Perspective & New Filmmakers' Competition (up to 3rd film of director). Audience makes pre-selection for jury, selecting 10 films for final judging. Entries must have been produced in preceding 2 years & be Brazilian premieres. Festival offers audiences opportunity to view works that might not otherwise be seen in Brazil. About 150 films showcased each yr. Founded: 1979. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Fest also awards Critics' Prize & Audience Prize. Winners receive Bandeira Paulista, trophy made by plastics artist Tomie Ohtake. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Leon Cakoff, fest dir., Rua Antonio Carlos, 288, São Paolo - SP, Brazil 01309-010; 011 55 11 3141 2548; fax: 55 11 3266 7066; info@mostra.org; www.mostra.org

SIENA INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 22-30, Italy. Deadline: July 31. Fest, held in conjunction w/ Short Film Market, offering five competitions: fiction, experimental, doc, animated films & Italian Panorama. All films must be 30 min. or less & have been produced in the last 2 years. No advertising or industrial films accepted for competition. Awards: Best Festival Film, Best Fiction Film, Best Animated Film, Best Doc Film, Best Experimental Film, Special Jury Prize, Audience Award, Best Italian Film. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Festival del Cortometraggio di Siena c/o Filmclub Associati, C.P. 11/065 Montesacro, Rome, Italy 00141; 011 39 06 4745585; fax: 39 06 47885799; fest@cortoitaliacinema.com; www.cortoitaliacinema.com

SITGES FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE CINE DE CATALUNYA, October 3-13, Spain. Deadline: July 31 (shorts); Aug. 15 (features). The fest has two official sections: "Fantastic" is a specialized competitive section for fantasy films which grants Sitges w/ the recognition of FIAPF as a specialized fest. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student. Awards: "Fantastic:" Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematogrphy, Best Original Soundtrack, Best Visual Effects, Best Fantasy Short; Best Art Direction; Best Make-Up. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Angel Sala, fest director, Av. Josep Tarradellas, 135, Esc. A, 3r. 2a., Barcelona, Spain 08029; 011 34 93 419 36 35; fax: 34 93 439 73 80; cinsit@sitgestur.com; www.sitges.com/cinema

TORINO FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-15, Italy. Deadline: Aug. 19(shorts); Sept. 16(features). The long running Fest is a competitive showcase for new directors & filmmaking trends w/ the goal of helping discover, support & promote new directors & emerging areas in film. Sections incl. Int'l Competition for feature & shorts films (35mm & 16mm, Italian premieres completed after Oct. 1, 2000); non-competitive section (features & docs). About 300 films shown. Founded: 1982. Cats: feature, doc, short, script. Awards: Best Int'l feature; Best Screenplay; Best short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Contact: TFF, via Monte di Pieta 1, Torino, Italy 10121; 39 011 5623309; fax: 39 011 5629796; info@torinofilmfest.org; www.torinofilmfest.org

VANCOUVER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 26-Oct. 11, Canada. Deadline: July 5 (Canadian); July 12 (Int'l). Fest presents 300 films from 50 countries at 8 cinemas over 16 days & has become one of N. America's larger int'l fests (after Montreal & Toronto). Founded: 1982. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Dragons & Tigers Award for Best Emerging Director of East Asia; Most Popular Film; Most Popular Canadian Film; Best Emerging Western Canadian Feature Film Director & Short or Mid-Length Film Director; Best Canadian Screenplay (computer hardware & software prize); Nat'l Film Board of Canada Award for Best Doc Feature; Diversity in Spirit Award; Chief Dan George Humanitarian Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 70mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, U-matic, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50 ($30 U.S., non-Canadian only). Contact: PoChu AuYeung, Program Manager, 1008 Homer St, #410, Vancouver , British Columbia, Canada V6B 2X1; (604) 685-0260; fax: 688-8221; viff@viff.org; www.viff.org

VIENNALE: VIENNA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-30, Austria. Deadline: Aug. 13. A "fest of fests," FIAF-recognized noncompetitive Viennale introduces local auds to major films of annual fest circuit. Fest is "in praise of independent politics & visions," emphasizing films off beaten track. Large retro every yr. on overlooked subjects, such as Rossellini or Godard. Sections inc. lost & found (recently discovered or very rare films) & 3 or 4 tributes to directors, actors & producers. Entries must not have been shown theatrically in Austria. Cats: Any style or genre, Retro, feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Hans Hurch, Siebensterngasse 2, A-1070 Vienna, Austria; 011 43 1 526 59 47; fax: 011 43 1 523 41 72; office@viennale.at; www.viennale.at

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Competitions

AMERICAN ACCOLADES SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: A screenplay competition designed to provide an outlet for emerging talent in a relatively impenetrable industry. Finalist judges include agents, managers & other industry executives. Cats: Drama; Comedy/Romantic Comedy; Sci-Fi/Action/Adventure; Thriller/Horror; Short; Other; Cat. winners receive $500. Grand prize $2,500. Entry fee: $40-$60, depending on when it is submitted (early, standard or late deadline). Early deadline: Aug. 30. Appl. avail. on website. Contact: American Accolades Screenwriting Competition. 2118 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 160B, Santa Monica, CA 90403; info@AmericanAccolades.com; www.AmericanAccolades.com

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: To bridge gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: first place $1,500; second place $1,000; third place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax: 475-0193; awards@Hollywoodawards.com; www.Hollywoodawards.com

ESHAY.COM SCRIPT WRITING COMPETITION: Contestants eligible to win a full script consultation and software. All will receive feedback on the first 10 pages of feature script. Visit eshay.com for more info. Deadline July 15th, $35 fee.

ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: To promote the positive portrayal of gays and lesbians in film. Entering its 4th year, the competition is open to all writers and offers cash awards & industry contacts to winners. Deadline: Sept. 1. Complete rules & entry forms available at website or by sending s.a.s.e to Cherub Productions, "One In Ten Screenplay Competition," Box 540, Boulder, CO 80306; (303) 629-3072; cherubfilm@aol.com; www.screenplaycontests.com

SCR(I)PT MAGAZINE'S OPEN DOOR SCREENWRITING CONTEST: This competition aims to discover, promote and recognize a talented, new screenwriter by awarding them cash and an "open door" to the industry. Top 10 finalists are forwarded to a production company which will choose the winner and may contact any of the finalists to work in the future. Entry fee: $45. Deadline: Aug. 19. Contact: Open Door Contests, Scr(i)pt Magazine, 5638 Sweet Air Rd., Baldwin, MD 21013; (888) 245-2228; fax: (410) 592-3466; contests@scriptmag.com; www.scriptmag.com

Films • Tapes Wanted

BIJOU MATINEE: Is a showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35 leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat at 2:30 PM. Submissions should be 25 min. or less. VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY, 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: Offers the excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features, of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations and allow for a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (773) 289-4261; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com

CINEMARENO: A year-round festival of films. Monthly screenings showcase new independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: $20. Contact: CINEMARENO, P.O. Box 5372, Reno NV 89513, e-mail: cinemareno@excite.com. Entry form and guidelines at www.cinemareno.org

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA: Located in Madison, WI Electric Eye is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits redistributed from screenings back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30-90 minute works that are creative, witty or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts, 10 minutes or less, any genre to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madision, WI 53714; for more information go to www.prolefeedstudios.com

FLICKER FILM FESTIVAL: A bi-monthly super 8 and 16mm show which features 12-16 new short films by local filmmakers at the Knitting Factory. Film grants, super 8 stock and $50 worth of super 8 processing are also raffled off at the show. Find out more at www.flickernyc.com

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE: Is accepting short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or less on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a non-exclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Works selected may continue on to nat'l and int'l venues for additional screenings. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled with name, title, length, phone # and any support materials incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Microcinema, Inc., 2318 Second Ave., #313-A, Seattle, WA 98121, USA. Info/details: (206) 322-0282; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com

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Known by most on the web as the premiere site for aspiring writers and directors with its helpful collection of resource books and classifieds, eShay.com, "the entertainment carriage company," has gone one step farther to help independents with its 2002 Script Writing Competition. The competition promises to improve your writing just for entering, with guaranteed feedback from the judges. Added incentives are prizes worth up to $1,500 that winners will receive, principally screenwriting software (first place receives Power Structure, a story development software, and Power Tracker, an expense management software) no starving writer should be without. See listing.

SPARK VIDEO INTERNATIONAL: Spark Contemporary Art Space is a collectively run gallery in Syracuse, NY. We are currently accepting submissions of short (under 15 min.) art videos for our next programming year (Sept. 2002-April 2003). All types of independent non-commercial work is accepted. International and domestic submissions are encouraged. All programs will be posted on the web and all participating artists will be contacted. Accepted formats: VHS and DV. Processing Fee: $5 payable to Jeremy Drummond. Include Synopsis, bio, CV and contact information. S.A.S.E. required for tape return. Send to: Jeremy Drummond - Video Programmer, Spark Contemporary Art Space, 535 Westcott St. Apt. #2, Syracuse, NY 13210. For more info e-mail jeremydrummond@hotmail.com or call (315) 422-2654.

SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Is looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature length non-fiction productions in all areas of the special interest or instructional fields, cutting edge documentaries and children and family programming. Also seeking feature length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural products wanted, both fiction and non fiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; (315) 454-5608; email: webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

THE DREAM SERIES: Seeks challenging social issue documentaries that promote frank community discus-

sions about issues of racial prejudice and social injustice that fall under the Martin Luther King, Jr. legacy. Selected works are screened for this on going monthly series at the MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta, GA and promoted, listed and reviewed in local print. Formats: VHS, Beta. Send non returnable VHS screeners to Mark A. Smith, IMAGE Film & Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Suite N-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; mark@imagefv.org

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a non-profit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, please visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

THE SHORT LIST: the showcase int'l short films, airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc; contact: fax 619-462-8266 or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu

UNQUOTE TV: Weekly nonprofit program dedicated to exposing innovative work of all genres. Not cablecast nationally. Unquote is now in its 12th year. Send to: Unquote TV c/o DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St. 9B/4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu; www.dutv.org

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting edge television station from Nantucket Island Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to: Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

WORKSCREENING/WORKS PRODUCTIONS: Is currently accepting submissions of feature and short documentaries and fiction films for programming of its upcoming inaugural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our Microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include a SASE. contact: Julian Rad, Works Productions/ WorkScreening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO: Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands. Only NoodleHead Network distributes videos made with kids. Educational videos in all subjects. Check out our distributor FAQ at www.aivf.org/independent and get your students voices heard. (800) 639-5680. www.noodlehead.com

Publications

DIGITAL MEDIA TRAINING SERIES: DMTS is the premiere training series for film, television & web developers. The series provides award-winning training video, CD-ROM, and DVD training tools that improve productivity & creativity for the end-user. DMTS training episodes feature the latest topics & technology, giving viewers access to working professionals and experts

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NAATA MEDIA FUND

With support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) provides production funds for Asian American film and video projects that have potential for national public television broadcast.

Recent Media Fund Highlights
ANCESTORS IN THE AMERICAS by Loni Ding
THE DEBUT by Gene Cajayon
DREAM CATCHER by Ed Radtke
FIRST PERSON PLURAL by Deann Borshay Liem
THE FLIP SIDE by Rod Pulido
ROOTS IN THE SAND by Jayasri Hart
THE SPLIT HORN by Taggart Siegel and Jim McSilver
TURBANS by Erika Surat Andersen
DAUGHTER FROM DANANG by Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco

Check out the Filmmaker's Corner at naatanet.org or call (415)863-0814 x122

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SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: Is a new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. Sanctuary is devoted exclusively to creative work. Thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

Resources • Funds

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION: Provide completion funding for educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact: Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202-4921; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis/

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in Richmond, VA, NYC & Austin, TX offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super 8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX, 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the Foundation's 2 major programs (Human & Community Development; Global Security & Sustainability). Send prelim. 2 to 3 page letter. Contact: John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF THE ARTS: NYSCA announces the availability of funds through its Electronic Media & Film Program for distribution costs of recent works by New York State artists. Grants up to $5,000 awarded for audio/radio, film, video, computer-based work & installation art. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: EMF Program; (212) 741-3993 or pjarowski@nysca.org

OPEN CALL FOR PRODUCTION FUNDS/OPEN DOOR COMPETITION: Funding is available from the National Asian American Telecommunications Assoc. for applicants with public TV projects in any stage of production or post-production (next open call deadline Aug. 30, 2002 by 5:00 p.m. PST) or final post-production phase (Open Door applications are reviewed on a rolling basis). Awards average from $20,000 to $50,000. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814 x 122; mediafund@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org

PORTLAND, OREGON FILMMAKING GRANTS: Digital Media Education Center of Portland, OR is announcing an open call for submissions for Avid Film Camp program. AFC affords a boost to indie feature directors looking to complete their films, while offering Avid-authorized training to career editors. Films will also receive free Pro Tools audio finishing & Avid Symphony Online editing. Submissions need to be feature-length projects w/ shooting completed. Projects accepted on a rolling basis. Contact: Deborah Cravey, Digital Media Education Center, 5201 SW Westgate Dr., Ste. 111, Portland, OR 97221; (503) 297-2324; deb@filmcamp.com; www.filmcamp.com

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals for programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS Web page, Producing for PBS, for content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Senior Director, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295. Email: cjones@pbs.org. Web: www.pbs.org/producers/ .

THOUSAND WORDS FINISHING FUND: Considers projects by first or second time feature filmmakers looking to create intelligent, innovative, and challenging films. The $500,000 fund is available in varied amounts for editing, sound mixing, music rights, and other post-production costs. Selected films will also receive assistance in film festival planning and distribution. Narratives, animation and works-in-progress may be submitted. Application forms can be downloaded at Thousand Words' website: www.thousand-words.com. Contact: finishingfund@thousand-words.com or Thousand Words, 9100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 404E, Los Angeles, CA 90212. (310) 859-8330, fax, (310) 859-8333.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS: One of the largest multidisciplinary contemporary arts centers in the Midwest, invites proposals for solo, group & curated visual arts exhibitions for the 2002/2003 season. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: UICA Race St. Gallery, 41 Sheldon Blvd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; (616) 454-7000; fax: (616) 459-9395.

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AIVF members can search all current opportunity notices with the AIVF interactive resource directory at www.aivf.org/listings

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Opportunities • Gigs

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ATTN! ACTIVISTS, INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS, AMATEURS: LOOKING FOR ANY AND ALL FOOTAGE OF THE FOLLOWING NYC EVENTS: 1) 9/24/94: Town Hall meeting with Mayor Giuliani at the 92nd St. Y. 2) 5/26/99: US Commission on Civil Rights—angle from front of room 3) 9/14/92: PBA rally at/near City Hall, esp.

speakers 4) 4/13/99: James Savage, acting Pres. of the PBA talk at mtg. in Queens 5) 3/16/94: New York Post-sponsored b'kfast conference on crime with Mayor Giuliani speaking. 6) Vendor/Street Artists—on NYC streets, esp. arrested/harassed 7) Bryant Park—1984-1992—any footage that shows people enjoying park, watching outside movies, etc. Will also consider footage of: arrests at protests over last eight years; NYPD police activity; footage of Rudy Giuliani. Please contact: K Video Productions, (212) 475 9195, k.video@verizon.net

NATIONAL COORDINATOR/FACILITATOR New Day Films, a 30 year old co-op of 40 film/video makers/self distributors, seeks a coordinator/facilitator to work as an independent contractor. 15 hours per week (average) with periods of concentrated service. Responsibilities include: leadership support; meeting planning & facilitation; mediation; interface with leaders in the media field. Fee for services, commensurate with ability & experience, in the $20,000-$25,000 range. Send resume, letter of interest, & references, by September 1, 2002, to: Marlene Booth, 23 Irving Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

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HISTORICAL RESEARCH: Any subject - News Events, Personalities, Sports, Crime, Medicine, The Arts, etc. From Library, Internet, and Special Collection Sources. Experienced Researchers. Free estimates. Cumberland Research (718) 522-6478

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SU-CITY PICTURES clients win awards and get deals! Susan Kouguell, Harvard/Tufts instructor, author The Savvy Screenwriter analyzes: scripts/films/treatments/queries/synopses/pitches.Credits: Miramax/Warner Bros/Fine Line. Rewrites available. (212) 219-9224; www.su-city-pictures.com.

Postproduction

2 MERIDIAN AVID SUITES (MAC platform) in Hudson Sq, Soho, available for short term or long term project. Beautiful office location, with flexible schedule and rates. Contact info@grandviewisland.com or call (212) 691-3859.

AVID RENTAL: Comfortable, affordable Avid Media Composer Suite with On-Line & Off-Line resolutions for rental in Upper Chelsea. Editors available if needed. Merci Media (212) 563-0210, www.mercimedia.com, mercimedia@mercimedia.com.

BE A FINAL CUT PRO EDITOR - learn from a professional editor & experienced teacher. Affordable: small classes and private tutorials, hands-on training. Call (917) 523 - 6260 or check www.HighNoonProd.com

BRODSKY & TREADWAY Film-to-tape masters. Reversal only. Regular 8mm, Super 8, or archival 16mm. We love early B&W & Kodachrome. Scene-by-scene only. Correct frame rates. For appt. call (978) 948-7985.

DVD DESIGN AND PRODUCTION for film and video artists. Discount for AIVF members! For details contact: dvd@randomroom.com; www.randomroom.com

EDITOR AVAILABLE w/fully equipped cutting room. Many credits in features & shorts. Sound editing, mixing, and screening room. Call Tom (201) 741-4367.

FCP ONLINE SYSTEM FOR RENT: Do your own online edit! Want to finish for broadcast but don't want to pay online prices? Will deliver to YOUR LOCATION: 800mHz Dual G4 w/ Digital Voodoo cap. card, 1GB RAM, Rorke 144GB SCSI RAID (>one hour uncompressed video), Superdrive (burn CDs or DVDs!), 17" flat panel monitor, second monitor support, deck control, and Yamaha Speakers. Start your project on our machine, or transfer your project when your offline is done, & batch capture uncompressed serial digital video! Consulting & Editors avail also. Rick Brown (917) 518-2896, rickbnyc@aol.com.

FINAL CUT PRO CLASSES. Learn to edit your first feature, documentary or music video using Apples Final Cut Pro software. We offer intensive 1 and 2 day courses with a maximum of 2 students per class. Each student works on an individual dual screen G4 workstation in our sunny spacious studio. Bring your own project in to learn on. We schedule classes from 10am-2pm, 2pm-6pm and 6pm-10pm 7 days a week. Call, e-mail or visit our website for more information. S. R. P. Video Services, Inc., 225 Lafayette Street, Suite 714, New York, NY 10012 Tel. (212) 334-7380. E-mail: info@FinalCutProClasses.com. Web: www.FinalCutProClasses.com

FINAL CUT PRO edit suite on the Upper West Side 50 feet from the 1,2,3,9 subway line. Dual 1Ghz with DVD burner, dual monitors, broadcast monitor, DVCAM (PAL, NTSC and aspect ratio conversion), miniDV, BetaSP, VHS, 16 channel mixer, 300 gig SCSI raid and Final Cut Pro 3. PAL & NTSC monitors and decks. 20 dollars an hour without editor. Will provide free training. Great for indies. Email info@ProductionJunction.com or phone (212) 769-8927.

FINAL CUT PRO RENTAL: Private edit suite in the Financial District w/ 24 hour access. 35 hours broadcast storage, 200+ at low res. Call Jonathan at Mint Leaf Productions: (212) 952-0121 x. 229.

FREE AVID! Rent our Avid-To-Go (AVR 77) with a Beta-SP deck for three months and get the fourth month for free! We also offer Avid edit suites, Pro-tools room with Voice-over booth and Digi-Beta-To-Go and DVD transfers of all video media. Call Production Central (212) 631-0435

PRODUCTION TRANSCRIPTS; Verbatim transcripts for documentaries, journalists, etc. Low prices & flat rates based on tape length. Standard 1 hr., 1-on-1 interview is only $80: www.productiontranscripts.com for details or call: (888) 349-3022.

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www.aivf.org

A NOTE TO MEMBERS:

Our office will be closed from July 1 – 8. We will re-open on Tuesday, July 9 at 11 a.m.

Public Filmmaker Resource Library hours for the Summer are Wednesdays, from 11 a.m.–9 p.m., and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m.–6 p.m. by appointment to members only.

AIVF events take a brief respite during the months of July and August. Be sure to check out our co-sponsored programs, and look for details on what's to come:

- AIVF co-presents HBO's Frame By Frame Series, September 12–26
- AIVF's Annual Membership Meeting, September 20
- New York programs will continue with Documentary dialogs and our ever-popular Producers Legal Series—as well as a new monthly Manhattan Salon!
- An all-new edition of the *AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors*

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY
Wednesdays, 11a.m.-9p.m. EST
(and by appointment to AIVF members)
The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.-Thu. 2-5p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

AIVF co-sponsors
THE NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL
Presented in association with Lincoln Center Festival 2002
July 19-25, New York, NY

The New York Video Festival offers a treasure trove of works that explore people, places and things in new and invigorating ways. While the festival continues to present experimental, non-narrative works that reveal the inner workings of the psyche and the outer sense of space, and that probe areas of our national and world consciousness—from international topics surrounding September 11th, to profiles of skateboarders and basement bands. Don't miss this eclectic mix of video art, guaranteed to stir you up.

AIVF is proud to support the New York Video Festival once again and to co-present the program:

LIKE, LOVE, LOSS, & LONGING

when: Sat., July 20th: 3:30;
Tues., July 23rd: 8:45
where: Walter Reade Theatre
(65 West 65th St., NYC)
for info: Contact the Film Society of Lincoln Center at www.filmlinc.com or (212) 875-5638

Story of your life? Well, you're not alone, as these disparate videomakers demonstrate in smart, lyrical, and touching tales of need, disquiet, dysfunction, and transcendence. While you've been curled up like an injured stinkbug on your bedroom floor, they've been looking at relationships of all stripes with a cool eye and putting it down on tape. A good tonic for those who know the chances of connecting once and for all are slim to none. Program includes:

Getting Stronger Every Day
Miranda July, USA, 2001, 7m

Reeperbahn
Samuael Topiary, USA, 2001, 14m

Just Another Day Without You
Virginia Valdes, USA, 2002, 5m

The Tower
Quirine Racké and Helena Muskens, The Netherlands, 2001, 15m

A Bunny Rabbit
So Yong Kim, USA, 2001, 5m

It's Not You, It's Me
Michael Bell-Smith, USA, 2000, 8m

Do You Know...
Minda Martin, USA, 2002, 15m

Skin Job
Jennifer Reeder, USA, 2002, 5m

OUTFEST 2002
L.A. GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL

AIVF co-sponsors
OUTFEST, THE LOS ANGELES GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL

Outfest builds bridges among audiences, filmmakers and the entertainment industry through the exhibition of high-quality gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender-themed films and videos, that enlighten, educate, and entertain the diverse communities of Southern California.

Don't Miss!
Panel Discussion:

Distributing Docs: Strategies & Success Stories

when: July 21, 4:30 p.m. (Note: this time is tentative. Please check website for updates and location.)
for info: www.outfest.org; (323) 960-9200

Now that you have made a documentary film, how do you find an audience for it? Join this panel of distribution representatives as well as self-distributing filmmakers on getting your work out there.

AIVF co-sponsors
URBANWORLD FILM FESTIVAL
August 7-11, New York, NY

urbanworld
FILM FESTIVAL

The largest competitive minority film festival dedicated to redefining and enhancing the roles of minority films in contemporary cinema.

Now in its sixth year, Urbanworld showcases films from African-American, Latin, and Asian filmmakers from around the world. Prior Grand Jury Prize winners have gone on to receive Academy Award nominations, as Urbanworld continues its excellence in programming and celebration of independent filmmaking. For further information: www.urbanworld.com

AIVF BOARD ELECTIONS

Run for the AIVF board of directors! Volunteer board members serve three-year terms, gathering several times a year for weekend-long meetings. We have an active board; members must be prepared to spend time at and between meetings to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

Attendance at all board meetings and participation by email & conference calls in interim • Preparation for meetings by reading/preparing advance materials • Active participation in one or more committee areas • General support of executive board and staff • Commitment to the organization's efforts toward financial stability and program goals.

Board nominations must be made by current AIVF members (i.e. dues are paid in full on date of nomination); you may nominate yourself. Board members must be at least 19 years old and AIVF members in good standing. To make a nomination, email or fax the name, address, and telephone number of both the nominee and nominator to the attention of elect@aivf.org. We cannot accept nominations over the phone. Nominations are due at the AIVF offices or in the email box by 6 p.m. EST, **Friday 8/30/02.**

Voting Eligibility: Only paid AIVF members may vote. Renew by Oct. 11 to be eligible. To verify your membership status, contact members@aivf.org or (212) 807-1400 x. 236.

save the date!
September 27 is Media Advocacy Day

Join with AIVF members all over the country as we take our concerns to our representatives! Watch for details, or for more info, contact members@aivf.org.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

State of the Arts NYSCA

The Academy Foundation
The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
The Chase Manhattan Foundation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
The New York Foundation for the Arts TechTAP Program
New York State Council on the Arts

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

Business/Industry Members: **CA:** Attaboc LLC; Busk Entertainment, LLC; Calliope Films, Inc.; Eastman Kodak Co.; Forest Creatures Entertainment Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; HBO; The Hollywood Reporter; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; **CO:** The Crew Connection; Inferno Film Productions; **FL:** Burn Productions; **IL:** Buzzbait; Rock Valley College; Wiggle Puppy Productions; Wonderdog Media; **MA:** CS Associates; Glidecam Industries; **MD:** The Learning Channel; **MI:** Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Kingberry Productions, Inc.; **NJ:** DIVA Communications, Inc.; **NY:** AKQ Communications, Ltd.; American Montage; Analog Digital Intl., Inc.; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cineblast! Prods.; Cypress Films; Dependable Delivery, Inc.; Docurama; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Earth Video; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Highdrama Productions Inc.; Historic Films Archive; Jalapeno Media; Lighthouse Creative, Inc.; Lowell Light Manufacturing, Inc; MacKenzie Culter, Inc.; Mercer Street Sound; Metropolis Film Lab Inc.; Mixed Greens; New Rican Filmmaker; New York Independent Film School; One Kilohertz; The Outpost; Paul Dinatale Post, Inc.; Persona Films; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Seahorse Films; Suitcase Productions; Swete Studios; Wolfen Prods.; **PA:** Cubist Post & Effects; Smithtown Creek Prods.; **UT:** KBYU-TV; Rapid Video, LLC; **VA:** Dorst MediaWorks; Roland House, Inc.; **WV:** Harpers Ferry Center Library.

Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Fest.; **AZ:** U of Central Arkansas/ Channel 6 Television; **CA:** Antelope Valley Independent Film Festival; California Newsreel; Filmmakers Alliance; The Hollywood Reporter; International Buddhist Film Festival; Media Fund; NAATA; Ojai Film Soc.; San Francisco Jewish Film Fest.; USC School of Cinema TV; **GA:** Image Film & Video Center; **HI:** U. of Hawaii Outreach College; **ID:** Center for School Improvement; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago/Video Data Bank; Community TV Network; PBS Midwest; Rock Valley Coll.; Roxie Media Corporation; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Lowell Telecommunications Corp.; LTC Communications; Projectile Arts; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **MN:** Intermedia Arts; Walker Arts Center; IFP North; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **NC:** Cucaloris Film Foundation; Doubletake Documentary Film Fest.; Duke University-Film and Video; **NE:** Great Plains Film Festival; Nebraska Independent Film Proj., Inc.; Ross Film Theater, UN/Lincoln; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; College of NJ/ Dept. of Communication Studies; Freedom Film Society; reat Vision Filmwork, Inc.; **NM:** Taos Talking Pictures; **NY:** American Museum of Natural History; Center for New American Media; Communications Society; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Dependable Delivery; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community TV; Film Forum; Film Video Arts; John Jay High School; Konscious, Inc.; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Foundation for Jewish Culture; National Video Resources; NYU TV Center; School of Visual Arts; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stanton Crenshaw Communication; Stony Brook Film Festival; Upstate Films, Ltd.; **OH:** Cleveland Filmmakers; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio Independent Film Fest.; Ohio University/Film; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; **PA:** PA Council on the Arts; Carnegie Museum of Art; Prince Music Theater; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI:** Flickers Arts Collaborative; **SC:** South Carolina Arts Commission; Hybrid Films **TX:** Austin Cinemaker Co-op; Austin Film Society; Michener Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; **WI:**Wisconsin Film Office; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Shorts Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Peru:** Guarango Cine y Video; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Friends of FIVF: Ulises Aristides, Bakus International, Michael Bernstein, Barbara Baxter-Brooks, Hugo M.J. Cassirer, Chris Deaux, Arthur Dong, Aaron Edison, Christopher Farina, Suzanne Griffin, Christopher Gomersall, Patricia Goudvis, Leigh Hanlon, Robert L. Hawk, Henrietta Productions, Jewish Communal Fund, John Kavanaugh, Laura Kim, Bart Lawson, Michelle Lebrun, Elizabeth Mane, Diane Markrow, Sheila Nevins, William Payden, PKXH, Possible Films, Robert L. Seigel, Esq., Mary Smith, Diana Takata, Rhonda Leigh Tanzman, Mark Vanbork

Essential Resources for Independent Video and Filmmakers

AIVF's top selling reference: All New Edition!

The AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals

edited by Michelle Coe $35 / $25 AIVF members *plus shipping and handling.*

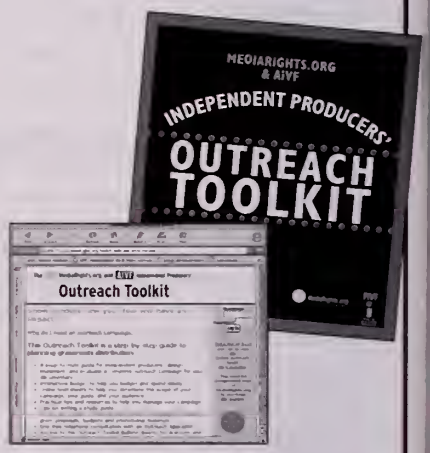
Up-to-date profiles of over 900 Film & Video Festivals, with complete contact and deadline information. First published in 1982, AIVF's Festival Guide is the most established and trusted source of information and inside views of film and video festivals around the world. Supplemented by selected reprints from *The Independent's* Festival Circuit column, profiling over 40 festivals in-depth from the filmmaker's perspective. The Guide is published to order, ensuring the most current information available! For AIVF members, the Festival Guide is enhanced by monthly listings in *The Independent* magazine, and an online interactive festival directory that is continually updated!

New! An interactive guide to grassroots distribution!

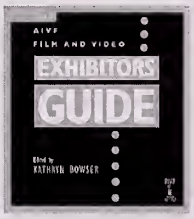
The AIVF & MediaRights.org Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit

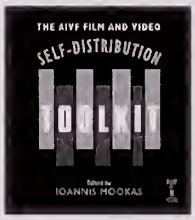
edited by MediaRights.org $125 / $115 AIVF members

Show funders how your film will have an impact! Your documentary can move audiences to take action for social change. What's your plan? Use this interactive resource to design, implement, and evaluate an effective outreach campaign. The Outreach Toolkit also downloads to your PDA and includes interactive worksheets; budgeting tools; a print resource binder; individualized consultation with outreach experts; case studies including funded proposals; an online producers' forum; and much more!



OTHER GUIDES TO GETTING YOUR WORK OUT TO AUDIENCES:





THE AIVF GUIDE TO FILM & VIDEO EXHIBITORS
edited by Kathryn Bowser $35/ $25 AIVF members ©1999

THE AIVF SELF-DISTRIBUTION TOOLKIT
edited by Ioannis Mookas $30 / $20 AIVF members ©1999

Buy Both Self-Distribution Books and Save! $60 / $40 AIVF members

THE NEXT STEP: DISTRIBUTING INDEPENDENT FILMS AND VIDEOS
edited by Morrie Warshawski $24.95 © 1995

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	QUAN.	PRICE
The AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals Michelle Coe, ed.; ©2001; $35 / $25 members		
The MediaRights.org & AIVF Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit ($125 / $115 members) *to order log on to www.mediarights.org/toolkit*		
The AIVF Film and Video Exhibitors Guide $35 / $25		
The AIVF Film and Video Self-Distribution Toolkit $30 / $20		
•both Self Distribution titles $60 / $40 members		
The Next Step $24.95		
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TOTAL		$

Please allow 2–4 weeks for delivery (shipped UPS); expedited orders require a $15 processing fee in addition to shipping charges. Note that UPS will not deliver to PO boxes. If you live in Manhattan, you may prefer to come by our Filmmaker Resource Library for instant gratification!

The AIVF Regional Salons provide opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons section at www.aivf.org for more details.

Be sure to contact your local salon leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 366-1538
jeff_burns23@yahoo.com
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday of the month, 7 pm
Contact: Jen White, jenslittlemovie@hotmail.com, (512)917-3027 www.austinfilm.org

Boston, MA:
Center For Independent Documentary
Where: 1608 Beacon Street, Basement of the Waban Public Library,
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
FSimon@aol.com

Boulder, CO:
"Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesday of the month, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
patricia@freespeech.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday of the month, 6:30pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun St.
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841; Peter Wentworth, filmsalon@aol.com

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315,
OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com
www.ohiofilms.com

Detailed salon information is posted on the web!
Visit **www.aivf.org** for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon programs as well as up-to-date information on programs.

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700,
bart@videofest.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
allen@passionriver.com,
www.passionriver.com

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: (713) 522-8592,
swamp@swamp.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite,
charles.white@tdsi.com

POINTERS FOR FORMING A SALON:

1) Find friends and aquaintences who have a driving thirst to support independent creation of film and video projects in your area.

2) Talk to each other to figure out what resources are in your community that could foster your group goal of supporting independently created work.

3) Call, write, or email Priscilla in the AIVF office in New York. She is originally from Tennessee and sometimes hates the fact that she had to leave clean air, cows, and mountains in order to support herself in her chosen field. So she will send you an application to begin a salon and eagerly anticipate welcoming you into the salon family. She wishes she knew about salons, back in the day.

4) Decide on a few events that are realistic to produce for the filmmakers in your area. think about screenings of work that is either finished or in progress, or a panel discussion on an aspect of filmmaking. Talk to the media centers or cable access television stations in your area. They might be able to donate space, or ideas.

5) Send Priscilla your completed package. She will then call you up enthusiastically, tell you what a great job you are doing, ask a few questions to make sure you are serious, then put your info right on this page, for all to see.

6) Now that your Salon has been planted, watch it grow.

For More info: Priscilla Grim,
members@aivf.org, (212) 807-1400 x236

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary,
mediaarts33@yahoo.com
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday of the month, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
mmasucci@aol.com

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
betuccia@aol.com

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Kate Kressmann-Kehoe,
(716) 244-8629, ksk@netacc.net

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
aivf@mediaartscenter.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
mybluesun@hotmail.com; Jane Selle Morgan
(206) 915-6263, jane@heropictures.com

South Florida:
Contact: Dominic Giannetti, (561) 313-0330
themoviebiz@hotmail.com
www.moviebiz.info

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday of the month, 6pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno,
yourdestiny@mindspring.com

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, jatvelez@hotmail.com
DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x 4,
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community!

Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!

AIVF MEMBER BENEFITS & TRADE DISCOUNTS

AIVF offers many benefits to our members. For complete details, including point persons, contact information, and discount codes, visit the comprehensive, interactive members benefits list at www.aivf.org/resources/benefits (note: you must provide your membership number to log on). Or call (212) 807-1400 x 506 to have a Benefits List mailed to you.

This information was last updated 5/02 and is subject to change without notice.

New Discounts!

- **Classes with Video Symphony in California;**
- **DVD duplication with Media Services in Omaha, Nebraska;**
- **Web Hosting with Free Speech TV;**
- ***Variety* subscriptions;**
- **movie tickets for national theater chains from Working Advantage;**
- **production office space with Affinity Lab in Washington, DC.**

AIVF Offers

Discounts on FIVF-published Books

AIVF Programs & Events
Discounted admission to dozens of programs offered or co-presented by AIVF across the U.S.

AIVF Mailing list
Reach a core group of folks who appreciate indie media!

Discounts on Classified ads in *The Independent*

For Business & Nonprofit members: Discounted Display ads in *The Independent*

Members only: AIVF Conference Room
Located in NYC office. Seats 20, with vcr and 32" monitor.

Members only: short-term desk rental
Rent a desk and voice mail box at our SoHo office.

Production Insurance

Special discounted rates on a variety of insurance plans with the following companies:

Hollywood Script Research
One flat fee for errors and Omissions coverage.

Marvin S. Kaplan Insurance Agency
A short shoot can be insured for as low at $300 the first day and $50 each additional day.

Homeowners & Auto Insurance

CGA Associates

Health Insurance

Bader Associates
Discounts on various plans.

RBA Insurance Strategies
Offers a 20-30% discount with HIP (NY only).

Teigit (for CIGNA health plans)
CIGNA health plans coverage in limited states.

Dental Insurance

Bader Associates

Teigit/Cigna

Stock & Expendibles

Film Emporium (New York, NY)
10% off film, video, and audio tape.

Edgewise Media (formerly Studio Film & Tape) (CA, IL, NY)
10% discount on film and videotape purchases.

Production Resources

Bee Harris Productions (Mt. Vernon, NY)
10% discount on rpoductions services and all editing services.

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ON View

BY JASON GUERRASIO

August
Dir. Avi Mograbi
This moving documentary gives the viewer a firsthand look at the tension between Isrealis and Palestinians. During the hottest month of the year, Mograbi travels the streets of Isreal with camera in hand, interacting with different groups of people. Most want to know why he's filming them in the first place. One person goes as far as blaming Mograbi's filming of a traffic dispute between a police officer and a distraught biker for causing the argument. Mograbi also films himself at his home: opening the film addressing the camera with a few words about what the month of August means to him, Mograbi puts on drag to play his own wife, who encourages him to film the ongoing violence in the streets. And later, he plays an angry producer who barges into the apartment looking for audition tapes that Mograbi has been working on. Using a little movie magic, Mograbi is able to have all three of his selves on the screen at the same time. It's good to see that he was able to put some humor into the piece. But the facts about the simmering hostility are all there, and if you can't see them for yourself then Mograbi spells it out bluntly: "This country is flooded with violence." The film was recently shown at the Human Rights Watch Film Festival. Contact: Avi Morgabi at 011-972-3-685-8889; mograbi@netvision.net.il

The Films of Martha Colburn
Dir. Martha Colburn
In ten shorts depicting everything from turpentine to vampires to foot fetishes, director Martha Colburn sends us into a world of the very, very unusual. Sometimes through music, sometimes through poetry, the shorts all reveal Coburn's strange personal universe (though at times I had no clue what was going on). The most memorable short is titled *Asthma.* 1940's footage of men and women—shown smoking anywhere, while doing anything,—is accompanied by music that is as disconcerting as the footage on the screen. Contact: Women Make Movies at (212) 925-0606; orders@wmm.com

A pair of Avi Mograbis debate the situation in Israel in the provocative documentary *August*.

Beyond Voluntary Control
Dir. Cathy C. Cook
Beyond Voluntary Control is a fascinating 30-minute short that looks at the mind-robbing illness of Parkinson's disease. Dedicated to the director's mother, Lila Mae Cook, who had Parkinson's, *Control* mixes eccentric dance movements with sound bites from people with the disease. Instead of simply showing the symptoms of Parkinson's, Cook creatively makes the viewer figure out what is going on. Through voiceovers and shots of hands trying to do everyday chores, we soon find out what this short is truly about: the inability of those afflicted to live a normal life. The most mesmerizing parts of the film are the unorthodox dancing of David Figueroa, with whom Cook is currently putting together a dance performance. Contact: Women Make Movies at (212) 925-0606; orders@wmm.com

Lucy's Dream
Dir. Relah Eckstein
This short comedy looks into the mind of director Relah Eckstein's dog, Lucy. Lucy's quite the thinker, as she goes to a physiatrist to figure out why she's having dreams about being a woman who has a crush on her master. But that's not all. Along with flashbacks of sitting between a loudmouth Sinatra-story-telling mother and boozed-up father, Lucy also dreams up a inter-gender boxing match, a band singing a 1940's-style love ballad and, of course, a big bone. With goofy costumes and special effects, the film is funny, if not exactly therapeutic. Eckstein's next project is titled French Toast, a fantasy film about a rich old lady who runs an underground crime family and has a passion for, well, French toast. Contact: Pajama Life Productions at (818) 881-7822; relah@earthlink.net

Ricky and Lenny / Fortune's Fool
Dir. Jadina Lilien
Ricky and Lenny is a hilarious six-minute short that chronicles the phone conversations of two people arguing about screening phone calls. The dialogue is all taken from the answering machine after Ricky picks up—the phone arguments are comical, yet intense. With Louie Armstrong's music in the background, you can almost imagine hearing this kind of back and forth happen in a Woody Allen movie. Fortune's Fool is a 20 minute drama about a palm reader (Francisca Vargas) waiting for her husband (Emanuele Ancorini) to return from serving in the military. Once he returns, a misunderstanding leads to a tragedy of Shakespearean proportions. Fortune's Fool was recently shown at the CineWomen New York Screening Series. Contact: Starlight Pictures at (212) 979-1297; jadinalilien@hotmail.com

Ophelia's Opera
Dir. Abiola Abrams
This modern day urban opera follows Ophelia (Taqiyya Haden) through a troubling relationship with her abusive boyfriend. As the film progresses, she gets through the pain of her boyfriend's abuse with the help from her friends and a little bit of magic. Director Abiola Abrams creatively tells this story by giving each character a different style of speaking: Ophelia speaks Shakespearean English, while her boyfriend Mark (Malcolm Smith) raps, and her best friend Moses (Titilayo) sings. Abiola is currently working on her next project, titled Knives in My Belly, an experimental documentary about the life of *Ophelia's Opera* star Taqiyya Haden. Contact: Abiola Abrams at (212) 462-0056; abiola99@hotmail.com.

Jason Guerrasio interns for The Independent.

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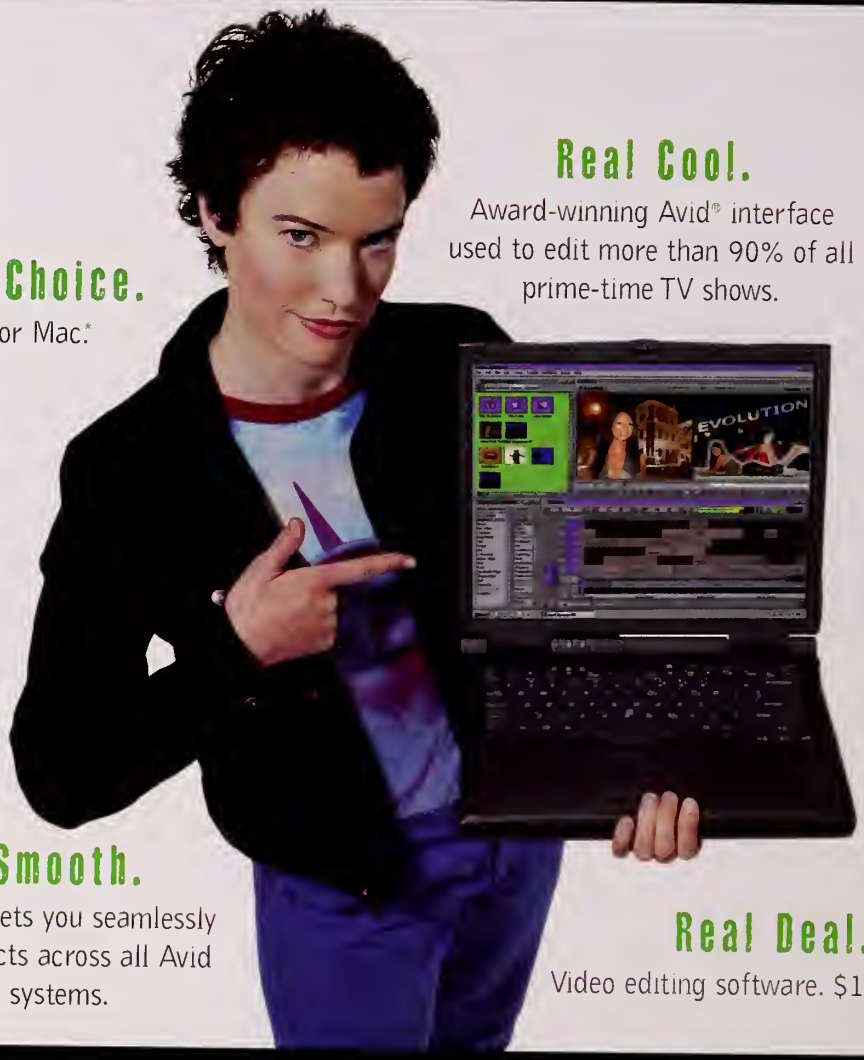

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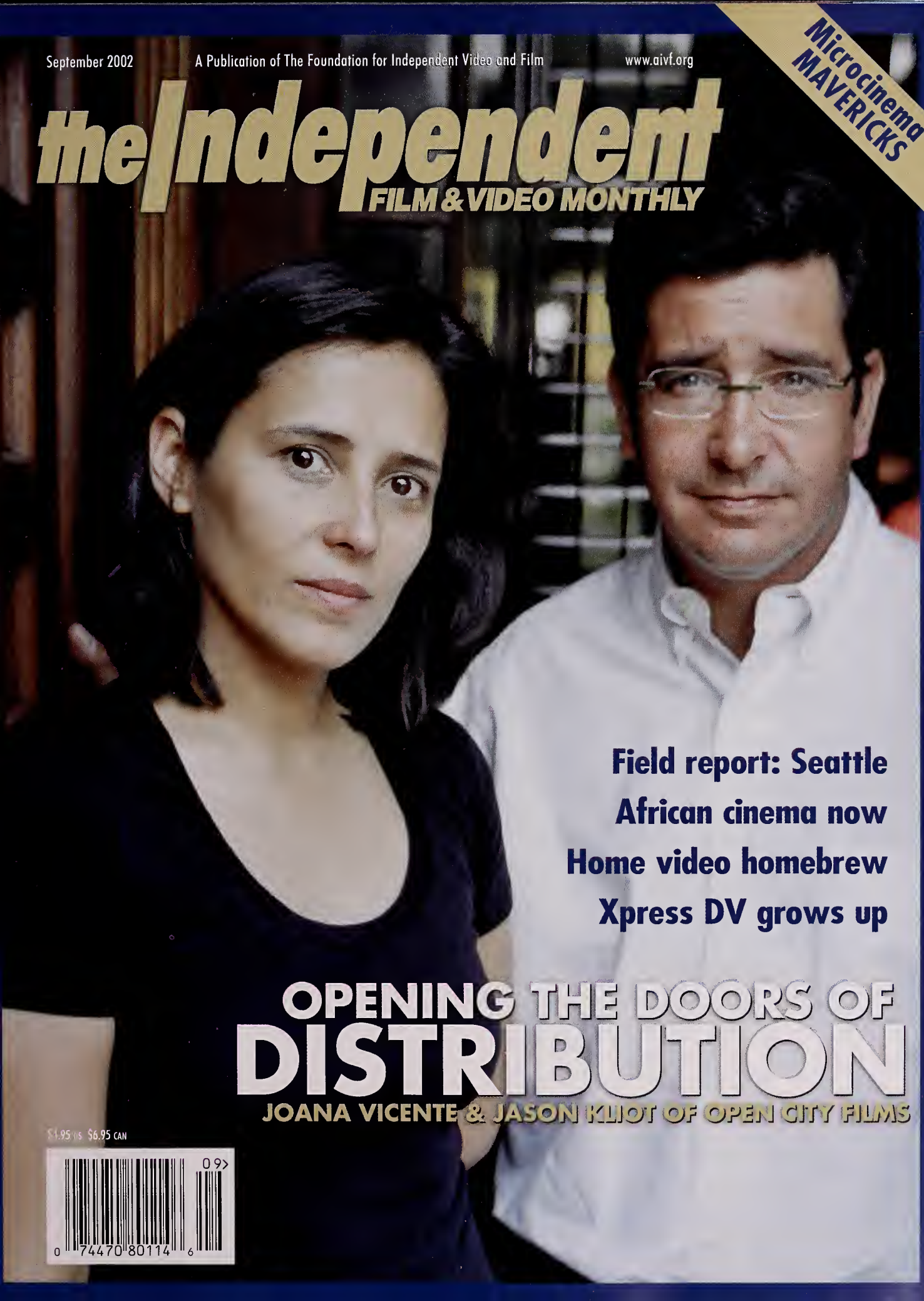

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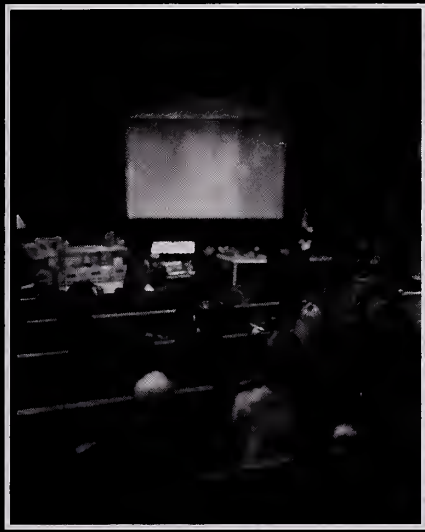

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Dear Reader,

When I accepted the job of editor-in-chief of *The Independent* I was thrilled and honored to be entrusted with a magazine that holds such a unique and important place in the moving image media community. The publication also has a special spot in my heart because Pat Thomson published my first print article in *The Independent* when she was the editor. These first few months have been exhilarating and hectic, and what has sustained me more than anything else is the incredible good will towards the magazine that has been expressed from all areas of the independent media community.

No area of moving image production is easy, but once a project is completed, mediamakers are confronted with a new demon to tackle, distribution. This month our writers have shined their flashlights into some dark corners to illuminate different types of distribution in hopes of sending you into the melee armed with new information and ideas.

"Cave Paintings, Churches, and Rooftops," Angela Alston's feature on microcinemas, not only profiles three very different screening spaces but offers insights into how these successful microcinemas operate, advertise, and acquire work. To add more information on these cinemas, AIVF's executive director and our publisher, Elizabeth Peters, has programmed a microcinema road trip with pit stops across the US.

Originally, I asked Joana Vicente and Jason Kliot of Open City Films and Blow-Up Pictures to write a short list of pointers on how to sell a fiction feature to a distributor. What they sent back was a generous, detailed article three times longer than I had asked for. The piece was so packed with information that we decided to run it as our cover story. If you have never taken seriously the warnings not to give distributors sneak peaks at your film, you will after reading this article. It's a little like the difference between being told not to run with scissors and knowing somebody who has an ugly scar across their arm because they did.

But the big screen is not the only place to market your project. There is the small box too. The video box that is. Danny Plonick offers up a step-by-step how-to on home video distribution. You will also find "The Filmmaker's Bill of Rights," in which attorney Mark Litwak lists what you should fight for before signing a deal with a distributor. Our legal columnist, Robert Seigel, Esq., adds advice on self-distributing to theaters. And Jason Guerrasio sits down with Eamonn Bowles of Magnolia Pictures in our Distributor FAQ this month. (Bowles is pictured on page five in a slightly different persona than most in the media are used to seeing him.)

Sandi DuBowski, director of *Trembling Before G-d*, contributes our opinion piece this month, calling for filmmakers to become an active part of their film's distribution rather than blindly handing it over to a distributor.

On the festival circuit, our writers visited Rotterdam, The Netherlands, for INPUT, the international conference for public television, and Durban, South Africa, for the African Union Film Festival. Both pieces examine the importance of moving image media to local, national, and global communities.

We're also introducing two new columns. In Site Seeing, filmmaker and writer Maya Churi will be examining moving image media on the web. This month she explores a collection of one-minute films created by different filmmakers about the same east London neighborhood. Also debuting this issue is our new back page, The List, which will detail as many different approaches to a topic as we can fit on the page. This month we have continued the distribution theme and recorded a number of alternative ways to get your work out there. In devoting this page to a wide range of subjects, we will hopefully help you to expand on these ideas and come up with new ones of your own.

A single issue of a magazine can never answer every question every person has about a topic as broad as distribution, but I hope that you will find in these pages some ideas and information that will be useful and thought provoking. In the future if there is some topic on which you cannot find reliable information or some media issue you feel remains unexplored, I hope you will contact us.

Thank you for supporting The Independent,
Maud Kersnowski
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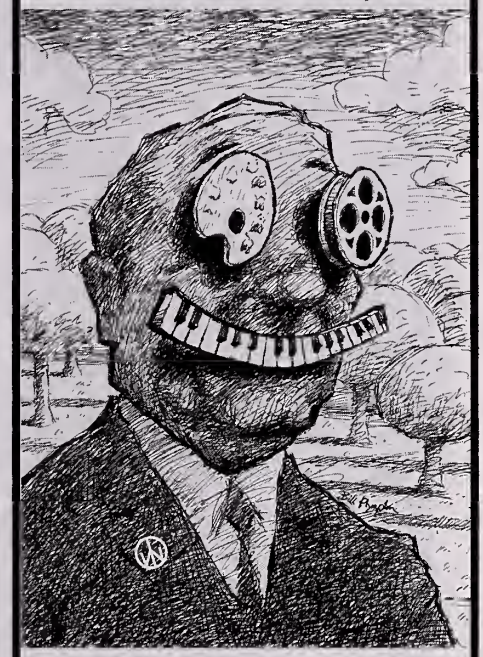

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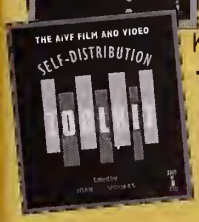

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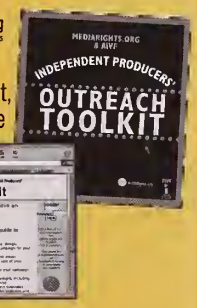

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NEWS

The Passing of a Texas Pioneer

R.I.P. Eagle Pennell

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER EAGLE Pennell died in his sleep on July 20. Self-taught and active as a director before independent film became a common career aspiration, the Houston native was part of a late seventies wave of Texas independents that also included Brian Hansen, who died in 1987, and Ken Harrison, who continues to work as a Houston-based director.

Pennell focused on the distinct character of the West through a series of films depicting blue collar down-and-outers, distinguished by sharp characterization and black humor. He made only two features: 1979's *The Whole Shooting Match*, and 1983's *Last Night at the Alamo* (which earned a thumbs up from critic Roger Ebert). Despite his small body of work, the surly maverick left his mark on the Texas filmmaking landscape.

Filmmaker Richard Linklater describes Pennell's impact on the second wave of Texas independents that flourished in the nineties, in an article written for the Austin Film Society. See www.austinfilm.org.

Eagle Pennell, right, working with Kim Henkel.

Media Democracy and Advocacy Converge

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

THIS FALL, MEDIA DEMOCRACY WILL BE spotlighted by a series of summits, conferences, and lobbying actions. In the Southwest, the Action Coalition for Media Education (ACME) will hold its first meeting in October. Canada's media activists are launching a national Media Democracy Day at the same time. Seattle is hosting the Community Media Conference in September. And AIVF is sending out a call for mediamakers to visit their elected officials on September 27, Media Advocacy Day. Each of these events shares the same goal, to mobilize the public to scrutinize media industries as closely as they do the characters on *The Sopranos*.

Community Media Conference
September 10–15, Seattle
www.reclaimthemedia.org

Reclaim the Media, a Seattle-based coalition of independent media, community media, radio, Internet, and cable groups, has organized a counter-conference to the meeting of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), which activists have dubbed "the WTO of broadcasting."

The goal of the conference is to ignite a national movement against concentration of media ownership, privatization of the airwaves and the internet through reduction of open access, and the increasingly narrow ideological range of news coverage during wartime. The conference will feature Amy Goodman, a celebration of Seattle public access, and a D.I.Y. media festival. A series of panels on broadband cable deregulation, loosening of FCC cross-ownership rules, and corporate media during wartime are also planned.

See also page 17, *Field Report: Seattle*.

Media Advocacy Day
September 27, 2002, USA
www.aivf.org

AIVF's Media Advocacy Day is a national lobbying campaign at local legislative offices across the United States. Members will mobilize to push legislators and Congress to weigh in on issues of funding, access, and public accountability. Media concentration and cross-ownership have been accelerating at rapid rates as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under Bush-appointed chairman Michael Powell (son of Colin Powell, Secretary of State) loosens and eliminates public interest rulings. The AIVF action hopes to galvanize legislators—who are pummeled by lobbyists from large media transnationals—to see preservation of a diversity of media channels and Internet open access as central issues for democracy.

See also @*AIVF*, page 58.

Action Coalition for Media Education: ACME Summit, October 18–20
Albuquerque, New Mexico
www.acmecoalition.org

ACME's inaugural summit will bring together media literacy educators, scholars, and activists from across the country. "We need a national media education organization to bring activists and reformers together with media educators and parents and schools to take on the vital media issues of our day," says Bob McCannon, executive director of New Mexico Media Literary Project, a national leader in media education. By creating a synergy between scholars, educators, and media reformers, organizers plan to underscore the antidemocratic consequences of "Big Media." AOL Time Warner, Fox, and ABC/Disney, according to McCannon, exert a monopolistic control of youth media culture. "We have a citizenry that knows more about Bud Lite than how government works," he asserts.

The goal of the summit is to generate interest in creating elementary and high school media literacy curricula for US public schools that will not only put cameras in

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the hands of students, but also explain the consequences—and economics—of media monopoly. According to McCannon, students need to understand the connection between government, the global media corporations, and the corporations who supply the ads that fuel false consumerist desires.

To protect its mission, ACME refuses contributions from global media. In contrast, founding sponsors of the Alliance for a Media Literate America (a national media literacy organization launched in 2001) include AOL Time Warner and the Discovery Channel. Media literacy organizations receiving corporate underwriting often institute "antimedia bashing" clauses and detour analysis away from media economics and government policy towards media images.

The ACME summit is endorsed by twenty organizations including Project Censored, American Academy for Pediatrics, Center for Media and Democracy, Media Channel, Dads and Daughters, and Project on Media Ownership. Featured speakers include Bob McChesney, Jean Kilbourne, Mark Crispin Miller, and Sut Jhally.

Media Democracy Day
October 18, 2002
Canada, Nationwide
www.mediademocracyday.org

A convergence of independent producers and anticorporate media activists have designated October 18 as Canada's second annual national Media Democracy Day. Protests, education events, and organization for media change are planned for Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary to challenge transnational media concentration, suppression of real news coverage, and lack of editorial diversity. Media Democracy Day seeks media reform for democracy and expression of transformative cultural change.

Additional Media Advocacy Websites:
www.mediaalliance.org
www.cjr.org/owners
www.democraticmedia.org
www.futureofmusic.org
www.mediaaccess.org

Patricia R. Zimmermann is professor of cinema and photography at Ithaca College. She is the author of Reel Families: A Social History of Amateur Film *(1995) and* States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies *(2000).*

WGA Program Targets Indie Writers

BY JASON GUERRASIO

THE WRITERS GUILD OF AMERICA RECENTLY initiated a new contract designed to give independent screenwriters and producers the benefits provided by Guild contracts. Called the WGA Low Budget Agreement, the program applies to films with budgets under $750,000 and allows writers to defer payment of their compensation.

Under this agreement, original screenplays will not be rewritten without the writer's consent, and writers will be guaranteed Guild contract protections, including residuals.

Available to both WGA members and nonmembers, the agreement can only be initiated with the consent of the writer. The agreement was created out of a collaboration between writers and the Guild, with an added (albeit unintended) effect that it could increase the number of WGA members. "It may result in a writer being eligible to join if a Guild signatory company is producing the film," says one WGA-East spokesperson.

For a number of years, both the Directors Guild of America and Screen Actors Guild have offered low-budget agreements, but until now, WGA members could only defer their compensation on a case-by-case basis.

The agreement is designed to promote production of low-budget independent films while assuring basic economic and creative protections for writers. "One of the advantages of doing the film under this agreement is that the film can be produced under the protection of the Guild, in a situation where the producers do not have the higher budget of, for example, a 'studio driven' project," comments the WGA-East spokesperson.

"This is an era when, due to the vertical integration of companies, the opportunities for both Guild members and nonmembers to sell their work are severely challenged," notes Victoria Riskin, president of WGA-West, in a written statement. "We also recognize that many writers prefer to see their work produced independently without the constraints of the studio development process. This agreement is writer-friendly and producer-friendly."

Jason Guerrasio interns for The Independent.

Take Back the Cinema

Don't give up your power!

BY SANDI SIMCHA DUBOWSKI

TOO MANY FILMMAKERS WHO SPEND HALF a day lighting a scene, years following characters, and months in the editing room abdicate all power when it comes to distribution and exhibition. They wrongly believe it cannot be as creative, engaging, and passionate as filmmaking. Instead of being involved in their film's distribution, they expect someone who does not know their film's issues intimately to know how to grow it into the world. Why birth the baby if you do not feed it when it is born?

At this critical time, when the theatrical situation is so dire for independents films, and especially for documentaries, filmmakers must engage in distribution, not abandon their films on distributors' doorsteps. In the past decade, an alarming trend has risen—movies open wide and fast and then get quickly slapped into home video. *Harry Potter* outstripped all previous records, opening in 3,672 theaters on one weekend. The top ten widest opening weekends occurred in the last three years. This 3,000-plus club endangers our communal cinema spaces where we as filmmakers and audience members can come face-to-face. Films are forced to be profitable in this new perform-fast-or-die distribution culture, before any film other than the most generic can find its audience. Films using word-of-mouth marketing, that need time to grow, are left in the dust, clouded by a barrage of high priced advertising.

These three-thousanders affect all filmmakers. In Miami Beach, my documentary about Hasidic and Orthodox gays and lesbians, *Trembling Before G-d*, was removed from the screen just before Passover this year. This decision was not about profitability; *Trembling* ranked high among the sixteen films playing at the theater. It wasn't about politics; Miami's large gay/lesbian and Jewish communities were extremely supportive of the film. *Trembling* was removed because Regal Cinemas, the Knoxville-based company that owns the multiplex, has a relationship with the studios to protect. On that particular weekend, a studio needed to open one of their megamovies on 3,000 screens. *Trembling* was playing on one of those screens.

We live in a nation where theater chains are not accountable to the communities they serve. As filmmakers and audience members, we accept our lack of power over these cultural, spiritual palaces, the cinemas. It is time to wake up. If we want voices of insight and debate heard and valued in a culture of corporate consolidation and merger, we must get smart. One and a half million movie tickets are sold every year in the US at approximately 35,000 theaters, and we still do not see cinemas as a traditional place of social activism. They are a powerful venue. We need to use these spaces. Filmmakers need to start seeing their distributors as partners so that their films do not fade. We must become the active element in making the difference between distribution that creaks its way across a few cities and distribution that creates a power surge as a film electrifies and galvanizes whatever ground it touches.

Artists and filmmakers must be encouraged to pursue the cultural, social, and profitable ramifications of what they create, not relentlessly asked what their next project is. For over a year, I have been creating a roving town hall in the cinemas where *Trembling* is playing. We're fusing a mass commercial release with social-change community organizing. And it's working. *Trembling* has already grossed over $750,000, with many more cities left on our schedule. At New York's Film Forum, we broke the opening day box office record and are the third longest running film. By 2003 *Trembling* will have played in over eighty US cities. So far we have done over 300 dialogues, events, Shabbats, and discussions with organizations across faith, sexuality, age, racial, and Jewish denominational lines in cities from Los Angeles to Nashville. And we have received a number of foundation grants and individual donor gifts to support this work.

As filmmakers, we must relate to our finished films as social entrepreneurs and creatively strategize their movement in the world, not just to maximize our theatrical releases. This winter, Working Films and I are touring Southern Christian seminaries, from mainstream divinity schools to Pat Robertson's and Jerry Falwell's universities. Not exactly a profit-making venture, but the tour will generate press attention, foundation support, and activism in a region where theaters rarely show documentaries. This exposure will drive home video sales and nontheatrical bookings, which are truly a documentarian's bread and butter.

"I am not about to create Hasidic, gay action figures and do tie-ins with McDonald's or Moishe's Deli to help propel *Trembling*."

As artists and entrepreneurs, we must leverage power we may not even know we have. The power to foster engagement, not just entertainment. We must create new models of distribution, not just mimic the strategies of Hollywood's corporate studios. I am not about to create Hasidic, gay action figures and do tie-ins with McDonald's or Moishe's Deli to help propel *Trembling*.

Visit www.tremblingbeforeg-d.com for more info and to learn how you can get involved.

Sandi Simcha DuBowski is a New York-based filmmaker and writer. His current project, Trembling Before G-d, *is in theaters across North America, Israel, and Germany. As a result of his outreach work, he has received grants from Stephen Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, among others.*

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Deborah Shaffer

From the Ashes: 10 Artists

BY CAITLIN ROPER

AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH, FILMMAKER Deborah Shaffer, who witnessed the first plane diving into the World Trade Center, wrote e-mails to many far-flung friends and relatives, saying that she, her husband, and their daughter were safe. One of these friends, Karl Khely, a producer at the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF), responded by asking her to make a film for his arts TV series. "Think about it," he said, clearly worried he might be imposing on her grief. For 12 hours, Shaffer thought about it. She had to say yes. "I wasn't thinking about anything else," she remembers.

Khely dictated few parameters. He wanted a personal film, an intimate portrait. The film had to be about artists living around the World Trade Center and offer some variety, but he wanted it to be her film. "I was gratified to have an excuse to be obsessed with it," Shaffer says of the events of September 11.

The truth is, she, like most New Yorkers, could think of little else, even though she had seen acts of war before. Shaffer began working in documentary during the anti-Vietnam movement. Many of her previous films, such as *Witness to War* (1984) and *Fire From the Mountain* (1987), explored war and human rights in Latin America.

Filmmaker Deborah Shaffer

As she developed a list of possible interview subjects for the film, she was dealing with the same issues as her subjects. They were all artists living and working downtown. Shaffer has lived in Soho for thirty years. She was worried about her family's safety, about air quality, about the exploded normalcy of her world. She was feeling the aftershocks of the near misses. Her husband's archictectural firm was working on a project on the 107th floor of one of the towers. She was mourning the lives lost. But for Shaffer it was easy, and appropriate, to immerse herself in her work.

From the Ashes: 10 Artists (2001) began as a half-hour assignment, but became more than that. The hour-long film weaves together the stories of a diverse group of artists as they give their accounts of September 11 and try to figure out how to proceed with their art.

The first person we meet is Skip Blumberg, a video artist trying to access his building in the "hot zone" on Warren Street. Shaffer asks him whether he shot footage on September 11. "I don't make videos about horrifying events," he replies tartly. "I make cultural documentaries, videos about celebrations, about dancing, about people being happy." And he adds, "I had no thoughts about making videos about the horror."

Blumberg would indeed make a film about September 11. *The Cookie Girl*, shot for a preteen audience, is about Gemma, a twelve-year-old who baked and distributed cookies to relief workers in her neighborhood after the attacks.

Performance artist Pat Oleszko's entire artistic identity is called into question by the immensity of the tragedy. "My work as an artist is playing the fool. And I'm trying to find some way to think how I can actually continue doing my work, which at this point just doesn't seem possible," Oleszko remarks.

Performance artist Laurie Andersen describes life following September 11.

In her first interview, as Oleszko stands astride her bicycle on the sidewalk in lower Manhattan, she talks about the neighborhood firemen, some of them her friends, who lost their lives. "They run in the building while we're running out. I mean, they had to know they were going to die." Oleszko's mouth quivers as she tries to remain composed.

After shooting a follow-up piece that will air on ORF on the one-year anniversary of the tragedy, Shaffer says that Oleszko is the most changed. In the past

"My work as an artist is playing the fool. And I'm trying to find some way to think how I can actually continue doing my work, which at this point just doesn't seem possible."

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Video artist Skip Blumberg explains his exile from the "hot zone" in Deborah Shaffer's *From the Ashes: 10 Artists*.

Eric Byler's feature, "Charlotte Sometimes" was transferred from digital video to 35mm film by Alpha Cine.
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year, Oleszko has created a piece and traveled with it around the US. "It's still very much her work," Shaffer says, though this performance elicits much more than laughter.

The subject of *From the Ashes* was so emotional and personal that making it affected Shaffer's documentary style. For the first time, she appears in one of her own films, walking the city streets in several scenes while talking to subjects. Painter Barbara Friedman was so overcome while throwing out her daughter's dust-covered stuffed animals that Shaffer stopped shooting and talked to Friedman about what she was going through. "She was feeling really afraid," Shaffer says. Shaffer herself never cried while working on the production. "It was even too deep for tears," she says.

Lisa Kopie surveys lower Manhattan after September 11.

Originally from Berkeley, California, Caitlin Roper currently lives in NYC, where she is a freelance writer, editor, and filmmaker.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF FILMMAKER; FACING PAGE, LEFT, JAMES LAPINE; RIGHT, WILL HART

Sarah Kernochan

Thoth—Portrait of a Central Park performer

BY CARL DERRICK

"A WALKABOUT PRAYFORMANCE IS WHEN I walk and dance around the world's neighborhoods and serenade whomever I encounter," writes Thoth from his website (www.skthtoth.com). "It is a way of asking for forgiveness for the judgements I've held about them in order to heal prejudice and hurt feelings, so I can continue to open fully to all my ancestral voices with love. The aborigines of Australia and most past prophets—Buddha, Mohammed, Jesus ... did their own versions of Walkabouts."

Bethesda Fountain, Central Park, most afternoons: A crowd of people gather and are staring intently, some mesmerized, some dancing along, others confused and frowning, deeply concerned. Still others are completely dismissive, thinking the whole scene is a waste of time. The object of their dismay—Thoth (subject of the winner of the 2002 Academy Award for Best Documentary Short), a true "everyman" performer. He is simultaneously innumerable creations: old/young, mystic/savant, black/white, evangelist/sinner, and joyous/saddened. Singing with all of his matter, in a language he created (not to mention in a highly trained operatic voice) this opera of the street, his solopera, is a harrowing cry for human unity and reconciliation rendered via his unique and harrowing daily prayformance.

Who would have thought that Thoth could make a valid and valuable film piece, that his unique performance could be rendered into a vital and universal piece of cinema? Sarah Kernochan, period. This prolific writer, musician, producer, and now director (*All I Wanna Do*, 2000) was cruising through Central Park and was slapped in the face by Thoth's cavalcade of sounds. She, "was racing through the park, heard the music in the air, and was drawn towards it." Her first experiences were so consuming that over the next few weeks, Thoth would reappear to her and work his way into the deeper recesses of her psyche. Who was he, what was he doing there, why was he doing it?

Filmmaker Sarah Kernochan

Driven by curiosity, her passions for music, expression, and art, she went back to meet him again and again, eventually overcoming his trepidation and convincing him that his prayformance could make a valid film. Perhaps the mitigating factors to Thoth's accepting Sarah were her committing her own funds to the project, her enthusiasm, and her transparent intent towards Thoth. Perhaps he could sense her altruistic desire to render him for the world in a way that was meaningful and essential to his intent.

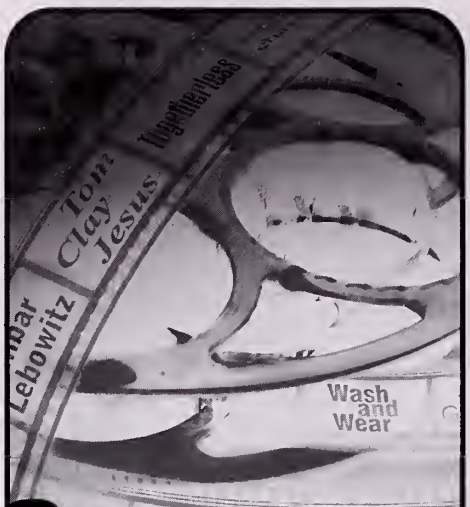
In a measure of true independence, driven by the need to tell his story, Sarah willed the project to happen. With a meager budget, the support of a few colleagues, and armed with some mini DV cams, she set to work. Sarah sought to capture not only Thoth's prayforming, but also the record of his fractured childhood and the pitfalls of being of mixed race in a time when America was, for the most part, intolerant. The film's most meaningful aspects are found in the creation of Thoth the character, from his birth and childhood as Stephan Kaufman, to his rebirth and re-creation as a vital human/artist who Sarah quipped in her Oscar acceptance speech, "wages love nearly every day of his life." He was born to a Russian and Jewish father and an African American mother, and one can only imagine the difficulties of being between communities, of walking the line between ethnicities, and of having constant difficulties developing a viable sense of self.

Being between races, ethnicities, and sexual orientations, Thoth represents us all. Pluralism, multi-culturalism, diversity, political correctness are all buzz words currently thrown about in an all too casual and alarming way. If you believe trends in mass culture, diversity is no more meaningful than skin color; see any Benetton ad campaign from the last ten years, or *Clueless*, and you get the banal lineup of black and white persons in a banal vanilla wrapping. In *Thoth* we have the best elements of documentary filmmaking, indeed of cultural and person(s) rendering; true, meaningful exchanges between markedly different groups of people, complete with all of the truths and myriad forms of discrimination, recrimination and misunderstandings that plague our interpersonal relationships. Yet somehow, mostly through force of will, *Thoth* the film and Thoth the man maintain the best qualities of understanding and celebration truly leading the way for us all.

The eclectic human/artist Thoth serenades crowds at NYC's Central Park.

Kernochan continues with new projects, forays into direction, and screenwriting—she wrote *Dancers* (1987), *Impromptu* (1991) and many more. Considering the success of her first film, *Marjoe*, (1972, which also won an Academy Award, Best Documentary) and the vitality and again the success of *Thoth*, we can expect her to continue rendering honest and unique films.

Carl Derrick resides in New York City, where he works as a graphic designer, writer, and art director.



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Entry Forms: Download at www.magfilmfest.com or write to: Ron Tibbett, Festival Director 2269 Waverly Drive West Point, MS 39773 Phone: (662) 494-5836 Fax: (662) 494-9900 email: ronchar@ebicom.net

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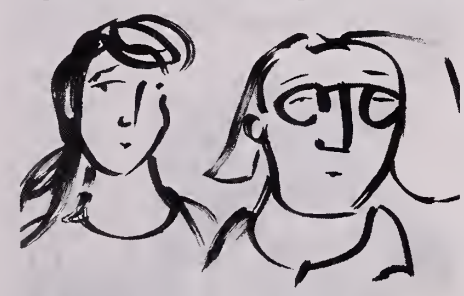
ILLUSTRATIONS AND RESEARCH BY SARAH JANE LAPP

Community Media Conference
September 9–15, 2002

YOU'VE GOT TO WONDER WHAT POSSESSED the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the lobbyist for commercial television and radio, to hold their annual "Radio Show" convention in Seattle, site of the boisterous protests against the World Trade Organization in 1999. Maybe thoughts of cappuccino by the Pacific lured the lords of radio to the Emerald City. But when they leave their convention castle, they won't necessarily be sipping lattés with people who share their agenda. A shadow convention called the Community Media Conference is forming to mirror NAB's meeting on September 9–15. The organizers of the



Media democracy advocates Susan Gleason and Jonathan Lawson

Community Media Conference aren't planning a repeat of 1999, but there will be some protests. These activists are focused on coalition building, media education, and political change. "[Throwing] rocks might make us feel good," conference organizer Jonathon Lawson states, "but [that] will not necessarily effect change. It is tedious policy work with the congressional and FCC regulations that will endow us with a media democracy."

The conference will examine issues of privatization and corporate monopolies of now publicly owned media. Since President Clinton signed the 1996 Telecommunications Act, concerns about the private control of the nation's airwaves have increased. Members of the Cascadia Media Alliance, the conference's organizing group, believe that the preservation of democracy depends on an educated and mobilized public. That's why the conference is not focusing on protests as much as forming alliances and actions, like targeting specific companies for boycotts. This conference is about building a movement to counter the political influence of NAB and others like it. The goal is a broad-based movement that will take the FCC and corporations to task, reclaim the public media, and create new models for independent networks. "There is a collaborative spirit afoot in Seattle," says Susan Gleason, conference organizer, environmental activist, and mediamaker. "It's a place ripe for D.I.Y. efforts."

www.reclaimthemedia.org

Reel Grrls

ORIGINALLY INTENDED AS JUST ANOTHER flavor of the week offering by at Seattle's 911 Media Arts Center, Reel Grrls is now roaring into its fourth semester. The two-semester program gives teenage girls a leg up in media-making through workshops and mentors. Malory Graham, 911's director of youth programs, together with Ti Locke at KTCS and Lucia Ramirez at the YMCA, developed this coveted, expanding youth program. The 50-student fall media literacy workshop takes a critical look at images of women in advertising. The five-person staff is supported by 25 guest instructors, who range in skills and expertise from PBS producers to Georgie Kunkle, an 82-year-old historian whose specialty is feminism in Washington. Other volunteers teach belly dancing, yoga, and Aikido as self-esteem strengthening strategies.

Registration for the fall workshop is first come, first serve. Students then move on to the more intensive spring program that takes place over weekends and spring break. Each of the 26 selected girls conceives of, scripts, and shoots a mini-DV project with a mentor. These range from 30-second public service announcements to four-minute documentaries. Last year, Reel Grrls produc-

Reel Grrls Lucia, Malory, Tani, and Tigisti.

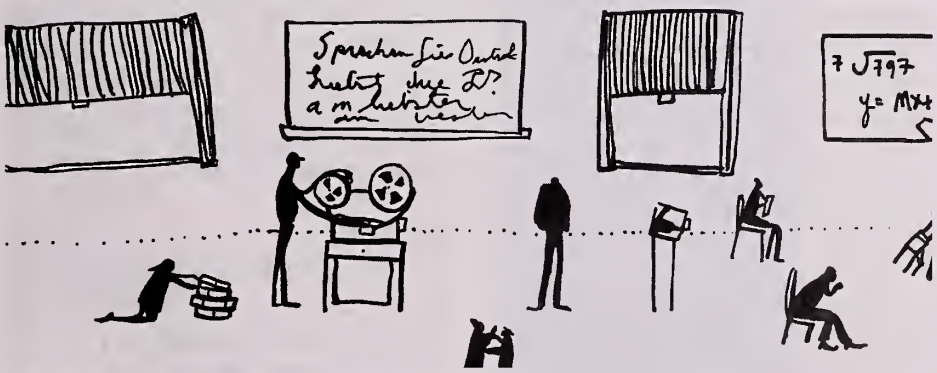
tions were accepted into 10 festivals, including the Gen Y Studio at Sundance.

Originally, 911 offered this workshop free of charge, but last year the program's major funder, the MacArthur Foundation, eliminated funding for media arts centers. This fall Reel Grrls tuition will be a subsidized $75.

Registration contact: Lucia Ramirez at YMCA, (206) 383-5332; or look up www.reelgrrls.org.

The Puget Sound Cinema Society

SEATTLE NATIVE OMAR WILLEY FOUNDED the Puget Sound Cinema Society based on a question: What would happen if a theater charged admission on the way out, rather than on the way in? The curmudgeonly cinema savant believes that the film industry's ecosystem would



Willey and his acolytes at the Puget Sound Cinema Society

change abruptly if patrons paid for the experience they actually had.

In 2001 Willey began screening an eclectic, educational mix of films with the intention of recreating the intellectual and aesthetic atmosphere of Cinema 16, the postwar grandparent of the New York

Seattle's native son, Omar Willey

Film Festival and avant-courier of documentary and experimental film for New York City and the country. In his shorts program, Depth of Focus, and features program, Depth of Field, Willey has played host to filmmakers Lynn Shelton, Robert DeChico, Kellen Blair, Susan McNally, and Ty Huffer.

"I don't have to please people with my programming, but I do have to prove that I'm selling something of value," Willey says. But the art of programming is partly the art of making films palatable, and Willey clearly understands this. He framed Ann Marie Fleming's screening at the Puget Sound Cinema Society with palate cleansers like local filmmaker Armando Munoz's mock horror *The Killer Krapper* and the Encyclopedia Britannica's children's education film *How to Spend Money*. "The key to programming is contrast," notes Willey, who screens every film format from 35mm to 8mm. "You get jaded if you watch five experimental films in a row.... If you just show features, you warp people's vision of the potential of film."

The Puget Sound Cinema Society is also predicated on Willey's own artist-as-troubadour ideology. "I adhere to the idea of playing for your meal," he explains. But it's the programmer, Willey, who's proving his worth; filmmakers are feasted, as recent guest Fleming discovered. Before watching her films, cinephiles enjoyed a prescreening spread of vegetarian shepherd's pie, pad thai, pineapple upside-down-cake, potato chips, and chocolate cake. Willey believes in taking care of people's material needs before talking philosophy. "You have to give something back to the community as a show of faith that you're not just a parasite living off public funds," he explains.

And Willey is anything but a leech. "There's no question about grafting from the United Way. I will never take public money. A community should be able to support itself," he pronounces. All funds for the Puget Sound Cinema Society come from what people to choose to pay on their way out the door. Sometimes it's $3, sometimes $2, sometimes $.50. "It makes the programming very direct," Willey says. But he's happy to show films produced with government money. Fleming, for example, received a grant from Canada's National Film Board. "I don't have a problem with that. The material is irrespective of the Society. I just don't like this nauseous marriage of commerce and art," he elaborates.

Third Friday of the month, 8:00 p.m.; University Heights Center, 5031 University Way NE.

Seattle Resources

Alibi Room

Back in the *Northern Exposure* days, Rob Morrow and Tom Skerrit hosted readings and underground screenings here. Over the years, both AIVF and DGA have held meetings in this film-friendly bar. Current events include an art show on the first Thursday of every month.

85 Pike St., (206) 623-3180

Artspot

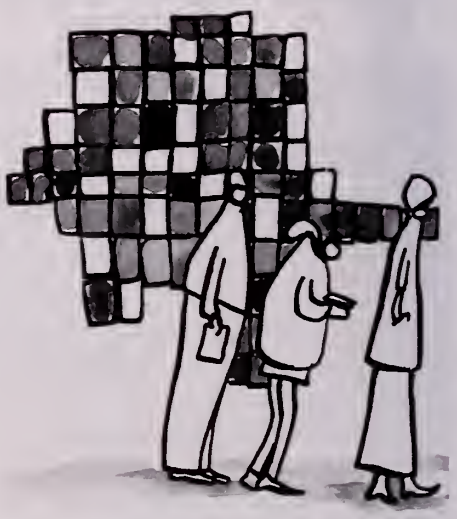
The Artspot collaborative produces 30-second media art pieces designed for broadcast. Two of the spots have aired on KING, and there are eight more in the can. "We make art for art's sake. The spots are not about illuminating or protesting, but presenting solutions," founder Staci Simpson explains.

Collective meetings first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m.; 1308 NW 70th; www.artspot.org

Cinerama Theatre

There are only three places left in the world where you can still see a movie in Cinerama, and only one currently accessible in the US—Seattle's recently refurbished Cinerama. The other North American screen, LA's Cinerama Dome, is closed for renovations. The third theater to feature the three-panel screens is in a museum in Bradford, England. In the past few years, more and more people have recognized the importance of the Cinerama art form in motion image history. As a result, serious efforts like those in Seattle and LA have been made to save the last remaining tri-panel screens to ensure that a whole new generation of movie buffs will be able to experience the magic of 70mm Cinerama.

2100 4th Ave.; www.seattlecinerama.com



In line at Cinerama

Emerald Reels

Four years ago, Emerald Reels began mixing shorts with live DJ's and serving up the cocktail at a Seattle nightclub. More of a cinema set in a nightclub than a nightclub with movies, the Emerald Reels Super-8 Lounge (ERS8) has screened over 185 films to audiences in Seattle, San Francisco, Telluride, and Vancouver, BC.

Last spring ERS8 returned to Seattle

for monthly Monday night screenings at Sit & Spin, featuring soundtracks and ambience by Kid Hops, DJ for KEXP.org Expansions. "It's a cinematic event. The DJ's love it. They don't have to have beats for dancing," Emerald Reels programmer Reed O'Beirne explains.

Once a month on Mondays at the Sit and Spin, $6; 2219 4th Ave. (between Bell & Blanchard); www.emeraldreels.com. For submission questoions: www.emeraldreels.com/submit.htm (Dec/Jan 2003 for show in San Francisco or Switzerland)

Independent Media Center

IMC evolved out of Seattle's loose confederation of videographers who distributed via satellite "Showdown in Seattle," the independent news coverage during the 1999 World Trade Organization protests. Since then, over 80 Independent Media Centers have been setup on every continent through a decentralized, autonomous network.

The group also distributes its own newspaper in Seattle that they repurpose online. The site has logged over two million hits. It features hundreds of audio segments, Studio X, and Internet radio. America Online, Yahoo, CNN, and BBC Online all link it.

1415 3rd Ave. (between Pike & Union); www.indymedia.org

Linda's Wednesday Night Summer Movie Madness

Every Wednesday evening in the summer, Seattle Underground Film Festival Programmer Jon Behren shows flicks on Linda's patio. "It began as B-trash drive-in stuff. Then I added more television shows and some unique programming. I slip in a few avant-garde films with the kitschy oddball stuff," Behren notes.

Tables and chairs are provided; don't bring your own. And it's a tavern, so don't bring kids, either.

Wednesdays at dusk; Linda's Tavern, 707 E. Pine St.; (206) 325-1220

Little Theatre & Grand Illusion

The forty-nine seats are hand-me-downs, and the walls are lined with sheets of burlap in the Little Theatre. But this tiny movie house on Seattle's Capitol Hill is well loved by Seattlites for its eclectic programming and concessions stand. "I love the Little Theatre.... You can't see that stuff anywhere except in Europe, at the Walker, in Columbus, and in NYC," says filmmaker Lynn Shelton. "And they have the best popcorn in town."

Another theater worth checking out is the Little Theatre's sister cinema, the Grand Illusion Cinema in the University District. Art films, independents and documentaries have been showing at the Grand Illusion for thirty years. Both of the houses are named after films by legendary director Jean Renoir, and both are owned by the Northwest Film Forum, a nonprofit filmmakers collective.

Wednesday night at Linda's

610 19th Ave. E; www.wigglyworld.org

Sneak

The grab bag of screening series, Sneak never announces in advance what titles it is showing. On any given night, the members-only club could show an independent feature, a foreign-language film, a documentary, or a rough cut of any of these genres. The only thing that is predictable is that the film will not have distribution. Following the screening, a club moderator leads a discussion, often accompanied by someone associated with the film.

Pacific Place Cinemas, 600 Pine St.; www.sneakfilms.com

Sarah Jane Lapp is a filmmaker and illustrator living in Seattle.

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Distributor FAQ

BY JASON GUERRASIO

What is Magnolia Pictures?

We are a specialty-distributor and we also are acquiring theaters around the county. We have theaters right now that we run or own in Dallas, Boulder, and Denver. We're looking to acquire more, ultimately having a nationwide presence playing mostly art and specialty films. We also program the Tribeca Film Festival.

What's the story behind Magnolia Pictures' origins?

As the Shooting Gallery was coming to a close, I met Bill Banowsky, who approached me because he had this concept of getting into the theater business and also wanted to have distribution to run things through them. A few people told him to talk to me, and basically we got together. I thought he had really done his homework, I liked him, and we just sort of kept talking. Last September 2001 it sort of came into being.

As a distributor housed within a theater chain, how do the two entities work in tandem?

We have opportunities and incentives on the theater level to market our films and go the extra mile for films we're distributing, so that's a big plus. That's one of the reasons that we got into that, to make sure that our films get into the local marketplace. One of the problems with exhibition right now, outside of Landmark, is that there really aren't that many dedicated people who know what to do on a local level with an art film. When you play with the chains, you are just one of the many films that come out of a Hollywood studio. They don't really differentiate between them and don't do the things on the local levels to attract customers. You end up having to spend more money and just kind of being one of ten films in the complex. When you go with an art house distributor, this is their bread and butter; they know the ropes, and they know where to attract the audience, the special interest groups, etc. That's really what we're trying to do, to extend those tentacles around the country.

How does a company like Magnolia, which is controlled personally, not corporately, effect the marketplace?

We get to do what we want and don't have to answer to anyone else. We have to answer to our investors if we're not successful, but basically we have the freedom to just do a film because we like it. I find that a lot of the "independent" companies sort of deal with a template, and it's harder to work on a gut feeling at these places. I still work on gut feelings, but I'm also very financially conservative when I work on that gut feeling. I really try to be creatively adventurous and fiscally conservative.

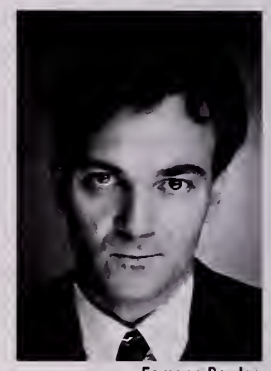
Scenes from Dover Kosashvili's *Late Marriage* (left) and Jacques Audiard's *Read My Lips*

What types of films do you seek?

Films with a point of view that isn't just made in a cookie-cutter commercial fashion. I'm not saying that we won't do a film that is a commercially bent film, but at its core it'll have to be something we like, something that we feel is some degree of personal expression and not just a commercial endeavor.

Where and how do you find them?

Festivals. We see as many as we can, and then afterwards we see the rest. If a Miramax or a Fine Line or someone is going to throw a lot of money at a film, they're going to get it, most likely. We pick up the ones where directors don't get the deal they like, or want a particular profile to a film. We're not going to be able to pay a lot of money for an advance at this stage, so if someone wants to get a lot of money, they're probably going to take the other offer. We try not to get into that. We really wanted to have a lot of integrity.



Eamonn Bowles

Do you go to second-tier festivals, the non-A-List fest?

I always go to South by Southwest, and I go to the Galway Film Festival every year—we go to what looks good, but most of our stuff is not the major festivals. We also keep in touch with the sales agents and keep our ear to the ground. People recommend films all the time.

Do you have a set target of a certain number of films to acquire each year?

No. We are not like, "Hey we have to release ten films this year, let's go find that tenth." We're not looking to do that. We're looking to be inspired by a film and go, "OK, we want to do this one." And if there's ten in one year and six in the other, that's what it is.

Magnolia Pictures

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www.magnoliapictures.com

Eamonn Bowles, President
Ryan Werner, V.P. of Acquisitions & Distribution
John McCarron, Director of Distribution

The Slate:
June 2002: *Late Marriage*
July 2002: *Read My Lips*
Fall 2002: *Under the Skin of the City*
November 2002: *Interview with the Assassin*

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA PICTURES

How do you work with the filmmakers when preparing their films for release?

We always like to hear what they have to say, because sometimes they have a take on the film; they're closest to the film obviously. That being said, filmmakers are not always the films' best marketers. If we bring them things and they're violently opposed to them, we'll try to work around it, but the ultimate decision, I have to say, is going to be ours. I'm not saying that in a harsh or callous way, but I do have to trust my instincts more than someone who's very, very close to a film. A lot of times it's like telling someone "Your kid is ugly," or "No, my kid looks best in blue."

How should filmmakers approach you with their projects? At what stage?

At this point we're very much acquisition based. If there's a special deal where there are foreign things attached to it and I really like the script, that's an exception. It's probably best to wait until your film's done before showing it to us, because we're not going to be able to come up with the production funds in any substantial manner.... But if you're David Lynch, I'm sure we'll take a look at it.

What's one bit of advice you'd give to filmmakers seeking distributors?

Try to get champions out there. Richard Linklater once talked about *Slacker*, and he said, "Try building a chain of yes's," instead of going to the top and getting a "no." It's not that bad of a thing to start at a little smaller scale. However, that being said, if you can get into the big film festivals, that's going to help you a lot. Though Sundance is a dual-edged sword... I have seen films at Sundance get hurt because they were there. *Donnie Darko* was a film that was incredibly-hyped going into Sundance, and people saw it there and were like, "Uh ... so what?" You went in with this exaggerated sense of what it could be. The film was actually really good, but I think if it had come out in the blank, open market and people only saw it coming out of a screening, there would have been people looking to buy that film for a considerable amount of money.

Jason Guerrasio interns for The Independent *and is a contributing writer/editor for* 1-42, *an online magazine.*

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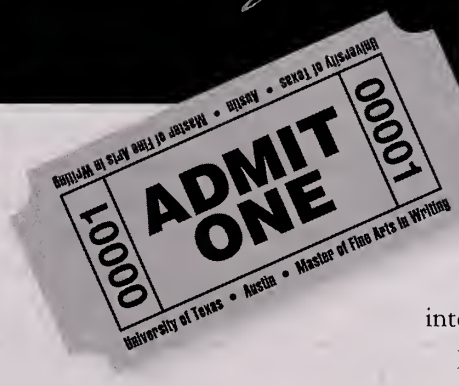

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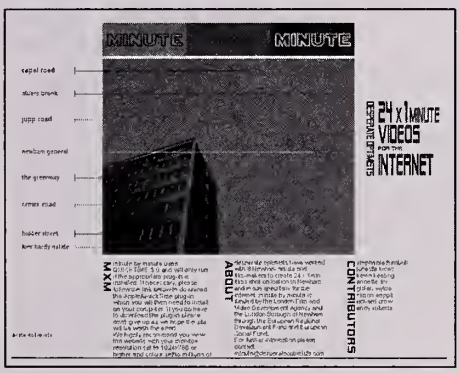
Where Limitations Liberate

BY MAYA CHURI

FOR MANY FILMMAKERS A MEDIUM where sound doesn't synch well, cuts and dissolves are lost on a small screen, and viewers have to wait and wait for the film to download is a medum in which the limitations outweigh the benefits. But for media-makers who are experimenting and taking advantage of the ever-changing technology, web art is at the beginning of its evolution into a full-blown art form. These artists are finding that the web, like jazz, fosters an art form where the limitations are the liberating factor.



Minute by Minute (www.minutebyminute.co.uk) is a site whose centerpiece is a series of twenty-four one-minute films about Newham in East London, a dying industrial thruway that is now experiencing a resurgence. This exploration of urban space uses QuickTime video, still images, text, and design to form a curated piece whose themes, according to the artistic directors of the project, Christine Molloy and Joe Lawlor, "act as a compositional glue across the entire site."

The glue behind the project is Molloy and Lawlor. Through their London-based company, Desperate Optimists, the two have been making works in a variety of media for over fifteen years. After seeing a Flash-based website they produced (www.map50.com), the London Film and Video Development Agency asked them to create a moving image site. With support from the London Borough of Newham, they began development on "Minute by Minute."

The concept behind the site was to find eight Newham-based artists who could create twenty-four one-minute films about their surroundings. The artists were given seven basic instructions:

1. Choose only one location in Newham.
2. Make three one-minute films in response to that locale.
3. The films must take place in the morning, afternoon, and night.
4. No camera moves (no panning and tilting and no zooming).
5. No synchronous sound.
6. Only three attempts to shoot any given scene.
7. Films must reflect upon incidental moments of activity.

These guidelines may seem strict, but the philosophy Desperate Optimists used to instigate this project was to create a space where structure and freedom support each other. "We're great believers in the jazz structure model, by which we mean it must be tight so you feel clear and supported enough to play freely because you aren't spending all your time looking for the structure."

Simon Aeppli, whose Minute by Minute films are about how one man deals with the passing of time, felt it was best to keep the films short, static, and simple. "I concentrated on minimal actions and movements within the frame and worked hard on the soundtrack to lift out the visual material," he explains. "The restrictions of the net actually open up creative choices for the filmmaker."

When making art for the web, there are other things than the visual limitations to consider. Jocasta Lucas, whose three films use sound as the driving force, takes the audience's mindset into consideration. "Films that are for the Internet should definitely take into account that the viewer is probably alone, in front of a small computer, and is involved in quite a private act," comments Lucas. "Watching film on the Internet is quite a lonely thing to do."

What makes these films different from so many others online is that they were made specifically for the web. The guidelines and rules imposed on the filmmakers were as much about keeping a common theme as making the films easily accessible to a wide audience online. Much of the inspiration for the films came directly from the Lumiere Brothers films, which, according to Molloy and Lawlor, are "very web friendly." But it is not just the films that make the website complete. The designers use text and still images to utilize the frame around the films, exploring this East London community even further. Each site page is a love letter to Newham.

The filmmakers feel that creating films for the web is entirely different than making films for the theater or for television. Gillian Wylde, whose three films speak about loss, desire, and malady, found that it was "very disappointing to watch the films on a TV monitor.... This project has really made me think about projects for different formats." What didn't work for Gillian on the small screen? "Tiny moments; I would somehow try and make those tiny moments a wee bit larger."

Clockwise from top left: Jocasta Lucas' "Something deemed unsubstantial," Gillian Wylde's "A drift," Simon Aeppli's "Second hand daylight," and Wylde's "Everytime I see you my eyes light up."

Maya Churi is a writer and filmmaker. She is currently working on a web narrative about a gated community in Texas.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MINUTE BY MINUTE

Broadening Horizons

Uncovering the international world of Public Television

BY SHANTHA BLOEMEN

WHEN MY DOCUMENTARY, *T-SHIRT TRAVELS*, was nominated to be considered for INPUT, I was obviously pleased, but it didn't strike me as anything different than countless other festivals. Months later, I received a letter saying that my documentary had ultimately not been selected, but would I be interested in applying for a PBS Travel Fellowship to INPUT. It was then I realized I had stumbled onto something quite extraordinary. Who wouldn't want an airline ticket to Rotterdam, this year's conference site, and a week watching the world's best public television?

For the past twenty-five years, INPUT has screened the world's most innovative and provocative television. Conceived in 1977 by a group of TV professionals meeting in Bellagio, Italy, on Lake Como, the International Public Television Screening Conference, later renamed INPUT, is hardly new. Originally, the conference was intended to bring non-English-speaking public television programs to American audiences, but the current of television content from, moving from West to East, already underway in the 70's, continued unabated. INPUT evolved into an annual conference seeking out fresh, innovative approaches to television. "The focus [is] on program ideas, not on program sales," Tim Knight, a Canadian producer, explains.

The nonmarket atmosphere, where ideas and innovations, rather than contracts, are exchanged, is what attracts producers, commissioning editors, station managers, and filmmakers from across the globe, including many American independent producers, year after year. Jennifer Fox, an American filmmaker and teacher, fell in love with INPUT when her first film, *Beirut: The Last Home Movie*, was selected in 1991. After doing the festival rounds, INPUT was a refreshing experience for her. "All of a sudden I was being asked meaningful questions and engaging in a dialogue about the craft and nature of television," she says. "What's so exciting is [television] is not the same all over the world. Yes, there are certain commonalities, but it's great to say, 'Oh, my God, in Denmark they do this,' or 'In Africa they have developed a series which is cheap, and we can't even do that in the United States.'"

Fox has continued to participate in INPUT over the last eleven years. This year she was nominated by national INPUT coordinators to be one of the eighteen "shop stewards" who select films and moderate discussions. Fox and her colleagues spent two weeks sifting through more than 400 hours of programming from thirty-three countries. In the end, they selected eighty-six hours of programs ranging from comedy to investigative journalism. "You get to see tons and tons of work, but in a collaborative way, with a lot of discussion involved during the selection process," she explains.

Jennifer Fox's first film, *Beirut: The Last Home Movie*, gained welcome attention at the INPUT festival in 1991.

The result is six days of television, with three thematic sessions running simultaneously. Shop stewards and filmmakers lead lively discussions on not just the content, but how a program fits into the public television world. "[You] become a sort of talk show host for the presentation with the filmmaker," Fox says.

One thousand international delegates rush from screening room to screening room, trying to be everywhere at the same time. Besides the screenings, special session discussions give an outlet for further, more focused debate. By entwining short TV clips with panelist comments, sessions ranged from reality TV, to STEPS, films on HIV/AIDS. The Producer's Hour, an informal extension of the sessions, provides the opportunity for the audience, filmmakers, and shop stewards to continue the often heated discussions over a cold beer.

INPUT 2002 revelers unite for an evening of music and merriment.

With so much interaction between the diverse audience, it is easy to gain insight into how diverse public television sensibilities are. What may be innovative in the Netherlands may be too controversial in Spain or too serious in Italy. "The US is very nationalistic and self-contained. PBS does very little collaboration with other broadcasters," says Jennifer Fox. "INPUT presents an opportunity to broaden your horizons and see what sort of television is being produced internationally."

INPUT provides not only a chance for Americans to see international content, but for Europeans to see something from the United States that is different than the abundance of American sitcoms and soap operas exported overseas. Five out of a nominated seventeen American programs were included in this year's final INPUT selection.

Egg, WNET's popular art show, generated positive discussion and feedback. Louis Alvarez and Andrew Kolker's *People Like Us: Social Class in America*, presented in a session entitled These Strange Things, drew a large audience intrigued

PHOTO: LEFT, COURTESY OF FILMMAKER; ABOVE, AUDREY MUCK

by their courageous effort to dissect the country though the lens of the seemingly un-American class distinction.

American nominations for INPUT are selected by a committee of individuals committed to public television. Although submissions should be geared towards public television, there are no restrictions. Programs are not required to have either a US airdate or a broadcast deal.

The PBS travel fellowships are one way to make the cost of INPUT more accessible to independent producers. Each year South Carolina Public Television (SCETV), where INPUT is administered in the US, applies for a grant from the Corporation of Public Broadcasting to provide travel grants. Depending on where the conference is held, they can cover the costs for ten to fifteen producers to attend. The grant only covers the airline ticket and registration fee. Producers still have pay their daily expenses.

Independent producers attending INPUT should not expect deals or to pitch their projects, but rather, to build relationships that can, in turn, lead to collaborations or funding later. "You feel like you are part of an international community, with people to talk through ideas with or meeting foreign commissioning editors or producers," says Jennifer Fox. "What people forget about funding and producing is that it is about relationships."

Sitting on the tall metal barstools in the cafe at the Den Dolen, the conference center in the heart of Rotterdam, Omonike Akinyemi, an independent producer, and I chat over a beer. We are exhausted after six days trying to fit as many hours of TV into our day as possible. "This is the best-kept secret for documentary producers," she sighs.

INPUT2003 will take place in Aarhus, Denmark from May 11–16. The deadline for US submissions is November 2, with final selections announced in March. The Travel Fellowship Grants deadline is March 31, and announcements are made in early April. For more information contact INPUT at www.input-tv.org or US INPUT's secretariat at SCETV Terry Pound, (803) 737-3434.

Shantha Bloemen has lived, worked and studied in Africa. As a communications consultant for UNICEF, she has created annual programming for International Children's Day. See www.itvs.org/tshirttravels.

CUSTOM BRANDED MOTION GRAPHICS FOR FILM, VIDEO, AND DVD

AFRICAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

African cinema in the African century

BY CLAIRE ANDRADE-WATKINS

WHILE DIGNITARIES FROM FIFTY-THREE African countries gathered in Durban, South Africa, for the in Inaugural Summit of the African Union (AU), the African Union Film Festival (AUFF) drew together filmmakers, cultural policy experts and audiences for six days of free screenings and panels. The thirty-plus films programmed reflected African cinema's past, present, and future, including classics, documentaries, shorts, and new feature films. Taking a cue from the new era launched by the creation of the AU, panels focused on the future of media in Africa. The festival was part of a wide range of arts programs presented throughout South Africa in conjunction with the AU summit held June 28 to July 10, 2002.

Jacques Behanzin, secretary general of the Federation of Pan-African Filmmakers

The AUFF program reflects a united Africa that transcends the psychological, geographical, and cultural barriers that divided the continent during the colonial period. With those barriers removed, the 700 million people living the continent become a huge potential market for African culture and cinema. "If only 10 percent of the people in Africa go see African films, that would be enough," filmmaker Cheik Sissoko of Mali notes.

At the AUFF kick-off reception, African Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Brigitte Mabandla indicated that the government is taking a strong position in support of the development of the film sector. "Film, as part of the cultural program surrounding the Summit of the African Union, is vital," she says.

Telling African stories, changing the stories that are told, and creating visual literacy based on non-colonial media products are the challenges facing filmmakers across the continent. With a population of 44 million, South Africa alone is a potentially significant market. But creating and distributing distinctly African films is difficult even in South Africa, the continent's broadcast leader. The legacy of apartheid, geography, and concentrated media ownership slows reaching and building new audiences and markets. There are no theaters in the black townships. And Hollywood imports dominate the screens in the affluent areas. It is clear that in media, as in many other sectors of the country, there are still two South Africas; the developed white sector, and the developing black sector.

Financing is an issue for all filmmakers, but this is doubly true in Africa. Many of the films produced on the continent still receive most of their funding from Europe. The battle for resources, production, distribution, and exhibition has been a frustrating one for filmmakers, who have been fighting for foothold in African distribution since 1969 with the creation of the Federation of Pan-African Filmmakers.

Many filmmakers argue there can be no development for Africa without culture, and that moving-image media is central to the rise of an African identity. Sissoko challenged and cautioned filmmakers to guard and preserve the African perspective and sensitivity while capturing the voice and personality of Africa during the panel "The Importance of Film in Shaping and Expressing Cultural Identity." At the same time, Ethiopian-born filmmaker Haile Gerima, a vocal warrior against Hollywood stereotypes of Black people's history, advocated for an "African Cinema on it's own terms."

During all the panels and the screenings, the African festival audience was vocal, engaged, and outspoken. One young student chastised the government ministers at a press conference for not attending the screenings. People complained about content of the television programs and the lack of African programming.

Both filmgoers and filmmakers were connected with AUFF's theme, films that had "broken the mold." Whether the films were classics of African and South African cinema, contemporary features, documentaries, or shorts, all the stories provided the audience with a new way of seeing themselves and their continent. Screenings of South African apartheid-era classic features, like *Cry, The Beloved Country* and *Place of Weeping* were overflowing. Showings of newer features from outside of South Africa like Sissoko's *Guimba*, a political film about a mythical warrior-sorcerer, and Med Hondo's stunning feature *Sarraounia*, about a legendary warrior queen who defeated the French were also packed. South African-born filmmaker Jacqueline Fox also premiered her bold UN documentary *Together We Can*, about HIV/AIDS South Africa, to great acclaim at AUFF.

The festival is a collaboration between the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), the Film Resource Unit (FRU), and the Centre for Creative Arts

Festival participants take time between meetings to discuss issues facing contemporary African cinema. From left, they are Cheik Sissoko, Jacques Behanzin, Haile Gerima, Eddie Mbalo, and Mike Dearham.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF JEEVA RAJGOPAUL

(CCAC). All three entities are major forces behind the innovative strategies that are redefining and building the film industry in South Africa. Each is headed by a dynamic, media savvy South African passionately committed to African cinema and to creating an economically viable, culturally progressive film industry in South Africa. In linking their cultural initiatives to the new political structure of the AU, particularly the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), they must first debunk the notion that African cinema is not economically viable. They must prove that cinema is a key to the continent's economic revival, which is the broadest goal of NEPAD, AU lead plan of action to set the continent on a path of accelerated growth and sustainable development, eradicating widespread poverty, and repositioning Africa in the global community.

African Union Film Festival was free to all attendees.

One encouraging sign that the film sector has the ear and support of the South African government is the existence of NFVF. Created by an act of the South African Parliament in 1999, NFVF is charged with revitalizing the country's film industry. Since its inception, NFVF's budget has risen from 10 million rand (the equivalent of 10 million dollars U.S.) to 18 million rand. The Foundation has encouraged and supported African filmmakers and developed collaborative relationships with South Africa's leading broadcasters, SABC and M-Net. NFVF finances five features a year and is planning to expand production. It also supports script development, documentary production, workshops, technical training, audience development, and distribution within South Africa. Outside of South Africa, NFVF is establishing a presence in international venues, such as Cannes and MIPCOM.

There are still questions among filmmakers about how supportive the political bodies really are of the emerging cultural organizations. During the panel "Developing the Commercial Viability of African Film: the Role of NEPAD," participants questioned the commitment of the NEPAD initiative to broader cultural concerns and not just fiscal development. Although throughout the AU summit a lot of noise was generated about culture as the foundation of Africa, in the NEPAD document, "African Century/New Century," the section on culture; is a skimpy and vague paragraph. Concerns that the speeches supporting cultural initiatives were nothing more than rhetoric were further underscored by the fact that few of the delegates from the Summit attended the panels or the screenings. Although many were seen shopping.

There is clearly a need for serious lobbying of African policy members, to educate them not to view cinema as benign entertainment, but as an economic trigger. Increased demand for African cinema products means a need for increased supply, and at the present time, there is a serious shortage. Most of the development initiatives have just gotten off the ground. It is unrealistic to anticipate prolific feature film production in the foreseeable future. To help fill the gap, organizations are fostering short film production, which is excellent training for young filmmakers and is proving to be popular and in high demand internationally, as demonstrated by the success of series like *Mama Africa*.

The festival set the parameters for sustainable development of the South African film industry. The country has the potential, and infrastructure, to set the continent's pace for developing innovative distribution, production, and exhibition strategies for African cultural products from an African perspective. Jacques Behanzin, secretary general of the Federation of Pan-African Filmmakers, said, "South Africa is the new camel to carry African cinema."

Claire Andrade-Watkins is a filmmaker/historian an and associate professor of visual and media arts at Emerson College.

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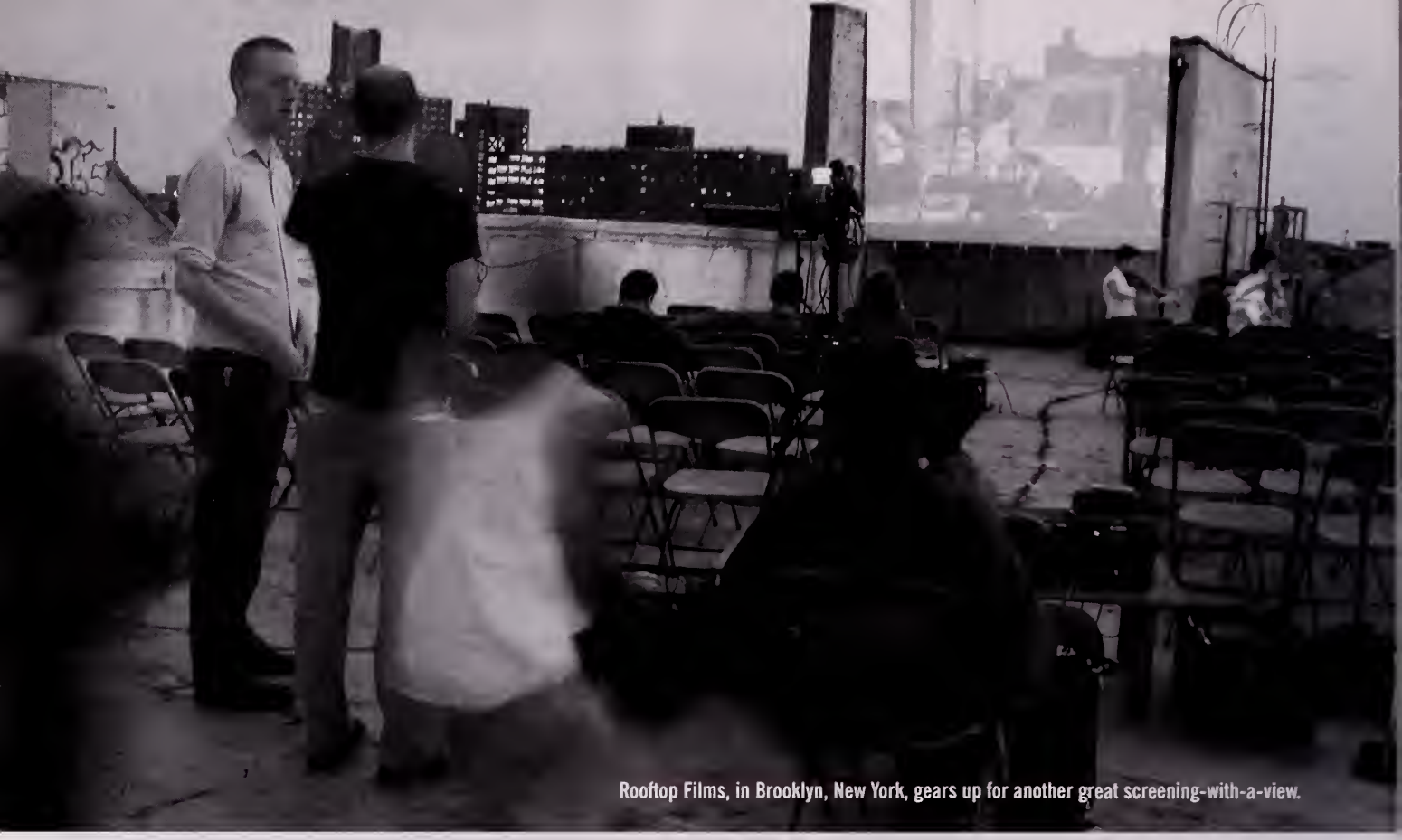


Rooftop Films, in Brooklyn, New York, gears up for another great screening-with-a-view.

Cave Paintings, Churches, and Rooftops

Microcinemas come of age

BY ANGELA ALSTON

WHILE THE LUMIERE BROTHERS ORIGINALLY SCREENED THEIR FILMS in a Paris café, the term microcinema was not coined until 1991 with the naming of Rebecca Barten and David Sherman's Total Mobile Home Microcinema. Since then microcinema has come to define a broad range of small screening spaces specializing in moving image media that hovers out of range of national distributors, air conditioned art houses, and sleek museums. The hermit crabs of screening series, microcinemas claim abandoned spaces, creating surprising, inspiring, and unlikely homes for media. They flit across rooftops or joyously unspool in a former church. The number of microcinemas is multiplying every year, not just in the US, but also in Canada, Europe, and Australia. A couple of them, Flicker in the US and Exploding Cinema in Europe, are even cloning themselves and replicating in new cities.

Every microcinema is unique, even the clones. Not only are the spaces one-of-a-kind, but so are the audiences. One of the characteristics of this screening format is that programmers, and often the filmmakers, interact with the audience. Microcinemas are not a place to sink into the dark and disconnect all neural activity. These events require a diet of healthy discussion and community to thrive.

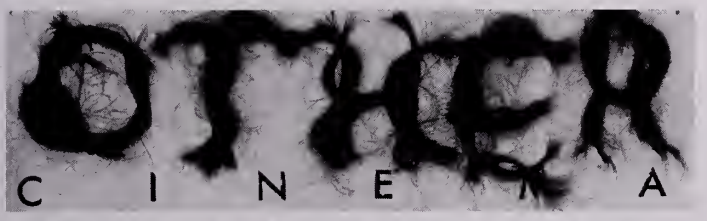
Other Cinema | San Francisco, CA

Established before the term microcinema entered the alternative media lexicon, Other Cinema has existed in one form or another for at least twenty years. And for those two decades, the focus has always been, literally, "other" cinema; ethnography, pornography, amateur work, to name a few of the genres favored here. "It's like fire, cave paintings—elemental, primal—tribal is a good word," founder and filmmaker Craig Baldwin explains.

The primal, tribal works that audiences really pack the house for are local projects, experimental documentaries, and media archaeology pieces, like Pixel Vision, regular 8, super 8, and small-gauge work. Baldwin also programs theme shows and series on

issues like reproductive rights and September 11th. Each theme will draw a different audience. "It's a celebration of diversity, about engagement with the art and the issue of the day," he says.

On an average night, about seventy-five people will show up, including the crew and friends who have been comped in. After



Craig Baldwin's hair-design logo: "As authentic as it gets ... and that's what microcinemas are all about!!"

expenses Other Cinema nets about $50 a night. All funding comes from the $5 apiece tickets, period. "Not that we'd turn away a grant!" Baldwin exclaims, "but we can't put ourselves in a position of dependency."

With such a long-lived microcinema, Baldwin has very clear ideas about publicity. In the early years, calendars were works of art in themselves: slide-rules, spinning disks, and assemble-yourself zoetropes, but eventually time constraints dictated standardization. The calendars are now limited to seasonal fliers, which gives each printing a long life. "People can put them on their refrigerators and be reminded of upcoming shows, and get excited," Baldwin explains.

Other Cinema doesn't use an e-mail list. It's too time-consuming. But they do have a strong electronic presence. The website gets over 100,000 hits a year. The site's primary purpose is to create a global presence by connecting with other microcinemas and enthusiasts both in North America and overseas and to promote their journal *OtherZine*. "[It] does duty on the history/theory front, often with media-archeology articles or other arguments that fall between the cracks of academic film research," Baldwin says.

But Other Cinema's most important advertising is word-of-mouth. That's where the fab Mission District storefront location is so important. "With thousands of people passing every day, an energized spread of blurbs, pics, and bold graphics can really spark interest," Baldwin comments.

Other Cinema presents two seasons of Saturday screenings a year, which correspond to school semesters. The venue is dark during the summer and in January.

For more information contact: Other Cinema, ATA Gallery, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA, (415) 824-3890; www.othercinema.com; OTHERCINE@aol.com.

Aurora Picture Show | Houston, TX

The Aurora Picture Show makes its home in one of the most unlikely places of any microcinema, a former church in south Houston. Snuggled into a largely Latino and African American neighborhood, this screening space has not only formed a community of its own as microcinema, but has taken a place in the larger community. "I wanted to keep it for a congregation," founder Andrea Grover explains.

Since the initial screening in June 1998, the Aurora Picture Show, like any healthy congregation, has continued to grow. There are now a group of regulars. Grover knows their names, faces, and where they'll sit for each show. She is working to expand the audience by focusing marketing, exchanging mailing lists with arts organizations, and promoting in the neighborhood. She's also targeting audiences from outside of the traditional microcinema demographic with programs like the family friendly Popcorn Kids, which admits children for free.

The efforts are paying off not just in building the community but in funding too. After operating for a year on whatever the door brought in, the Aurora Picture Show received grants from the City of Houston, the Texas Commission on the Arts, and several private donors. Last year, the budget was $80,000, $10,000 of which came in from the door. "[When I started] it was a full-time hobby," explains Grover, who supported herself as a freelance writer until recently, when she became the first full-time employee of the Aurora Picture Show.

The space hasn't changed much. Grover keeps the church atmosphere alive. There are still pews for about ninety-six people. The array of the equipment that came with the church is still around, although some of it has been converted to different uses. There's an annual June picnic that teams up with the Extremely Short program. Grover finds that the venue allows and even creates a "rich, meaningful, intimate exchange" with the audience.

Every month, two or three different programs screen in the church. Grover programs four a year, and mediamakers and other folks with interesting perspectives are invited to guest-curate the others. Architect Michael Bell put together "Museum of Love Exceeding," which explored how catastrophe generates new forms. In 2003, Matthew Coolidge of the Center for Land Use Interpretation will curate a show focusing on the evolving landscape. For Grover, the Aurora Picture Show community extends beyond Houston. The twenty-six-member advisory board is spread out across the US. A large part of their role is scouting for works at festivals, since collectively they attend more than

The hallowed portals of Houston's Aurora Picture Show.

PHOTOS: FACING PAGE, COURTESY OF SARAH M. PALMER; ABOVE, CRAIG BALDWIN; RIGHT, ANDREA

Rooftop Films hosts a variety of open-air entertainment.

Grover could manage on her own. "They're our ambassadors," Grover says of the board, which includes Ralph McKay, Chrissie Iles, Art Jones, Ruby Lerner, Marian Luntz, and Craig Baldwin. "We don't want to be a lone island," she emphasizes.

For more information contact: Aurora Picture Show, 800 Aurora Street, Houston, Texas 77009; (713) 868-2101; www.aurorapictureshow.org.

Rooftop Films | Brooklyn, NY

On a sweltering summer evening there's nothing quite like sitting on a Brooklyn roof as the sun sets over Manhattan and the silhouettes of jets glide down to land at Kennedy Airport, as you sip a cold beer and watching a movie. That's right, a movie. Rooftop Films, in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn, screens flicks with a view every Friday all summer long. This year, it's even catered. Last year, you had to bring your own from the bodega around the corner. After six years they're in a good, solid groove, with an audience of regulars. "It almost doesn't matter what we show!" co-director Mark Elijah Rosenberg laughs.

Rooftop Films was conceived when Rosenberg set up a one-time-only screening of his work and of some fellow filmmakers on the roof of his Manhattan apartment building to celebrate his film school graduation. When 200 people showed up, Rosenberg knew he had something. Once his friend Dan Nuxoll offered the roof of his building to continue the screenings, Rooftop Films was born. The two formed a partnership, along with Moira Griffin, and they've been screening films ever since. The large screen of lightweight plywood is now a permanent fixture on Nuxoll's roof.

Friday nights on the roof are very laid back, more like large parties than formal screenings. There's live music before the show on the 10,000-square-foot roof, which can comfortably hold up to 250 people. You can bring blankets and just sit on the tarpaper roof. Nuxoll lives on the fourth floor, so the audience has access to two bathrooms. And he makes a point of keeping good relationships going with the neighbors. "I always give them schedules. And of course they get in free. We try to avoid any potential problems," he says.

They show an eclectic mix of work. At last year's Texas Night, the Kunstler sisters' *Tulia, Texas*, a straight-ahead doc about oppression of the black population in a small town, was combined with Susannah Erhler's *Tamale House #3*, a "goofy" documentary about an iconic Austin eatery. Some films, a few experimental pieces, and an animated music video were thrown in for extra flavor.

More and more, Rooftop is working on broadening their audience. They're promoting themselves in other Brooklyn neighborhoods with flyers and sharing e-mail lists with other groups like Women Make Movies. Griffin has publicized screenings and submission opportunities to blackfilm.com, a news wire. Rooftop Films doesn't do snail mailings; it's not cost-effective, and the regular audience is very wired.

As new folks become aware of Rooftop, the focus is expanding. It's now also a filmmaking collective, sharing skills and equipment. One-sixth of all proceeds from the screenings are set aside for a fund to pay for new projects. Currently, there are ten projects in production. Rooftop is funded largely by proceeds taken at the door, a "strongly suggested" $6 per person, but they did land two grants from the LEF Foundation. Faced with a dark and cold winter on the roof, Rooftop Films opted instead to tour the West Coast last year, screening in San Francisco, Seattle, and Vancouver. Other new projects include a magazine and a compilation video of Rooftop works.

For more information, contact Rooftop Films, P.O. Box 482, New York, NY 10276; (877) 786-1912; www.rooftopfilms.com; info@rooftopfilms.com.

Angela Alston is a filmmaker and co-coordinator of Talking Pictures, at New York's Shambhala Center. Her films have screened at Rooftop Films.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SARAH M. PALMER

PROGRAM A MICROCINEMA ROADTRIP!

Here are a few venues to get you started. But don't limit yourself to our suggestions: forge your own route. Remember, all it takes is a projector, some work to screen, an audience, and a sense of adventure.

Venues:

1 Peripheral Produce, Portland, OR
www.peripheralproduce.com

2 Artists Television Access, San Francisco, CA
www.atasite.org

3 Ciné16, San Jose, CA
www.afana.org

4 Basement Films, Santa Fe, NM
www.basementfilms.org/

5 Cinemaker Coop, Austin, TX
www.cinemaker.org

6 Video Association of Dallas, Dallas, TX
www.dallasvideo.org

7 MiniCine, Shreveport, LA
www.swampland.org

8 Zeitgeist, New Orleans, LA
www.zeitgeistinc.org

9 Sarasota Film Society, Sarasota, FL
www.filmsociety.org

10 IMAGE, Atlanta, GA
www.imagefv.org

11 Belcourt Theatre, Nashville, TN
www.belcourt.org

12 Glitter Films, Raleigh, NC
glitterfilms.tripod.com

13 Berks, Reading, PA
www.berksfilmmakers.org

14 Film at the Prince, Philadelphia, PA
www.princemusictheater.org/film.html

15 Robert Beck Memorial Cinema, New York, NY
www.rbmc.net

16 Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT
www.realartways.org

17 Balagan, Boston, MA
www.coolidge.org/balagan

18 Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY
www.squeaky.org

19 Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA
www.pghfilmmakers.org/

20 Cinema Center, Fort Wayne, IN
www.cinemacenter.org

21 Chicago Filmmakers, Chicago, IL
www.chicagofilmmakers.org

22 Electric Eye Cinema, Madison, WI
www.prolefeedstudios.com

23 City Club Cinema, Minneapolis, MN
www.nationalprojects.com

24 Ragtag Cinemacafé, Columbia, MO
www.ragtagfilm.com

25 Nebraska Independent Film Projects, Lincoln, NE
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

26 Boulder Public Library, Boulder, CO
www.boulder.lib.co.us/films

27 The Flicks, Boise, ID
www.theflicksboise.com

28 The Little Theatre, Seattle, WA
www.wigglyworld.com

Resources:

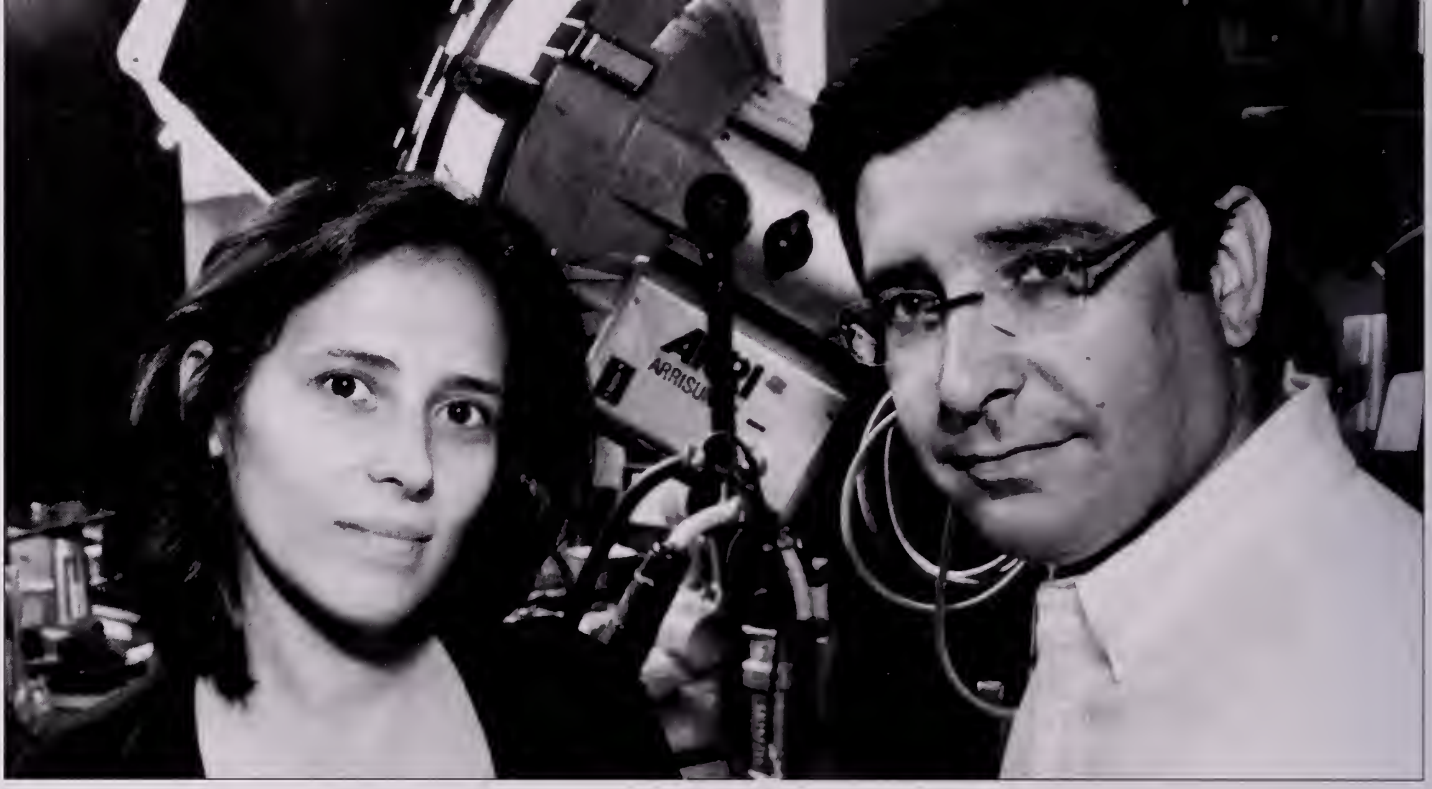
Microcinemas live and die by the passions and pocketbooks of their founders, so the roster of venues is ever-changing.

The premier source for exhibition information is Flicker, "the home page for the alternative cinematic experience," produced by Bay Area artist Scott Stark (www.hi-beam.net).

Other resources include the ring of (no relation) Flicker organizations that offers a mini distribution system (for example, see www.flickerla.com); Microcinema International, which programs a travelling series called Independent Exposure (www.microcinema.com); and Film Arts Foundation's most excellent *Alternative Exhibition Information Of the Universe* database, a.k.a. the *A.E.I.O.U. Guide*, which is available in print and also on-line to Film Arts members (www.filmarts.org).

AIVF's own *Film and Video Exhibitors Guide* lists over 1,000 alternative and art-house screening venues, along with tips for taking your show on the road. The *Guide* is being completely updated this fall; AIVF members can preview the interactive directory at www.aivf.org/resources/exhibitors.

— Elizabeth Peters



DON'T BE AFRAID TO WAIT!

When and How to Sell Your Independent Film

BY JOANA VICENTE & JASON KLIOT

PHOTO BY MARK STEPHEN KORNBLUTH

WE WILL BEGIN WITH RULE #1—THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE there is: *You only have one shot.* Whether you are trying to sell to a distributor, get an actor onboard your film, or find a producer to back your movie, this rule is one to keep at the forefront of your mind at all times.

The one thing independent filmmakers have an abundance of is time—time to write until the film is right, time to prepare a no-budget shoot, and time to edit the film until it's the best it can be (thank you, Apple). We always work with our writer-directors until their project is as polished as it can be. We generally urge filmmakers to take their time and ignore outside forces like festival deadlines and acquisitions executives banging on their door. The absolute worst thing you can do to your movie is to say, "Well, that's good enough."

Beware: Agents, reps, and acquisitions people always say, "I know how to look at a work in progress," "I'm a professional," and "I see through the rough cut to the great film that you are trying to make." Baloney. They are as effected as anyone by the way you present your project. Their job is to cajole you into letting them be the first one to see your film. The only people who can properly evaluate an unfinished film are producers, directors, and editors who have made a lot of films and seen many, many rough cuts. Everyone else just *thinks* they know how to look at a rough cut.

Get to know the marketplace

Independent film is constantly changing. Knowing the marketplace—especially when selling a finished feature—is vital to your success. This means acquainting yourself with potential buyers and the physical marketplace, most likely film festivals, where your film will be put up for sale.

Getting into an "A-festival" like Sundance, Toronto, or Cannes will put an imprimatur of quality on the film, but there are also a number of smaller festivals that are attracting healthy press and industry attendance. Our advice is always to try to go to an A-festival to premiere your film. We have sometimes waited over a year for the right festival, and have never regretted it. There is always time to show your film on the lower rungs of the

Well-timed presentations helped sell these Open City films.

festival circuit, but only one time to sell your film. Be patient.

Festival strategy requires taking an objective look at your film and using common sense. Ask yourself, What's the best festival the film has a shot at? Why would it play better at one festival than another? Which festivals require world premieres? Don't limit yourself to festivals' main competitions or official selections. Your film may shine in a field of midnight movies or another "sidebar" program. *The Blair Witch Project* did.

Knowing the marketplace also means identifying companies that may buy your film. Do your homework: What kinds of films have been successful for which distributors recently? Is your film edgy, controversial, commercial, a crowd pleaser, a niche market film? What has Lion's Gate, Sony Pictures Classics, Miramax, Fine Line, Lot 47, or Focus picked up recently? Where and when do they buy their films?

Once you've taken all of this into account and have made a decision, stick to your guns and wait for the right time and place to debut the movie, even if that event is a year away. It's a hundred times better to submit a terrific film to a festival committee early in the selection process than a half-baked film at the last minute. Sending in a film near the deadline means that your film will be compared to other already selected titles. Films which, because they took more time, are more polished.

Once your film is ready, assemble a team that includes a producer's rep, an agent or attorney, and the right publicist for the film. Assembling the team, however, will require you to break a big rule, which is....

Don't show your film to anyone

Before *Chuck & Buck's* Sundance premiere, director Miguel Arteta and producer Matthew Greenfield insisted that their assistant or an intern accompany every tape sent out and be physically present during the screening of the tape—even to their attorney and publicist, who were trusted friends. Their paranoia served them well. Artisan acquired *Chuck & Buck* at Sundance for a healthy advance. Afterward executives told us they left the festival early because they'd already seen 80 percent of the films supposedly screening for the first time. Imagine the advantage held by the 20 percent who held out for the big day, films like *Chuck & Buck*.

Earlier in our careers we showed one of our films to a distribution executive, a friend we absolutely trusted. The film got into a festival, but when we arrived we found out he'd told every competitor that he'd seen the movie and passed. What's worse, he didn't even show up to the premiere as he promised he would. We learned the hard way that it's a badge of honor for an executive to say they've seen a film before everyone else. It's also good business. Why? Because if that executive doesn't have to buy the movie and then proceeds to spurn it in public, chances are their competitors won't want to pick the movie up, either. In this way, they might actually gain from having bad-mouthed your movie. After all, who wants to be the person who had the first chance but passed on the next *Blair Witch Project*? For this reason alone, you should make sure that at the first screening of your movie, every major distributor is represented. If a key player is missing from your premiere, the other distributors will assume that you showed the film early to the absent company, and they passed on your film. And believe us, distributors notice who is missing as much or more than who is in the room.

This is why when we decided that *Series 7*, a film about a reality TV show where the contestants killed each other, should go up for sale, we did it with simultaneous screenings in New York and Los Angeles, and every company was represented. The film had been accepted by a couple of fall festivals, but the director had finished the film just as the country was in the throes of the first *Survivor* phenomenon. It was also the one time we broke our rule about not screening a film on video, before transferring it to 35mm. *Series 7* was, after all, supposed to be a TV show. After some healthy bidding, the movie was sold to USA Films.

Once the film is in play, act quickly

Once a serious offer is made on your film, you should close the deal immediately. Anyone who doesn't want to close, *for any reason,* is not a serious contender and should be discounted. As soon as a serious offer is made, you should call the other distributors who have shown interest in the film, tell them that a deal is going down, and now is the time for them to make an offer on the film. Always be polite, but always show you mean business. And never lie about an offer. Distributors talk to each other, especially when they have passed on a film.

We learned the importance of acting quickly when we premiered a film not long ago at the laid-back Telluride Festival, a cool boutique festival where we thought the film might stand out. We were right. A number of offers were made the day after the premiere. One offer was for a lot of money for worldwide rights. We had no

PROMOTIONAL ART COURTESY OF OPEN CITY FILMS

reason not to trust the executive who'd made it—except for one thing: He wouldn't close the deal. Days later there was still no deal, and the executive's competitors were beginning to ask why there was no announcement in the trades. It turns out, the executive's strategy was very sleazy. He didn't really have the authority to buy the movie at that price, so he planned to get us to take the movie off the market while he showed it to others at his company to see if they also wanted to buy it. When he backed out, he hurt the chances of the film ever selling. While we were later able to make another nice deal for the movie, the momentum we lost definitely hurt us and cost us a tremendous amount of money.

Sometimes it takes a really, really long time

Six years ago we produced a wonderful, funny film called *Too Much Sleep*, directed by David Maquiling. We didn't get into Sundance, so we went to South by Southwest, where we ended up premiering the film at a screening with only thirty people, twenty-eight of whom were locals. The film had no buzz and got a tepid review in *Variety*. Afterwards, we sent out tapes to distributors—always a sign of great desperation. The film died.

Cut to five years later. Maquiling, who is working with the Anthology Film Archives, encourages them to program a series of "neglected" films. They accept. Being the enterprising young independent filmmaker he is, he selects his own film as the series opener. The people at Anthology were so enthusiastic about the film that they decided to exhibit the film for over a week, which meant that the New York papers could review it.

And review it they did.

Amy Taubin of the *Village Voice* called the film "A wry, nearly deadpan suburban comedy [that] is so good it made me wish I had kept that workhorse phrase 'remarkably assured debut feature' just for it." Writing in *The New York Times*, Dave Kehr said: "Perhaps too modestly for his own good, Mr. Maquiling doesn't proclaim his originality in the capital letters of a Lars von Trier or a Paul Thomas Anderson. But it is clearly there, and it marks him as a young filmmaker to watch." And in a three-and-a-half star review in *The New York Post*, V. A. Musetto wrote: "Just when I was dreading seeing another indie movie, along comes this delightful, low-budget comedy. It brings to mind Richard Linklater's *Slacker*...."

We e-mailed the reviews to distributors, and the film finally found a home with Eamon Bowles and the Shooting Gallery's second film series. He gave us for delivery more money than film cost to make. After five years, *Too Much Sleep* finally opened nationally.

Listen to others' advice

What we've learned since we started is to listen to feedback from the right sources. Show your film to trusted, knowledgeable friends before sending it into festivals, and listen to their comments. Use the information to look for another way to cut the movie or make other changes. Even if a film gets rejected from a festival, always call and request notes about why they didn't take the movie.

We really believe that there's a right time for everything, and that you can't rush it. We've always regretted it when we have. So learn what the marketplace is like at that time. A film that is competing with titles that don't complement it may need to sit on the bench until the world changes. And the world is always changing. Remember, there can be wisdom and courage in deciding to do nothing—at least for a little while.

Jason Kliot and Joana Vicente are the co-founders and co-presidents of Open City Films and its digital division, Blow Up Pictures. In the past seven years, they have sold over twenty features, including Love in the Time of Money, *opening this month. See www.blowuppictures.com.*

DOING THE MATH | Crunching the numbers for contracts | BY MARK LITWAK

IT IS RARE FOR AN INDEPENDENT filmmaker to sell his copyright outright to a distributor. Usually the filmmaker licenses specified distribution rights for a term of years. Once the term expires, the rights revert to the filmmaker.

In a typical deal, the distributor secures the right to distribute the movie in one or more media (e.g., theatrical, home video, television). The distributor pays for all distribution, advertising, and marketing costs. Both parties share revenue derived from the film. Most deals allow the distributor to retain a percentage of gross revenues as a distribution fee and to recoup certain designated marketing expenses from film revenues, with the remaining balance, if any, paid to the filmmaker. I will call this formula a "standard" distribution deal, although there is nothing standard about it, except that these deals all calculate the distributor's fee as a percentage of gross revenues.

Another type of deal, sometimes referred to as a "fifty-fifty net deal," allows the distributor to first recoup its expenses from gross revenues, and then equally split the remaining amount with the filmmaker.

Which deal is best? That depends on how much revenue is generated, the extent of expenses incurred, and the amount of the distributor's fees. If $1 million is generated in gross revenues, a standard distribution deal with a 25 percent distribution fee and recoupment of $100,000 in expenses, would generate $650,000 for the filmmaker. Under a fifty-fifty net deal, with the same revenue and expenses, the filmmaker would receive $450,000. But if the film generated $400,000 in revenue, and the standard distribution fee was 35 percent, with recoupable expenses of $150,000, the filmmaker would receive $110,000 under the standard distribution deal, and $125,000 under a fifty-fifty net deal.

Most deals are more complex than this, because they cover multiple media with varying fees (i.e. 35 percent for theatrical, 25 percent for broadcast television), and may require cross-collateralization of expenses. Thus, it behooves the filmmaker to take pencil to paper and figure precisely how much he will receive under different revenue and expense scenarios.

This article is an excerpt from attorney Mark Litwak' forthcoming book Risky Business: Financing and Distributing Independent Films. *See www.marklitwak.com.*

YOUR FILM'S SHELF LIFE:

How to distribute to the home video market

BY DANNY PLOTNICK

ONCE YOUR FILM HAS MADE THE FESTIVAL ROUNDS, EVEN IF IT didn't get the distribution deal of your dreams that doesn't mean it's doomed to collect dust on a shelf in the back of your closet. Distributing your movie in the home video market creates a shelf life for your work in a much brighter environment—video stores both in North America and across the world.

Almost any type of film can be sold in the video market. Those that don't feel at home on video stores shelves might be more comfortable with an educational distributor who will market to schools and associations. Even shorts can be marketed as tapes. Since distributors usually won't touch anything under sixty minutes, your best bet is to compile your short with several others as feature-length program.

Just as in making your film, selling it as a video takes a lot of hard work. You'll have to package your film, sell it to distributors (that's right distributors again), and market it.

Finding distributors

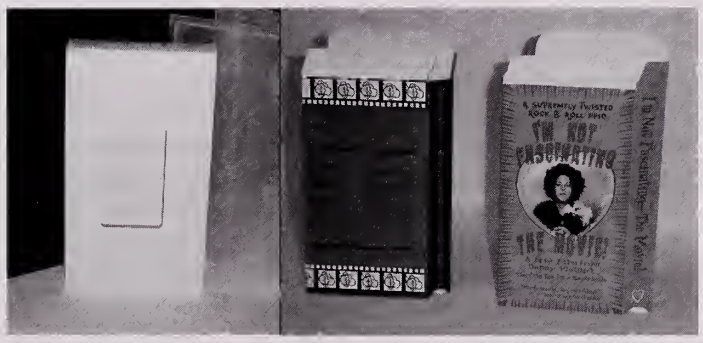
You'll have to do some research to determine which distribution companies are right for your work. The Video Software Dealers Association (www.vsda.org) puts out several publications listing hundreds of distributors. Two distributors who are particularly friendly to independents are Facets and the Cinema Guild. If you have a local video store that carries work that interests you, ask them who they purchase from. Investigating niche market distributors like Music Video Distributors (music related) and Wolfe Video (gay and lesbian titles) can broaden your search considerably. I successfully distributed my film *I'm Not Fascinating—The Movie!* through music distributors because of its rock-and-roll content. After you come up with a list, call the distributors and ask for a catalogue.

Designing the box

Your box may be more valuable than your film, when selling your film to distributors. Your box has to stack up to whatever else is on the store shelf. Since the average person looking for a video on Friday probably hasn't heard of your film, what's on the box is what they rent. This is your million-dollar ad campaign, so use this space wisely.

The cover should include a telling photo and a log-line, the one-sentence description that quickly gives the antsy video store customer an idea of what your film is about. If it has won any awards, put that on the cover too. The back of the box should include a full description, press quotes, and any other sellable point you can come up with. Also include pertinent information like how long your film is and whether it's color or black-and-white.

For video boxes, you have two choices. You can get professionally printed, bottom-loading boxes, or purchase "clamshell" boxes with a full plastic sleeve to slip the printed art into. I recommend shelling out the money to get your box printed. It just makes your video look more real. Depending on how many tapes you sell, it may even be more cost-effective. Houses printing video boxes include Ross Ellis (818-993-4767) and FB (818-773-9337). Full-color boxes run about $550 for the minimum order of 2,000 boxes. If you go for the clamshell, they'll cost you about $1.40 a box, plus the time it takes to trim each copy and stuff them into the clamshell sleeve. The shells will cost you around $.40 each, and color copies go for roughly $1 apiece. You'll also need video labels. Most office supply stores sell Avery video labels that can be easily designed and printed on a home computer.



Easy-to-assemble video box, left, versus the classier, but costlier, printed box.

Attracting press attention

It helps to get some. But timing press coverage for a film released solely on the video market is even trickier than managing the press for an independent film with theatrical release. You have two options, both of which have drawbacks and advantages. You can try to attract press attention before the release date. You'll have quotes for the one-sheet, which makes the film more sellable to the stores and more attractive to distributors. You also run the risk of raising the public's interest in the film when they can't rent it because it's not in the stores yet.

Setting your sights on press coverage after your street date allows John and Jane Q. Public to run out and rent your film immediately after reading a glowing review . But in this case you run the risk of never having a street date because you never made a blip on the store radar. Ultimately, you'll have to make this choice based on your particular film and how you feel you can best position it.

Getting paid

When a distributor picks up your film, be sure to work out the percentage split and payment terms ahead of time. Thirty to sixty days is standard. You should include an invoice with each shipment of tapes. And be sure to keep good records. You are in this at least partly for the money.

What to send distributors

Once you've identified your target distributors, you'll need to send them a packet that includes a one-sheet and your tape. That's it. What, no press kit? No, not unless your film has gotten major press coverage or accolades. In that case, it may be helpful to send a small press kit, but keep it short and sweet. Don't worry, all your film's pertinent selling points will be on the one-sheet (see example).

The one-sheet is what sells your film. It is extremely important. The distributor will either fax it to stores, or use the information in their catalogue and listings of new releases. You can send black-and-white copies, color copies, or full-color printed sheets, but the more professional your one-sheet looks, the better.

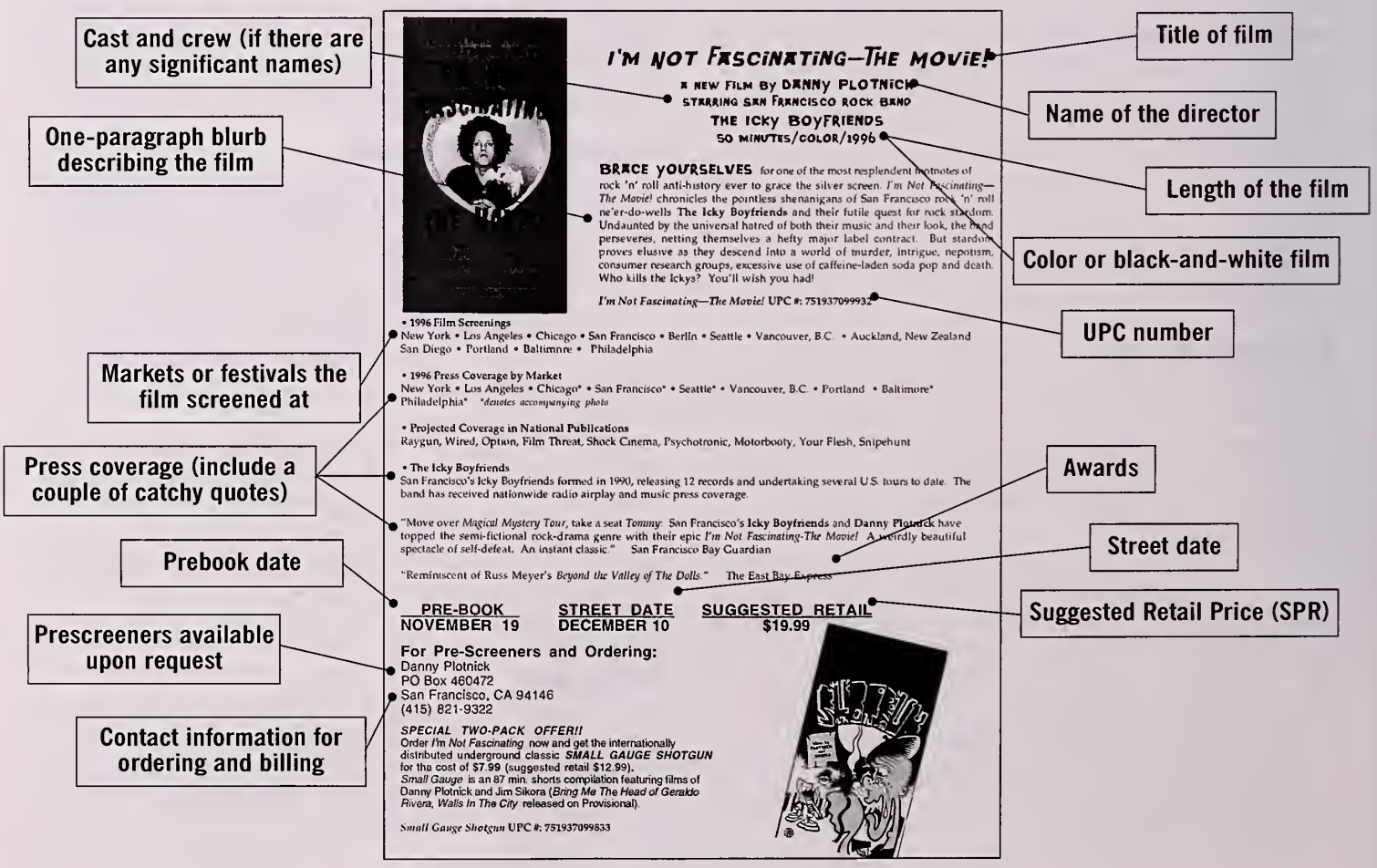
Among other things your one-sheet should include prebook and street dates. These are the critical dates that set the distribution chain in motion. The prebook date should be a Friday, the industry standard. The street date should fall on a Tuesday three to four weeks later. This is how it works: Send your package to the distributor five to six weeks prior to the prebook date. They solicit sales for your tape during that time, then place orders made by stores on the prebook date. You fulfill the order by the street date, three to four weeks later. This allows you time to decide how many tapes to get and make the dubs after you've received the order. Other orders may trickle in after the prebook date as your film gets press based on the video release.

Another important piece of information to list on the one-sheet is the suggested retail price(SRP). The SRP is price stores pay the distributor for your tape. You set the price. In most cases, you will receive 50 to 60 percent of the SRP from the distributor. Larger distributors who deal with chains may pay as little as 35 percent. A $19.99 SRP brings you approximately $10 to $12 per tape. I wouldn't recommend setting your SRP much higher if your film has had limited play and press. Stores are willing to take chances, but the less they have to pay, the more they're willing to gamble.

If you're targeting chains like Tower, Borders, Barnes & Noble, and Blockbuster, you'll need a to include a UPC, more commonly known as a bar code. The bar code is what most large businesses use to keep track of their inventory. It can be printed directly on your box or placed there in sticker form. Be sure to leave space in your artwork for the UPC code. While you can buy them yourself, often the cheapest, easiest way to get a UPC is to buy one from your distributor or printer. For info on how to obtain a UPC, go to www.uc-council.org.

As for preview tapes,you only need to send one. Distributors rarely send stores screener copies. But just in case they do, your one-sheet should include the line "Prescreeners available upon request." Once everything is packaged together, then it's only a matter of putting on postage, sending it off, and making libations to the gods of distribution.

Danny Plotnick's shorts compilation Small Gauge Shotgun *and his featurette* I'm Not Fascinating—The Movie! *are available in video stores in the US and Holland. His short* Swingers' Serenade *airs on IFC.*



A Filmmakers' Bill of Rights

Essential clauses to include in your film deal

BY MARK LITWAK

WHEN IT COMES TO DISTRIBUTION contracts, very little is self evident. But there are two business cliches that continue to be truths: "get it in writing" and "everything's negotiable." Below, entertainment attorney Mark Litwak highlights some of the points filmmakers need to negotiate before putting their John Hancock on a contract with a distributor.

1. NO CHANGES: The film should not be edited or altered, nor the title changed, without the filmmaker's approval. Editing for censorship purposes, television broadcast, and foreign releases, such as translating the title, may be permitted.

2. MINIMUM ADVERTISING SPECIFIED: The minimum amount the distributor will spend on advertising and promotion of the film should be specified in the contract. This may include a poster, one-sheet, and trailer, as well as print and broadcast ads.

3. EXPENSES LIMITED: There should be a floor and a ceiling on expenses. Market expenses (cost of attending film markets) should be limited to the first year of release and capped for each market. Only direct out-of-pocket costs to promote the film should be included, not the distributor's general overhead and staff expenses.

4. TERM: It is best to begin with a shorter term, such as two years, but it may be as long as ten. The term should not be in perpetuity. After the term expires, a series of automatic rollovers should be instituted if the distributor returns a certain amount of revenue. If these performance milestones are not met, all rights automatically revert to the filmmaker.

5. INDEMNITY: The filmmaker should be indemnified (receive reimbursement) for any losses incurred as a result of the distributor's breach of contract.

6. POSSESSION OF NEGATIVE: The distributor should not be given the original negative or other elements, but rather a lab access letter. The distributor should not be permitted to remove masters from the laboratory.

7. ERRORS AND OMISSIONS (E&O) POLICY: Filmmakers generally purchase an E&O insurance policy, but distributors will often advance this cost and recoup it from gross revenues. In this case, the filmmaker's name should be added to the policy.

8. TERMINATION CLAUSE: If the distributor defaults on its contractual obligations, the filmmaker should have the right to terminate the contract, regain rights to license the film in unsold territories, and obtain money damages.

9. RIGHT TO INSPECT BOOKS AND RECORDS: The distributor should maintain complete books and records of all sales and rentals of the film, which the filmmaker has the right to examine. The filmmaker should receive quarterly statements with any payment due.

10. LATE PAYMENTS: The distributor should pay the filmmaker interest on any payments past due.

11. LIMITATION ON ACTION: The filmmaker should have at least three years after receiving a financial statement, or discovering an accounting irregularity, whichever is later, to contest accounting errors and file a demand for arbitration.

12. ASSIGNMENT: The distributor should be prohibited from transferring its rights and obligations to another party unless the filmmaker consents. If assignment is permitted, the distributor should not be relieved of its obligations under the original contract.

13. FILMMAKER DEFAULT: The distributor should give the filmmaker fourteen days written notice of any alleged default by the filmmaker, and an additional ten days to cure the default, before taking action.

14. WARRANTIES: The filmmaker's warranties against infringement of third-party rights should be to the best of the filmmaker's knowledge and belief, not absolute.

15. SCHEDULE OF MINIMUMS: For foreign distributors, a series of minimum acceptable license fees, on a per territory basis, should be scheduled.

16. ARBITRATION CLAUSE: Every contract should contain an arbitration clause ensuring that all contractual disputes are subject to binding arbitration with the prevailing party entitled to reimbursement of legal fees and costs. The arbitration award should be final, binding, and non-appealable.

Contracts and all other legal documents should be vetted by a lawyer. This is an abridged version of "Filmmakers' Bill of Rights." The complete text can be found at www.marklitwak.com/bill.htm.

Mark Litwak is an entertainment and multimedia attorney based in Beverly Hills, California. He is the author of five books, including Contracts for the Film & Television Industry *(1998), which covers independent film dealmaking.*

Essential Resources for Independent Video and Filmmakers

FIVF
FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILM

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edited by Michelle Coe $35 / $25 AIVF members *plus shipping and handling.*

Up-to-date profiles of over 900 Film & Video Festivals, with complete contact and deadline information. First published in 1982, AIVF's Festival Guide is the most established and trusted source of information and inside views of film and video festivals around the world. Supplemented by selected reprints from *The Independent's* Festival Circuit column, profiling over 40 festivals in-depth from the filmmaker's perspective. The Guide is published to order, ensuring the most current information available! For AIVF members, the Festival Guide is enhanced by monthly listings in *The Independent* magazine, and an online interactive festival directory that is continually updated!

New! An interactive guide to grassroots distribution!

The AIVF & MediaRights.org Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit

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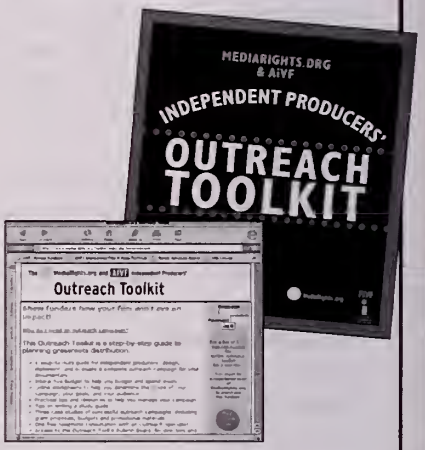
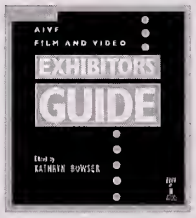
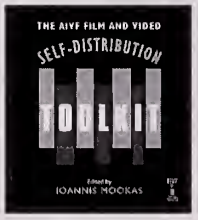


Show funders how your film will have an impact! Your documentary can move audiences to take action for social change. What's your plan? Use this interactive resource to design, implement, and evaluate an effective outreach campaign. The Outreach Toolkit also downloads to your PDA and includes interactive worksheets; budgeting tools; a print resource binder; individualized consultation with outreach experts; case studies including funded proposals; an online producers' forum; and much more!

OTHER GUIDES TO GETTING YOUR WORK OUT TO AUDIENCES:





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Self-Distribution Deals

Mediamakers coping in a buyer's market

BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

ONCE A MEDIAMAKER DECIDES TO SELF-distribute a project, they are faced with the basic question of how to go about it. There are three basic models to self-distribution, each has its pros and cons. One is to hire a booking agent who will find the theaters while taking a percentage of the monies received from the theater owners or exhibitors. A less expensive but more labor-intensive route is to be your own booking agent, calling the theaters and cutting the deals yourself. The third, and riskiest, is to act as both booking agent and theater manager by renting a theater, or "four-walling" it. While this is a high-risk option there are a few films that have successfully launched from this platform. Both *Paris is Burning* and *Slacker* had their theatrical debuts in theaters rented by the filmmakers.

Hiring a booking agent

Theatrical booking agents and their cousins, "service deal" distributors, offer the most hassle free way to get a film into theaters without a distributor. They generally have long-term relationships with the exhibitors. Without these contacts, many theater managers and owners will not even speak to the mediamaker. A booking agent may be able to strike a more favorable deal or arrange to have the film shown at a more preferable time of the year, and the arduous process of collecting monies from exhibitors is often less difficult for a booking agent, who has the leverage of a steady flow of releases, than a mediamaker with a single film.

Booking agents usually get between 10 and 20 percent of the monies received from the exhibitor. The size of that percentage depends on how much responsibility the filmmaker takes for the tasks associated with marketing and distributing the project. Some agents only book the theaters. In this case the mediamaker takes care of all marketing, including creating posters and one-sheets, as well implementing and developing strategies. Other booking agents act as quasi-theatrical distributors, not only booking the theaters, but also creating the marketing materials, implementing the marketing campaign, and handling administrative details such as ensuring that the project's prints get from one exhibitor to the next. In exchange for these services, the mediamaker pays a higher commission, 15 to 25 percent. Some of these companies require a nonrefundable retainer, which serves as an advance against future box office profits, or a service fee. One key point for mediamakers to remember is that, unlike conventional theatrical distributors that spend their own money on marketing, in this case the mediamaker pays for all the marketing costs. Most booking agents are purely theatrical. The mediamaker generally retains the rights and money from other forms of distribution like cable television and home video. Be aware that there are some distribution service companies that insist on controlling those rights or taking a percentage of the monies from these ancillary markets.

When hiring booking agents, mediamakers are essentially purchasing their connections and expertise, which is often worth the price. One alternative to hiring a booking agent is to contract one as a consultant, either on flat fee or monthly basis.

When hiring booking agents, mediamakers are essentially purchasing their connections and expertise, which is often worth the price.

Negotiating with exhibitors

If a mediamaker decides to forego the services of a booking agent, then she or he will be negotiating directly with the exhibitors. Deals between distributors and exhibitors tend to be brief and vary according to theater, region, and time of year, which may be influenced by the seasonal release schedules of traditional distributors.

There are a couple of different types of theaters, and each has very different needs. Calendar houses set their schedules months in advance and are not able to change their line-ups at the last minute. Projects booked in calendar houses run only for one or two weeks, unless a theater has more than one screen and can rotate projects. Other theater owners will run a project as long as a number of tickets is sold. If the revenues dip below a certain point, the film is sold. Although a mediamaker can occasionally negotiate a minimum run, it's often not to anyone's advantage. If a project performs poorly at one theater, it can affect how other theater owners regard it.

Even when a project performs above expectations, the exhibitor may have to remove it because another release has already been booked into the space. If an established distributor wants to screen a film on the same screen as an independent filmmaker, the exhibitor will often choose to break its contract with the independent rather risk alienating a regular supplier. This is one of the reasons that mediamakers have difficulty negotiating minimum runs.

Many theaters will require a mediamaker distributing her or his own project to make a certain level of financial commitment and expenditure of funds for marketing the project. In the New York market, an ad, even a tiny one, placed in *The New York Times*, can be a critical factor when an exhibitor is deciding whether or not to screen a project. If the theater does assume some marketing and advertising costs, the percentage of money that the mediamaker receives from the theater may be decreased.

The "split," or percentage, that a self-distributing mediamaker can negotiate with an exhibitor varies significantly. A mediamaker must address if, when, and what percentages will be

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deducted by an exhibitor to cover the theater's operating expenses, an amount known as the "house nut." In many theaters, the house nut is a fixed figure or a percentage such as 10 percent of the box office. A theater's house nut may vary according to the screen the film is playing—the more seats, the larger the fee. A common distributor/exhibitor split is 90/10, after the deduction of the house nut.

Other contracts may not include the house nut. The exhibitor may take a percentage, like 40 percent, of the monies actually received at the box office (i.e., the gross), and the mediamaker retains the balance. These figures may vary considerably. There is a "settling" process, during which the amounts allocated and received by the mediamaker and the exhibitor are negotiated after the project's run, especially if a project doesn't perform as well as expected. A 50/50 split is also quite common in some theaters and markets.

If a mediamaker is providing a strong promotional campaign or investing heavily in advertising, then the percentages may run in the mediamaker's favor. Occasionally the percentages reflect the amount of marketing funds an exhibitor expends. For example, if an exhibitor is paying for 35 percent of the project's theatrical marketing budget, it may be entitled to receive 35 percent of the box office earnings.

Theaters in a major market such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago can be very competitive and territorial. Many self-distributing mediamakers discover that if they release a project in one theater, then other exhibitors in the same market will not screen it. This issue becomes even more complicated when a theater is part of a chain. Mediamakers often find that if they do not screen a project in a particular theater in a certain market, that their film is shut out of other theaters owned by the same parent company in other markets.

Positioning when a project will be screened is also extremely important. To maximize their revenue potential, specialized exhibitors often screen a project only once or twice a day, splitting the screen time with another project. A distributor's job is to try to make sure that the project is not screened only on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. If a project has performed well in other markets or is eagerly anticipated by exhibitors, a mediamaker can usually specify the times of the day the project will be screened.

Four-walling

If no distributor wants to release the project and no exhibitor wants to screen it, the mediamaker is faced with the difficult decision of choosing whether or not to "four-wall" the project. Often mediamakers four-wall projects in order to get media attention and prove to distributors and exhibitors that there is an audience for their projects. Exhibitors will rent a screen to a mediamaker for a weekly fee that varies significantly according to the theater's expenses. Four-walling often costs approximately the equivalent of the house nut plus 10 to 15 percent. The math is relatively straightforward: If a project earns more than the rental fee and other expenses, the mediamaker makes and keeps the money. If the rental fee and related expenses exceed the project's box office figures, then the mediamaker takes a loss.

Mediamakers need to carefully weigh the benefits and the drawbacks of these various forms of self-distribution, especially ones that require the mediamakers to enter into the distribution business. Distribution is extremely time-consuming. Mediamakers can spend up to two years on the distribution trail, often pushing the next project back.

A distributor's job is to try to make sure that the project is not screened only on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a partner in the Daniel, Seigel & Bimbler, LLP, law firm that specializes in the representation of clients in the entertainment and media areas. He can be contacted via e-mail: Rlsentlaw@aol.com or rseigel@DSBLLP.com.

3D Animation

How the software applications stack up

BY GREG GILPATRICK

THE WORLD OF 3D ANIMATION IS SLOWLY opening up to new artists. New training options, online communities of users, and lower prices now make the prospect of 3D animation more enticing for independent filmmakers. But for those who know little about the field, starting out in 3D animation is still laden with many tough decisions, primary among which is selecting the animation program to invest in.

In the last issue of *The Independent*, I covered the evolving field of 3D animation. Here I report on three popular 3D applications from the perspective of an independent artist. As you will see, no single program will be right for everyone, but one of the following programs will meet the requirements of most independent artists.

I determined three criteria for a 3D animation program to meet for it to serve the specific needs of the independent artist. Each of the programs reviewed here are distributed in a free "learning edition" demonstration version that allows the prospective user to try out and learn how to use the program before purchasing it. Each of these programs costs less than $2,000. Finally, each of these programs is available for both the Mac and Windows platforms, so any filmmaker with a modern video editing system will be able to add 3D animation to their tools.

Universe 4

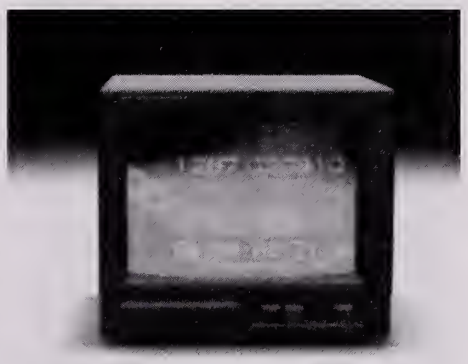
Electric Image, $1,000, Mac OS 9/OS X, Windows 98/2000/XP, Solaris, www.electricimage.com

Originally called Electric Image Animation System, this program is popular for its quick rendering of images. Universe is overshadowed in popularity by other applications but it is a flexible, useful, and quick performer with much to offer those on a budget. The application has the simplest and most straightforward interface of all three programs reviewed, and it has the considerable advantage that a limited version of it is bundled with the 3D Toolkit, a superb 3D training system.

Universe separates its functions into three programs: modeler, animator, and camera. As their names imply, modeler is for creating your 3D models; animator is for texturing, lighting, and animating; and camera is for rendering images of your animations. Using separate applications to create 3D is a little awkward because it makes it difficult to make changes to your models once the animation process begins. However, this is my only major complaint about the program.

Compared to the Lightwave and Maya interfaces, the absence of a multitude of tools, menus, and buttons feels almost austere. Although Universe lacks many of the extra features of the other programs, it is just as adept at creating high-quality images, showing that the true measure of how well a program functions is how well it handles the basics. In that regard, Universe is a top-notch program, especially for those just starting out in 3D.

I found that although Universe excels at the creation of industrial-type objects like



The author's monitor, rendered with Universe 4

machines, buildings, and vehicles, it lacks many character-animation tools that narrative filmmakers will want to use. But it is worth strong consideration by independents because of its integration with the 3D Toolkit, and the simple and direct nature of its interface. Of the three programs, Universe will be the one that people will be able to understand the quickest.

Lightwave 7.5

Newtek, $1,595, Mac OS 9/OS X, Windows 98/2000/XP, www.lightwave3d.com

Lightwave is notable for its design as an all-inclusive package that includes nearly all the functions needed to produce high-

Electric Image Universe 4	
Documentation:	+
(when used with 3D Toolkit)	
Features:	o
Rendering speed:	+

Strengths: The price (especially for those who use the 3D Toolkit version), quick renderer, easy to learn

Weaknesses: non-3D Toolkit manual is not very helpful, small user-base, poor character animation tools

Lightwave 7.5	
Documentation:	–
Features:	+
Rendering Speed:	+

Strengths: Fast and feature-filled renderer, fairly large community of users

Weaknesses: Poorly written documentation and awkward interface make it especially difficult to learn to use.

Maya Complete	
Documentation:	+
Features:	+
Rendering Speed:	–

Strengths: Great documentation and training, innovative features, single-program functionality

Weaknesses: Slow rendering, designed for teams of artists instead of single independent artists

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quality animation for video or film. Like Universe, Lightwave is split into separate applications for modeling and animation, but it does have tighter integration between them, which makes it a little easier to institute changes to models once you have begun to animate them.

Lightwave is a surprisingly powerful program, containing many high-end features that are not found on products in the same price range. Lightwave's renderer

Lightwave's advanced features are extensive, though tough on beginners.

allows you to render scenes with an advanced feature called radiosity that computes light rays in a more realistic method, which is much more developed than similar features in Maya or Universe. Lightwave also has features designed for character animation that make it easier to create and automate the usage of complex movements in your characters. However, Lightwave uses many unique interface conventions that make it difficult to navigate the program without spending a lot of time investigating the different tabs, windows, and buttons. But my own tests showed that Lightwave was the quickest to render images and video, so the time spent learning the program should be made up in the long run.

My main complaint about Lightwave is the scarcity of well-written documentation and training for it. Although Lightwave includes a huge manual, and there are a few third-party books published for it, I find that these serve more as references for people who are already comfortable with the application—I didn't find any of them to be particularly well written or especially helpful. Lightwave's usefulness is seriously hampered by its lack of training designed for the beginning 3D artist.

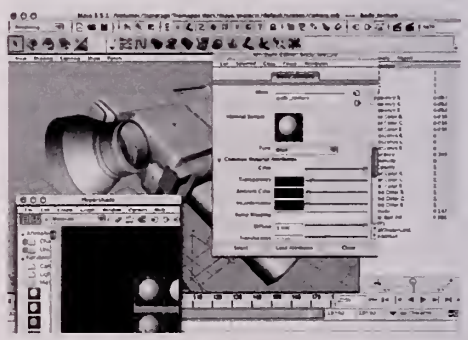
Endorsing Lightwave for beginners is a tough call not only because it is difficult to learn (particularly because of the lack of well-written documentation) but also because its interface is difficult to navigate. Lightwave is a surprisingly feature-filled program that has a lot to offer the independent artist without a lot of resources. At press time, Newtek released a few Internet-based tutorials (see "tutorials" in their website) designed for the beginning user. These tutorials are helpful and hopefully indicate more tutorials to come.

Maya Complete

Alias|Wavefront, $1,995, Mac OS X, Windows 2000/XP, Linux, Irix
www.aliaswavefront.com

Maya is the heavyweight champ in the world of big-budget 3D production. It has been used in movies like *Shrek*, the *Star Wars* prequels, and *Ice Age*. The current round of price cutting and releases of "learning editions" in the world of 3D software were both instigated by Alias|Wavefront and Maya seems to be the leader that the industry looks toward for direction in terms of product features and pricing. Maya has the most buzz of all the 3D programs around, but that doesn't make it the best choice for independent artists. Its price and complexity both should warrant caution.

Unlike Universe and Lightwave, Maya incorporates all of its modeling and animation features into one application. The all-in-one functionality alone makes Maya



A typical interface using Maya

easier to use, once you understand the program—which is no easy task. Maya is famous not just for its impressive features but also for its complexity and difficulty to master. Even those familiar with one or more other 3D applications may find using Maya for the first time an exercise in extreme frustration. Maya's interface abounds with buttons, commands, toggles, and windows whose functions are not immediately comprehensible.

Thankfully, Alias|Wavefront under-

stands the steep learning curve for Maya and has devoted a great amount of effort toward creating effective documentation and training materials. Maya comes with fully-indexed electronic documentation accessible via web browser, in addition to a whole set of tutorials that walk the user through all the main functions of Maya. Alias|Wavefront also publishes books and DVDs for further training.

Maya is so complicated because it's chock-filled with an incredible amount of tools and features. Although it doesn't have some rendering features found in Lightwave, Maya has many features for creating models and complex animation. For example, artisan and paint

Software Doesn't Run Itself...

3D animation requires a significant amount of computational power that the average consumer-level computer may not be able to provide. Modeling, designing, and animating doesn't require a top-of-the-line computer, but it does need a fairly advanced video card to display the information on screen. Rendering (turning work inside the 3D application into video files) is a computationally exhausting process that can require hours to produce just a few second's worth of material.

Many people serious about 3D production have separate computers for rendering and animating. If you are going to render on the same computer you use for animation, try to get the most powerful computer you can afford. The time you save in rendering will make up for the extra money you spend on the computer. A computer able to edit DV-quality video should be enough to start out in 3D. You may want to install one or more "learning editions" on your editing system to try it out.

Finally, don't forget about running the other programs that are involved in the production of 3D. Image editing and painting programs like Photoshop and Painter, and video compositing programs like After Effects, Combustion, and Final Cut Pro, are both integral to creating superb 3D animation.

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Materials for Learning Maya

The documentation included with Maya is excellent, but there are even more books and videos available from Alias|Wavefront as well as other publishers that can help you understand this complex program. *The Art of Maya* ($75.95, Alias|Wavefront Education, www.aliaswavefront.com) is a large, glossy, and colorful book that illustrates the basic concepts of 3D production with specific examples from film, video, and games that were produced with Maya. The book alone won't teach you how to use Maya, but it is fun to flip through and see what the program can produce under the control of an accomplished artist, and to generate ideas for your own work.

Maya 4 Fundamentals ($45, New Riders, www.newriders.com) is another resource intended to introduce Maya to the new user. The book focuses on Maya features that the new user is most likely to use, along with the issues they will come across. This book is much shorter and direct than the Alias documentation and is likely to lead someone to using Maya effectively in a shorter amount of time.

effects are both tools that allow someone to create 3D models and effects with an intuitive brush-like interface. The number of different windows and tools in Maya is staggering, but as I used it, it became obvious that they each serve an important purpose.

Maya seems to be designed more for large teams of artists with many resources available to them. Both Lightwave and Universe include rendering software that is both fast and feature-filled, while the renderer in Maya is not. This could add substantially to costs in terms of rendering time and software costs, depending on whether you buy a separate rendering application or use the one included with Maya.

Although Maya incorporates a great deal of training to lessen the grade of the learning curve, it still has a great deal of features, tools, and workflow steps to learn before it can be used effectively. Learning to use Maya means investing a great deal of time toward training and practice. Although I enjoyed using Maya the most of the three programs I reviewed, I must admit that I don't feel that the program is the right choice for the majority of independent producers and artists.

The bottom line

Each of these programs has their own strengths and weaknesses, and no one is better than one of the others for every case. Some people want to become one-person animation studios that produce their own work, others want to find work as an animator or FX artist at a larger studio. Some artists may only be interested in creating visual effects for live-action production, while others want to create totally 3D worlds with their own animated characters. For each of these people, a different program will be most suitable.

For those who want to strike out on their own and become their own animation studio, both Lightwave and Universe are designed to be all-in-one solutions that are more suitable for a small operation. Universe's weak point is its lack of character animation tools. Lightwave's stronger character animation tools may justify spending the time to learn its convoluted interface and workflow. Those looking to find work at a post-facility or FX shop using 3D software should have at least some familiarity with Maya, since it is quickly becoming the standard for much of this work.

The quality of professional-grade tools available to the independent artist is truly a breakthrough, and the bottom line is that independent artists can now fully embrace 3D animation.

Greg Gilpatrick (greg@randomroom.com) is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant.

Avid XpressDV 3.5 for Mac & PC

BY ROBERT GOODMAN

AVID TECHNOLOGY'S XPRESSDV (v3.5) IS now available for the Mac (OS 10.1.4 and higher) and Windows (XP Pro) platforms. Bins, timelines, user-preferences, project settings, and media files are cross-platform compatible for seamless interchangeability with Avid's higher-end products—Media Composer and Symphony. This means you can start a project on an Apple G4 laptop and finish the show on a Windows system. Or, take your project to a facility with an Avid Symphony or DS|HD to online the show. XpressDV's AAF compliance (see below) expands XpressDV's capability for seamless interchange with systems beyond Avid.

Symphony-style color correction

Version 3.5 brings real-time color correction from Avid's Symphony system to XpressDV. Competition from Apple's Final Cut Pro has pushed Avid to include this very powerful tool, which brings a suite of sophisticated color correction functions to the desktop.

Opening the color correction toolset launches a three-monitor panel, which defaults to previous frame, current frame and next frame. The position of the timeline cursor determines what appears in the current frame monitor. The previous frame monitor displays the clip on the timeline to the left of the current frame clip.

These monitors can be switched to display a reference, second previous, second next, entire sequence, vectorscope, Y waveform, YC waveform, YCbCr histogram, YCbCr parade, RGB histogram, RGB parade, a quad display with YC waveform, vectorscope, RGB histogram and RGB parade, or black. Each monitor can be toggled to display a before and after correction split. The area of split is resizeable. Underneath the monitor panel is the color correction tool.

Color correction operates on either the RGB or HSL model. Camcorders capture images by splitting the light into red, green, and blue data. HSL represents hue, saturation, and luminance. In the RGB mode, adjustments can be made using individual ChromaCurve(tm) graphs for each of the three channels and a master. In HSL mode, there are three Chroma Wheels(tm) for highlight, shadow, and midrange tones, plus master controls for hue, saturation, brightness, contrast, and clipping, and an invert toggle switch.

There is a learning curve; color correction can be complicated. The tools are well thought-out, though clearly designed for professional use. Avid has made XpressDV's color correction easier to use by scaling down the available options without eliminating critical features. You can match any color to any other color using the eyedropper tool. Four points can be set on chroma curves rather than the sixteen possible in Symphony. Warning indicators can pinpoint the elements in the image that are outside of the legal color space, though it's up to the user to correct this problem. Secondary color correction and masking functions were left out. However, Avid's NaturalMatch system, a powerful tool for skin tone matching, is more than worth the price of admission.

NaturalMatch can evaluate skin tonesor specific colors in a scene and then match them from shot to shot with a click of a button. The ability to match skin tones easily has enormous value because audiences notice these shifts in values. Much of what can and is done in the name of color correction passes the audience by. Skin tones don't. XpressDV's color correction tool lets you correct the tonal range of a shot, achieve consistency between the shots, neutralize or add color casts, and create a finished look. Yet, if you only use the color correction tool to match skin tones, your show will have 90 percent of the benefit for 10 percent of the effort.

I have mixed feelings about providing color correction tools on the desktop. Most users don't have an evaluation-quality monitor connected to their editing system. Perhaps having these tools will encourage more people to purchase a video monitor up to the task of judging color accurately, though I doubt it. In the right hands, color correction can enhance the original intentions of the director of photography and add a level of polish rarely seen in miniDV-originated programs. Yet, relying on a desktop approximation to judge a video signal is a prescription for disaster which can easily produce unexpected misadjusted images.

Total interface control

One of Avid's strengths has always been its highly customizable interface. XpressDV is now customizable down to the font and point size of the text and labels in the project, bin, composer, and timeline windows. Color schemes, button styles, toolbars, and the keyboard are completely customizable. Version 3.5 also brings back the functioning of Avid's traditional user profile selection on start-up, which was absent in v3.0. XpressDV has five default desktop layouts, all of which can be customized and saved. When layouts are saved with minimized windows, the windows are open when you re-access the layout. It's a minor annoyance.

A view at the helm of XpressDV version 3.5

Desktop space improvements

The top of the timeline window now includes a two-track audio meter and volume controls. The meter can be switched to: peak or infinite hold metering; audio tracks 1 & 2 or 3 & 4; set reference levels; and generate calibration tones. Having the meter on the timeline was handy, though it's easily turned off if you don't want to see it.

Auto Duck: Automatic Composition Import | The problem of integrating AE with Avid has been solved

Adobe After Effects (AE) is an essential motion graphics and effects tool, especially for editors working on Avid systems. Avid systems have basic compositing tools. AE offers extensive 2D and 3D compositing tools, animation features, and motion effects. The latest version, AE v5.5, adds vector paint tools. Avid editors use AE for animating titles and to speed up or slow down footage because AE does a better job at frame blending and field interpretation than XpressDV.

The challenge of using Avid and AE together is that AE only supports QuickTime or AVI files, and Avid uses OMFI files. For simple things such as creating animated titles or changing the speed of one clip, the export/import routine is a mere annoyance. Attempt anything more complex and the process becomes frustrating and time-consuming.

AutomaticDuck's Automatic Composition Import (ACI) v1.04 ($275 DV version, $495 full version, Mac/Win) was developed to solve this problem. This plug-in for AE v5.0 or higher adds a single option to AE's import menu, "OMF as comp." What these three words mean is that editors can export an Avid timeline as an OMF 2.0 composition and import it into AE. Timelines export instantly because there's no media to convert.

The procedure is simple. In Avid, export the timeline to OMF 2.0 without media and save it in your AE projects directory. Under AE's file menu, select import, and click on "OMF as comp." A pop-up window opens. Choose the file you exported and set three program options. "Separate fields" determines whether to import the composition with lower, upper, or no field preference. "Audio tracks" allows you to ignore audio tracks, transfer them intact, or place them all in a single nested track. And "Effect translations" has options for removing effects, or transferring only the transitions, or allowing ACI to make a best guess at translating Avid effects into AE. You also have the option of labeling the effect in AE's timeline.

The first version of ACI can translate dissolve, superimpose, picture-in-picture (2D), Xpress 3D picture-in-picture, flip, flop, flip-flop, matte key, submaster, and motion effects into AE effects. Avid keyframes aren't decoded, though ACI does create separate layers corresponding to keyframes changes. We tested ACI on XpressDV (Win2000) and Media Composer (Mac) systems.

Opening Avid timelines in AE is magic that will gladden the hearts of Avid editors everywhere. Clip names became layer names. Dissolves became opacity layers. If a media file was missing, ACI generated a warning placeholder with the file name to make it easy to for the media. It didn't detect inverted mattes, so you may need to make some corrections. For heavy users of AE and Avid, AutomaticDuck's ACI is a must have plug-in.

The impetus for making maximum use of every inch of the desktop appears to be the way real-time effects are implemented. The timeline sports a new real-time enabled button. When this button is on, output to the Firewire port is disabled. The real-time effects previews will appear on the desktop. If you have a dual monitor video card, one side can be used to send the video signal to a video monitor. A consequence of this arrangement is that you can either have dual computer monitor display or a computer and video monitor display.

In the past, the video monitor was connected to the Firewire source so you could have two computer monitors to increase the size of the desktop. You can still do that, though you won't be able to monitor the real-time effects in video. Of course, color correction and many other effects should be monitored in video for the sake of accuracy.

XpressDV had a single composer window that displayed the sequence on the timeline. Clips were loaded into source viewers. The new version adds the Media Composer Source/Record viewer. Users can switch to a different desktop layout or simply stretch out the left side of the composer window to reveal the source monitor. The source record model is easier when you're first learning to edit, and keeps the number of open windows on the desktop to a minimum.

A new SuperBin feature was added for similar reasons. Instead of having multiple bin windows open on the desktop, multiple bins can be opened within a single window, which Avid calls a SuperBin. There's also a new bin view called Brief that provides a text list with the clip name, starting time code, duration, tracks, and status (off- or online). The fields in the brief view cannot be changed. This view is a mere convenience. The standard text view is completely customizable and could be used to create your own version of a brief view with the fields you prefer.

Two new toolbar buttons—head and tail fades—can be assigned to the tool palette or to a keyboard shortcut. Depending on which tracks are selected, these buttons will fade out audio and/or video. If applied at the transition point between two clips, the button will create an audio cross-fade or video dissolve. Long-form editors will appreciate this shortcut.

Real-time effects

Nearly all of the effects included in XpressDV can now be previewed in real-time. Changing effects parameters has no impact on whether an effect is real-time or not. Titles with drop shadows, color correction, transitions, and DVE effects are all real-time. The display settings determine how many layers at what quality can be previewed in real-time. At the highest quality setting you may be limited to four layers, depending on your computer system. A high-performance setting can substantially increase that number.

There's a new advanced keyframe control for the picture-in-picture effect. Avid traditionally has used one keyframe for all parameters. This new feature allows the editor to set individual keyframes for each parameter and select shelf, linear, spline

or bezier interpolation. Extensive compositing forces the editor to use nesting, because XpressDV has a four-track limitation for video. The nesting capability overcomes this limitationl, though the approach remains cumbersome.

Full AAF compliance

AAF is a new form of EDL that can include metadata, which encompasses all the settings necessary to output a finished show (such as audio eq, levels, and pan; color correction; layered effects; digital media files locations; and sequence information), and essence, which are the digital media files themselves. The advantage is that you can save an AAF file and transfer the project to any other system without losing information. The AAF file allows a show to be automatically assembled on any AAF-compliant system, and traces all the information about the material in the finished show back to the original source recordings. AIST, Avid, and Quantel have already implemented full AAF compliance. Discreet and many others are also working towards full compliance. Eventually, AAF should make it easy for producers to take advantage of the best talent instead being forced to use facilities with compatible software.

Odds & ends

There are new features which improve an editor's efficiency and solve some nagging annoyances. Whenever audio and video are in sync, the sound on the desktop and from a monitor attached to the DV device will appear to be out of sync because of the lag time between the devices. Avid now offers a way to adjust for this so you can monitor the sound in perfect sync. Clips with different audio sample rates can be identified by color on the timeline. Slip and slide trims are now selectable from the timeline shortcut menu. DV scene extraction, which relies on the time and date data miniDV camcorders record along with time code, can be used to automatically subclip a tape. Transcoders and new preroll options were added to the deck configuration settings. XpressDV v3.5 has an improved version of Avid DV codec and supports the new inexpensive DVD recorders. Finally, although this software can be installed on multiple computers or platforms, though the USB dongle included in the package must be plugged in or the software won't load. A bug in OSX affects the dongle, so OSG must be installed for XpressDV to install properly.

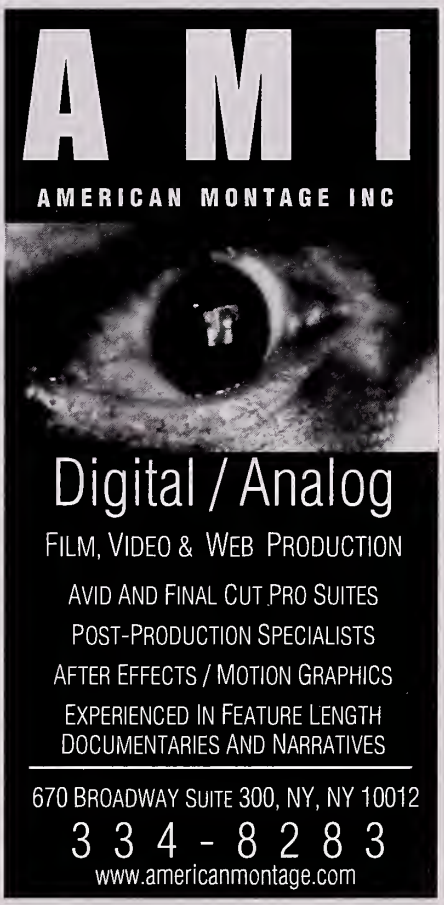
Summary

We didn't bother doing extensive performance tests, because we ran an early beta version of the software. One-second dissolves rendered in under 2.4 seconds. The same ratio of original material to render time (1:2.36) was observed when color correcting a one-minute clip on a 2.0 gigahertz Pentium IV system with 512MB of RAM. Mac render times were slower, though our G4 500MHz test system was also significantly slower. At this point, the differences between render times on equivalent platforms are minimal, unless you plan to do extensive color correction on long-form programs. If that's important, we suggest running your own tests before deciding on the platform and CPU speed to use.

Avid has been locked into fierce competition on the high-end against Discreet's Fire and Smoke, and on the low-end against Apple and Adobe. Part of Avid's competitive strategy is to erase as many of the differences in its product interfaces from XpressDV to DS|HD. An editor who learns XpressDV can easily move to a Media Composer, Symphony or DS system. The corollary is that editors familiar with those products can easily adapt to XpressDV. In fact, user profile settings created on a Media Composer or Symphony will work with XpressDV.

Media management is another strong point, though you still can't search for clips in your entire project; only within a bin. For effects-heavy work, there are better choices than XpressDV. The new keyframe functionality is an improvement, but XpressDV's approach to layering and compositing remains limited. The eight audio track limitation should be rethought as DVD replaces VHS and digital audio becomes the norm. Overall, for long-form digital video editing, XpressDV remains the tool of choice.

Robert Goodman is the coauthor of Digital Video Editing, *a newly published book about telling stories using digital editing tools. Goodman is an Emmy-nominated writer/director based in Philadelphia. Send your comments to wd24p@hotmail.com.*



BY BO MEHRAD

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DOMESTIC

ASBURY SHORTS OF NEW YORK, November 15–18, NY. Deadline: Sept. 22. Fest combines screenings of shorts, under 20 min. in length, w/ live musical performances, comedy surprises & celebrity hosts. Organizers also invite executives & producers from major TV commercial production compnaies & ad agencies. Touring program of selected works travels to US & European cities. Noncompetitive. Cats: short. Awards: Audience choice award. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15 (made out to: Asbury Film Festival, Inc.). Contact: Rebecca Mandel, 553 Prospect Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215; (917) 612-2928; fax 369-3807; aff1@earthlink.net; www.asburyshorts.

BROOKLYN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 28–May 4, NY. Deadline: Oct. 15; Feb. 15 (late). Annual fest (formerly The Williamsburg Brooklyn Film Festival) held at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Incl. Q&A sessions, panel discussions & live broadcast over the Internet. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation. Awards: "Grand Chameleon Award" ($30,000 in services). Winners in each cat will be awarded the "Chameleon" statuette. Formats: All formats accepted, 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, super 8, 8mm, Hi8, DV, DVD, Beta, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS (nonreturnable). Entry Fee: $20; $50 (late). Contact: Mario Pego, 180 South 4th St., Ste. 2-S., Brooklyn, NY 11211; (718) 388-4306; fax 599-5039; mario@wbff.org; www.wbff.org.

CINEQUEST FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 27–March 9, CA. Deadline: Oct. 12 (short); Oct. 31 (feature). Founded in 1990, "Maverick Filmmaking" is annual theme of fest, which showcases an eclectic mix of indie films. Competitive for features, docs & shorts. Maverick features & shorts of artistic, social, or stylistic merit eligible. Founded: 1990. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Maverick Spirit Award, Best Feature, Best Documentary, Best Short, Audience Choice, Best First Feature. Formats: digital, 35mm, 16mm, DV, Beta, digital, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35. Contact: Mike Rabehl, Programming, P.O. Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172; (408) 995-5033; fax (408) 995-5713; info@cinequest.org; www.cinequest.org.

D.U.M.B.O. SHORT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 18–20, NY. Deadline: Sept. 3. Film & video event is part of the annual D.U.M.B.O. Art Under the Bridge Festival & is designed to showcase the work of independent & experimental film & videomakers living in NYC's five boroughs. Works must be 30 min. or less. Founded: 1996. Cats: short, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25. Contact: D.U.M.B.O. Arts Center, 30 Washington St., Brooklyn, NY 11201; (718) 694-0831; mail@dumboartscenter.org; www.dumboartscenter.org.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, Jan. 10–11, 17–18, NY. Deadline: September 1. This touring fest is the oldest annual int'l dance film/video event in the world. Co-sponsored by Film Society of Lincoln Center, fest incl. photo exhibits, workshops, live performances. Cats: experimental, doc, animation, narrative & performance. Founded: 1972. Cats: Experimental, Feature, Short, doc. Awards: cash prize for "Best of Festival." Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30. Contact: Dance Films Association, Inc., 48 W. 21st St., #907, New York, NY 10010; (212) 727-0764; fax (212) 727-0764; dfa5@earthlink.net; www.dancefilmsassn.org.

Ladies First

Although a recent survey by San Diego State University reported a sharp decrease last year in the number of women holding key behind-the-scenes positions in the film industry, **Women in the Directors Chair's International Film and Video Festival** gives us hope. Now in its 22nd year, WIDC is the longest running and largest annual women's media event in the world, and judging from their recent slate, it's obvious that great work continues to be created and exhibited by women filmmakers. Previous festivals have screened new works from a wide range of directors, from Faye Dunaway to Miranda July to Myra Sito Velasquez (*Mother's Blood*, pictured). See listing.

DEEP ELLUM FILM FESTIVAL, November 13–17, TX. Deadline: Sept. 15. Annual fest seeks to unite, celebrate & cultivate the best & most unique of American & Latin American film. DE/F2 is unique in its mission of promoting the art of filmmaking while providing relief in the ongoing battle w/ cancer. Cats incl. dramatic, doc, comedy, shorts, experimental, Texas cinema, Latin American, HiDef & music video. Films must have been completed no earlier than January of the previous year. Competition awards: 40,000 feet of film processing to the winner of the "Unfinished Category" & $2,500 cash award for the HiDef competition. Formats: 35mm, 1/2", Beta SP, HiDef. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (feature); $25 (short); $30 ("Unfinished" incl. script competition); late entries add $5; link to website on film site add $5. Contact: Michael Cain/Melina Mckinnon, 3002 B Commerce St., Dallas, TX 75226; (214) 752-6759; fax (214) 752-6863; info@def2.org; www.def2.org.

DIRECTOR'S VIEW FILM FESTIVAL, February 13–17, CT. Deadline: September 30; October 31; November 25. The Director's View Film Festival is dedicated to the director's craft & firmly believes film to be a director's medium. It honors & presents directors who have raised the artistic level of the medium. The fest features narrative shorts & features from established directors as well as newer filmmakers, w/ their independent & int'l student segments. Fest takes place in Stamford, CT & is competitive, juried by a panel of film critics. Founded: 1999. Cats: short, feature, doc. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Sept: $40; Oct: $50; Nov: $100. Contact: Elizabeth Nelson, P.O. Box 312, South Salem, NY 10590; (914) 533-0270; fax (914) 533-0269; intlfilm@thedirectorsview.com; www.thedirectorsview.com.

DOCSIDE FILM FESTIVAL. Spring, TX. Deadline: September 30. Fest is organized by the Doc Film Project, the only nonprofit doc film society in Texas. Its objective is to showcase the best documentaries from Texas, the US, & the world, w/ the purpose to form alliances w/ other film organizations & media groups. Second, through this fest, the Doc Film Project's mission is to raise the importance & awareness of doc film to entertain, educate & empower positive action. Founded: 1999. Cats: short doc, feature doc, experimental, animation, youth media. Awards: Best Short Doc, Best Feature Doc, Best Experimental Doc, Jury Award. Foreign entries need to have subtitles & clearances. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta SP, DigiBeta, Hi8, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25. Contact: Doc Film Project, Attn: Lucila Betz, P.O. Box 12703, San Antonio, TX 78212; (210) 826-2386; fax 349-7562; dfp@iland.net; www.docfilmproject.org.

FREEDOM FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 25, CA. Deadline: October 1. Cinema Foundation presents the Freedom Film Festival, an int'l showcase of new feature films from Eastern & Central Europe whose themes are democracy, freedom & 20th Century history. In Berlin & Los Angeles the following February, w/ programs in Moscow & Karlovy Vary Int'l Film Festivals in June & July. Non-Competitive, curated selection. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). No entry fee. Contact: American Cinema Foundation, 9911 W. Pico Boulevard, Ste. 510, Los Angeles, CA 90035; (310) 286-9420; fax (310) 286-7914; acinema@cinemafoundation.com; www.cinemafoundation.com.

HOLLYWOOD BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, March 25–30, CA. Deadline: August 31; September 30 (final). Annual fest brings the work of accomplished & aspiring Black filmmakers to an environment encompassing the mainstream Hollywood community & S. California filmgoing audiences. Accepting feature-length films, shorts, docs, animation & student films for its competitive program as well as its World Cinema Program, which is open to Black

filmmakers outside of the continental US. Fest also presents Storyteller Competition for screenwriters & an invitational program screening out-of-competition theatrical premieres by Black filmmakers. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental, script, music video, student. Awards: Jury Awards for Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc, Best Student Film, & Best Script. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta, Beta, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25 (early); $35 (final). Contact: Jacqueline Blaylock, Dir. of Programming, P.O. Box 34858, Los Angeles, CA 90034-0858; (323) 224-6625; fax 224-6624; info@hbff.org; www.hbff.org.

IFP/CHICAGO FLYOVER ZONE SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, November 10, IL. Deadline: Sept. 20. Chosen films will be screened at the 10th Annual IFP/MW Independent Filmmakers Conference. Eligible films must be 30 min. or less & must have been produced by IFP/Midwest members or produced in the Flyover Zone, or by filmmakers who reside or are originally from the Flyover Zone. The Flyover Zone is defined as the area of the United States between New York & Los Angeles often viewed by film industry executives from 35,000 feet above the earth. Founded: 2000. Cats: short, doc, experimental, animation, comedy. Awards: All films compete for "Best of the Fest" honors in each category. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 for members of IFP/Midwest, $25 for nonmembers. Contact: Rebekah Cowing, IFP/Chicago, 33 East Congress, Rm. 505, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 435-1825; fax 435-1828; infoifpmw@aol.com; www.ifp.org.

KIDFILM, January 6–21, TX. Deadline: October 18. Presented by the USA Film Festival, KidFilm is the oldest & largest children's film fest in the US. From regional premieres of high-profile films to shorts made by independent producers, KidFilm presents the best contemporary & classic children's films from around the world. Founded: 1984. Cats: short, feature. Awards: Incl. $1,000 prizes for narrative, nonfiction, animation & exp. Plus $250 Jury Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Nancy Fallen, USA Film Festival, 6116 N. Central Expressway, Ste. 105, Dallas, TX 75206; (214) 821-6300; fax 821-6364; info@usafilmfest.com; www.usafilmfest.com.

MOONDANCE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, January, CO. Deadline: October 1. Moondance encourages & promotes screenwriters & filmmakers. Held in Boulder, Colorado, the competion is open to all writers & indie filmmakers. Cats: feature, doc, animation, short, experimental, script, music video, student, youth media, family, children, TV, any style or genre, radio drama, puppetry theatre, lyrics & libretti, TV MOW's, TV episodes, stage plays. Awards: Columbine Award for film, screenplay, stage play, or short story that best depicts problems or conflicts solved in nonviolent manner; plus $1,000 for "best of" in each cat. Spirit of Moondance Awards (for & by women all genres & cats), Seahorse Awards (for & by men & women, all genres & cats, positive, strong roles for women & girls, plus lead roles for women over 40), Dolphin Awards (for & by kids & youth). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, 1/2", DV, CD-ROM, Hi8, DigiBeta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: 25–75. Contact: Festival, 970 Ninth Street, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 545-0202; moondanceff@aol.com; www.moondancefilmfest.com.

PORTLAND DOC & EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL (PDX), December 5–8, OR. Deadline: Sept. 27. Fest is a four-day expo of nonconventional cinema. Taking place at the historic hollywood theatre, the PDX Fest will feature artistic works of all shapes & sizes that challenge the cinematic status quo. Cats: doc, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15. Contact: Peripheral Produce/PDX Film Fest, P.O. Box 40835, Portland, OR 40835; fest@rodeofilmco.com; www.peripheralproduce.com.

SHORTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 5–8, NY. Deadline: Sept. 15. Fest aims "to put shorts back on the map" & boasts advisory board incl. the Coen bros., Susan Seidelman & Ang Lee. Held in Manhattan at Sony Theaters Lincoln Square. Length: 40 min. or less. Films must be completed after Jan. of previous year. Founded: 1997. Cats: Short, Animation, Doc, Comedy. Awards: Grand Prize of $2,000 to winning director in each cat. Films that win awards become eligible for Academy Award consideration (excluding doc & digital cats). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25. Contact: Lisa Walborsky, 545 5th Ave., 5th fl., New York, NY 10017; (212) 907-1288; fax 907-1266; info@shorts.org; www.shorts.org.

SHRIEKFEST FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12, CA. Deadline: Sept. 6 (late). Shriekfest, the annual Los Angeles Horror Film Festival, is held at Raleigh Studios in Hollywood. The fest focuses on the horror film genre & the work of young filmmakers (18 & under). The fest "screens the best independent horror films of the year." Cats: feature, doc (about the horror genre), short, script. Awards: Best Young Filmmaker; Best Film; Fan Favorite; Scariest Film; Best Screenplay; Best Makeup; Best FX. Entry Fee: Late: $45 (shorts), $55 (features). Contact: Shriekfest Film Festival, P.O. Box 920444, Sylmar, CA 91392; e-mail@shriekfest.com; www.shriekfest.com.

SLAMDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 18–25, CA. Deadline: Aug. 30 (early); Oct. 11 (final); Anarchy online section has year-round rolling deadline; Screenplay comp: June 15. Started by 3 filmmakers in 1995, fest's primary objective is to present new indie films by new filmmakers. Fest runs concurrent w/ Sundance Film Festival & takes place in the heart of Park City, Utah. Films showcased attract industry interest & several have received distrib. & agency rep. Founded: 1995. Cats: Short, Doc, Feature, Animation, Experimental, Any style or genre. Awards: Awards: $70,000 worth of prizes awarded last yr. for jury & audience awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, DVD, Web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20-$55. Contact: Brent Clarkson, 5364 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038; (323) 466-1786; fax 466-1784; mail@slamdance.com; www.slamdance.com.

TUCSON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER FILM FESTIVAL, March 6–9, AZ. Deadline: Oct. 1. Fest seeks film and video works that address issues and themes of particular interest to LGBT community. Cats: doc, feature, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10. Check or MO payable to Wingspan. Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 3013, Tucson, AZ 85702; filmfest@wingspanaz.org; www.wingspanaz.org.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 15–24, IL. Deadline: Sept. 1, Oct. 1. Annual fest is the largest & longest-running

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WOMEN WITH VISION FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 1–21, MN. Deadline: Oct. 30. Annual fest of film & video by women directors, artists & filmmakers incls. world cinema, American independents, short works & Minnesota youth media. Festival incls. premieres, thematically linked shorts programs, as well as career retros. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media-Minnesota only. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic, DV, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Sheryl Mousley, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN 55403; (612) 375-7615; fax 375-7618; www.walkerart.org.

Z FILM FESTIVAL, December 1, IL. Deadline: Sept. 10; October 1 (late). Z Film Festival, dubbed the "fest with teeth," is a traveling fest based in Chicago. Z emphasizes the strange, the beautiful, the provocative, the hardcore, even the obscene. It's also about the makers, the technology, the anarchy, and the psychology of work that sneaks underneath the radar of most major venues. Run by experienced filmmakers who ooze enthusiasm about screening films and videos by D.I.A.Y. (do it ALL yourself) artists, the Z Fest beckons the onslaught of film and videomakers with mouths wide open for a taste of what the fringe has to offer. Founded: 2000. Cats: short, feature, animation, experimental, music video, student, any style or genre. Formats: Beta SP, 16mm, 35mm, super 8, 3/4", DV, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, DigiBeta, 8mm, Hi8, U-matic, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS or mini DV. Entry Fee: $15 (under 25 min); $25 (30–60 minutes); no features. Contact: Usama Alshaibi, 333 West North Ave., #123, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 409-3890; info@zfilmfestival.com; www.zfilmfestival.com.

INTERNATIONAL

$100 FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 15–18, Canada. Deadline: Oct. 1. 10th annual fest encourages new & experienced filmmakers to make "shoot from the hip" exp. shorts. Entries outside Canada should label packages: "Cultural Purposes. No Commercial Value." Founded: 1991. Cats: short, experimental. Awards: Cash awards: $500–$1,000. Formats: super 8, 16mm. Preview on VHS or Beta. No entry fee. Contact: Calgary Society of Filmmakers, P.O. Box 23177 Connaught, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2S 3B1; (403) 205-4747; fax 237-5838; info@csif.org; www.csif.org/100filmfest/index.htm.

AMIENS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL & MARKET, November 8–17, France. Deadline: September 6. Competitive showcase focuses on films exploring cultural identity, minority groups & ethnic issues, with an emphasis on little-known cinema & int'l multicultural film. Works addressing identity of a people or a minority, racism or issues of representation. In competition, entries must have been completed between Sept. of previous yr. & Oct of yr. of edition; also must be French premieres. Founded: 1980. Cats: feature, doc, short, doc, animation, children. Awards: Grand Prix to best feature (fiction; 50,000 FF, approx. $7,270; to promote French distrib. of the Grand Prix), Jury award, Grand Prix to best short. Screenplay Development Fund (grants of 50,000 FF). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta (for docs), Beta, Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Jean-Pierre Garcia, MCA Place Léon Gentier, 80,000 Amiens, France; 33 3 22 71 35 70; fax 33 3 22 92 53 04; contact@filmfestamiens.org; www.filmfestamiens.org.

AUTRANS INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN AND ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL, Dec., France. Deadline: Sept. 30. Competitive fest, open to professional & non-pro filmmakers, looks for films that "contribute positively to knowledge on the one hand, of the snow & ice world, and the other to developing & exalting human resources in adventure & evasion." Entries may incl. snow & ice films, sporting & sports teaching films, social life & ethnology films. Entries should have been completed in previous 4 yrs. Founded: 1985. Cats: any work concerning "mountain & adventure." Awards: Grand Prix d'Autrans (2287 Eu; approx. $2,180); Best Film in six separate cats (762 Eu; $727). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP, 1/2", DigiBeta, all non-NTSC video. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Secretariat General du Festival International du Film d'Autrans, Office du Tourisme, Autrans (Vercors), France 38880; 011 33 4 76 95 30 70; fax 011 33 04 76 95 70 93; info@festival-autrans.com; www.festival-autrans.com.

BRUSSELS LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, January 17–26, Belgium. Deadline: September 15. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: DVD, Beta SP, 35mm, 16mm, U-matic. Contact: Festival, Tels Quels a.s.b.l., rue du Marche au Charbon 81, B-1000, Brussels, BELGIUM; 32 2 512 45 87; fax 32 2 511 31 48; info@fglb.org; www.fglb.org.

CLERMONT-FERRAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Jan 31–Feb. 8. Deadline: October 19. Festival presents major int'l competition w/ over 50 countries represented, providing a spectacular event of worldwide cinematographic creation, screening over 70 films to enthusiastic audiences. Entries must be 40 min. or less & completed after Jan. 1 of preceding year. Directors invited get accommodations and food allowance paid. Festival also hosts short film market w/ large catalog listing over 3,300 prods. Several buyers have participated over the yrs, incl. Channel 4, Canal+, ZDF, BBC, YLE, La Sept-Arté, France 2; 2,000 professionals attend. Cats: Feature, Doc, Animation, Experimental, Short. Awards: incl. Grand Prix 4,000 EU ($3,600); Special Jury Prize; & Audience Choice 4,000 EU ($3,600), & Vercingétorix to director. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Michel Raluy & Christian Guinot (int'l), Calmin Borel (digital), La Jetée, 6 place Michel-de-l'Hospital, 63058 Clermont Ferrand Cedex 1, France; 011 33 473 91 65 73; fax 011 33 473 92 11 93; info@clermont-filmfest.com; www.clermont-filmfest.com.

FESTIVAL DE FILMS GAYS ET LESBIENS DE PARIS (Paris Gay & Lesbian Film Festival), December 2–8,

France. Deadline: Sept. 30. Cats: any style or genre. Contact: Florence Fradelizi, David Dibilio, 8 rue du repos, Paris, France 75020; 33 1 43 56 53 66; fax 33 1 43 56 53 66; festiparis@wanadoo.fr; www.ffglp.net.

GIJON INT'L FILM FESTIVAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, November 21–29, Spain. Deadline: September 27. Member of FIAPF & European Coordination of Film Festivals. Festival aims to present the newest tendencies of young cinema worldwide. Films shown are daring, innovative & young in every sense. Official section is competitive for long & short films produced after Jan. 1 of preceding yr. & has non-comp. element too; Information section incls. cycles, retros & tributes. Also special screenings & other film-related events. Founded: 1962. Cats: Feature, Short, Children. Awards: Int'l Jury Prizes incl. Best Film (12,000 EU, cash) & Best Short Film (6,000 EU, cash); Young Jury of 50 people age 17–26 awards: Best Festure Film (6,000 EU) & Best Shortfilm (6,000 EU); also Best Actress, Actor, ArtDirection & Script as well as "Special Prize of the Jury." Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Jose Luis Cienfuegos, Paseo de Bogona, 24-ent, BOX 76, 33205 Gijón - Asturias, Spain; 011 34 98 534 37 39; fax 34 98 535 41 52; festgijon@telecable.es; www.gijonfilmfest.com.

HAVANA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA, December 3–13, Cuba. Deadline: Sept. 15. Fest is world's largest showcase of Latin Amer. & Caribbean film/video w/ 400 int'l productions showcased each yr. & 500,000 spectators. Entries may be made by non-Latin Amer. filmmakers subtitled in Spanish. Also screenings at several cinema & video venues, retros & seminars. Cats: fiction, doc, anim., editing, acting, script, photo, sound & design. Founded: 1979. Cats: feature, doc, short, script. Awards: Coral Award to Best Film contributing to Latin American cultural identity; Best unproduced Script; Best Poster. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Ivan Giroud, Calle 2 #411 e/ 19 y 17, Vedado, Havana, Cuba 10400; 011 53 7 552841; fax 011 53 7 333078; festival@icaic.inf.cu; www.habanafilmfestival.com.

NAMUR INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, November 14–17, Belgium. Deadline: September 15. All-short film fest accepts films 45 min. & under. Entries must have been completed w/ in previous 2 years. Cats: short, doc, animation. Awards: Three cash awards of 2,500 EU. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVcam, HDcam. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Media 10/10, Festival Int'l du Court Metrage de Namur, Avenue Golenvaux, 14, 5000 Namur, Belgium; 011 32 81 22 90 14; fax 011 32 81 22 17 79; media10-10@province.namur.be.

NANTES FESTIVAL OF THREE CONTINENTS, Nov. 26–Dec. 7, France. Deadline: October 15. Founded in 1979, fest is a major European competitive forum/showcase for feature-length fiction films from Asia, Africa, Latin America & African America. Features 70 films (12 in compet). This was one of the original fests focusing on cinema of the Third World. Founded: 1978. Cats: feature. Awards: Montgolfière d'Or (40,000 ff) & Montgolfière d'Argent. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Philippe & Alain Jalladeau, 19A Passage Pommeraye, B.P. 43302-4403, Nantes Cedex 1, France; 011 (33-2) 40 69 74 14; fax 011 (33-2) 40 73 55 22; fest@3continents.com; www.3continents.com.

OULU INT'L CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, November 18–25, Finland. Deadline: mid-September. Fest organized for children & adults has as its main goals introduction of new trends in children's films & locating distributors for children's films in Finland. Main program comprises screenings of new children's film from throughout world & is limited to 15 films. Special programs: world of children to adult audience, retros, Finnish children's films. Since 1992, jury of children has awarded prize of ECU 3,000 & Kaleva newspaper's Starboy figurine to director of the best film in main program. In addition to screenings, fest program incls. meetings w/ directors, exhibitions & seminars. Entries should not be shorter than 45 mins. Founded: 1982. Cats: children, doc, feature, family. Awards: Star Boy Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Eszter Vuojala, Fest Sec., Torikatu 8, 901-00, Oulu, Finland; 011 358 88 881 1293; fax 358 88 881 1290; oek@oufilmcenter.inet.fi; www.ouka.fi/lef.

THESSALONIKI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, November 8–17, Greece. Deadline: Oct. 1. The fest of new trends in world cinema is also Balkans' primary showcase for work of young & emerging filmmakers. Fest targets new filmmakers & showcases innovative, int'l indie films. Sections incls. Int'l Competition for 1st or 2nd features; Retros & tributes, Marco Bellocchio, Bob Rafelson Bela Tarr, Asian Vision, New Horizons. Info section & number of special events, galas, etc. All participating films should be nat'l premieres. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Golden Alexander (36,700 UE) & Silver Alexander (22,000 EU). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Michel Demopoulos, 40 Paparigopoulou St., Athens , Greece 11473; 011 30 1 645 3669; fax 30 1 644 8143; info@filmfest.gr; www.filmfest.gr.

TORINO FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7–15, Italy. Deadline: Aug. 19 (shorts); Sept. 16 (features). The long-running Fest is a competitive showcase for new directors & filmmaking trends w/ the goal of helping discover, support & promote new directors & emerging areas in film. Sections incl. int'l competition for feature & shorts films (35mm & 16mm, Italian premieres completed after Oct. 1, 2000); noncompetitive section (features & docs). About 300 films shown. Founded: 1982. Cats: feature, doc, short, script. Awards: Best Int'l feature; Best Screenplay; Best short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Contact: TFF, via Monte di Pieta 1, Torino, Italy 10121; 39 011 5623309; fax 39 011 5629796; info@torinofilmfest.org; www.torinofilmfest.org.

TRANSMEDIALE, Feb. 1–5, Germany. Deadline: September 8. Int'l media art fest in Berlin for moving image, software art & interactive systems. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Transmediale award in the 3 cats. Formats: Beta SP, S-VHS, DigiBeta, DV, DVD, CD-ROM, Web. No entry fee. Contact: transmediale, Klosterstr. 68-70, Berlin, Germany 10179; 011 49 30 24 72 19 07; fax 49 30 24 72 19 09; info@transmediale.de; www.transmediale.de.

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Competitions

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: Bridging the gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: 1st place $1,500; 2nd place $1,000; 3rd place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax 475-0193; awards@Hollywoodawards.com; www.Hollywoodawards.com.

HOLLYWOOD SCREENPLAY CONSULTANTS SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Finds quality screenplays for Hagan Productions, Inc., to produce & Cine-Vision 2000 to distribute. Seeking low budget (less than $1.5 million) character- or story-driven feature film screenplays. Should be live-action, 1 or 2 locations ideal, 10 or less characters, 90-120 pages. Any genre considered. Cats: feature, short, animation, TV movie, TV miniseries, TV series (currently in production or not). Each entry must not have been sold, optioned, in turnaround, in preproduction or have been produced at time of submitted deadline. Prizes: 1st. place $2,000; 2nd place $1,000; 3rd place $500. A prominent agent, a WGA signatory agency, will consider winners for representation to production companies & the major studios. Top 3 winners will receive free copy of Screen & Stage Play Marketing Secrets by James Russell. Each entry will receive 2-page critique & coverage of their screenplay from HSC. Entry fee: $75 per screenplay. Deadlines: Mar. 1, Sept. 1 & Dec. 1. Contact: 17216 Saticoy Street, #303, Van Nuys, CA 91406; (818) 994-5977; www.swiftsite.com/cine-vision2000.

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: Provides new, valuable outlets for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, between 90 & 130 pages. Rules & requirements in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script loglines sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies by Writers Script Network for 6 months. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Winner's diploma posted on HSI website for 1 month. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: HSI, 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; 800-SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com.

THE ROY W. DEAN EDITING GRANT: Your film must be completed, scripted, and ready to edit. You will have shared accommodations in Portland, Oregon, while editing. See www.fromtheheartproductions.com for application and guidelines. Deadline: September 10, 2002.

THE ROY W. DEAN NEW YORK FILM GRANT: Now taking applications. Seeking documentaries and shorts that are "unique and make a contribution to society." See www.fromtheheartproductions.com for application and guidelines. Deadline: September 10, 2002.

SCREENWRITING SHOWCASE AWARDS: The 8th Annual $10,000 Screenwriting contest will be held Feb. 15, 2003. The winning scripts will get professional coverage, established industry contracts and also possibly see their script optioned by an independent production company. The $30 entry fee deadline is Oct. 15, the $40 deadline is Dec. 15. Log on to www.screenwritingawards.com to enter.

PUSHING CULTURE & COMMUNITY

Pull Focus
Pushing Forward

How to move past the restrictions of race, class, age, and other issues many in media arts face is the topic of the first National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture Conference (NAMAC) of the 21st century. Its title is Pushing Forward, and filmmakers, artists, youth producers, media educators, funders, and policy makers from across the country will explore these issues through lectures, interactive panels, and round-table discussions. Divided on three tracks—Media Artists/Low Walls, Connectivity and Community, and Cultural Policy—the conference will also highlight new work from filmmakers on cultural issues. As always don't forget to enjoy the people, places, and parties. See listing.

Conferences • Workshops

ACTION COALITION FOR MEDIA EDUCATION SUMMIT 2002: Oct. 18–20, Albuquerque, NM. Stimulate your mind, voice your thoughts, and take action during a pivotal moment in the media education and media reform movements. A.C.M.E. is a new, national organization that is forming to tackle the challenges brought on by our current global media system. Activists, educators, students and concerned citizens will join with other dedicated and passionate individuals that want to make an impact upon media education. See www.acmecoalition.org

INTERNATIONAL DOC CONGRESS: October 14-16, CA. Pre-register by Sept. 15. An Int'l forum for makers, programmers, distributors, scholars, students, and docuphiles to gather. Contact: Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 247-2600; idc4@doc.org; www.doc.org.

NAMAC CONFERENCE: Join hundreds of filmmakers, youth producers, media artists, educators, funders, and more to view new work from filmmakers pushing the edges of cultural transformation. Along with that, challenge and debate leaders from dynamic grass-roots organizations and cultural institutions on current issues facing the field. October 2–5 in Seattle, WA. Log on to www.pullfocus.org to register.

Films • Tapes Wanted

BIJOU MATINEE: A showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35 leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat. at 2:30 p.m. Submissions should be 25 min. or less. VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: The excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations and provide a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (773) 289-4261; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com.

THE DREAM SERIES: Seeks challenging social-issue documentaries that promote frank community discussions about issues of racial prejudice and social injustice that fall under the Martin Luther King, Jr., legacy. Selected works are screened for this on-going monthly series at the MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta, GA, and promoted, listed and reviewed in local print. Formats: VHS, Beta. Send nonreturnable VHS screeners to Mark A. Smith, IMAGE Film & Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Suite N-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; mark@imagefv.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA: Located in Madison, WI, Electric Eye is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30- to 90-minute works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts, 10 minutes or less, any genre, to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; for more information go to www.prolefeedstudios.com.

FLICKER FILM FESTIVAL: A bimonthly super 8 and 16mm show which features 12 to 16 new short films by local filmmakers at the Knitting Factory. Film grants, super 8 stock and $50 worth of super 8 processing are also raffled off at the show. Find out more at www.flickernyc.com.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE: Accepting short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or less on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a non-exclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Works selected may continue on to nat'l and int'l venues for additional screenings. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled with name, title, length, phone #, and any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Microcinema, Inc., 2318 Second Ave., #313-A, Seattle, WA 98121, Info/details: (206) 322-0282; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals for programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS web page, producing for PBS, for content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295; cjones@pbs.org; www.pbs.org/producers.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: A quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are sought. Incl. synopsis of work, artist bio & contract info. Ongoing deadline. Tapes are not returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a nonprofit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHORT FILM SLAM: NYC's only weekly short film competition is looking for submissions. Competition on Sundays at 2 p.m., and at the end of each show the audience votes for a winning film, which receives further screenings at the Pioneer Theater. To enter must have a film, 30 minute or less, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater during operating hours and sign up directly, or get in touch with Jim at (212) 254-7107 or jim@twoboots.com.

THE SHORT LIST: The showcase for int'l short films airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.com. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266, or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

SPARK VIDEO INTERNATIONAL: Spark Contemporary Art Space, a collectively run gallery in Syracuse, NY, is currently accepting submissions of short (under 15 min.) art videos for our next programming year (Sept. 2002 to April 2003). All types of independent non-commercial work is accepted. International and domestic submissions are encouraged. All programs will be posted on the web, and all participating artists will be contacted. Accepted formats: VHS and DV. Processing Fee: $5,

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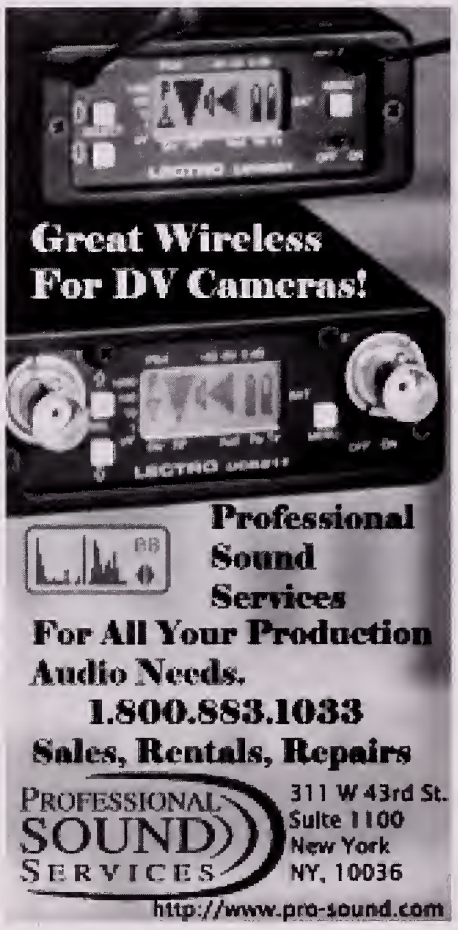

payable to Jeremy Drummond. Include Synopsis, bio, CV and contact information. SASE required for tape return. Send to: Jeremy Drummond, Spark Contemporary Art Space, 535 Westcott St., Apt. #2, Syracuse, NY 13210. For more info, e-mail jeremydrummond@hotmail.com or call (315) 422-2654.

SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse-area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature-length non-fiction productions in all areas of the special-interest or instructional fields, cutting-edge documentaries, and children and family programming. Also seeking feature-length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural themed products wanted, both fiction and nonfiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; (315) 454-5608; webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

TOTAL MOVIE MAGAZINE: Wants to see your shorts (under 20 minutes) and feature-length films for possible inclusion on the DVD that goes out with the magazine. Nonexclusive rights, filmmakers get paid, wide distribution. Send (NTSC) VHS copy of the work to: Total Movie & Entertainment, Attn: Scott Epstein, 2400 N. Lincoln Ave., Altadena, CA 91001; (626) 296-6360; scott@digital ideations.com.

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting-edge television station from Nantucket Island, Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast. Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

WORKS PRODUCTIONS/WORK SCREENING: Currently accepting submissions of feature and short documentaries and fiction films for programming of its upcoming inaugural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials, including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include a SASE. Contact Julian Rad, Works Productions/Work Screening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com.

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO: Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands. Only NoodleHead Network distributes videos made with kids. Educational videos in all subjects. Check out our distributor FAQ at www.aivf.org/independent and get your students' voices heard. Call (800) 639-5680; www.noodlehead.com.

Publications

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: A new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. *Sanctuary* is devoted exclusively to creative work—thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

Resources • Funds

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS: Provide completion funding for educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis.

CCH MEDIA PROGRAM PLANNING GRANTS: Outright funds of up to $20,000 for film and radio documentaries that explore California-related topics and issues of contemporary relevance. Before applying, contact Sarah Ashcroft, Programs Manager, at (415) 391-1474 x314. Deadline is Oct. 1. See www.calhum.org

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in NYC, Richmond, VA & Austin, TX, offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in super 8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the Foundation's 2 major programs (human & community sevelopment; global security & sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org.

NEH SUMMER STIPENDS: Support 2 months of full-time work on projects that will make a significant contribution to the humanities. $5,000 stipend to support faculty & staff members of schools, colleges & universities; scholars & writers working in institutions with research or educational collections; scholars & writers working in institutions with no connection to humanities; scholars & writers working independently. Visit website or write to the NEH for application & information on eligibility. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact NEH Summer Stipends, Room 318, National Endowment for the Humanities, 110 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20506; stipends@neh.gov; www.neh.gov/ grants/onebook/fellowships.html.

PORTLAND, OREGON, FILMMAKING GRANTS: Digital Media Education Center of Portland is announcing an open call for submissions for Avid Film Camp program. AFC is a boost to indie feature directors looking to complete their films while offering Avid-authorized training to career editors. Films will also receive free Pro Tools audio finishing & Avid Symphony Online editing. Submissions need to be feature-length projects w/shooting completed. Projects accepted on a rolling basis. Contact Deborah Cravey, Digital Media Education Center, 5201 SW Westgate Dr., Ste. 111, Portland, OR 97221; (503) 297-2324; deb@filmcamp.com; www.filmcamp.com.

DEADLINE: 1ST OF EACH MONTH, 2 MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G. OCT. 1 FOR DEC. ISSUE). CONTACT: (212) 807-1400, FAX: (212) 463-8519; CLASSIFIEDS@AIVF.ORG.

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About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

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Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

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Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

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AIVF supports over 20 member-organized, member-run regional salons across the country, to strengthen local media arts communities.

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AIVF has been consistently outspoken about preserving the resources and rights of independent mediamakers. Members receive information on current issues and public policy, and the opportunity to add their voice to collective actions.

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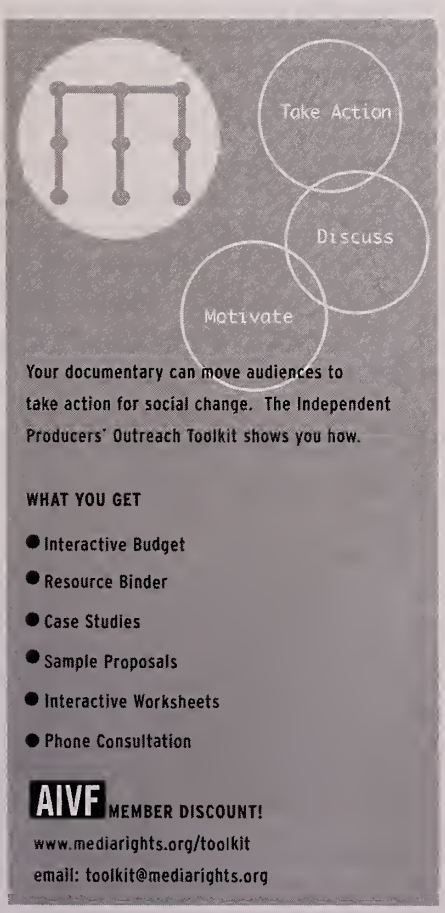

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ANNUAL AIVF MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Saturday, September 21

when: 3–5 p.m.; followed by reception
where: Location T.B.A.
Please R.S.V.P.: (212) 807-1400, x301

The annual AIVF members' meeting is your opportunity to meet representatives of the AIVF staff and board, tell us how the organization is meeting your needs, and hear about the programs and services in development.

AIVF recently wrapped up an extended strategic planning project, which helped us to evaluate our role in the field and the organization's efficacy in fulfilling our mission. The outcome was a strong affirmation of AIVF and its work, and a concrete set of strategies to help retool services to maximize their impact.

Among these strategies are changes to the corporate structure, which will require a vote by the membership later this fall. The plan was adopted by a unanimous vote of the AIVF board at the spring 2002 board meeting.

This will be a very important meeting this year! Board members will present key components of the plan and answer questions regarding our corporate restructuring. Member participation is encouraged.

The meeting will be followed by a membership mixer, sponsored by Forest Creatures Entertainment. Join your fellows for some good cheer and collegial conversation. Please be sure to R.S.V.P so we know how many beers to chill!

AIVF BOARD ELECTIONS
Prepare to Vote!

Only paid AIVF members are eligible to vote in the AIVF board elections. If your membership expires on or before October 15, 2002, and you do not renew, you will not be able to vote. To verify your membership status or to renew, contact members@aivf.org or call (212) 807-1400 x236.

Nominee statements and ballots will be mailed in late October, and responses are due (postmarked) by Friday, November 29, 2002.

AIVF MEDIA ADVOCACY DAY
Friday, September 27

AIVF members across the country are organizing visits to their Congressional representatives, to ensure that they represent independent concerns when it comes to funding independent media, protecting public interest policies, and preserving open access to the Internet.

While each visit is simple to participate in, together they will send a message that cannot be ignored. Be a part of our collective voice!

Contact Priscilla Grim at (212) 807-1400 x236 or members@aivf.org, to learn how to set up or to join a delegation in your own community.

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY
HOURS: WED. 11-9; by apt. to AIVF members Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11-6. The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.-Fri. 2-5 p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

AIVF Co-Presents

FRAME BY FRAME
THE 5TH ANNUAL HBO DOCUMENTARY SERIES
September 12–26

where: The Screening Room, 54 Varick St., New York, NY

tickets: Tickets to individual screenings are $5 and are available at the Screening Room box office on the day of show.

series passes: Avoid being turned away from a sold-out screening: buy a series pass! Passes guarantee your seat up until 15 min. before showtime. Options: **Full Showcase Pass** (access to all screenings and discussions): $75 ($50 for AIVF members); **Meet the Filmmaker Pass** (includes 10 7 p.m. screenings and accompanying discussions with filmmakers): $50 ($30 AIVF members). Passes are sold by AIVF: (212) 807-1400, x301.

program schedule: Programs run from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.. For a complete program schedule and descriptions of films, see www.hbo.com/framebyframe

HBO's Fifth Annual Frame By Frame Series presents films of both established and emerging nonfiction filmmakers, celebrating and highlighting the documentary genre.

Over two weeks, more than thirty HBO and Cinemax Reel Life premieres, and critically-acclaimed America Undercover programs, will be showcased. The series includes special Meet the Filmmaker events (co-presented by AIVF; these are featured screenings presented by their makers and followed by a discussion—see list), plus a rare Meet and Greet with HBO Documentary staff. Don't miss your chance to see these docs on the big screen and to support your fellow filmmakers!

Meet & Greet:
HBO DOCUMENTARY BUYERS PANEL

when: Sunday, September 22, 1 p.m.
where: The Screening Room, 54 Varick St.
cost: $20 public, $10 AIVF members

A panel of HBO documentary staff descuss their programming objectives and describe how decisions are made. Learn what type of work they seek, and how to put your best foot forward when submitting your project to HBO or Cinemax.

FRAME by FRAME

Special Frame by Frame evening progams:
MEET THE FILMMAKERS

when: weeknights during the Frame by Frame Series, 7–9 p.m.

Each night's 7 p.m. screening will be presented by the director (and other special guests). Afterwards, a moderated discussion hosted by AIVF will provide insight into the filmmakers' creative process and their journey in bringing the work to fruition. Here's your chance to learn the stories behind the screen!

Meet the Filmmakers (*subject to change*):

Friday Sept. 13: Alexandra Pelosi presents *Journeys with George*

Monday, Sept. 16: Brent Owens presents *Hookers at the Point: Five Years Later*

Tuesday, Sept. 17: Rebecca Cammisa and Rob Fruchtman present *Sister Helen*

Wednesday Sept. 18: Karen Goodman and Kirk Simon present *Smashed*

Thursday, Sept. 19: Deborah Dickson and subjects Ruthie and Connie present *Ruthie and Connie*

Friday, Sept. 20: Ellen Spiro and Karen Bernstein present *Atomic Ed*

Monday, Sept. 23: Sarah Kernochan and Thoth present *Thoth*

Tuesday, Sept. 24: Kristi Jacobson presents *American Standoff*

Wednesday, Sept. 25: Alice Elliott presents *The Collector of Bedford Street*

Thursday, Sept. 26: Aviva Slesin and Toby Appleton Perl present *Secret Lives: Hidden Children & Their Rescuers During WW II*

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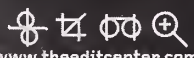

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Academy Foundation
The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
The J.P. Morgan Chase Manhattan Foundation
Empire State Development
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Sony Electronics Corporation

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

Nonprofit Members: **AL**: Sidewalk Moving Picture Fest.; **AR**: University of Central Arkansas/Channel 6 Television; **CA**: Antelope Valley Independent Film Festival; The Berkeley Documentary Center; Filmmakers Alliance; International Buddist Film Festival; Media Fund; NAATA; Ojai Film Soc.; San Diego Asian Film Festival; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; USC School of Cinema TV; **CO**: Denver Center Media; **DC**: Media Access Project; **FL**: Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival; Sarasota Film Festival; University of Tampa; **GA**: Atlanta Black Film Festival, Inc; Savannah College of Art and Design; **HI**: U of Hawaii Outreach College; **ID**: Center for School Improvement; **IL**: Art Institute of Chicago/Video Data Bank; Community Television Network; PBS Midwest; Rock Valley Coll.; Roxie Media Corp.; **KY**: Appalshop; **MA**: CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Long Bow Group, Inc.; Lowell Telecommunications Corp.; Projectile Arts; **MD**: Laurel Cable Network **MI**: Ann Arbor Film Festival; **MN**: Intermedia Arts; Walker Art Center; **MO**: Webster University Film Series; **NC**: Doubletake Documentary Film Festival; Duke University-Film and Video; Empowerment Project; **NE**: Great Plains Film Festival; Ross Film Theater, UN/Lincoln; **NJ**: Black Maria Film Festival; College of NJ/ Dept. of Communication Studies; Freedom Film Society; Great Vision Filmwork, Inc.; **NM**: Taos Talking Pictures; **NY**: American Museum of Natural History; Art21; Center for New American Media; Cinema Arts Center; Children's Media Project; Communications Society; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Creative Capital Foundation; Crowing Rooster Arts; Department of Media Study, SUNY Buffalo; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community Television; Experimental TV Center; EVC; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Film Video Arts; Globalvision, Inc.; Hudson Valley Media Arts Center; International Film Seminars; John Jay High School; Konscious, Inc.; Listen Up!; Media Department, Museum of Natural History; Mimetic Media; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Foundation for Jewish Culture; National Video Resources; National Museum of the American Indian; New School University Film Department; NW&D. Inc.; New York Film Academy; NYU TV Center; New York Women in Film and Television; Paper Tiger Television; Ross Media Center; School of Visual Arts; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stanton Crenshaw Communication; Stony Brook Film Festival; SVA; Swimming Elephant Productions; Syracuse University; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH**: Athens Center for Film and Video; Cleveland Filmmakers; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio Independent Film Festival; Ohio University School of Film; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Prince Music Theater; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR**: Media Arts, MHCC; **PA**: PA Council on the Arts; Department of Film and Video, Carnegie Museum of Art; Great Lakes Film Association; Prince Music Theater; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI**: Flickers Arts Collaborative; **SC**: South Carolina Arts Commission; Hybrid Films; **TN**: Nashvile Independent Film Festival; **TX**: Austin Cinemaker Co-op; Austin Film Society Michener Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; Worldfest; **UT**: Sundance Institute; **VA**: The Noodlehead Network; VA Department of Drama; **WA**: Seattle Central Community College; **WI**: UWM Department of Film; **France**: The Camargo Foundation; **Germany**: International Shorts Film Festival; **India**: Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Peru**: Guarango Cine y Video; **Singapore**: Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Business/Industry Members: **AZ**: Aaquinas Productions, Inc.; **CA**: Action/Cut Directed by Seminars; Attaboc, LLC; Busk Entertainment, LLC; Calliope Films, Inc.; Eastman Kodak Co.; David Keith Company; Groovy Like a Movie; HBO; The Hollywood Reporter; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; **CO**: The Crew Connection; **FL**: GeekPower; Vision Films; **GA**: Tomorrow Pictures, Inc.; **IL**: Buzzbait; Rock Valley College; Roxie Media Corporation; Wiggle Puppy Productions; **MA**: CS Associates; Glidecam Industries; Lef Foundation; **MD**: Walterry Insurance Brokers; **MI**: Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Kingberry Productions, Inc.; **MN**: Aquaries Media; **NH**: Kinetic Films; **NJ**: DIVA Communications, Inc.; **NY**: AKQ Communications, Ltd.; American Montage; Analog Digital Int'l, Inc.; ArtMar Productions; Asset Pictures, Inc.; Black Bird Post; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cataland Films; Cineblast! Productions; Code 16/Radical Avid; Corra Films; Cypress Films; Daniel, Seigel & Bimbler, LLP; Dekart Video; Docurama; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Earth Video; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Harmonic Ranch; HBO; Highdrama Productions, Inc.; Historic Films Archive; Jalapeno Media; Lighthouse Creative, Inc.; Lowel Light Manufacturing, Inc; Mad Mad Judy; MacKenzie Culter, Inc.; The Means of Production, Inc.; Mercer Media; Mercer Street Sound; Metropolis Film Lab, Inc.; Mixed Greens; New Rican Filmmaker; New York Independent Film School; One Kilohertz; The Outpost; Paul Dinatale Post, Inc.; Persona Films, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Seahorse Films; Solar Films; Son Vida Pictures, LLC; Studio 4J; Suitcase Productions; Swete Studios; Triune Pictures; Webcasting Media Productions, Inc.; Wildlight Productions; Wolfen Prods.; XEL Media; Van Vliet Media; Zanzibar Productions, Inc.; **PA**: Smithtown Creek Productins; **TX**: The Media Cottage, Inc.; Shootz Production Group; Tempest Production Company; **UT**: Rapid, LLC; KBYU-TV; **VA**: Dorst MediaWorks; The Project Studio; Roland House, Inc.; **WV**: Harpers Ferry Center Library

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In Brief: Producers Legal Series
FORMING A LEGAL ENTITY

when: Tuesday, Sept. 3, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
cost: $30 general public, $20 AIVF members (per session). *Hold a seat for these important seminars by purchasing a series pass: call or visit www.aivf.org for details.*

The AIVF Producers Legal Series addresses specific issues of concern to independent producers. These small group sessions answer common questions and connect producers to individuals and resources that will be of use on an ongoing basis.

Topics include: rights and clearances, tax and finance, contract negotiations, and legal terms and definitions.

The series moderator and co-producer is Innes Smolansky, an entertainment attorney with Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, and specializes in independent film, representing independent producers, writers, and directors.

Documentary Dialogues
TEST SCREENING: WHO TESTS WHO?

when: Monday, Sept. 9, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Wine & goldfish reception till 9:30 p.m.
where: AIVF office
cost: $5 members; $20 general public

So you finally have the first rough cut, or at least the first 20 minutes. Shall you rush out the door and call everybody for a screening? Or hold your breath through the next cut? Test screenings are, without a doubt, the first taste of audience reaction, giving you the push to go on to final-cut land, or making you sign up for school again. Come and discuss with your peers how to organize a screening and pass the test. Hosted by AIVF member and filmmaker Fernanda Rossi.

AIVF co-sponsors
CINEMATEXAS
September 17–22; Austin, TX

Since its inception in 1995, Cinematexas has provided a hospitable, diverse, and ever-expanding space for landmark short films in the American Southwest. In today's era of image proliferation and festival commercialization, Cinematexas is less a festival than a place for contemplation and awe, a spontaneous congregation of visual cartographers, a mobile home for intimate nomads.

This year's program includes over 300 films, performances, installations, receptions, parties, and workshops. For details and to purchase tickets, visit www.cinematexas.org or call (512) 471-6497.

Special Cinematexas program:

AIVF Panel on the Power Politics of Media:
M.A.D. AS HELL

when: Thursday, September 19, 12 p.m.
where: The Hideout

AIVF invites you to get involved in the ongoing struggle for more funding for media artists, public access, and public television; and for more scrutiny of

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increasing media consolidation. As global media empires assume a greater share of public discourse space, what can independent/codependent artists do to ensure that nonhomogenized voices of resistance get through?

Join our discussion about issues of media consolidation, FCC regulations, and the changing face of funding and broadcast opportunities for media artists in America, and learn about what you can do to rally for the cause on Media Advocacy Day. Now more than ever, let's get MAD!

Meet & Greet

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES

when: Thursday, Sept. 19, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
cost: $20; $10 for AIVF members

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) supports the development and production of projects that engage general public audiences in the humanities, including history, literature, history of art and science, philosophy, religion, folklore, and other disciplines. The NEH is a major funder of independent public television productions.

Meet program officer David Weinstein and get more insight on government funding for documentaries. David will also offer advice on submitting your proposal to the NEH. AIVF members can review the NEH funder FAQ at www.aivf.org.

AIVF co-sponsors
The 3rd Annual Woodstock International Film Festival
September 18-22, Woodstock, NY

The Woodstock Film Festival strives to bring world-class and developing filmmakers together in an intimate setting bursting with independent film screenings, seminars, workshops, concerts, demos, parties, galas, and the Woodstock spirit!

Over eighty films will be screened, featuring first-class features, documentaries, and shorts from around the world, with a special focus on emerging makers. The Festival also works year-round to provide support to filmmakers and their projects in the region.

For more information visit www.woodstockfilmfestival.com or call (845) 679-4265 for details.

AIVF co-sponsors
LADYFEST EAST
September 19–22, New York, NY

LADYFEST EAST 2002 is a four-day festival celebrating an amazing array of talented local musicians and artists. In addition to workshops and discussions, the festival presents screenings September 21–22 at New York University's Cantor Film Center. For more information, visit www.ladyfesteast.org.

AIVF co-sponsors
THE IFP MARKET
September 27 to October 4
New York, NY

The 24th Annual IFP Market is a showcase of new work from emerging filmmakers, which includes screenings, seminars, and networking events. This year's lineup shows a marked shift in focus toward works-in-development and emerging talent. Filmmakers visiting New York City for the Market should be sure to stop by our booth and say hello! Booth times and dates will be posted at www.aivf.org. For more information on the IFP Market, call (212) 465-8200 or visit www.ifp.org.

Coming in October:
***The AIVF Guide to Film & Video Distributors*—All New Edition!**
This essential resource profiles over two hundred distributors of independent work and provides an intimate look at the distribution of independent film and video work. The 2002 edition has been completely researched and updated, with supplemental articles geared to help you package and present your work.
The AIVF Guide to Film & Video Distributors, Rania Richardson, ed.; $35 ($25 AIVF members).

Join the Discussion!
Online Distribution Panel in October
AIVF invites you to join a week-long online discussion with independent distributors, moderated by AIVF board member and d-word Documentary Community leader Doug Block. See www.aivf.org for details!

The AIVF Regional Salons provide opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons website at www.aivf.org/salons for more details.

Be sure to contact your local salon leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesday, 6:30 pm
Where: Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 366-1538
albany@aivf.org
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesday, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Monday of the month, 7 pm
Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
austin@aivf.org
www.austinfilm.org

Boston, MA:
Center For Independent Documentary
Where: 1608 Beacon Street, Basement of the Waban Public Library
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
boston@aivf.org

Boulder, CO:
"Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesday, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
boulder@aivf.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursday, 6:30 pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun Street
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841, or Peter Wentworth, charleston@aivf.org

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Detailed salon information is posted on the web!
Visit **www.aivf.org/salons** for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon programs as well as up-to-date information on programs.

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700
dallas@aivf.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
edison@aivf.org www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:
Contact: Erik Mollberg, (260) 421-1248
fortwayne@aivf.org

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: Mary Lampe, (713) 522-8592;
houston@aivf.org

Experience the African Diaspora with the Portland, Oregon, Salon!

This past June, the Portland salon had a screening of the video *Viva Cape Verde*, an observational documentary about the culture, landscape, and people of Cape Verde, West Africa. Originally shot on 8mm video and edited digitally, *Viva* is a collage of social gatherings, religious events, musical performances, and daily life events that were captured over the course of a year by Hermes Illana. Hermes was living in Cape Verde with his wife, Marcia Rego, who was conducting research as part of her Ph.D. in anthropology. Five years later, the unscripted footage was edited (under Rego's supervision) to create a cultural panorama of the events the couple witnessed on the islands. The result is a sort of audio-visual photo album, without narration or deliberate "thesis." Instead, the video gives the viewer a more atmospheric and open-ended view into the lives of some Cape Verdeans.

Viva director Hermes Illana was born and raised in south Brazil, and currently works as a landscape architect in Portland, Oregon. Illana is planning a documentary about the Cape Verde Rabelados, a religious community that has developed very unique and dissident version of Catholicism in Cape Verde.

Hermes Illana's Viva Cape Verde

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE:
Nebraska Independent Film Project
When: Second Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Monday of the month, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
losangeles@aivf.org

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Dan Wilson, (414) 276-8563
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesday of the month, 7pm (Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: W. Keith McManus, (716) 256-3871
rochester@aivf.org

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
sandiego@aivf.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933; Jane Selle Morgan (206) 915-6263
seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Monday of the month, 6 pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno
tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline, (202) 554-3263 x4
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
washingtondc@aivf.org

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!

The List: Do-It-Yourself Distribution

BY JASON GUERRASIO

In 1965 D.A. Pennebaker's now legendary doc about Bob Dylan, *Don't Look Back,* had something in common with many current documentaries—nobody wanted to distribute it. "I wasn't discouraged because I knew that there was an audience there. I [just] had to find a way to get to it," the icon of rockumentaries says. The answer came in the form of a porn theater in San Francisco. "I'm sitting around wondering what to do with the thing and a guy comes to me who ran the Art Theater Guild in the West, which shows porn films," he remembers. "He looked at the film and he said, 'You know, this is what I'm looking for. It looks like a porno film but it's not.'"

Don't Look Back ran for a year in San Francisco, during which time it received rave reviews in publications ranging from local weeklies to *Life* magazine. The film was later released nationally and internationally. What began as a 16mm print screening at what was, in Pennebaker's words, the "seediest looking theater you've ever seen in your life" became the inspiration for future filmmakers who couldn't find distribution for their films.

While porn theaters may be harder to come by these days, filmmakers are instead developing innovative ways to get their films in front of audiences every day. Here are just a few of those developments:

1. Package DVD Compilation on the Cheap

With the goal of seeking out and aiding unsigned filmmakers, IndieDVD pays for permission to use the films on their discs. The filmmakers retain the rights to their films. If that's not a sweet enough deal for you, it's free to submit. "They knew how to market the film," says *Drawing Files* co-director Malcolm Ingram. "They are very sympathetic and supportive of filmmakers." See: www.indiedvd.com

2. Find Under-Utilized Spaces

Emerging Pictures, a new digital exhibition outfit, specializes in films that can't find regular distribution. The company is acquiring a network of under-used screens in venues like unutilized auditoriums and performing arts theatres. "Hopefully our network would supply enough value that not only will [a film] make money and get some notoriety, but also create further value in the ancillary markets," says Ira Deutchman, president and CEO of Emerging Pictures. Each film plays a one-week stint, and if the film performs well, it is booked for another week at a later date. See: www.emergingpictures.com

3. Seed the Underground With 'Viral' Distribution

To distribute her six-minute short, *Terminator Seed,* Nina Rota adapted the practices of dot-com marketer's viral marketing. She calls it viral distribution. Transferring the film to a CD, she passed them out to people for free. The catch was, people that took it had to agree that once they were done with it they would pass it on to someone else. *Terminator Seed* has gone across the globe, winning prizes at film festivals, and it gets constant airplay on Free Speech TV, organicconsumers.org and purefood.org. "What this is useful for, and the reason I think this is important, is if you have a short social issue documentary, or something kind of like a PSA (Public Service Announcement), the thing you need to do is get it around the world as best you can," explains Rota. To find out more e-mail Nina at nrota@pobox.com or www.sorellaproductions.com.

4. List Free on the Web

Several sites market DVD and videos of undistributed films. Some of these charge a fee or take a percentage of the sales. ReelUniverse is one site that doesn't charge anything or ask for rights to the film. You just send them a copy of your film, and if they like it they'll list it on their site for free. Visitors purchase copies of the film by contacting the filmmaker directly. See: www.reeluniverse.com

5. Find Your Natural Allies

When filmmakers Pam Yates and Peter Kinoy began self-distributing their film, *Presumed Guilty*, they contacted forty-eight outreach legal groups, who helped get the film mentioned on list serves and in newsletters. *Presumed Guilty* played at this year's Human Rights Watch Film Festival and had a theatrical run in July. See: www.mediarights.org for a case study.

6. Rent Your Own Theater

It's not the cheapest way to go, but you can actually rent a theater. You can let people in for free, or charge what you want, but filmmakers usually do this to present a film in a normal fashion, with the regular ticket prices. Tickets are also where you recoup the cost, unless you cut a deal for the concession stand. Theaters like to do this because it guarantees income, but they're cautious about choosing films, as they still have to maintain the theater's reputation. For more information see page 39.

7. Offer Free Pizza & Beer

Running for the past two years each Tuesday evening is a weekly New York screening series that features appearances by filmmakers, distributors, and festival organizers. The screening is preceeded by a free pizza and beer reception for ticket holders. "We wanted to make a nice place where filmmakers and film lovers could screen new work, hang to talk about it, and enjoy a damn good slice of pizza after," says the owner of Pioneer Theater, Phil Hartman. See: www.twoboots.com/pioneer

8. Catch the DVD Giveaway Wave

Total Movie & Entertainment magazine sends out a DVD with every issue. On one side music videos, short films, and interviews; on the other, a full-length feature film. Up to 500,000 discs reach the magazine's readership. The magazine gives filmmakers a small licensing fee, a couple hundred copies of the DVD, and a master they can use to replicate more discs. (See Notices section, this issue, to submit film.) See: www.insidedvd.com

Jason Guerrasio interns for The Independent *and is a contributing writer and editor for the online magazine* 1-42.

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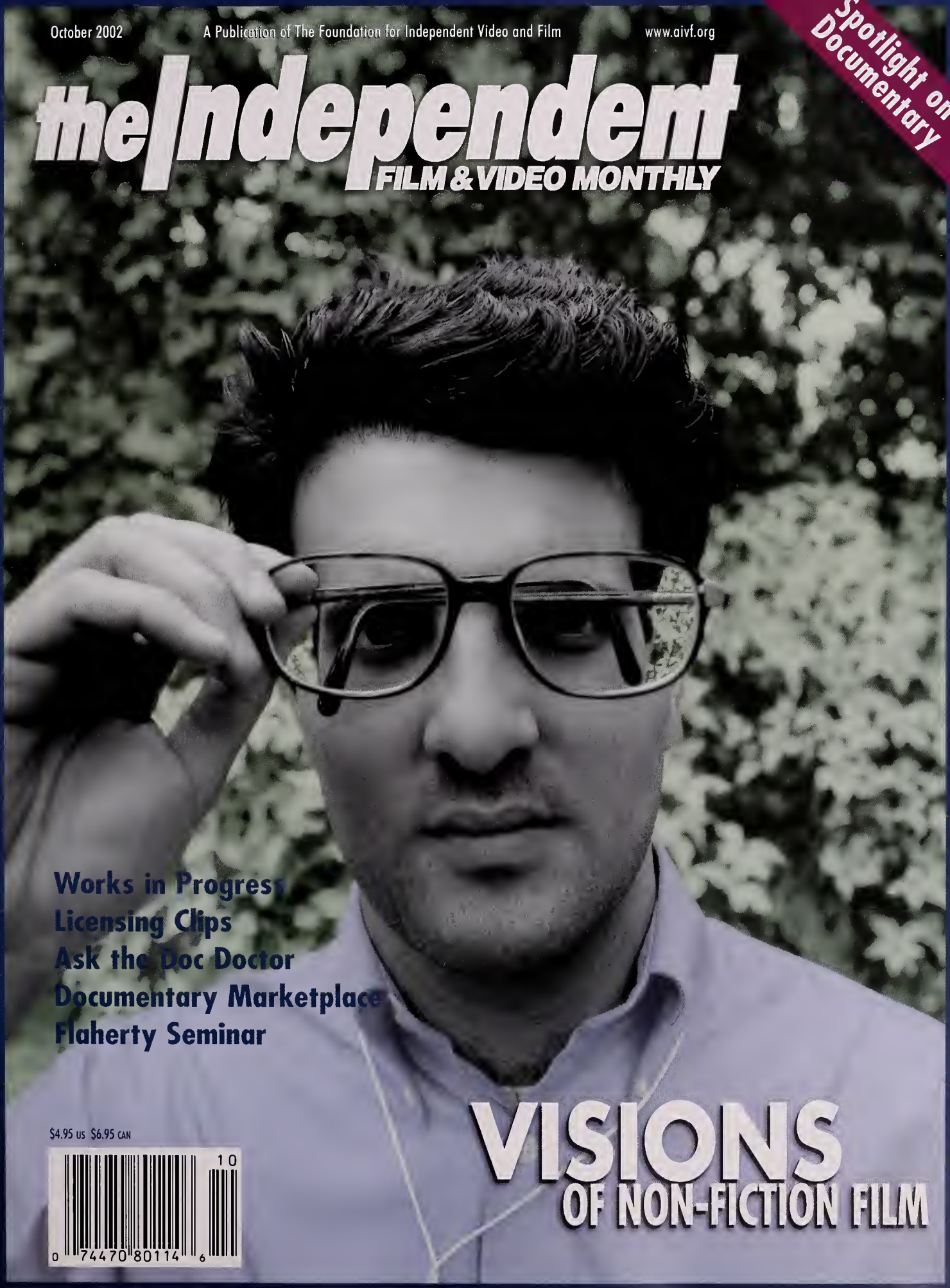

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About the cover: James Fotopoulos, whose work sparked debate at the 48th Flaherty Seminar. (Michael Galinsky, illustrated by Suzy Flood)

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Applications from all countries are welcome. Application deadline is February 1 for the following academic year.

For additional information and application forms, please consult the Foundation's Web site, **www.camargofoundation.org**, or write to:

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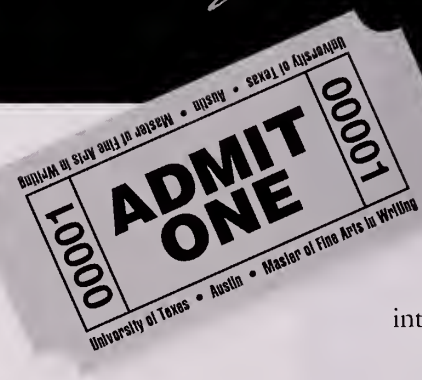

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Dear Reader:

Each October the *The Independent* is devoted to documentaries. This year, in addition to focusing our columns and features on this central form of moving-image making, we are bringing you an extra sixteen-page section which covers the 48th Annual Flaherty Seminar. As one of the longest running and most unusual independent media events, the Flaherty has witnessed and shaped many of the discussions and controversies that are central to the documentary community. Neither a market nor a festival, the Seminar has a history of its own, shaped by the passionate and sometimes explosive interactions among the audience, filmmakers, and programmer. This meeting draws together over a hundred people, many of whom have little in common except that they care deeply about independent mediamaking. For one exhilarating, infuriating, epiphany-inducing week, these participants inhabit the same dorms, eat the same college cafeteria food, and ingest the same films morning, noon, and night. Since the experience of the Flaherty Seminar is so different for each participant, we decided to approach the event from several angles. Four writers contributed articles to the section: long-time Flaherty attendee Patricia Zimmermann, cultural and film journalist Ann Lewinson, student and attendee Matt Wolf, and this year's programmer, Ed Halter. And to truly get the flavor of Flaherty, we invited fourteen other participants to record their week in diaries for *The Independent*, portions of which have been reprinted in this issue.

While I was working with this material, I began to see it as an organic whole rather than as separate parts. As I edited the rest of the magazine, I found that many of the discussions that flared in the Flaherty section were also touched on by other writers in the magazine. The issues and controversies raised during the Seminar are the issues and controversies currently facing moving-image makers, particularly documentarians. Writer Mary Sampson interviewed six key figures of the documentary world about the business side of their craft, from icon St. Clair Bourne to HBO's Shelia Nevins to filmmaker Arthur Dong. While any one of these pieces alone would make an entertaining read, as a unit they open broader discussions, the same discussions I hear documentary makers talking about every day, and the same subjects that were flash points at this year's Flaherty: concerns about commercialism versus the need to seek a broader audience; character-driven projects versus social activism.

A number of the pieces screened at Flaherty this year were works in progress. Screening a work in progress at the Seminar is either an act of bravery or masochism, considering that the audiences are notoriously honest and brutal. But there are many more formal work-in-progress forums that are designed to protect as well as help the filmmaker. Tamara Krinsky's article on work-in-progress screening details several different screenings that aid documentary projects.

In addition, we are introducing a new monthly column designed to address concerns specific to documentary makers. Fernanda Rossi, a documentary film consultant, joins *The Independent* team with the premiere of Ask the Doc Doctor. In the following months, she will be answering questions submitted by our readers in this Dear Abby for documentarians. To ask her a question, either e-mail her at info@documentarydoctor.com, or write her a letter care of *The Independent*, 304 Hudson St., 6 Fl., New York, NY, 10013.

Also this month, contributing editor Cara Mertes updates us on the activities of Nicole Guillemet, former codirector of the Sundance Film Festival, who has recently taken on the post of director of the Miami International Film Festival. And our publisher, Elizabeth Peters, spent time with one of the pillars of documentary exhibition, Karen Cooper of New York's Film Forum. Maya Churi continues her coverage of moving images on the internet in our Site Seeing column by exploring the online, first-person documentary of six different subjects, *Symphony of a City*.

While *The Independent* covers documentaries throughout the year, this annual spotlight is important because it gives us the opportunity to take a broader look at the vast and changing sea of documentary making by glancing at the past, focusing on the present, and setting our sights on the future.

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D.A. Pennebaker's *Daybreak Express*, set to the music of Duke Ellington, is airing on the Sundance Channel.

All Docs, All the Time

Sundance moving forward with documentary channel

BY CAITLIN ROPER

SINCE ROBERT REDFORD'S ANNOUNCEMENT at last year's Sundance Film Festival that the Sundance Channel would be launching an all-documentary cable station, plans have moved quietly forward, with executives hiring staff, positioning the would-be station in cable markets, and buying film rights. By the time the station begins broadcasting in early 2003, they will have acquired around 150 documentary titles, according to spokesperson Sarah Eaton.

"We don't ever pass on a film without watching it," says Christian Vesper, executive director of ancillary rights and acquisitions. "We put every tape in." And they get a lot of tapes—of every possible nonfiction genre. "[But] we are not about hardcore journalism, we're not about reality TV or travel or nature, which all fit a formula. We're about great storytelling," explains Paola Freccero, senior vice president of film programming.

Paola Freccero, senior vice president of film programming for the Sundance Channel

With the number of cable stations rapidly increasing, and reality TV exploding in popularity, "We realized documentary was climbing up, that a doc channel was an idea whose time had come," says Freccero.

Over the past year, the Sundance Channel has used focus groups and other research methods to learn what documentary lovers and Sundance subscribers thought a documentary channel should be. The concept has been met with "wild enthusiasm," says Freccero. She was not surprised to learn that people love nonfiction programming on television. Respondents said they wanted stories told with a particular voice and style, through the eyes of the storyteller. They may love VH-1's *Behind the Music* and A&E's *Biography*, but they also crave a broad range of voices, different levels of emotion, and a less formulaic approach to storytelling.

Though at press time they could not yet name the documentary titles they would be acquiring for the new channel, Freccero and Vesper were forthright about what they wanted. "We're looking for films that tell unusual stories in unusual ways," says Freccero. "What will bring you in is an idea you're interested in, and when you land here, you'll learn about the topic in a way you won't see anywhere else." Freccero cited Nanette Burstein and Brett Morgen's screen adaptation of Robert Evans' 1994 autobiography, *The Kid Stays in the Picture*, as a recent example of the kind of storytelling documentary that Sundance is after.

This month, the Sundance Channel is offering *Sonic Cinema*, a collection of innovative music documentaries and music videos. The series begins with the US television premiere of the hip-hop film *Scratch*, directed by Doug Pray. *Silver Rockets/Kool Things: 20 Years of Sonic Youth*, directed by Christoph Dreher, and Todd Phillips' documentary about Phish, *Bittersweet Motel*, will also be airing.

Both the Sundance Channel and the Sundance Festival have a long tradition of supporting documentary work like Ron Havilio's seven-part series *Fragments Jerusalem*, Marina Zenovich's *Who is*

PHOTO: TOP, COURTESY OF THE SUNDANCE CHANNEL; RIGHT, GABE PALACIO

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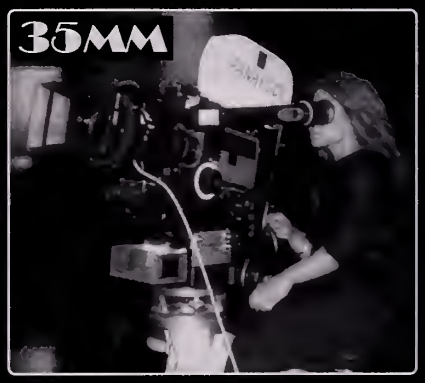

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Bernard Tapie? and Mark Singer's *Dark Days*. The channel has also aired films like Chris Hegedus and Jehane Noujaim's *Startup.com*, Terry Zwigoff's *Crumb*, and Aiyana Elliot's *The Ballad of Rambling Jack*.

Vesper, whose office walls are lined with row after row of tapes, knows what he wants. "Intensely personal stories," he says. "That's the stuff we get most excited about." Vesper seconds Freccero's emphasis on filmmaking with a distinct point of view. "It's a mistake to look for balance," he says, "I want the filmmaker to have an agenda, if possible." He finds that a vivid voice makes for better storytelling, but of course the work must be tightly focused and thoughtfully edited. "What I see at the festivals is generally pretty well done because it is well edited," he says. Vesper mentions filmmaker Nick Broomfield (*Kurt and Courtney*; *Biggie and Tupak*; see page 59) as an example of someone with a very distinctive voice and Stacy Peralta's *Dogtown and Z-Boys* as an example of a documentary that captures a "compelling sense of a life." Deborah Dickson's newest film, *Ruthie and Connie: Every Room in the House* and Tim Kirkman's, *Dear Jesse* are other films Vesper is excited about. "Kirkman has a lot of integrity as a filmmaker," says Vesper.

Sundance plans to center its offerings around big ideas like family, sex, politics, and war, but the films chosen to air within these categories will offer very specific and personal takes on the themes. This style of programming "speaks to the universality of film, but leaves room for individuality," says Freccero.

Over the last six years, the Sundance Channel has looked for ways to expand itself while continuing to show feature films, shorts, animation, documentaries, and foreign films, uncut and without commercial interruption. The channel operates independently of the nonprofit Sundance Institute and Sundance Film Festival, but shares the overall Sundance mission of supporting independent artists while getting their work to wider audiences.

Visit the Sundance Channel website for more info: www.sundancechannel.com.

Originally from Berkeley, California, Caitlin Roper currently lives in NYC, where she is a freelance writer, editor, and filmmaker.

IFC pulls Next Wave

IFC ENTERTAINMENT CLOSED ITS FINISHING fund division, Next Wave Films, in late June. Next Wave was established in 1996 to support emerging filmmakers working on low-budget fiction and non-fiction films in the US and abroad. Current projects will retain their funding. Next Wave Films' slate includes Kate Davis' *Southern Comfort*, the Academy Award-nominated *Sound and Fury*, by Josh Aronson, and *Blue Vinyl*, codirected by Judith Helfand and Daniel B. Gold. IFC Entertainment's other divisions will continue to operate as before.

P.O.V. nabs four Emmys

TWO DOCUMENTARIES THAT AIRED ON THE public television series *P.O.V.* were awarded Emmys last month. *Promises*, by filmmakers B. Z. Goldberg, Justine Shapiro, and Carlos Bolado, took home two Emmys for News and Documentary: Best Documentary in 2001, and Outstanding Background/Analysis of a Single Current Story: Long Form. *Promises*, the story of seven Palestinian and Israeli children's worldview, is a co-presentation with the Independent Television Service (ITVS).

Eric Paul Fournier's *Civil Wrongs and Rights: the Fred Korematsu Story* also received two News and Documentary Emmys—one for Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Direction, and another for Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Editing. A co-presentation with the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA), *Civil Wrongs and Rights* tells the story of Fred Korematsu, who resisted, and then challenged in court, the forced internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Errata

IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF *THE Independent*, the Seattle Field Report stated that the Cinerama Dome Theater in Los Angeles is closed for renovations. The renovated landmark reopened in March.

Also, our report on the African Union Film Festival listed the original budget for South Africa's National Film and Video Foundation at ten million rand—we noted this is the equivalent of $10 million US dollars. Ten million rand is actually $1 million US.

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Karen Cooper

Keeping NYC's Film Forum up and running

BY ELIZABETH PETERS

"AT THIS MOMENT, MY BIGGEST DREAM IS to find the source of our HVAC leak without having to shut theaters and tear into walls," says Karen Cooper, executive director of New York City's Film Forum. "There's nothing less glamorous than a broken machine."

A prosaic goal for the woman responsible for presenting work to over a quarter of a million viewers each year. But a faulty air conditioner disrupts the inconspicuous clockwork of spooling out work and turning over audiences. As Cooper points out, the Film Forum operation is "really just a big factory, full of machines." Some machinery is obvious, such as the array of projectors that serve the three auditoriums. Other is less apparent: the finely tuned system that identifies good work and makes sure that audiences know how to find it.

"Just staying in business is goal enough," Cooper continues. "Keeping our enthusiasm is a goal. We're fortunate that a group of people that are obsessive about these things have come together to make this place work."

The Film Forum was created in 1970, and Cooper has been in charge of this machine for the past thirty years. From the early days, when the staff consisted of herself and a part-time projectionist, to today, with close to fifty employees and two distinct calendars (Repertory, programmed by Bruce Goldstein assisted by Harris Dew; and Premieres, programmed by Cooper assisted by Mike Maggiore), Cooper has managed to sustain a nationally recognized resource while maintaining its personality and independence.

"When I took over, Peter Feinstein handed me a valise of carbon copies of his correspondence with filmmakers. That was it. We didn't even have letterhead, we had a rubber stamp. I asked, 'How do we know I'm in charge? What if you decide to come back?' And Peter said, 'Karen: you've got the rubber stamp.'"

New York in the seventies was a fertile place for underground film, with programs including Filmmakers' Cinematheque, Millennium Film, and MOMA's Cineprobe series. Cooper immediately expanded the Film Forum programming to include more foreign and documentary work. Along with seeking out new artists and their works, she began to market the work to larger audiences.

Karen Cooper, celebrates thirty years as executive director of NYC's Film Forum.

Just about every week Cooper receives a call from someone who wants advice about starting a program like the Film Forum. It's not so easy. Besides the talented (and obsessive) staff, New York City offers particular benefits for filmmakers. Films that open in New York benefit from Academy rules and the concentration of film critics. And the Film Forum has a secret advantage: the no-miss press release.

"What Henry James is to the novel, I am to the press release," quips Cooper. The results are impressive, displayed in a wall of clippings binders: slender in the seventies, thickening through the eighties, now requiring several volumes each year. The Film Forum continues to do all its own publicity work, and maintains contact with over 700 writers and editors. The mailing list for programming calendars has topped 22,000—each a person who has requested materials. "These are valuable contacts. And even more so is a story in *The New York Times*, with its 1.2 million readers. All the papers: It all contributes."

The Film Forum staff prides itself on remaining consistent in its standards and accurate in its information, thereby earning the trust of both critics and audiences. And concurrently they have earned the loyalty of a body of filmmakers, partly through working with them to determine the best ways to promote their work. Besides generating press and presenting work, the Film Forum helps filmmakers in less obvious ways, such as sharing directories of print source and distribution companies, providing fiscal sponsorship for projects, and arranging occasions for filmmakers to present their work in person. "But this is not what we are really about," explains Cooper. "We're like an old-fashioned grindhouse. It's our job to churn out the shows and move the audiences through."

Under the leadership of board chair Ned Lord, the Film Forum is mid-way through a $4 million dollar endowment campaign, and fundraising duties presently takes up half of Cooper's time. But programming is her first love. Of the nine independent premieres programmed this fall, seven are documentaries, profiling subjects as diverse as philosopher Jacques Derrida (Amy Ziering Kofman's *Derrida*), General Augusto Pinochet (Patricio Guzmán's *The Pinochet Case*), and mail-artist Ray Johnson (John Walters' *How to Draw a Bunny*). "The quality of what I am seeing has never been better," says Cooper. When asked if she can identify trends in documentary over the years, she demurs. "Every film is its own universe. It's like poetry—every good film finds its own form."

And for Cooper, this is what makes the burden of running a nonprofit theater seem a little lighter. "The other day I was watching a pile of tapes, and I put in Mark Moskowitz's *Stone Reader*. It was an original, compelling story," she says. "And I can't even begin to describe the satisfaction of being in a position where I can bring this film to an audience."

For more info, see www.filmforum.com.

Elizabeth Peters is publisher of The Independent *and director of AIVF.*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ROBIN HOLLAND; FACING PAGE, JAMES CARLSON

Nicole Guillemet

Beyond Sundance...

BY CARA MERTES

THE NEWS TRAVELED FAST. IN FEBRUARY 2002, just after the eighteenth Sundance Film Festival wrapped up, word leaked out that Sundance Festival co-director and long-time Sundance Institute executive Nicole Guillemet was leaving the festival. After seventeen years of building the US's pre-eminent festival from its modest beginnings as the US Film and Video Festival, including recently launching several important initiatives, Guillemet was moving on. For Guillemet, the transition has been a time to explore some ambitious and inventive planning for bringing independent media to more people—the goal that has driven her career for almost two decades.

Guillemet is hard to miss in a crowd. Inevitably laughing, her French accent still intact after thirty years in the US, she is usually surrounded by people. One of the most remarkable things about Guillemet is the fact of her presence. As a programmer, she's always there, monitoring the progress of a panel, a screening, a meeting.

Her devotion to the filmmakers and her work is palpable. As she says, "By far the most inspiring thing is to meet and work with artists who are passionate and dedicated to their work, who have a vision and a story to tell. The persistence of so many talented but struggling filmmakers always amazes me, and it is what I most respect."

For someone whose career started in the festival world at the most glamorous (some now say commercialized) festival of them all, Guillemet stands out as someone surprisingly accessible and unfazed by the celebrity quotient. Echoing the ideals of founder Robert Redford, she often made efforts to distinguish between the goals and values of the Sundance Institute, which has been consistently focused on supporting the vision of artists, and the resultant celebrity, and media frenzy, that began to grow around the Sundance Festival in the mid-1990's and continues today. The tension between the mission and the marketplace was a double-edged sword. The expectations that fame, celebrity, and the elusive "buzz" create can sometimes work against core values like experimentation, a willingness to take risks, and a focus on developing talent, not hype. In this media age, the spin can easily overwhelm the spun.

While at Sundance, Guillemet tried to keep a solid sense of mission in the festival's work with initiatives such as the House of Docs and the Gen-Y Studios. Both of these successful projects scored high on the value meter, lending a weight and legitimacy to the Sundance Festival in two important but perennially undervalued arenas: nonfiction filmmaking and youth media.

While both of these programs will continue, in the past several years, each project has created a micro-environment, within the context of the overall festival, that has been cheered on by participants and others involved in those fields. B. Ruby Rich, long-time critic and currently a programmer for the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival, applauds Sundance's longstanding commitment to documentary. "What Nicole did with the House of Docs," she says, "was to magnetize documentary and raise excitement to an unprecedented extent."

One of the marks of Sundance overall and evidenced by Guillemet's initiatives has been its place at the forefront of identifying strategic, long-range ways to support the creation and distribution of all kinds of independent media, even as the "main event" of finding the next big indie hit attracts the buyers, celebrities and press. In the past several years, documentary has seen increased attention at festivals and elsewhere, with pitch sessions, traveling showcases, limited theatrical releases, and community engagement strategies.

In the midst of this burgeoning interest, the House of Docs launched in 1999, after years of discussion. As Redford described it during House of Docs 2002 opening night, "[Its purpose is] not only to create something like what we have for the [fiction] filmmakers (at Sundance at both the Festival and the Lab), but [to create] a place for documentaries that's for them—to draw attention to the importance of documentaries." Guillemet seconds this feeling, saying, "With documentary we see the world through the eyes of real people confronting real stories—emotional, economic, political. Also, anyone who has followed documentary film in the last decade knows that it abounds in work of the highest artistic value that can move our emotions just as much as feature film does."

Emotional impact aside, documentary has always languished behind narrative as the center of attention, because good ones tend to generate respect rather than profits, and the impetus behind the House of Docs was primarily an attempt to create a user-friendly networking environment for sharing experiences and making contacts. Though it doesn't necessarily put more money into the mix, it has helped to create an aura of legitimacy and prestige for nonfiction filmmakers, and made it easier for filmmakers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to meet and talk.

In another vein, Guillemet started the Gen-Y Studio to support young people interested in making films—those in high school who had already produced some creative work. Started in 2000 after

Ever affable and on the ball, Nicole Guillemet is set to take on new challenges as director of the Miami International Film Festival.

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Guillemet decided to formalize the ad hoc festival attendance of high school-aged youth from around the country, the first year included a conflict-resolution round table with youth from the war-torn countries of Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, and Israel. "It is very important to bring young people into the film culture, to listen to them, to create opportunities for them to work with the best professionals. Most of all, we need to find ways for them to tell their stories," Guillemet explains. Meredith Lavitt, the senior manager of the documentary Film Program at Sundance, says the Gen-Y program will continue, "with a focus on the art of filmmaking and storytelling for youth sixteen to eighteen."

Nicole Guillemet, right, works with Alexi Buhler on the creation of the Salt Lake City Film Center during her tenure at the Sundance Institute and Film Festival.

America may continue to be her home, but Guillemet's sights are increasingly set on the international media landscape. Newly installed as the director of the Miami International Film Festival, she is, as usual, aiming high for its twentieth anniversary event, scheduled for February 21 through March 2, 2003. While the festival has nineteen years behind it, it was, until recently, a relatively small festival with a regional profile. In 1999, Florida International University became its major partner, and within a year, Nat Chediak, the festival founder and manager for seventeen years, left. Since then, the transition from a local festival to one that strives for international prominence, along the lines of Telluride, Toronto, and, yes, Sundance, has been rocky. The festival's first director, journalist and movie critic David Poland, resigned a week after last year's festival concluded.

With her global network of contacts, an entrepreneurial sensibility, and her Sundance reputation, Guillemet may be just what this ambitious festival needs to make the difficult leap from regional festival into the "must-attend" festival category that draws the local community, press, and industry professionals. With an average attendance of over 35,000 to 40,000 and about fifty films programmed a year, Miami is both bigger and smaller than Sundance, which is industry-oriented and draws about 10,000 to 15,000 festival goers a year for about 100 presentations.

Guillemet believes her main challenges will be taking the festival to the next level, from a largely regional event to one of the stops on the international circuit. She intends to build on the festival's already established international programming, using Miami as a platform for a special focus on an all-Americas film festival that includes Spain and Portugal in a kind of Latin axis.

While her love of documentary will be felt strongly in Miami, it will also be expressed in one of her Utah legacies—the new Salt Lake City Film Center, which Guillemet launched with Geralyn Dreyfous. A monthly Salt Lake City showcase alternating documentaries with foreign films, the center is, for Guillemet, a part of creating alternative exhibition spaces for independent work in the age of the multiplex, a necessary part of cultivating the love of cinema that she has dedicated herself to.

For more info: www.miamifilmfestival.com and www.sundance.org.

Cara Mertes is the executive director of P.O.V., PBS's award-winning independent documentary showcase. She has participated in the House of Docs and Gen-Y Studios since their inception.

PHOTO: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF JAMES CARLSON; FACING PAGE, JULIA PIMSLEUR

But What I Really Want to Do is Produce...

BY JULIA PIMSLEUR

DOCUMENTARY PRODUCERS ARE A RARE AND misunderstood breed. I often defended my choice to produce, instead of direct, because people seem to regard this as a little weird if not downright daft of me. But becoming a producer turned my worst flaws into my greatest assets—I am a compulsive planner, I'm bossy, love to talk on the phone, and always prepare for the worst. More importantly, I care deeply about documentary filmmaking and consider it a privilege to guide a project from inception to distribution. There are not many of us out there, and even fewer who have actually trained for the job.

Becoming a producer turned my worst flaws into my greatest assets—I am a compulsive planner, I'm bossy, love to talk on the phone, and always prepare for the worst. More importantly, I care deeply about documentary filmmaking.

There are so few documentary producers in part because we are rarely acknowledged as an important part of a documentary team. Understandably, filmmakers working with small budgets are reluctant to share the pie. But the lack of producers in documentary filmmaking exists for other reasons too: Few film schools offer producing as a major or a department; film festivals and other industry accolades do not recognize the importance of the documentary producer's role; and media arts centers rarely offer documentary producing classes. US film schools and the infrastructure of the documentary film industry could do much more to foster, recognize, and promote documentary producing.

American documentary makers tend toward the "one man band" approach to filmmaking, playing both the parts of director and producer. Over the years I have watched many directors spin their wheels trying to do the work of producers when all they really want to do is direct. I believe that producing and directing are (or should be) two different jobs. Very few people can actually do both well, but there are many more people who want to direct than produce. Or so it stands. That could change....

In France, where I went to film school, documentary producers have an established, respected role. There, more documentaries get produced, more filmmakers are paid for their work, and more of these films get shown on television and in the theaters than in the US. When I applied to the French National Film School (FEMIS), I did not want to be the next Jean Luc Godard or Agnes Varda. I wanted to be a producer.

By having distinct producing, editing, screenwriting, and other departments, FEMIS acknowledges what most American film schools don't: that we are not all going to be directors. Whether in France or the US, the film industry simply cannot accommodate all film school graduates joining the ranks of directors. And some of us do not *want* to direct. FEMIS recognized and validated my producing aspirations.

Film schools in the States need to teach aspiring producers the finer points of budgeting, crew management, and strategic planning, and expose them to the fundamentals of cinematography and editing so that they can become skilled, savvy producers. For example, schools can team together producers with directing classmates to produce their films. As a student, I produced over eight films and found one of my most important collaborators in classmate cinematographer Kirsten Johnson, whose first documentary, *Innocent Until Proven Guilty*, I produced and with whom I have worked closely for over eleven years.

We would all gain from training and validating documentary producers. Aspiring young film enthusiasts would have a track to consider other than directing. Dedicated, trained producers would gain the ear of funders and broadcasters and help to bring projects to their attention. Directors who cannot or do not want to produce their own projects would have a place to turn. More films could be made without sucking the energy and life out of their directors. And the directors could move on to new projects knowing they're not alone in handling their film's distribution. Ultimately, we would have an industry that looks and functions more like an industry, and that would gain credibility, clout, and lobbying power.

I realize that the documentary field in the States is working with a different deck of cards than the European systems are. While funding for the arts has been steadily decreasing in the US, European filmmakers still enjoy hefty government grants and institutional support. But which came first, the professional support provided by the industry, or treating the industry as a profession? As we skid into an era when funds are even harder to raise, television and web convergence is imminent, and distribution options are multiplying at a dizzying rate, we need a new generation of producers to take on producing in the twenty-first century. It's going to be a full-time job.

Julia Pimsleur is co-founder of Big Mouth Productions (www.bigmouthproductions.com) and MediaRights.org (www.mediarights.org). In 2000, she directed her first feature length documentary, Brother Born Again, *and was happy to leave the producing to Katy Chevigny. She now works at a not-for-profit organization that uses video and the internet to advance human rights issues (www.witness.org).*

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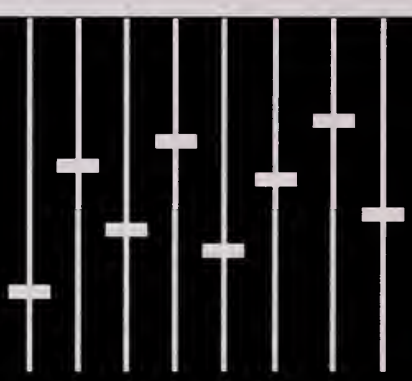

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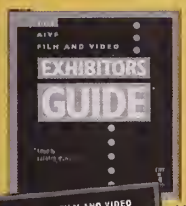

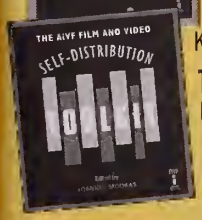

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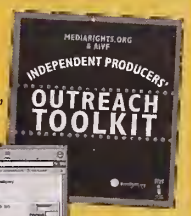

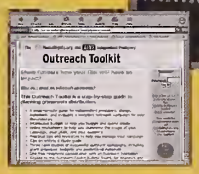

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Athens, Georgia

Home of the artist-geek-academic

BY PAUL MARCHANT

IF ONE THING CAN BE SAID ABOUT ATHENS it is that it has proved time and time again to be a true breeding ground for creativity. Given that reputation, it is no wonder so many artists call Athens home. "It really is only in Athens that you can find the type of person who has the heart of an artist, the soul of a geek, and the mind of an academic. That is what distinguishes Athens from other places. There are people that really have no problem moving back and forth between all those areas," says Scott Shamp, director of Athens' New Media Institute.

A community where curiosity prevails makes Athens the perfect environment for exploring creative uses for new media. "People here are willing to do a bunch of different things. And there is a high tolerance for people trying new things that don't work," Shamp says. This constant eagerness to explore contributes to Athens' ever-changing environment of creative ideas and projects. For many artists, the chance to be a part of something new is reason enough to experiment. "The cool thing about Athens is, nothing is ever finished," Shamp comments. "You can always be at the beginning in Athens, because everything is always changing."

NEW MEDIA INSTITUTE
Test bed for wireless technology

In just two years, Athens' New Media Institute (NMI), an interdisciplinary unit of the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, has become a leading institution for the creative exploration of ideas. Combining technology with "technowlegable" students, NMI is developing new ways of approaching what new media can and should do. "The primary driving force in new media is not technology. It is creative ideas for the use of technology," explains Shamp.

NMI offers students the chance to create a new communication experience by exploring the possibilities of mobile-rich media. By creating a wireless zone called the WAGZone (Wireless Athens Group), Shamp and the rest of the NMI team are using wireless technology to stream audio/video signals throughout downtown Athens. Currently, anyone using a WiFi-equipped device is able to transmit and receive data from a collection of ten WAG boxes installed on the city's light poles. "There are a lot of other places who are flinging up these access points and allowing people to log on. Nowhere that I'm aware of has a city government and an academic institution come together to facilitate and enable wireless communication. That's what makes it unique," says Shamp. By establishing Athens as a wireless test bed, a whole community can begin to explore creative uses with this technology. The wireless "cloud" becomes a platform that anybody can build upon.

The NMI gang sinks its teeth into new technology: (from left) professor Tom Cona, NMI student/staffer Kevin West, director Scott Shamp, Jennifer Maldonado (NMI Service Group), office manager Marshall Akers, and former professor Brett Robinson.

No one knows this better than NMI's fifty-three students, who are already connecting to the internet a quarter-mile from NMI's downtown headquarters. In fact, NMI's 5,000 square feet of teaching and research space is a completely wireless environment, enabling students to roam from room to room with continuously connected laptop computers. Once outside the classroom, students can also take full advantage of the radio spectrum space designated to amateurs and non-commercial practitioners allotted by the federal government.

One recent group project enabled students to stream video directly from cyclists participating in the 2002 Charter Twilight Criterium bike race, that runs through downtown Athens. Cameras linked to backpack computers equipped with WiFi technology were placed on racers to give spectators a first-hand account of what it's like to be a part of the event. "This is just one example of creative exploration that lowers the barriers," says Shamp. There was no satellite truck, no TV station to broadcast a signal. Just fifteen students with access to under $5,000 of equipment who were able to produce a really compelling video presentation to people around the world."

It is this type of experimentation that Shamp believes will transform how we use wireless communication. "Wireless technology hasn't advanced, because we haven't found a way to tell people what they can do with wireless. We only have been told, 'it doesn't use wires.'" But Shamp is confident that his students will find a solution. "It's the institute's job to build the wireless zone. It's up to students to change the face of what it can do. Here you can just work on cool."

For more information on Athens' New Media Institute, visit www.nmi.uga.edu.

FLICKER THEATRE AND BAR
Athens' lo-fi, no-budget fun

Founded in 1991 by Michael Lachowski and Jennifer Williams, Athens' Flicker Film Festival has long been considered the best ticket in town for folks looking to gather for an evening of lo-fi, no-budget discoveries. First gaining notoriety for having screened early works from such talents as Lance Bangs, Matthew Buzzell, Jem Cohen, and Jim McKay, Flicker has, over time, grown into an international phenomenon, inspiring over ten independent chapters worldwide, with recent Flicker interests in New Orleans and Prague.

While these satellites keep Flicker's fes-

Filmgoers wet their whistles between screenings at Flicker's full bar.

PHOTO: LEFT, COURTESY OF NEW MEDIA INSTITUTE

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tival-minded spirit alive, what originally began as a series of local Super 8 showcases at the fabulous 40 Watt Theater has since become a full-time operation. In 1999, long-time Flicker organizer Angie Grass began opening her doors nightly to expanded programming at the Flicker

Flicker Theatre staples: popcorn, ice cream, Super 8's.

Theatre and Bar. The Flicker establishment is host to the best in rare, classic, and independent films, boasting an intimate fifty-seat house and some outstanding drink specials. In addition to ongoing thematic programs like Flicker Noir, Summer Serials, and the ever-popular Flicker Local (a showing of all things Athens), the Flicker Theatre and Bar also offers camera rentals and access to other Super 8 equipment for those eager to make their own little gems.

"Our goal has always been to show rare and hard-to-find films," explains Grass. Popular fare includes music docs, film noir classics, artist series, and silent films accompanied by the Flicker Orchestra, five to fifteen musicians who are often part of Athens' eclectic music scene. "The Flicker Theatre and Bar is a truly unique venue and a good example of one that has identified with local tastes and programs to them also, within their means, which are not plentiful," states native son Jim McKay. And with no official local arthouse cinema in town, and a revolving door of annual film festivals, Flicker is Athens' best bet for a continuous look at new, exciting, and provocative entertainment.

For more information and a Flicker schedule, visit www.flickertheatre.com.

WALTER J. BROWN MEDIA ARCHIVES AND PEABODY COLLECTION

Treasure trove of old film, television, and radio clips

Home to more than 51,000 television programs, 40,000 radio programs, and over five million feet of news film footage, the University of Georgia Libraries' Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Collection is a valuable resource for filmmakers and broadcast teams searching for rare and often unique programming.

Recognized as the third largest public broadcasting archives in the United States, the site offers access to a wide variety of stock and archival footage. "I believe we have the best representation of the history of broadcasting anywhere," says Brown Media Archives Director Ruta Abolins.

In large part, that can be attributed to the impressive Peabody Awards Collection, the cornerstone of the Brown Media Archives. With more than 19,100 radio titles and 22,000 television programs, the collection embodies the best in American broadcasting. Programs represent a cross section of national and local television and radio news, documentaries, drama, music and dance performances, children's programming, situation comedies, and more. There are works ranging

The University of Georgia archives store television and radio's highs, lows, and everything in between.

from the golden age of television, when performances were broadcast live, to recent stylized, fast-paced music videos.

All of the programs vying for the prestigious George Fosters Peabody Award are preserved in the vast collection. As many as 6,000 tapes or approximately 1,200 titles, are entered for consideration at Peabody in any given year. Many of the films, video, and audio tapes are the sole surviving copies of programs.

That is also true of many of the Archives' other collections, like the Nixon/Gannon Interviews. With more than thirty hours of videotaped interviews conducted by trusted friend Frank Gannon, the footage serves as Richard Nixon's most substantial and lengthy post-presidency interview. Another notable collection is the Michaelis Library of Living History, featuring hundreds of

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, RIGHT, AND FACING PAGE, COURTESY OF THE WALTER J. BROWN MEDIA ARCHIVES AND PEABODY COLLECTION

hours of Arnold Michaelis' audio, film, and video interviews with leading political and cultural figures including Martin Luther King Jr., Eleanor Roosevelt, and Indira Gandhi.

The WSB Television Newsfilm Archive is another important chronicle, representing a visual history of Atlanta, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Southeast from 1949 to 1981. WSB's Television Newsfilm Collection contains five million feet of newsreel. "The majority of the

Interviews with 1960's school desegregation activists Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter are available as part of the WSB Television Newsfilm Archive.

footage we have is unedited and predominately unused, not just the television news broadcast," notes Abolins. "Parts have been used in productions like *Eyes on the Prize* and in the new documentary being done by WGBH on Jimmy Carter."

Archival footage from collections like the WSB Television News Film Archive and the Nixon/Gannon Interviews are licensed directly by the Brown Media Archives. To obtain footage from other named collections, like from the Peabody Awards Collection for instance, permission must first be granted by the rights holder. Filmmakers or producers interested in viewing or acquiring program copies are encouraged to contact the archives directly to find out more about copyright (a breakdown of licensing fees is available on the archives' website, www.libs.uga.edu/media/mediarch.html). Abolins notes, "We try to help out independents in any way we can and are open to negotiating licensing fees. Our first goal is preservation, but providing access to these programs runs a close second."

For further information on the University of Georgia Media Archives, contact archive director Ruta Abolins at abolins@arches.uga.edu.

Paul Marchant spent time in Athens as codirector of the Kudzu Film Festival. He is currently director of the Atlanta Film Festival and the Out On Film Festival.

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Fanlight Productions

JASON GUERRASIO INTERVIEWS BEN ACHTENBERG

What is Fanlight Productions?
A leading distributor of independent film and video work on social issues, but with a special focus on health care, mental health, professional ethics, aging, and disabilities.

Why was Fanlight created?
We've been in existence since 1980. I had just completed my first independent film, which had been turned down by a few independent distributors, and a couple of others wanted changes that I didn't think I could live with.

Ben Achtenberg's Academy Award nominated documentary, *Code Gray*.

Simultaneously with that I had been working for a guy here in Boston, Ed Mason, who was a psychiatrist and filmmaker. I had worked on his productions and helped him with distribution. I also had the model of New Day Films, which was five years old at that point. So I decided to do it myself. Fairly soon after that, I went into partnership with a filmmaker named Joan Sawyer, who had a couple [films] of her own, and we added a few others by friends of ours. Joan, Christine Mitchell, a nurse/ethicist, and myself made a film called *Code Gray*, which got an Oscar nomination and is probably the only film on nursing ever to get an Oscar nomination, as far as I know. Things kind of took off from there.

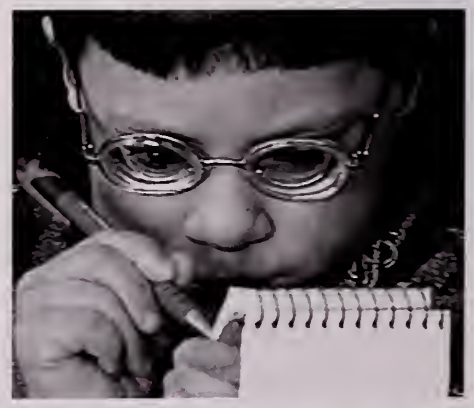
Fanlight's Mission?
To create a select collection of programs which are independent in their vision, emotionally and intellectually engaging in their approach, and accurate and up-to-date in their content.

How do you distinguish Fanlight from other independent distributors?
We, the filmmakers, the distributors, and the people who use the films, are all on the same side. It's our job to make the bridge between the filmmakers and the users. The filmmakers we work with really care about the films they're making and want them to be useful to people. I think the people who are our customers care about the same subjects, and for the most part care about film. A lot of them love film and love to be able to use film and video in the work their doing, so we're in the middle trying to make the connections.

What's rewarding about distribution?
It's knowing that people are seeing the films and finding them useful. We are a small to midsize distributor, but our stuff is known all over the country, and to some extent all over the world. I ran into somebody in the jungle of Peru last summer who was familiar with some of our films. We know that all of the nursing schools in the country use some of our films at one time or another, which means any nurse who takes care of you has had his/her conscience raised by something they saw from Fanlight. That feels good, and we try to convey that to the filmmakers when we can.

What types of films are you seeking?
Most of what we distribute are documentaries. That's not a rule, that's just a fact. We are open to dramatic work. We're open to experimental work. Some of the films we have are kind of on that documentary/experimental borderline. For the kinds of audiences we reach, it's important [for films], even if they are scripted, to be based in reality, to deal with the real issues people are confronting day-to-day. I would say the films we like the best, and our customers like the best, combine worthwhile information about one of the subjects we're interested in with some kind of personal vision.

How do you find these films?
A lot of it is word-of-mouth. We are now representing somewhere between 150 and 170 producers, so we have dealt with a lot of people over the years who like us and spread the word with other filmmakers. We monitor a lot of festivals pretty closely. We also pay attention to a lot of professional journals and magazines, where things might not show up in filmmaker magazines. We just try to keep our ear to the ground in every way we can.



A scene from Richard Kahn's *In Our Midst*.

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Director Jay Corcoran sets up a shot for the film *Undetectable*.

What festivals in particular?
Certainly Hot Springs and DoubleTake are some of the prime documentary festivals these days in the States. There are some special focus festivals, Super Fest out in California, that focus on disability films. There's the International Health and Medical Media Awards that we pay attention to. It's a mix of general festivals and ones that are really focused on an issue.

How many films do you acquire per year?
It's been running about twenty to thirty over the past three to four years.

How do you work with a filmmaker in the distribution process?
We usually find that the filmmaker knows stuff that we don't, so we do try take advantage of that. We work with the filmmaker to try to develop mailing lists, to find people to send films to for reviews and comments, to look at what professional organizations might be interested in the subject and therefore might program the film in their annual meeting.

During what stage of production should filmmakers approach you?
We're very happy to look at rough cuts. But we almost never make a decision based only on a rough cut. We want to be sure we see the final product before we make a commitment to anybody, and of course they don't make a commitment to us by sending a rough cut either.

Fanlight Productions

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Nuestra Salud, Suzanne Newman
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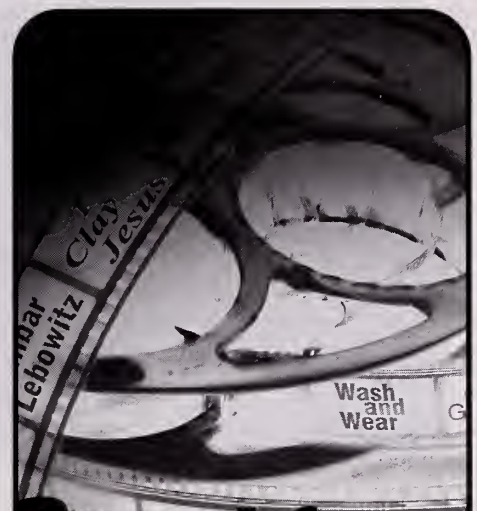
Clockwise, from bottom left: Kelly English, Barbara Altman, Ben Achtenberg, Sandy St. Louis.



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What advice can you give to filmmakers who are looking for distribution?

The one thing we always say is "think short." It has become more of an issue as more and more of the model for independent producers is public television. Everybody is making sixty-minute films, which is obviously understandable, that's where the money is, that's where the prestige is. But some of these films are never going to make it onto public television, and they are going to hurt their educational market by being that long. We frequently get back our little response cards that we send out where people say, "We loved it. We laughed. We cried. We can't use it." Because most of the people using our films are using them in a classroom setting (or some kind of community discussion setting or something like that) where it's not just somebody sitting down in front of the TV to watch a film. They want to discuss it. I think more importantly, listen to the audience. Meaning, talk to the people who are going to use it, not just the people who are going to help you get it shown.

***Refrigerator Mothers*, by David E. Simpson, J.J. Hanley, and Gordon Quinn, explores a generation of autism.**

What are some of the issues that effect Fanlight?

Technology...We are getting more requests from people who want to digitize our releases either for use on in-house systems or, in some cases, for web screening. We would like to develop those as potential additional markets to generate revenue for us and royalties for our producers, but there are real copyright problems there that have to be paid attention to.

Jason Guerrasio is an intern at The Independent. *He has also written for 1-42 and moviefone.com.*

Ask the Documentary Doctor: Paring it Down

BY FERNANDA ROSSI

Dear Doc Doctor:
The current cut of my film is three hours long. I know it needs to be shorter, but everything happened exactly the way it is in the edit. What can I do to make it shorter and still be true to the topic?

"But it really happened that way!" is a common trap many documentarians fall into. The subtext is: "It must work in the film, because it worked in real life." Unfortunately reality doesn't always work on screen. And while fiction screenwriters can simply change a scene, documentary filmmakers face the dilemma that documentaries are about reality, or at least a close representation of it.

Most filmmakers are acutely aware that their mere presence, and that of the camera, affect the reality of the situation they are documenting. They also see clearly how editing decisions can significantly change the meaning of the topic or subject of a film. But once in the cutting room, raw footage has a way of establishing itself as a new reality. Fear of misrepresenting reality by editing something out causes many filmmakers to cling to an it-really-happened-that-way mentality and become stuck, unable to change a single frame. When this it-really-happened-that-way mindset jeopardizes the narrative strength of your documentary, what you probably need to do is decide what storyline you want to develop.

Filmmakers Jonathan Skurnik and Kathy Leichter were challenged by these exact ethical issues after the first cut of their documentary *A Day's Work, a Day's Pay*. The first version portrayed the lives of three people on workfare and their journey to become welfare activists. The film went to great lengths to explain the ins and outs of how each bill was passed, each demonstration attended, each late-night gathering. It was also two hours. And, as they put it, "It's long and it gets pretty boring in places."

The filmmakers needed to decide if they were committed to telling the story of three people moving from being victims of the system to becoming activists, or chronicling the perils of the ever-changing labor laws. Both stories really happened that way, but since the filmmakers wanted a story about empowerment rather than the ultimate manual on legislation, they chose to focus on the people. After that pivotal decision, the reality of the legal changes took a back seat to the reality of the activists, and the filmmakers made the choices that followed accordingly.

Once you have decided what storyline will stand out, you need to detach yourself from the experience of the shoot. When you remember vividly how everything took place, each change or omission seems to be an assault to veracity. You run the actual events in your head repeatedly and want to see them represented on the screen frame by frame. Instead, try to imagine a very informative yet entertaining version of the film. What scenes would you most like to see as an audience member?

After Skurnik and Leichter sifted through the 180 hours of film they had shot, keeping these instructions in mind, they were able to edit their final version down to a tight, succinct one hour that is as truthful as the events themselves. Today, the filmmakers successfully use the film as a teaching tool as well as a motivational tool for people on workfare. Even though the editorial decisions presented a challenge, they can in all honesty say, "It really happened that way."

Dear Doc Doctor:
I'm editing a documentary; how close do I need to stick to the actual chronological events? Can I introduce some things before they happened in reality?

The chronological order of events is often a source of conflict when editing a documentary. Is it possible to present a series of events out of order, as *Roger and Me* was accused of doing? It obviously depends on the scene or event in question. It's easy to deconstruct a single-day interview to suit the purpose of the film, regardless of the order in which the questions and answers were shot. But some filmmakers have continuity concerns because of the physical changes of their characters during a one-year shoot. If the final interview would work as a great opening, even though the interview took place much later than most of the material, you can probably justify inserting that interview wherever it needs to go (despite the longer hair and the extra pounds).

Going back to *A Day's Work, a Day's Pay*, the filmmakers had to deal with more than just the regular hassle of interviews spread across a long period of time. There were two scenes in the end of the film. Then-NYC mayor Rudolph Giuliani overruled all new legislation supporting workfare workers. The film's main subjects marched out of City Hall, exclaiming, "No justice, no peace!" Later on, there was a heated exchange in a chance encounter in the subway between one of the subjects and an ex-workfare administrator—synchronicity or documentarian's luck? The first scene elicited a more representative ending, but the filmmakers didn't want to lose the precious subway scene. They chose to reverse the order, knowing it

Fear of misrepresenting reality by editing something out causes many filmmakers to cling to an it-really-happened-that-way mentality and become stuck, unable to change a single frame.

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wouldn't affect the overall truth of the film.

An example of a more drastic change of scene order, but with paradoxically weaker implications, is in *An American Death*, by Jay Spain. In this story about assisted suicide, the main event, the suicide, was placed at the very beginning but only after considerable debate. From the title alone,

In most documentaries, filmmakers borrow storytelling techniques, such as flashbacks and ellipses, from the fiction world without jeopardizing the ultimate 'truth' that the documentarian seeks to portray.

the audience knows what is going to happen—no need to keep up the suspense and there's no threat to the narrative timeline. The events were ordered to emphasize why the main character made such a decision, not whether to make the decision. The film has several chronological jumps but never fails to tell, with amazing honesty, of the tribulations of a person suffering from terminal cancer.

In most documentaries, filmmakers borrow storytelling techniques, such as flashbacks and ellipses, from the fiction world without jeopardizing the ultimate "truth" that the documentarian seeks to portray. Such techniques often enhance a documentary's ultimate purpose, presenting a compelling story in a short time span. Freeing yourself from a timeline is just another one of those techniques, as long as you are not misrepresenting the truth.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She also leads the bimonthly Documentary Dialogues discussion group offered by AIVF. For more info, visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

Work to Watch For

BY JASON GUERRASIO

Theatrical

Roger Dodger

(Oct. 25) Dir. Dylan Kidd

Dylan Kidd devised *Roger Dodger* after writing a series of expensive scripts nobody would fund. In the process of cutting his budget, he created the complex character Roger Swanson, a smooth-talking advertising copywriter who has so much confidence, or ego, that he can charm the pants off anyone he meets. Living a playboy lifestyle in the fast paced New York City social scene, he spends most of his nights in the arms of his boss, Joyce (Isabella Rossellini). Roger's skills are put to the test when his nephew, Nick, (played hilariously by newcomer Jesse Eisenberg) comes to him for lessons on how to seduce the opposite sex. But the student soon becomes the teacher as Roger learns through the child-like innocence of Nick that there's more to women than sex. "I tried to think up what relationship hasn't really been explored," says Kidd who used the "buddy movie" formula as a guide.

With the help of cinematographer Joaquin Beca-Asay, Kidd devised an unusual shooting style to keep the audience's attention on the story. Using mostly handheld, close frame shots, Kidd and Beca-Asay eliminated the use of the city as a character, a style that most directors use when shooting in New York. "The idea that we had for the handheld was that the character of Roger was somebody who was always in motion and never really wanted to be nailed down or caught. He was literally dodging," says Kidd.

Winning the best narrative award in the inaugural Tribeca Film Festival this past May, *Roger Dodger* emerged as a witty comedy full of amusing moments (such as Roger sneaking Nick into a trendy Manhattan bar to hit on women) and serious issues (including Roger's inability to let his family into his life) that culminates into a great film to watch.

Also Opening:

Auto Focus

(Oct. 18) Dir. Paul Schrader

Acclaimed writer/director Paul Schrader takes us on a wild ride of sex and murder in *Auto Focus*. Taking a glimpse at the colorful life and tragic end of Hogan's Heroes star Bob Crane (played dead-on by Greg Kinnear), the film delves into the seedy after-hours lifestyle that Crane lived.

Gerry

(Oct. 18) Dir. Gus Van Sant

Lost in the Nevada desert, Gerry (Matt Damon) and his partner, also Gerry (Casey Affleck), must figure out how to get back to their car before the desert swallows them up. Van Sant shoots the film in an experimental film style with long, wide shots of the beautiful desert horizon and very little dialogue.

The Grey Zone

(Oct. 11) Dir. Tim Blake Nelson

With chilling detail, *The Grey Zone* chronicles the Sonderkommando, squads of Jewish prisoners used by the Nazis to help exterminate their fellow Jews in exchange for a few more months of life. The film follows the members of one squad (David Arquette, Steve Buscemi, Daniel Benzali, and David Chandler) that fights back.

Television

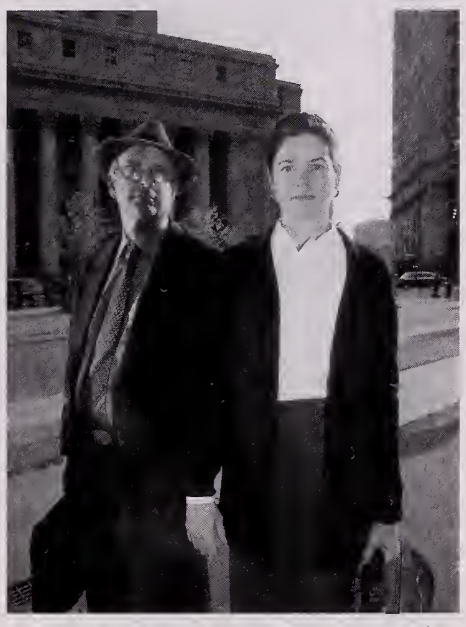
Presumed Guilty

(PBS, Oct. 23) Dir. Pamela Yates and Peter Kinoy

You thought your job was hard; try being a public defender for a day. Better yet, try documenting what a public defender does for three years. That's exactly what documentary filmmakers Pamela Yates and Peter Kinoy did for their eye-opening documentary, *Presumed Guilty*. In the doc, viewers get an all-access-pass through the complex profession of a public defender.

The documentary follows four attorneys working for San Francisco's public defenders office. Jeff Adachi, the star of the bunch, is preparing for one of the biggest cases he's ever tried, and waiting to hear if he's been promoted to chief attorney. Meanwhile Will Maas, a Vietnam vet, is trying a case with more colorful characters than anything you've seen on *Law & Order*. The other two attorneys are rookies, one of whom has tried five cases and lost them all.

Typically labeled as mediocre lawyers who sleep through trials and bargain away the rights of their clients, public defenders usually get a bad rap. But Yates and Kinoy show us lawyers battling day in and day out to defend individual rights guaranteed in Constitution. "We wanted to make a film about the criminal justice system but from a perspective that's rarely seen, which is [through] the eyes of the accused and the public defenders," says Yates. "Everyone else is judging [the defendant]: The judge judges them, the media judges them, their families are judging them, the communities are judging them. The public defenders don't judge them. They defend them."



Filmmakers Pamela Yates and Peter Kinoy delve into the unappreciated world of public defenders.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHERYL DUNN, KQED

Also Airing:

The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow

(PBS, Oct. 1) Dir. Sam Pollard, Bill Jersey, and Richard Wormser

This four-part series explores segregation from the end of the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement. Using archival footage, video, letters, and personal accounts, *Jim Crow* shows the laws of segregation enforced through brutality, humiliation, and terror. But through the horror come the real unsung heroes of American history.

Jason Guerrasio is an intern at The Independent. *He has also written for 1-42 and moviefone.com.*

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A Walk in Their Shoes

BY MAYA CHURI

IN THE PAST, DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS making issue-oriented films that promoted social change had to pound the pavement to pull together activists, educators, and the average moviegoer, as well as tell an engaging story. But the web changed all that. A filmmaker can now reach a wide audience, provide a forum for discussion, direct viewers to organizations, and even make educational guides available online. But it's not just the web's inherent ability to promote social change that has filmmakers exploring its capabilities. As documentarian Liz Canner and political muralist John Ewing have discovered, the web is also a dynamic format to tell the story itself.

At the 2001 Boston Cyber Arts Festival, Liz Canner and John Ewing unveiled their multimedia documentary *Symphony of a City* (www.symphonyofacity.org) by streaming the site to the side of Boston's City Hall for the night.

The documentary consists of eight juxtaposing videos exploring the lives of different Boston residents. Armed with a miniature camera and microphone mounted on eyeglasses, each resident takes the audience on a tour of their typical day. In an age of webcams and reality television, what could have been a mundane look at daily rituals turned into an enlightening view of how we treat or ignore our neighbors.

Symphony of a City was inaugurated with a screening on the side of Boston City Hall.

Visit the *Symphony of a City* website, and spend a day with Mike Murray, homeless student.

Boston is in the throes of a huge housing crises. Eighty-thousand low-income homes have been taken off the market since the removal of rent regulations in 1995. Deregulation created a housing shortage for low-income families and left a large homeless population in its vacuum. In an effort to address this situation Canner and Ewing asked various community organizations to nominate a representative to participate in the documentary. They chose eight different people from eight different backgrounds in eight different communities. The participants include a landlord, a man who is homeless, a textile artist, a lawyer representing tenants and community groups, a city councilman, a sixteen-year-old politician, a philanthropist, and a member of the Chinese Progressive Association. Side-by-side each of the residents invites the audience, and each other, to walk a day in their shoes. The goal is to create a "deeper understanding of the housing crisis, the diversity of the city, and how poverty affects your daily routine," Ewing says. "People are walking around the city and they see someone homeless and they act like it's normal. [We want] people to pause and stop and see how others live. People don't get a chance to compare each other on such an intimate level."

Though the documentary addresses a hot topic in many urban environments, the architecture of the online exhibition is what really brings the point home. By using two to four simultaneous QuickTime downloads, we can watch concurrent experiences of multiple residents on one screen. This design allows people to compare the subjects' lives, see how they are treated, and get a feel for their environment. "We hoped that people would have a greater sense of the way people live in Boston," Canner explains. One of the best examples is watching Mike Murray, a homeless man who attends the University of Massachusetts, as he goes through his morning routine, which includes taking the subway, going to McDonald's, and sitting alone drinking coffee. Simultaneously we can watch as John Coppola, a landlord, brushes his teeth, talks to his dog, and leaves his lush suburban home in a silver SUV. Canner points out that while watching these videos one realizes that "Mike Murray is always utilizing public space, while John Coppola is always in something he owns.

PHOTOS: LEFT, COURTESY OF SYMPHONY OF A CITY; RIGHT, JOHN EWING

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There is a visual juxtaposition between them, and you can see it there."

In an effort to place the viewer directly in the shoes of the subjects, the filmmakers worked closely with Harvard physicist Alex Barnett, adapting a miniature camera to fit onto eyeglasses. The lens is stationed on the right side of the eyeglass frames and is connected to a camera control unit (CCU) that the participants carried with them in a bag. The CCU was then connected to a mini-DV camera where everything was recorded onto tape.

Symphony lets viewers stream multiple filmers' experiences at the same time.

In addition, a lavalier microphone was attached to the left side of the eyeglasses to capture the subjects' spoken reflections on their day's events. This kind of hands-free, autobiographical filmmaking allows the subjects to have complete control over their representations. At the same time, it allows the audience to literally see their world. "We see what interests them, how they look at people, and even more importantly how people look at them," Canner comments. Whereas one participant was constantly being fawned over, you see that there are others who are consistently ignored.

This kind of dynamic navigation through urban space pushes our perceptions of what documentary is. In addition to letting the audience decide who to watch and at what time of day to watch them, there is also an ongoing discussion where viewers can speak anonymously about the topics raised in the videos. The discussion board gives a voice to many of the marginalized residents who have been affected by the housing shortage. On other parts of the site, viewers can find out about the subjects and their lives as well as get information on Boston's housing crisis.

The web's ability to broadly disperse information and bring complete strangers together on a common theme has pushed watching documentaries from a passive experience to an active one. Mike Murray, the homeless university student, is the clearest example of that. "Mike got so much attention he realized that his experience was much more important that he thought. It validated his life in a big way, and people have asked him to speak," Ewing says.

But helping the individual subject was not the only benefit of this project. Prior to the documentary most of the community groups in Boston were working independently of each other, but now they are taking steps to organize. The first step: To create a website to help tenants become aware of their rights.

To watch *Symphony of a City*, visit www.symphonyofacity.org.

Liz Canner is a member of AIVF's board of directors.

Maya Churi is a writer and filmmaker. She is currently working on a narrative about a gated community in Texas

PHOTO: THIS PAGE, COURTESY SYMPHONY OF A CITY; FACING PAGE, DIGVIJAY SINGH

The Asian American International Film Festival

Asian cinema moving into its own

BY ANNE DEL CASTILLO

AUDIENCES AND CRITICS ALIKE TOO OFTEN fail to distinguish between Asian cinema and Asian American cinema. They consider them in the singular, as Asian cinema, not recognizing Asian American cinema as a genre unto itself. It is doubtful that many would categorize a film like *Mean Streets* as an Italian film; in fact, the film is often referred to as a milestone in American cinema. In his book *Out of the Shadows: Asians in American Cinema*, film producer Roger Garcia draws the distinction: "Asian America is a distinct and discrete entity—it is not a subset of China, Japan, or Vietnam, but a constituency that has lived, breathed, and contributed to the nation for over a century. It has its own achievements, artists, stories, and traditions that have grown separate from its various Asian roots."

Nitya Shelty plays the title role in Digvijay Singh's film *Maya*.

The slate of programs featured in this year's 25th anniversary presentation of the Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF) celebrates the festival's continuing effort to distinguish between and expand the boundaries of Asian American and Asian cinema. Founded by Asian CineVision (ACV), a nonprofit media arts organization, the festival is the nation's oldest and longest-running exhibition devoted to works by filmmakers of Asian descent. Since its inception, counterpart festivals have been established in eleven cities in North America, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Toronto, and Chicago.

Garcia says, "I think the festival selection now reflects the changing definitions of 'Asian America' which is not a fixed label but something that is evolving and developing, like the nature of Asian American identity itself."

In the beginning, Asian American films largely comprised experimental and documentary work, much of which explored issues of identity and what it means to be Asian in America. But the climate has changed somewhat in the last few years, in part due to the commercial success of filmmakers like Wayne Wang (*The Joy Luck Club*) and Ang Lee (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*), as well as a move toward a more global perspe tive. While some Asian American filmmakers continue to explore identity issues and immigrant stories, growing numbers of filmmakers are becoming averse to the possibility of being pigeonholed. To some degree, there is an assumption, both from within and outside the community, that Asian American filmmakers have a responsibility to promote Asian American stories.

This year's festival featured Christopher Ad. Castillo's film *The Sky Is Falling*, a psychological thriller set in Los Angeles and featuring a primarily white cast. Responding to the criticism he encountered, Castillo says it was a deliberate choice to cast a non-Asian actress in the lead role. Though he points to the difficulty in getting financing for a film with an all-Asian cast, he's more emphatic about not succumbing to such rigid definitions of Asian American cinema. He praises AAIFF for being "daring and progressive" in terms of their programming.

Na Eng, on the other hand, admits to being skeptical as to whether her film would be selected for the festival. Eng's film *Fortunate's Letter* is a documentary about a young girl growing up amidst poverty and AIDS in a township of Zimbabwe. "I was really afraid that they weren't going to accept me," she recalls. "I mean I've looked at their programs in the past and have hardly seen anything that's not Asian American or Asian related." Encouraged by the festival's support of her film, Eng says, "I was very, very, very appreciative. I really got a kick out of telling people that a Zimbabwean film was going to play the Asian American film festival."

Just as the festival is helping to redefine what is Asian American cinema, it is also broadening the scope of what is considered Asian cinema. While the focus was primarily on work from the Far East—China, Japan, Hong Kong—the spectrum has widened to include the Southeast Asia, South Asia, and parts of the Middle East. "Why the definition has changed," explains Daryl Chin, one of the original founders of the festival, "has a lot to do with the fact that the avenues for exhibition of films from other parts of the world remain severely limited in the US."

Of particular note was the number of Filipino films featured in the program. Opening night featured the North American premiere of Filipina director Marilou Diaz-Abaya's *Bagong Buwan* (*New Moon*), a timely film about a Muslim family in war-torn Mindanao. "Prior to 2002 ... there had never been a Filipino film opening night of any film festival in the United States," festival co-director David Maquiling comments, "or a festival that in fact celebrated the contribution of Filipino and Filipino American filmmakers."

"These festivals are really great at creating awareness, giving audiences a chance to look at these films," says director Digvijay Singh. "A lot of these films aren't exactly films that you would find at Blockbuster or, say, at a multiplex theater. So it gives people the chance to watch films that they would never ever have the luxury otherwise, and I think festivals like

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these play a very important role in that." Singh's film *Maya*, a beautiful, yet devastating, coming of age story about a young Indian girl, was the closing night feature, screening before a notably mixed audience in terms of age, race, and class. Responding to the reaction to the film, Singh says, "This was the best audience I have seen the film with, because they really got it."

Capitalizing on the celebration of their silver anniversary, the AAIFF featured a number of retrospective programs, including Christin Choy and Renee Tajima-Peña's *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1988), Sam Fuller's *Crimson Kimono* (1959), the first Hollywood musical to feature an all-Asian American cast, director Henry Koster's *Flower Drum Song* (1961), and *The Cheat*, a 1915 silent by Cecil B. DeMille and starring Sessue Hayakawa. The latter program featured an introduction by Martin Scorsese, who spoke to the film's creation of a negative stereotype of Asian men. "Having someone like [Scorsese] there really drew in a whole different audience that never would have come to the festival," says festival co-director Risa Morimoto.

Diversifying AAIFF's audience is an ongoing struggle. ACV Executive Director Angel Velasco Shaw notes that the partnership with Asia Society helped to broaden their scope this year. The collaboration was a first for AAIFF, which had previously operated out of Chinatown and the Lower East Side and more recently, at the Alliance Française. Shaw emphasizes the need for more cross-programming with other media arts organizations, museums, and educational institutions. "If we're going to be able to rise in the twenty-first century," says Shaw, "we need to communicate more, and those avenues for communication need to open up. I just feel like these alliances need to be made across the board."

Part of that effort has manifested itself in AAIFF's national touring program, the first and only one of its kind. The program offers a slate of films from the New York festival and travels to different sites throughout the country. The Museum of Fine Arts/Boston and Museum of Fine Arts/Houston are regular hosts for the tour, which has also been exhibited in Madison, Philadelphia, Chicago, Durham, Miami, and Berkeley. "The tour is just something incredibly unique and amazing because there's eleven other film festivals, and a lot of them actually started with the tour," says Morimoto.

The founders of the AAIFF express amazement at the success and longevity of the festival, which they say is above and beyond their "wildest imagination." Festival co-founder Daryl Chin says, "The evolution of the festival has been unprecedented. I don't think anyone who was with the festival from the beginning had any idea that: 1) there might be commercial possibilities for Asian Americans in Hollywood; and 2) that there would be filmmaking activity from the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, and Iran that would rank those filmmaking cultures with world-class activity." At its core, the festival hopes to continue to provide a forum for Asian and Asian American cinema in all of its various incarnations. "My hope...is that it can move forward with the vision that its originators had, while at the same time shifting with the times," says Shaw. It is important "not to forget our grassroots history, keeping one foot in our communities here. Not everybody wants to be in Hollywood."

Jose Saenz portrays a preacher in Christopher Ad. Castillo's *The Sky is Falling*.

For more information, visit www.asiancinevision.org.

Anne del Castillo recently returned to New York City after a five-year stint working in Austin's independent film community. She is now doing film research and fundraising development at P.O.V.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF THE FILMMAKER; FACING PAGE, VILLAGE OF SKOKIE, ILLINOIS

Alliance for Community Media Conference

Access producers find strength in community

BY PRISCILLA GRIM

THIS PAST JULY, SEVERAL HUNDRED PUBLIC access producers, including local education and government access station providers, descended on Houston, Texas for the Alliance for Community Media Conference (ACM). The conference provides hands-on production seminars, philosophical discussions, and instructions on the political maneuvering needed to keep public, educational, and government access (PEG) in the public domain. "PEG access stations" refers to the public community cable stations known as public access, local government, and community education broadcasters. ACM's purpose is to bring individuals in the PEG family of media together to share notes, attend workshops, and discuss current issues. But more than anything, the conference creates a once-a-year community for people who often work in isolation and obscurity.

ACM is part trade show, part conference, part film festival. The trade show this year included vendors of everything from 3-D animation software to production services for the latest digital cameras. All of which tied into the technology track of the conference, but one wondered how many of the PEG access stations actually have the resources to upgrade their equipment. With typical operating budgets ranging from $15,000 to $100,000, an upgrade of equipment usually only happens when the current equipment is on its last breath. The rest of the conference offered everything from philosophical discussions to how-to's on programming. And the Hometown Video Festival featured moments of memorable programming from Alliance-member work.

Nori Van Elsen's film on a large, potentially frustrating city water project helped educate (and hopefully placate) residents and commuters in Skokie, Illinois.

The conference offered attendees from across the country opportunities to network, connect, and exchange information with hundreds of people who share concerns and problems. Seminars covered the process of developing a board and staff, meeting with public policymakers, choosing an executive director, and recruiting. But the panels didn't serve only programmers. Independent media producers found sessions on everything from publicity to lighting techniques. And ACM's specialty, PEG access management issues, was discussed by a panel that included representatives of German and Taipei community media stations.

Creative examples of effective use of both government and educational access programming were also screened. Many producers have moved beyond the single camera shot of the city council or school board meeting to more significant and expanded coverage. Government access channels do not critique the government, but report on local programs the government initiates. Nori Van Elsen, from the Village of Skokie Channel in Illinois, presented a piece about a local stormwater control program which stops local homes from flooding by temporarily rerouting the water on the streets instead of allowing it to drain into an overloaded public sewer system. The broadcast raised public awareness of what to expect on city streets during a storm.

AIVF Fort Wayne, Indiana, Salon leader Eric Möllberg received the Buske Leadership Award for outstanding community service. Other awards were received in various categories of programming. Coverage of a Sports Event went to *The Battle for Burbank*, produced by Peter Musurlian, wherein the viewer is treated to the intricacies of the homecoming high school football game in a documentary format that could give any broadcast news magazine competition. Not just satisfied with simply covering the game, Musurlian led his camera crew of five around the entire event, which included homecoming dances, eating contests, and aerial arena shots. The cameraperson convinced the police to allow PEG a seat on their helicopter. The entire community was able to tune in and learn about the culture of that segment of the high school population that becomes filled with exuberance and expectation during each homecoming season.

Augustin Avalos, a twenty-one-year-old broadcast journalism student at the University of La Verne in California, also took home a 2002 ACM Sports Programs Award for his piece, *The Rancho California Arabian Horse Show*. Avalos, who produces commercials and short documentaries in addition to sports programming, is taking advantage of the kind of opportunities available at PEG stations across the country.

Many film and television students are utilizing public access stations for the

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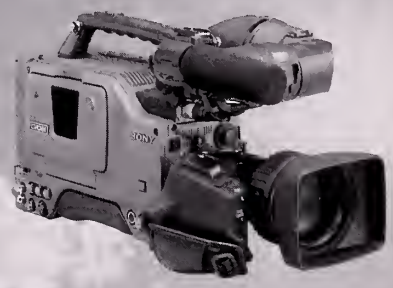

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exact same reasons as Avalos. It's a great place to improve your skills. And the equipment is cheap and often free. Like many access stations, PeopleTV in Atlanta, Georgia, waives the equipment rental fee for local residents and air their products on the channel.

But these resources are endangered. PEG access stations are among the last broadcast airwaves unfettered by corporate, commercial control and are one of the last hopes for broadcast freedom of speech. Keynote speaker Larry Irving, former assistant secretary of commerce for communications and information under President Clinton, opened his speech by stating that of the hundreds of cable companies that existed twenty years ago, there are only a handful left. The powerful few fund PEG access through the franchise fees of local cable companies, which is typically a low percentage of the local profit share (typically five to twelve percent). But cable giants constantly lobby policymakers for decreases in the franchise fees, which are decided when each franchise license is up for local renewal. This is the prime reason the most important mission of the Alliance for Community Media is to educate its members about the importance of lobbying their legislators for more protections of PEG access.

Locker scene from Peter Musurlian's *Battle for Burbank.*

For more information on what you can do to protect PEG access stations, visit the Alliance for Community Media website: www.alliancecm.org.

Priscilla Grim serves as the membership and advocacy director for AIVF. In addition to occasional forays as a writer for The Independent, *she is also an independent filmmaker, video artist, and activist. Her latest collaboration is due in January 2003.*

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF FILMMAKER; FACING PAGE, MIKE GALINSKY

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Documenting Flaherty

EACH SPRING FILMMAKERS, ACADEMICS, AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES GATHER FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA SLEEP AWAY CAMP, BETTER KNOWN AS THE FLAHERTY SEMINAR. THIS YEAR *THE INDEPENDENT* PEEKED INSIDE THIS MYTHICAL EVENT, RENOWNED FOR BRINGING ON BOTH HEATED ARGUMENTS AND EPIPHANIES.

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DOCUMENTING FLAHERTY

Each spring filmmakers, academics, and other interested parties gather for independent media sleep away camp, better known as the Flaherty Seminar. This year *The Independent* peeked inside this mythical event, renowned for bringing on both heated arguments and epiphanies.

The Flaherty Seminar is an independent media institution that many people have heard of but few actually experience for themselves. Each year, participants filter the seminar through their own perceptions and experiences to create a predictably unique week of films and discussions. In order to document as many different voices as possible in this section, we chose to stalk the elusive Flaherty from several different angles. Four writers contributed articles which make up the structure of this collaborative special section. Playing off of these four posts are the contributions of fourteen diarist who tracked their reactions and interactions over the long days and nights that made up the 48th Flaherty Seminar. For space reasons we were only able to reproduce a small portion of the wealth of insight, passion, and humor that we found in the diaries, but we hope you will find it as enlightening and thought provoking as we have. —Maud Kersnowski

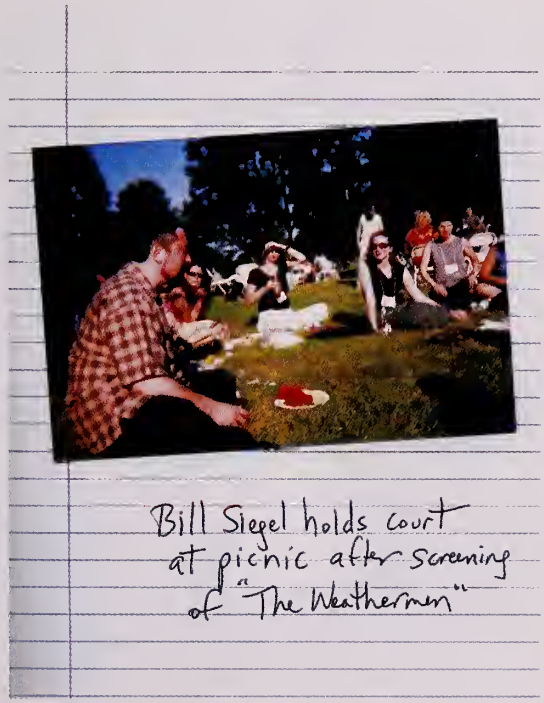
Flaherty Past and Present

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

For almost half a century, 100 people who work in the independent media world, from academics to underground filmmakers, have gathered each year to passionately discuss and often argue about cinema in all its forms at the Robert Flaherty Seminar. The seminar eschews film festival markets, film school academicism, production training instrumentality, art cinema elitist consumerism. It's a confluence of people, works, film movements, and differences that ignite new thinking.

Many filmmakers consider an invitation to screen at the Flaherty a great honor. Others dread going. Programmers perceive it as the ultimate curatorial challenge. "It was retreat, think tank, pit stop, lucid interval, revival tent, i.e. a seminar," wrote Erik Barnouw, the media historian involved in the seminar for over forty years.

A good Flaherty takes what is "boiling up in film culture" and provides space for meaningful discussion to erupt, Barnouw once observed. He and filmmaker George Stoney always advocated for letting ideas work themselves out democratically, rather than with academics or trained facilitators. "Without conflict, there can be no change," was their mantra.



JEFF KRULIK

Robert Flaherty is often credited as the father of documentary, a moniker film historians, feminists, and post-colonialists endlessly criticize and debate. His 1922 landmark film *Nanook of the North* changed the contours of cinema with its Inuit-inspired cinematography, collaborative filmmaking process, and independence from the studios. Although it had product tie-ins, such as Nanook ice cream bars, and a commercial release, the European cine club movement in the 1920's hailed as it a groundbreaking experimental film.

Flaherty himself was a hard-drinking raconteur who loved to share filmmaking stories with younger makers. His wife, Frances Flaherty, more intellectual and well-read, transformed his penchant for exploration, conviviality, argument, and filmmaking into the Robert Flaherty Seminar after he died in 1951. Robert never attended a seminar.

After his death, film festivals and universities invited Frances to screen her husband's films. At the sixth International Edinburgh Festival in 1952, Frances reacted so negatively to a claim that visual sensibility was innate that she formed the Robert Flaherty Foundation. She believed seeing could be learned.

In August 1955, at the Flaherty home in Dummerston, Vermont, the first Flaherty Seminar commenced. Richard Griffith, the Museum of Modern Art Film Library director, explained to eight students that the seminar was designed for "inquiry and discussion and controversy." Seminarians examined Flaherty films, ideas, and techniques with presenters Ricky Leacock, Helen Van Dongen, Robert Fine, and Frances. George

Stoney's landmark *All My Babies* (1953) and student works were also screened.

During the Cold War, with the emergence of art cinemas, film societies, and 16mm, the Flaherty brought together disparate communities. The seminars mixed filmmakers and viewers of every type: humanist scholars, television producers, librarians, museum curators, writers, regional film society programmers. It also mingled documentaries, experimental films, science, educational, training films, Canadian animation, British Free cinema, French cinema verité, Indian cinema, narrative features, classics.

The seminars immersed young filmmakers in intensive exploration of the aesthetics, theory, politics, philosophy, social context, and techniques of cinema with more experienced makers and thinkers. This multigenerational environment has persisted for five decades. Robert Flaherty wrote that, "all art is a kind of exploring. To discover and reveal is the way every artist sets about his business." Instead of assessing content (who and what), like many critics in the fifties and sixties, the seminars focused on the how's and why's of cinema.

NINA ROTA

Frances aggressively advocated for "nonpreconception," a concept Robert himself never articulated. Frances watched Robert abandon scripted filmmaking and open up himself and his camera to people, terrains, and cultures. She read Zen texts, Tielhard de Chardin, and philosophy to hone her observations into a model. Exploration and nonpreconception eventually concretized as programming traditions.

Nonpreconception propelled one of the most controversial, unusual seminar strategies: Films are not announced in advance. Each screening is a surprise. This tactic distinguishes the Flaherty Seminar from university film studies classes or film festivals.

The history of the Flaherty Seminar exceeds distillation because it is so multiple, vast, and changeable. It adheres to traditions and legacies yet also embraces virtually every new development in independent media arts. The Flaherty Seminar is perhaps less of a place to discover new talent—although it does indeed launch careers—as it is a place where emerging movements and changes in the media arts are scrutinized and debated.

Over the last five decades, the Flaherty has been a hothouse, germinating and nurturing media developments from new distribution models to aesthetic breakthroughs. In the fifties, film society programmers and educational film distributors met there as the nontheatrical market was developing. In the same decade and place, Jean Rouch (France), Robert Drew (US), and Michel Brault (Canada) realized that an international movement using lightweight film technology to capture life—cinema verité and direct cinema—was converging.

In the seventies, feminist filmmakers, recovering from attacks from Willard Van Dyke, organized the New Day Films distribution collective. The seminar was among the first arts organizations to show work from political filmmaking collectives like California Newsreel. It explored video art and reel-to-reel; it featured live performances by visionaries like Shirley Clarke and Steina Vasulka. And when President Nixon vetoed the appropriations for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 1971, the Flaherty organized the Arden House Seminars where, for the next ten years, independent producers met to screen work and argue with public TV program managers and executives. The seventies also saw the Flaherty Seminar produce one of the first Third World cinema seminars in the United States.

Later, in 1989, Pearl Bowser programmed a breakthrough seminar on African diasporan cinema. In that same decade, programmer Erik Barnouw infiltrated video into this much-heralded film event. In the nineties, the Flaherty sponsored summits in Riga, Latvia with Glasnost documentary filmmakers, and in Israel with Middle Eastern makers. Middle Eastern and Mahgreb filmmakers, and Latin American feminist cinema, were also featured at the seminar in the US. And in 2001, it ran an adjunct Digital Flaherty.

The seminar presents a history of layers, detours, and juxtapositions rather than a neat, linear progression. It's also a history whose roster features master filmmakers across virtually every genre from all over the globe, including Satyajit Ray (India), Johann Van Der Keuken (The Netherlands), Susumu Hani (Japan), William Greaves (US), George Kuchar (US), Artavazk Peleshyan (Armenia), Agnes Varda (France), Barbara Kopple (US), Kidlat Tahimik (Philippines), Cheick Omar Sissoko (Mali), and Marta Rodriquez (Colombia), to name only a few.

Like most democratic utopias, the Flaherty is not without enormous combativeness when all these different constituencies crash together—the renowned and notorious "filmmaker bashings," which are not as frequent nor as ferocious as is commonly assumed. Everyone disagrees about what the Flaherty was, is, or should be. While the Flaherty defies any facile historical explanation, it does have a defining zeitgeist—argument. The almost infinite, cantankerous debates are, in the end, most likely what keeps the Flaherty pulsing with life and always moving, as Erik Barnouw used to say, "onward."

Groping in Darkness

2002 Flaherty Seminar

BY ANN LEWINSON

In 1976, Emile de Antonio, Mary Lampson, and Haskell Wexler made a documentary about the leftist militant group (often considered terrorist) the Weather Underground. Among the demands of their subjects was that their identity be obscured. After a frustrating day spent shooting the FBI's most-wanted through a scrim, their subjects set up a mirror. They sat facing the filmmakers, but the camera was aimed at the mirror, reflecting the crew and the backs of the terrorists' heads. What we remember from that documentary is not Bernardine Dohrn's robotic Marxism or Bill Ayers' idealistic ramblings, but Wexler's macho posturing, Lampson's concerned eyes, and de Antonio's sympathetic questions.

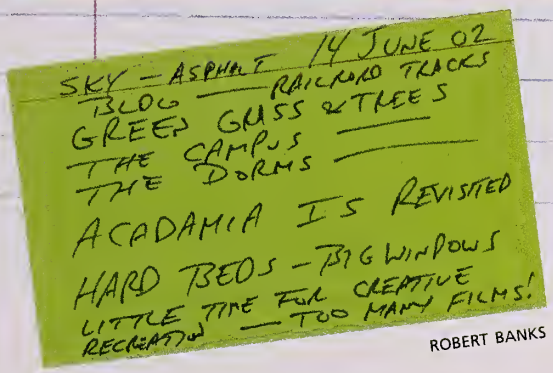
The makers of the film had become the subject.

The spectre of terrorists haunts the 48th Robert Flaherty Film Seminar at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, threatening to disrupt a week-long appreciation of recent documentary and experimental film and video with the cold realities of life after September 11. This year's programmer, New York Underground Film Festival director Ed Halter, manages to drop only one live bomb—a video of journalist Daniel Pearl's murder and decapitation. In its wake, subsequent controversies seem all the more trivial; like the Weather Underground's bombs, they are random acts of arrogance, born of a comfortable elitism.

The theme of this year's seminar is "Anti-tainment," but it might more properly be "Rebellion"—very few of the films programmed could be described as genuinely anti-taining, and entertainment has never been a priority at the Flaherty. Bringing oppositional cinema to the Flaherty is like bringing videos to Blockbuster.

Although many fascinating, provocative films are screened, there is nothing formally rebellious about most of them. Helen Stickler's *Stoked* is ready for MTV, Sam Green and Bill Siegel's *The Weather Underground* for PBS, give or take the odd sound effect. Elisabeth Subrin's feminist shorts fit squarely in a tradition of conceptual art currently dominant in galleries. James Fotopoulos speaks the language of midnight movies for the *Jackass* generation. Jeff Krulik is pitching a TV series based on his and John Heyn's *Heavy Metal Parking Lot*—there is no integrity in remaining underground when basic cable awaits.

How can one rebel when dissent has been commodified? Is it still possible to be an underground filmmaker when innovative imagery is engulfed as soon as it emerges by the insatiable maw of advertising? The Weather Underground invoked revolution to drop bombs; Stickler's skater punks invoke revolution to sell skateboards. Who has made the greater impact?



ROBERT BANKS

➤ I'm regressing to a strange place. The dorms. The food. A few cliques (I'm in the nerdy one). I unknowingly sat next to Kenneth Anger at dinner and had an anxiety attack. Woke up with zits.
SIMON TARR

➤ Flaherty Seminar, a mad, intense pace of screenings, discussions, and late night drinking.

A bunch of us tried to explain this drill to the newly arrived Helen Stickler and she thought we sounded like Moonies, we were so impassioned.
JEFF KRULIK

NINA ROTA

➤ I ate COOKIES and cake with George Stoney and talked about "UPRISING OF '34." He filled me in on the process of making the documentary and issues of community/collaborative filmmaking. And this is my very first night.
CAROLYN TENNANT

➤ Monday A.M.
There is no caffeinated coffee in the cafeteria this morning. This does not bode well...
SCOTT NYERGES

Programs are not announced at the Flaherty. The audience is literally in the dark, at the mercy of the programmer and the images on the screen. This practice, which Frances Flaherty called "nonpreconception," is intended to keep minds open and auditoriums full.

In this context, the screening of the Pearl video is a terrorist act, an assault on unsuspecting eyes.

The Flaherty is built on a myth perpetuated by Frances Flaherty after her husband's death: Robert Flaherty, lone explorer, set up his camera and recorded the drama of everyday life as it unfolded. The truth is a bit less heroic; we now know that Flaherty staged scenes in *Nanook of the North*, and that *Louisiana Story* was financed by the oil company it glorified.

But when Frances Flaherty held "An Exploration of the World of Robert Flaherty" on her farm in 1955, her eight participants studied the works of her husband as examples of "nonpreconception." Emerging filmmakers Richard Leacock and George Stoney screened their work. In its subsequent forty-eight years, the Flaherty, now administrated by International Film Seminars, has hosted a who's who of independent film and video, from Agnes Varda to Satyajit Ray, Dusan Makavejev to Marlon Riggs.

➤ I just saw the Danny Pearl video. I felt as though I have been raped. How can I discuss anything else? Nothing else seems to matter after seeing a man killed.
SCOTT NYERGES

➤ Ed was really brave to take that type of a risk. He was also putting a lot of faith in the audience's ability to handle these images, and many people couldn't deal – AT ALL! I felt completely manipulated by this but I sure as hell didn't feel "RAPED."
CAROLYN TENNANT

I feel as though I have been an unwitting participant in Pearl's death...
SCOTT NYERGES

We should chip in and get life insurance for Ed Walter.
JEM COHEN

➤ The Daniel Pearl video is made by filmmakers, it is a documentary. Those filmmakers have replaced us in importance. Those images are chilling and convey much more than any film I could make.
NINA ROTA

➤ I am almost glad that I was not told that I would see this video – death, despite what media would have us believe, is not packaged or pretty or controllable.
SCOTT NYERGES

I experienced a great amount of gastric distress today as did many others. Maybe it was seeing someone die.
NINA ROTA

➤ The reactions were too emotional to be able to nurture this conversation. And it is emotional. I think this is a programming issue, not an audience issue. And the audience can be so aggressive — truly stealing time.
GHEN ZANDO-DENNIS

KEVIN EVERSON AND ROBERT BANKS, BY MICHAEL GALINSKY

ED HALTER, BY MICHAEL GALINSKY

"The shit hits the fan"

Monday AM – Kenji Onishi + James Fotopolous + Snuff Film

CAROLYN TENNANT

J. Columbus – Pearl as ultimate fetishization

➤ Things are going to bubble over. Several folks I've talked to are frustrated by the moderation of discussions and/or the programming. I trust Ed thus far, but I admit that the larger design eludes me. It'll reveal itself. I'm sure.
SIMON TARR

It seems to me that Ed – as our guide – considers the Pearl video as media in a broad definition.

representation
iconology

SCOTT NYERGES

RUTH BRADLEY AND LINDA LILIENFELD, BY MICHAEL GALINSKY

➤ It's never really about the films, or the filmmakers, nor is it ever really about the programmer; because, as Richard Hershkowitz always says "The seminar is programmer proof." You could put almost ANYTHING on the screen and there's the possibility of a great discussion. The Flaherty is always, at its best, at its worst, about the audience.
RUTH BRADLEY

At the heart of the Flaherty is talk—in the formal discussions after each screening, in the cafeteria over wilted lettuce, in the bar over remarkably cheap beer, and on the steps of the dorm into the morning. In the hothouse atmosphere of movies morning, afternoon, and night, conflict is inevitable. Halter hastened this with Monday morning's Pearl video, but the Flaherty typically explodes on Monday or Tuesday anyway. The friction is generally between the social activists and the experimental filmmakers, those who look outward and those who gaze inward, those who make films to change the world and those who make films to reflect their view.

This divide is apparent even during discussions of the least polarizing films. Social activists try to inscribe readings with which they're comfortable on films that resist them; a student sees Jem Cohen and Peter Sillen's *Benjamin Smoke* as a "highly politicized" portrait of a gay man, ascribing "freedom" to a dying drag queen who rarely ventures outside. When someone ventures a topic for discussion, "the aesthetics and politicization of geographies," a more literal-minded participant asks Cohen, "Why didn't you show more of his mother?" The geographic thread goes nowhere, the discourse fractured between those who quote Barnouw and those who quote Barthes. It is hard to argue for the depiction of reality with those who believe it is wholly a construct.

Many of the younger filmmakers speak the language of poststructuralist theory, excluding those who are not upper-middle-class college graduates of the past twenty years. Words like "legibility" are deployed like hand grenades to silence the uncool philistines who dislike a film. A Flaherty veteran remarks to me, "I've been impressed by the high level of commentary," which may be a polite way of admitting that she, educated in a simpler time when a text was just a text, has not been able to participate in the discussion.

JEM COHEN, BY CINDY STILLWELL

➤ The discussion was back toward polite conversation. Are we still reeling from this morning? Or are we simply encountering a piece of beauty that holds us in muted awe?
SCOTT NYERGES

Bill's Bar
w/ Craig the Bartender

JEFF KRULIK

➤ What is it about Jem Cohen that every frigging movie he makes is so completely fulfilling?
SIMON TARR

"FLAHERTY TERMS"
"PROBLEMATIC" "FEMINIST"
"UNDERGROUND" "SEX"
"INTELLECTUAL" "CLASS"
DO THESE WORDS HAVE ETC-
SIMILAR MEANING?

ROBERT BANKS

➤ Jem Cohenisms:
Come down the pike.
The chips fall.
The chips are down.
Down that road.
At the end of the road.
There are worse crimes
than being a romantic.
GHEN ZANDO-DENNIS

Issues of political correctness have seeped into the seminar in the past decades: There aren't enough women, or African Americans, or Latinos, or non-Western filmmakers. White male filmmakers complain that the works of marginalized groups are given a free pass. At least one program of non-white filmmakers was canceled by the board because the programmers were white.

Discussions which might be consumed by more complex issues are dragged down by participants who don't like seeing negative images on the screen. During the contentious discussion of Fotopoulos' *Migrating Forms*, many female participants can't get past the film's loathing of women to move on, in a more productive manner, to the film's unironic plundering of just about every major feminist avant-garde film of the seventies.

Controversies are legendary at the Flaherty. In 1968 Frances Flaherty walked out on a screening of *Easy Rider*. Jim McBride and L. M. Kit Carson's *David Holzman's Diary*, Trinh T. Minh-ha's *Reassemblage*, and Peter Watkins' fourteen-and-a-half-hour antinuclear war film, *The Journey*, were notoriously attacked. George Kuchar was so traumatized by the Flaherty's response to his first *Weather Diary* that he used footage of the discussion in his 1996 video *The Vermin of the Vortex*, in which extraterrestrials beam him back for more abuse. In 1992, in what is perhaps the most notorious incident of a filmmaker accused of exercising white male privilege, a volatile discussion of Ken Jacobs' *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX (Cherries)*, a two-hour performance involving two projectors, a propeller, and a loop of French porn, climaxed with Jacobs yelling, "Fuck you! You disgusting creeps!" and fleeing the room.

Jacobs and the sixties underground had become the old guard, the feminists who critiqued his work the new. The images of naked girls and disaffected boys which consume some of this year's "underground" are, in a sense, reactionary—the return of that which has been repressed by political correctness. That this is the same backlash that has dominated mainstream culture in recent years—not just in the multiplex, but on TV, on the radio, and in the White House—remains unexamined.

➤ Wednesday @ 8 – Migrating Forms discussion more interesting than the film.
MIKE BUDD

➤ I'm angry with filmmakers who act so nonchalant about their own work. James Fotopoulos could not explain why he filmed the images he did or their importance.
LUCIA MANDELBAUM

Jim Fotopoulos

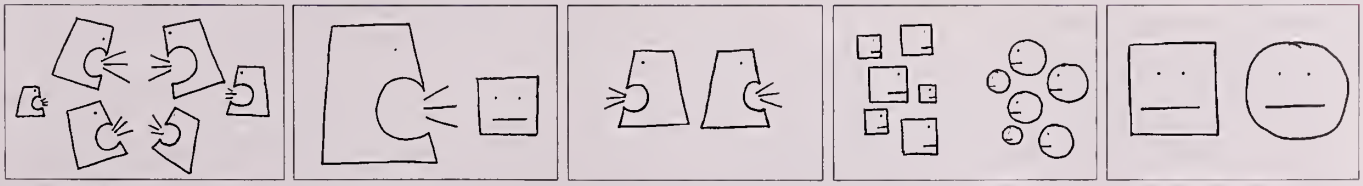
Ralph McKay

Very funny. These photos were a sneak attack. I think they are...

JEFF KRULIK

Suki Hawley

WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT THE FLAHERTY... "DEBATING THE SUPPOSED MERITS OF 'MIGRATING FORMS'..."



SCOTT NYERGES

➤ The filmmakers are not defending their inclusion of a POV, but defending the right to structure the delivery of material based on their own experience of shooting it. The structure/narrative of the non-fiction work is informed by the experiences had during shooting.
GHEN ZANDO-DENNIS

➤ Everybody seems to think this film is reiterating information/styles from film history. By assuming everyone has seen these works, one isolates those who haven't, like myself.
CAROLYN TENNANT

➤ They were all upset over Jim's work and he was so funny 'cause he just kept saying "okay, that's your opinion" but he didn't defend or talk about why he did what he did. That seemed to infuriate people even more. They wanted to have an explanation for everything. I thought it was awesome of Jim because film isn't really about artists' intentions, it's about what an audience receives, how they feel.
SUKI HAWLEY

JAMES FOTOPOULOS WITH GRAPEFRUIT, BY GHEN ZANDO-DENNIS

➤ We have been behaving badly at Flaherty. Again and again in the discussions, the first comment is negative. "It was boring." "It had no humor." "I rolled my eyes." Sometimes, understandably, the filmmakers reacted defensively.
NINA ROTA

The following is an excerpt from an e-mail dialog between James Fotopoulos and fellow Flaherty attendee Matt Wolf.

WOLF: I think *Migrating Forms* confused the seminar because of its unique experimental strategies. How do your forms speak for themselves?

FOTOPOULOS: Sometimes I see things in very geometric ways. When I look at insects I end up seeing them as shapes and then further as little geometric civilizations. I see oblong worms with hair scurry into shadows, organic fleshy horses in alleys or winged things on the surface of water.

I must accept all the images that I recognize. Others will also recognize these things when they pursue a certain level of awareness....

When people say my work is boring or unemotional, the actors are like robots or a video game, or that I am technically proficient and nothing more, I take these observations as compliments.

The photographing or recording of an object is in itself a sufficient surrender to the material. These individual objects have to be organized through the remaining tools. There is a great requirement of self-detachment needed to truly grasp the full scope of audio/visual potentials.

WOLF: Flaherty participants called the content of your films cliché and recycled, anti-feminist and purposeless.

FOTOPOULOS: I don't fully understand the problems people have with the objectification of woman. The detachment in my filmmaking will render anything translated into an image "objectified." These critics are applying their own personal issues to the work. It is fine if they apply those issues to me.

If someone said, "Your work fails to move me," fine. People comfortably dwelled in the personality filter at Flaherty. There is the threat of individualism—the notion that a person can have a vision and orchestrate that vision in a singular object.

This troubles most academics. They would prefer to trust the administration and distribution of power that creates safe homogenized work.

WOLF: What are your particular objections to academia?

FOTOPOULOS: Most people I encounter pride themselves on believing they are intelligent. They think intelligence and education is power and more important than balancing your relationship between good and evil.

Academics don't want to surrender to something they can't understand. Why did they become so angry when I said, "make up your own mind?" Few people accomplish something greater than themselves to benefit civilization or to aid the exchange of knowledge between people.

WOLF: Your goal is to benefit civilization?

FOTOUPOLOS: No, my purpose is to use this medium to balance my relationship between good and evil.

Halter tries to further polarize the participants by asserting a generation gap. Before the discussion of *Stoked*, he asks for a show of hands: "How many of you know who Tony Hawk is? How many of you have seen *Jackass*? After *The Weather Underground*, he requests that only participants under thirty speak. A board member spends the rest of the week with "over thirty" scrawled on her nametag. Yes, many of the social activists are over thirty, but so are most of the filmmakers, the programmer, and this writer. Many of the student participants, of whom there are more than usual, had never seen any experimental cinema except *Un Chien Andalou*; and the most perniciously aestheticized, politically decadent navel-gazing comes not from the latest hot young underground filmmaker but from the seventy-two-year-old Kenneth Anger, in a reel of footage of Hilter Youth from Nazi propaganda films, seemingly spliced end to end.

Even though the Flaherty has always shown the work of new filmmakers, this oedipal drama of the young taking over the Flaherty is repeated year after year. In 1963, Jonas Mekas and Ken and Flo Jacobs tried to crash the Flaherty armed with prints of Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* and Jacobs' *Blonde Cobra*. Ten years later, PBS's *An American Family* engendered a debate between older filmmakers who saw documentary as a tool for social change and a new generation of port-a-packers who found that lightweight equipment encouraged the exploration of lightweight material, and that suburbia was as valid a subject as the ghetto.

If there is a generation gap, it has been cleaved by the changing economic climate. Subrin, whose experimental films have been rejected by Women Make Movies, says nonprofit distributors are as obsessed with the market as everyone else. Stickler says Women Make Movies wouldn't provide fiscal sponsorship for *Stoked* because she had a male protagonist. "It's a different time now," she says. "There aren't grants—not for the stories that my generation wants to tell."

Stickler's ready-for-primetime work is condemned as insidious, while Sam Green and Bill Siegel's is not. (Is the only difference the subject matter?) Jem Cohen questions how *Stoked* can critique the skateboard industry while "using manufactured, commodified language." Stickler retorts: "I wanted to reach a broader audience with my story."

"Why innovate?" asks Halter, not for the last time. At the Flaherty, which values formal innovation overall, this question is heretical. Someone suggests that telling a linear story can be a rebellion.

After the screening of Emile de Antonio's *Underground*, it is remarked that the only realized American revolution in our lifetimes was Ronald Reagan's, and why aren't we making films about that? Many scribble the call letters for conspiracy theorist Dave Emory's radio show. Maybe someone should invite him to the Flaherty.

➤ It's kinda us against them. That's what it's feeling like.... Filmmakers here. The participants there. I think Jim Fotopoulos is calling "them" The Suits or The Librarians. Or something like that.
SUKI HAWLEY

Revolution = Social
Rebellion = Personal
Bi Polar = Clinical

CAROLYN TENNANT

HELEN STICKLER, BY CINDY STILLWELL

➤ Rebellion is commodified and commercialized. So is narrative structure.
GHEN ZANDO-DENNIS

➤ Last night we complained to Helen Stickler that her documentary, *Stoked*, is too commercial. This morning we are complaining that we cannot get distribution.
NINA ROTA

➤ It's funny how shocked audiences here are at the concept of wanting a film to be seen by a large audience – as if that's not everyone's wish. This filmmaker works for MTV and is using insider knowledge as part of a stylistic framework, and I think that's not only smart, but good for the film.
CAROLYN TENNANT

Kenneth Anger unveils his excursion into fascinating fascism. Polite questions follow; finally, Klaus Eisenlohr, the only German in the room, admits that he doesn't know what Anger's trying to say, and the room releases an almost audible sigh of relief. Anger finds significance in marching—"Where are they going? It is a march of doom?"—and latent homosexuality in their "tribal bonding." When pushed further, he remarks that he likes to watch young blond boys in short pants. He does not understand German: "I'm not interested in the words they're saying." When urged to say more, Anger repeats, "It's a work-in-progress." He compares the Hitler Youth to other youth groups, including the Boy Scouts and—no joke—Kibbutzim, and nobody throws a rotten banana from lunch at him.

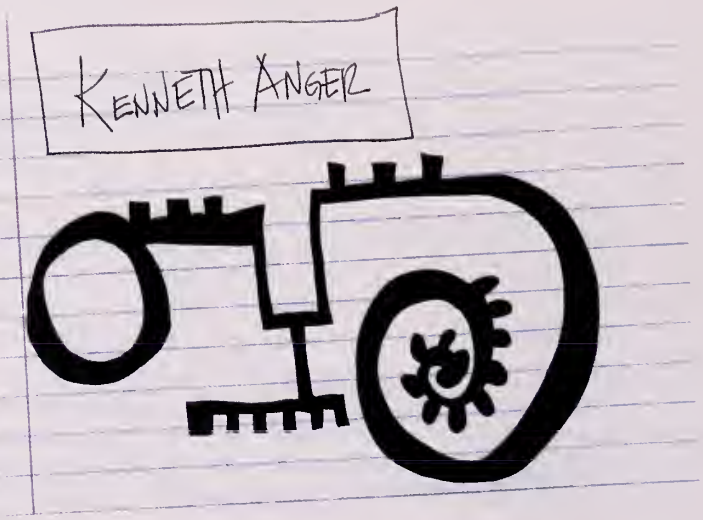
Later in the week, Jeff Krulik's *Hitler's Hat* starts deceptively as a kind of *WWII Parking Lot* at a reunion of veterans in Seattle, but becomes a provocative splicing of Spike Jones and Dachau. A Jewish veteran stomps on Hitler's top hat, destroying a fetish, divesting it of power. A meager revenge, perhaps, but a cathartic one. Many here would like to stomp on the Pearl video, cut it to ribbons, smash every server that holds it in its digital memory—but would its images ever be erased from our minds? A snuff film is a hard act to follow. Perhaps Halter showed the Pearl video because his filmmakers had nothing as shocking in their arsenal.

Why bother, then, making films at all? In a world of insurmountable horror, filmmaking can be either an expensive and egotistical waste of time, or a redemptive strike at terror, a lens focused on the human experience. In this most mechanical way—what Frances Flaherty called "the Flaherty way"—film throws out a life preserver to the passage of time. Nanook bites the trader's gramophone record, believing it to be food. Benjamin adjusts the blue gown that threatens to slip from his emaciated shoulders, getting ready for his close-up. This is, perhaps, all the justification a filmmaker needs.

➤ Kenneth Anger was the last filmmaker to present today and I thought all but the last piece were beautiful. It's hard to make films about static subjects (in this case paintings), but I don't know why he did it at all. It sounds like he's been through a lot and wants to continue making films.
LUCIA MANDELBAUM

➤ Hey I just found out that Kenneth Anger is here! How cool is that?! Woo hoo! Score one for Big Ed.
JEFF KRULIK

KENNETH ANGER, BY CINDY STILLWELL



NAOMI UMAN

➤ Flaherty is like a heated discussion with a lover. Someone starts with an emotional outburst, the other person reacts defensively, it is followed by a long discussion and it ends with hugs. Both people have come to a better understanding of each other and, maybe, love each other a little more.
NINA ROTA

That's Anti-tainment!

Programming the 48th Robert Flaherty Film Seminar

BY ED HALTER

The work of curating is largely intuitive and highly contingent, thus tricky to pin down in words. Rather than fully recapitulate my Flaherty experience , I offer here a few of riffs on the major ideas that engaged me while putting it together.

CURATING DISCUSSIONS

As greenhorns are gently reminded, Flaherty is a seminar, not a festival, composed of not merely a series of films, but also a series of discussions. The programmer must therefore curate the filmmakers as much as the films themselves. Most of the filmmakers I selected, such as Elisabeth Subrin, Jem Cohen, Roddy Bogawa, Helen Stickler, Suki Hawley, and Michael Galinsky, are deft public speakers who eagerly engage in heated discussions about filmmaking, unafraid to argue passionately for their points of view.

A few of the filmmakers were versed in the shoptalk of academia, but many were outsider intellectuals, artists who have developed their own complex ways to think about cinema which do not necessarily jibe with professorial fashions, political movements, or documentary traditions. James Fotopoulos, Jeff Krulik, and Kenneth Anger, in fact, were chosen precisely because they would challenge desires for easy explanation and engagement.

JEFF KRULIK

Except Anger, all are of a generation of artists who came of age in the nineties. Among them were at least three Guggenheim fellows and, a handful of Creative Capital recipients with films that had screened at Rotterdam, Sundance, MOMA, and the Whitney Biennial. These were the big guns of underground cinema, blistering with hard-earned résumés.

The screenings also need to interact with one another, to create mini-trends and overarching questions to be explored in discussion. I programmed with multiple themes in mind, which bled into one another in ways which I sometimes did not expect. Just a few were:

1. the boundaries between life and performance (Krulik, Cohen, Subrin, Anger, Troyano, Green, and the final evening's karaoke party, which underscored the way in which attendees are themselves performers at Flaherty, as much as the filmmakers)

2. the role of transgressive, perhaps immoral or amoral, content (Onishi, Fotopoulos, Anger, Troyano)

3. the relationship between generational identity, revolution, rebellion, and youth cultures (Green, de Antonio, Stickler, Subrin, Galinsky, and Hawley, Bogawa, Scott)

4. the use of images of violence and conflict, and their relation to history (*Hiroshima/Nagasaki*, *The Weather Underground*, *Cul de Sac*, *Hitler's Hat*)

5. the link between an esthetics of the homemade and the notion of labor or work (Uman, Everson, Banks, Fotopoulos—the whole seminar, really)

It's nearly impossible to explain how many multiple threads of connection, interaction, and reference developed between these films, a complex network of interwoven meanings. As the films screened, these moments of recognition and epiphany kept popping up like cartoon light bulbs throughout the course of the week.

A WEEK'S TEMPO

Any cinema event takes place over a span of time. Like DJ's or editors, good programmers account for each work's tempo, the esthetic contrast and variety between films, and a given audience's own abilities to maintain interest over time. At Flaherty, this formal diversity is essential in helping keep the crowd alert during the week's unforgiving cinematic death march.

When possible, I scheduled longer, more "difficult," abstract works earlier in the day, and shorter, more "fun" and accessible works in the evenings. Thus a program of experimental works by Everson and Uman was followed by a selection of offbeat portraits by Krulik. My plan was to shape the Flaherty week into a kind of Wagnerian cycle of audience emotions, veering from elaborate subtleties to booming visual carnage to warm, homey affection and every sensation in between. The goal was a ruthless, non-stop mind-fuck that would never allow attendees to feel comfortable in their expectations. This warlike sense of

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anxiety, I hoped, would produce a heightened sense of awareness and excitation.

Flaherty's unannounced lineup allows for improvisation, creating a dialog between the programmer and evolving discussions. The tribute screening of Erik Barnouw's antiwar film *Hiroshima/Nagasaki* 1949, which includes gruesome footage of Japanese casualties, prompted talk of the lack of images from the current war, and the theoretically liberatory role the internet could take in disseminating them. So, the next morning, I added an impromptu screening of the Daniel Pearl video, a bit of propaganda that only days earlier appeared online, as an example of how images function in our current state of war.

THOUGHTS ON THE FLOW OF MEANING

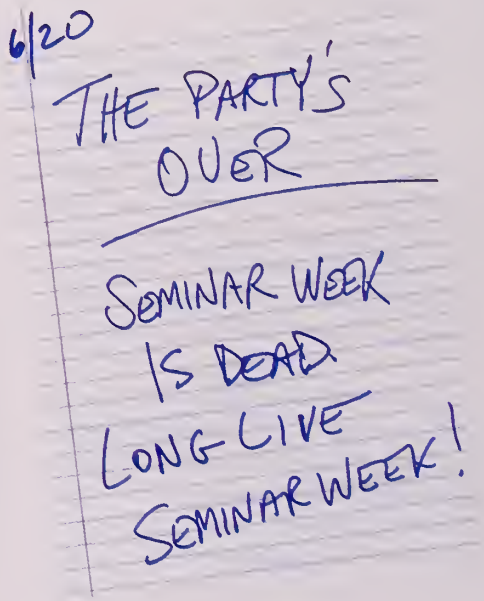
A Flaherty programmer needs to consider how the themes of each film flow into one another throughout the week. How one constructs this flow of meaning is contingent upon one's own concept of how ideas work in art.

Some consider art as a rhetorical gambit, to service political or social goals. The role of art is then seen as the introduction of knowledge or ways of thinking that further progress towards a given end: the complete emancipation of women, the destruction of the capitalist state, a rethinking of dominant modes of cinema, or merely broadly defined social progress. This a fairly common mode at Flaherty; its reputation leans strongly towards humanist social documentary traditions.

My thinking on how ideas should work is comparatively nihilist, more of an esthetics of cognition. The mind, like the muscles, enjoys being stretched and pushed near the point of exhaustion, thereby increasing flexibility, strength, and agility. Having a work of art drive a person to the edge of complete confusion and consternation is like working a muscle to the point of sore, twitching pain. Denying the mind such work-outs results in flabby thinking or, worse, carpal tunnel syndrome of the brain.

Flaherty, to me, was a unique forum to enact this theory, using the attendees (myself included) as subjects. Thus I included films that would sharply counter expectations. An antiwar activist film, Nazi propaganda, and abstract compositions all served as individual movements in the symphony of the whole. Any moral judgements on the content of each work would be left to the individual viewer, who I think of as a rational adult capable of forming his or her own opinions.

My approach was to both engage with the audience's interests and expectations, as well as play against them, in an attempt to precipitate a kind of ancient agon, the production of new knowledge and understanding through dialectical conflict rather than mere agony.



JEFF KRULIK

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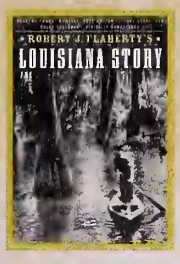

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Minding Their Own Business

Reflections on the documentary marketplace

by Mary Sampson

Unlikely as it may seem, six experts in the business of documentary filmmaking will agree on a number of points. Most, for instance, will concur with the suggestion that the proliferation of digital technology has made documentary production easier and cheaper, and that as a result there are more documentaries being made and seen than anyone could have anticipated ten years ago. Nearly all will cite PBS, cable channels, or film festivals as having raised the profile of documentaries and helped them become accepted by a mainstream audience. And all will predict that the internet will play a role in the future of both the marketing and the distribution of nonfiction films.

But those same six will differ significantly in their opinions on the current state of the marketplace for documentaries, the future of that marketplace, and what an independent filmmaker ought to do in order to thrive there. Little consensus can be found regarding the value of cable outlets for independent documentaries. And there is no unanimity when it comes to the best way to distribute a nonfiction film. There is even disagreement on whether or not the business has really changed all that much since the pre-digital days of documentary making.

In the following pages, St. Clair Bourne, Shelia Nevins, Arthur Dong, Larry Daressa, Barbara Kopple, and George Stoney detail their views on these matters and, in doing so, create a snapshot of an industry and an art as it exists today.

Mary Sampson is a writer and editor living in New York City.

BOURNE {A Call for Independents}

After thirty years in the business of documentary filmmaking, St. Clair Bourne is willing to attest to the damaging influence corporate media has had on the field. "Marketing has taken over and now has a major influence in the development of documentaries," says Bourne. "The result is subject matter that is less investigative, less provocative, and more towards the sensational." Fighting these corporate media monsters, as Bourne calls them, requires independent documentary makers to explore or create new techniques for funding and distributing their material. Fortunately, Bourne believes there are a variety of techniques already available and in use.

One approach is to use the trend toward documentary-as-entertainment as a way of getting serious information out to the public. "In this way, Michael Moore is the Spike Lee of documentaries," notes Bourne, who produced and directed *Making 'Do The Right Thing,'* a documentary which received its own theatrical release. "Moore uses his persona of a bumbling, working-class, white guy to entertain people while he asks some very serious questions." Bourne doubts that Moore's films would have gotten made if he had not used that persona as a technique. And Bourne cites his own experience producing a documentary on the life of photojournalist and filmmaker Gordon Parks for HBO as an example of using a persona to get serious, politically conscious information into a commercially released documentary. "Parks himself dealt with black experience, therefore you couldn't make that film without dealing with that material." Bourne believes that without the persona of Gordon Parks as the subject matter, politically conscious material would not have gotten into the film. "The material alone is no longer enough to justify, in the corporate media mind-set, the making of a film." For this reason, Bourne suggests documentary makers turn to using gimmicks if they have to.

He sees the influence of corporate marketing increasing in the future. "There will probably be seventy-five percent fluff," he predicts, "stuff that pimps off the cinema verité tradition like *Survivor*." In order for independent documentary makers to survive financially in this marketplace, Bourne expects many will have to produce such fluff from time to time in order to keep the cash flow coming while making the films that matter to them. But he warns against spending too much time or attention on this approach. "You have to concentrate on making the film you want to make," he says.

With the future holding only a small part of the mainstream marketplace as space for socially conscious films, Bourne thinks smart filmmakers will not only use the niche broadcasting slots (e.g. *P.O.V.*, *Frontline*), but will also look beyond them and seek nontraditional coproducing partners. He recommends partnering with organizations and institutions that share the same point of view on the subject matter of a potential documentary. These groups offer marketing opportunities not usually found in the marketplace for commercial documentaries. "Those organizations that have an agenda also have an audience, a newsletter, and outreach programs," says Bourne.

Participating in the documentary community (or better yet, creating a new one) can assist a filmmaker in finding these alternative coproducers. Bourne, who seeks his subject matter in the African diaspora-based community and who wanted to do something to make it easier for black documentarians to get their work out to an audience, helped form the Black Documentary Collective. This group of filmmakers meets monthly to screen short scenes from black documentary makers in order to acquaint themselves with techniques, subject matter, and materials, as well as to develop outreach to organizations that might help raise funds for documentaries on issues of interest to both the organization and the collective. This effort has recently led the collective to produce a project based in Brazil. "There is an international documentary community out there," Bourne believes.

And this belief leads Bourne to his final, and most emphatic, piece of advice for documentary makers: Think globally, or at least internationally. "If you're clever and you don't limit your thinking," says Bourne, "you'll realize that what might not work in America may work in London, or France, or Germany." The internet can help with publicity as well as with production and distribution. "In five years, I expect that documentaries will be able to be shot on DV, edited on Final Cut Pro, and then uploaded to the internet, where they can be paid for and downloaded by the audience." The means of production has become more democratic, making it easier to get information and issues out to an international audience.

For an independent documentarian, there is more than just a financial imperative for finding ways around corporate influence and domination. There is a philosophical one as well. "These corporate media mergers are structuring the world one way," notes Bourne. "And because serious documentary filmmakers tend to be in opposition to the corporate mentality, we have to strive to structure the world in another way."

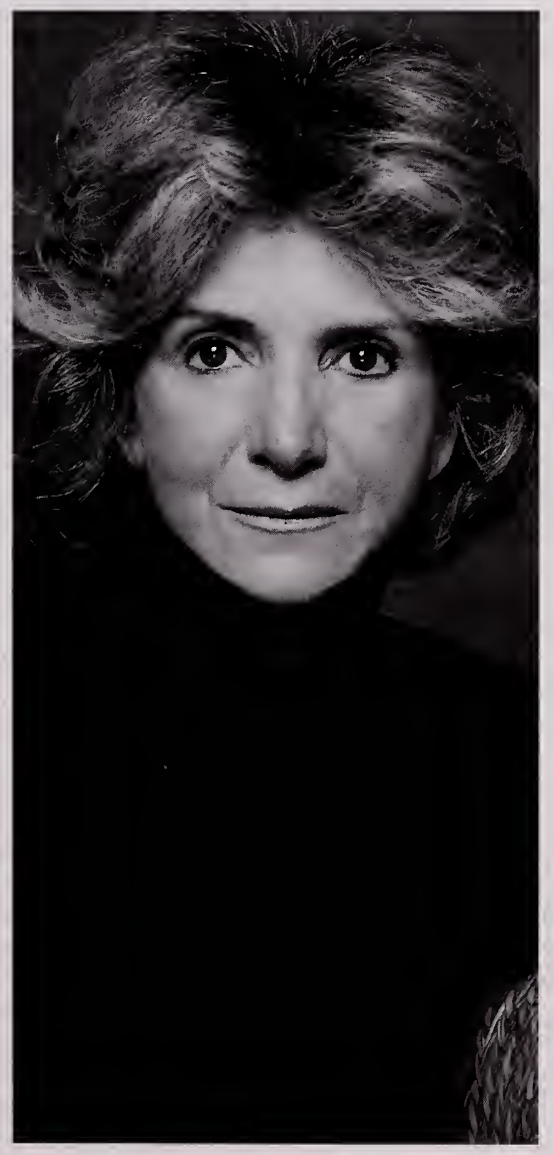
PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF ROBERT BENSON; FACING PAGE, TOM LEGOFF/HBO

NEVINS

{Quality and Quantity}

When Willa Cather first saw an electric typewriter, she reportedly cried out in dismay, "Oh no, now a great many novels will be written that shouldn't be." Anyone with Sheila Nevins' job could come feel the same way about digital technology and documentaries. That Nevins, executive vice president for original programming at HBO, does not feel this way is a testament to both her equanimity and to her abiding faith in the power and popularity of documentaries.

Nevins is responsible for overseeing the development and production of documentaries for HBO, Cinemax, and their multiplex channels. In this capacity, she and her staff used to screen about thirty hours of material a week. These days they are averaging between fifty and sixty. "More is better, but more means more work," says Nevins. And she cites digital technology as one of the reasons for an increase in the quality of documentaries in the marketplace, as well as for the number of them. "When I started in this business, we wanted to be a fly on the wall," she remembers. "But it was hard to be a fly when you had a big camera, big lights, and a crew standing there." Smaller cameras of today, that work in low lighting and with fewer people, have allowed documentarians to be less intrusive and more agile when dealing with people and subject matter. To Nevins' mind, this has led to material that is purer, stronger, and closer to the ideal documentarians strive for.



An increasingly media literate society is helping the documentary field as well. "Nowadays a motion picture is recording every baby's first smile," says Nevins. And then there is the fact that nearly every college and university has a film department. Nevins believes this kind of awareness of technology allows people to relax and lets the filmmaker tell a story more realistically and more honestly.

This improved state of documentary making requires that an important distinction be made between television documentaries and reality programming, according to Nevins. "A reality show is a genre that manipulates human behavior," she says. "Therefore it alters the way people might behave if they had actually been on that island, or in that house, or looking for a mate." Because these programs combine the television game show aspect with the reality of people's lives, they do fit under the broad category of documentary in Nevins' opinion. And they do make more money than traditional documentaries, she admits. "But we've stayed out of the reality genre because we've made our mark, and we're going to continue to make our mark, in the classic documentary world." Nevins says that most of the documentaries HBO produces are intended for a broad audience. "We're not looking for advertising," she says. "So we're also not looking for the hot eighteen- to thirty-nine-year-old market when we make our films."

There is also a difference to be noted between nonfiction films, which Nevins defines as films that are intended from the beginning for theatrical release, and television documentaries that may end up in a theater but start out as a project for television. "Some producers clearly start out with a theatrical documentary in mind," says Nevins, and she goes on to give *The Buena Vista Social Club* and *The Kid Stays in the Picture* as examples. "We don't set out to make theatrically released films, because that's not our business. But one or two out of the thirty-five or forty documentaries we plan to put on one of our services will appear to be better suited for a theatrical release. But we don't know this until we are well into the production of the film." Nevins cannot put a finger on exactly what it is that makes a documentary better suited for a theatrical release than for television, but she insists it has nothing to do with quality. "The films we put into theaters are not the same as television documentaries," she says. "Both television docs and theater docs are excellent in different ways."

Documentaries will be a profitable means of expression in the future. "Provided," Nevins says, "you are willing to move within the genres." Theatrical, television documentary, or reality program, the most important thing is to work hard and "to wear comfortable shoes."

DONG

{Keep Your Rights Up}

It is the best of times. It is the worst of times. Or so it seems at times to Arthur Dong when he thinks about the marketplace for documentary films. Which of these two possible realities filmmakers will experience depends, according to Dong, on the amount of thought they put into the marketing of their documentaries.

When Dong's 1997 documentary, *Licensed to Kill*, premiered at Sundance, the internet was still a relatively new marketing idea for filmmakers. "Putting my web page up at that time was a pretty novel move," says Dong, who self-distributed the film. He used e-mail primarily to develop an audience, and achieved approximately sixty screenings for the documentary, mostly by faxing and calling theaters, film festivals, and broadcasters.

Dong's latest project dealing with anti-homosexual bias, *Family Fundamentals*, will be released on October 11, 2002, a date designated as National Coming Out Day. Though this new documentary is also being self-distributed, Dong has found the marketplace much easier to navigate this time around. And he credits the maturing internet with bringing the wind to his sails. "Now my e-mail and my website are tools for bookers to come to me," he reports. "And the amount of work I've had to do, compared to 1997, is really minimal." Dong allows for the possibility that having had three theatrical releases and two previous Sundance entries to his name has made his latest film more marketable, but he will not discount the effect the internet has had on the marketplace for independent films. "I think the internet had more to do with the marketing success of *Family Fundamentals* than anything," he insists. Dong will even go so far as to suggest that online catalogs may be more important to the success of a film than even the most high-profile of festivals are. "My feeling is that many bookers and festival directors are looking at the Sundance catalog online and skipping the festival itself." As such, Dong believes it is important that all documentary makers get their films listed in some online catalog and that electronic press kits are a must.

But as sunny as things may be on the seas of self-distribution, Dong sees a cloud in the form of broadcast media encroaching upon a documentary maker's ability to get a theatrical release. A member of the Board of Governors and an executive committee member for the documentary branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Dong is alarmed by broadcast networks playing what he calls "the Oscar game." He believes networks put documentary films out in theaters only for the marketing advantage a theatrical release (and possibly an Oscar nomination) gives a broadcast documentary. Currently, a film must appear in a New York or Los Angeles theater for one week and then not appear on any broadcast network for six months after that in order to qualify for an Academy Award nomination. "They have no sincere intention of giving the film a full theatrical run," says Dong. He points to one recent documentary that on one day won an Oscar and the next premiered on television as an example of the exploitation of the theatrical marketplace by broadcast media.

The effect this practice is having on independent documentaries is twofold, according to Dong. First, the flooding of the theatrical marketplace with documentaries that are really created for broadcast is making it harder for self-distributed and other independent films to get a theatrical release. And second, there is an alarming rise in the restriction, and even the prevention, of theatrical releases for independent documentaries by networks who offer filmmakers contracts for broadcast rights. In this way, broadcast corporations are controlling more and more what will be released theatrically and what will not. "I've heard from a number of filmmakers in the last year who have had to forego a chance at a real theatrical release in order to get a contract," says Dong. "And so a lot of good films never see the 'dark' of day." Dong himself walked away from funding from the Independent Television Service (ITVS) in part because the contract would have prevented *Family Fundamentals* from receiving a theatrical release. "Television is fine," he says, "but there is nothing like a theatrical release for either the filmmaker or the audience." The film will be shown on PBS after its theatrical run.

All this leads Dong to recommend that documentarians think about the life of their film before signing any contract. And even though he sees movement on the part of broadcasters (both public and otherwise) to reconsider restricting the theatrical release of a film they wish to broadcast, he stands firm in his belief that being independent means keeping control of distribution as much as it means having control over the content. "For independents who have a vision, who have a subject they are passionate about, and who want to get their voice out to the communities they want to reach," says Dong, "it's better to hold on to some of the rights."

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT, COURTESY OF ZAND GEE; FACING PAGE, ERICA MARCUS

DARESSA

{Reality Check}

The institutional market is the real marketplace for documentary films. According to Larry Daressa, director of California Newsreel, one of the oldest and most notable American, nonprofit documentary production and distribution centers, the business is not going through a revolution. Changes happen slowly. And misconceptions about the marketplace are hurting the quality of documentaries overall.

Daressa sees a distinction between documentaries made primarily for educational purposes and those primarily for entertainment. Bigger budget, higher profile, commercial documentaries do not concern him much. The difference for him lies mostly in the seriousness of the treatment of the subject. To Daressa, who served on the founding board of directors of the Independent Television Service (ITVS), entertainment and education oriented documentaries do not necessarily compete with each other. "The only change that I see is in the price," he says. "I have customers who now ask me why they should pay $200 for a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funded documentary when they can get an A&E documentary for $17." Even so, entertainment-focused documentaries do not sell well for California Newsreel. They have bought some from people who used to work for HBO and found they generally did poorly in the institutional marketplace. The films that sell the best tend to be those funded by NEH.

Daressa believes there is no reason to fret over the relatively recent development of broadcast media making documentaries for theatrical release. He points to the absence of theatrical documentaries in the past as evidence that the entrance of these media docs are not crowding out the independent ones. "They certainly aren't squeezing films out of a market that never really existed," he says. Moreover, Daressa believes that it is as hard as ever to get a middle-of-the-road documentary into a theater. He notes with some amusement that having a film at Sundance, and maybe at New Directors in New York, now passes as having had a theatrical release. "What is often called a theatrical release in this field really isn't," he says.

But Daressa is not amused by the effect this theatricalization of documentaries is having on the overall form and quality of the films being made. "I think Sundance has had a very negative effect in the sense that documentaries keep expanding and getting longer." He notes that often someone will get funding for a one-hour documentary and turn it into ninety minutes so that it will fit in better with the Sundance format. "And they are doing so in the rather remote hope of getting a theatrical release," he adds. "The films themselves are not that good, because to maintain an arc of ninety minutes in a documentary is quite an achievement." For Daressa, this expectation of making a hit indie movie is the biggest misconception filmmakers have about the business of documentaries. "And I haven't noticed any great home video marketplace for documentaries," Daressa adds.

The biggest change Daressa sees in the past few years is the centralization of the purchasing of documentaries. "There are more places that can buy them because they are in need of the documentary format [as opposed to text books]," he says. "But the purchasing decisions are being made by the libraries in these places and not by the individual departments." He has noticed a small increase in the audience interested in documentaries, due mainly to better publicity on the part of PBS and the rise of the internet, but he reports this increase is nothing spectacular or unexpected.

According to Daressa, a vastly better approach for a documentary maker is to research what the people who purchase documentaries are talking about before choosing a subject. "There is a big difference between the films that are being made and the films our market needs," Daressa says. "And the reason for that is that people think up their documentaries in a vacuum." As a result, he sees too many films that are character driven rather than subject driven. "Instead of making films about interesting characters they should be asking themselves something like, 'What is the big controversy or undercurrent surrounding the revolutionary war'," suggests Daressa. They should pick a subject that interests them, of course, but also one that also that interests the marketplace.

KOPPLE

{Audience Appreciation}

For Barbara Kopple, the increase in audience awareness and acceptance of the documentary form of storytelling is the noteworthy thing in the world of filmmaking today.

Certainly, some of this change in the audience's attitude is due to the rise of reality programming on television networks and cable outlets. But Kopple, who in 1977 won the first of her two Academy Awards for documentary film, saw the seeds of this audience growth planted in the theaters a long time ago. "Peter Davidson's *Hearts and Minds* did very well at the box office," says Kopple. "And then, little by little, more and more nonfiction films started showing up in theaters." The result is that now there are nonfiction films in theaters that rival fiction stories in their beauty, their narrative storytelling ability, their humanness, and their clear point of view. "And what makes them even more wonderful than fiction is that nonfiction films are real," she says. (Just about the only creative tool Kopple does not see in use by documentarians today is manipulation of reality, which would, in her opinion, tip them over into the reality programming genre.)

Kopple sees both the increase in television documentaries and the theatrical release of films produced by networks as encouraging signs for independent theatrical documentaries and their makers. "It's always hard to make a film," she notes. "Places like HBO have allowed more and more filmmakers to get work done and get it shown." Nor is she is troubled by the possibility of television documentaries taking the audience away from theatrical releases. She compares this situation to when video stores first came into existence and the unfounded fear that they would take business away from movie theaters. It's two different things. "A film won't be seen on cable for a long time if it first goes theatrical," Kopple points out. "And you aren't going to see the beautiful quality of a documentary film on a small screen. The theater is mesmerizing."

Taking a broad view of the history of marketing many different types of media, Kopple notes a potential downside to digital technology and documentaries. "I understand there are going to be films shown on the internet," Kopple notes, "and that has the film industry in general a little nervous because people are afraid that what happened in the music industry is also going to happen in the film industry."

Another thing documentary filmmakers should concern themselves with, according to Kopple, is the marketing of their films. "*Hoop Dreams* was successful early on because Fine Line did a good job marketing it. And *Buena Vista Social Club* owes a lot of its success to the soundtrack." Kopple recommends a documentary filmmaker decide where she wants to go with her film right off. "If you go to television," she says, "you know it will appear on television. But you also may have to forego getting both a theatrical and a broadcast release." Networks like HBO, according to Kopple, are giving documentary filmmakers more opportunity to have both a network and a theatrical release by giving some documentaries up to a six month theatrical before broadcasting the film.

She also believes in making documentaries for a general audience and letting the people find their way to a film through their interest in the subject matter. "Some people are going to be interested in the subject matter of *Wild Man Blues*," she thinks. "And some are going to go more for *Harlan County, U.S.A.*"

Kopple looks with pleasure on the vastly wider options available to someone just entering the field of documentaries now, as opposed to in the seventies. "There are a lot of different routes you could take now, " she says. "You can do something for A&E or the History Channel to get your feet wet. Or you could go and do something you feel incredibly passionate about and try to do it as a theatrical film." She doesn't try to predict the future of documentaries, but she does voice some hopes for it. "I hope there will be more and more nonfiction theatrical films that succeed so that there will one day be nonfiction films in theaters all over the world.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF CABIN CREEK FILMS; FACING PAGE, GEORGE STONEY

STONEY

{Documentary Traditions}

The first thing students of George Stoney's class at New York University learn is that documentary making is an evolving concept. "It's like our idea of poetry," he explains. "At one time it had to be a Spencerian sonnet or it wasn't considered poetry. At another time it had to rhyme or it wasn't a poem." So, too, the business of documentary making evolves according to Stoney, Paulett Goddard Professor in Film at NYU. And the majority of this evolution is coming about because of technology

When Stoney looks back on the first documentary he directed—and he has made fifty in the more than fifty years he has been in the business—he notes that he had a budget of $40,000, put up by the Georgia health department. "In today's terms that's something like $200,000," he surmises. "But the expenses were there: the film, the camera, the crew, lab costs, etc...." In addition, for a long time, the audience for documentaries were educational facilities, hospitals, and civic and government agencies. "The idea of making a documentary that was independent and said exactly what you wanted to say didn't come about until the 1960's," Stoney says. "There were a few exceptions, but they were what we usually called experimental films."

Though the advent of television had a tremendous effect on the documentary marketplace, Stoney cites the introduction of small video cameras, that can produce results as good as 16mm film, as the catalyst for the enormous change in the business of documentary making. Now people can make films that are completely self-financed, an almost impossible feat before video cameras appeared. It is cheaper and easier to make documentaries, and therefore there are many more people making films and selling them. And while much of this change is for the better, there has been at least one unhappy result. "When I first got into the business, one could make a precarious living making instructional films. We could sell a print that cost, say, $130 ... for $600. Now, we make something and the customer says, 'Why should we pay more than $19.99 for your short film?' So many, many people in my generation went out of the business because they didn't know how to accommodate the new marketing situation."

As technology has changed the business of documentaries, so has business changed the discipline of documentary making. "A half-century ago, we just assumed we had to design what was in front of the camera," says Stoney. "Now that's considered passé, although we fail to recognize that an interview is just as artificial as anything else and that a demonstration is something that is designed specifically for the camera." The rise in film criticism and scholarship has brought changes as well. "It used to be if you needed a sheep, you needed a sheep, and you didn't care much what kind of sheep it was," says Stoney. "But now we have to consider where the original footage came from, whether it was staged or not. We are going to have to be much more rigorous in the way we use archival material." Stoney is coming up against this problem with his current project (based on the life and work of Paolo Freire in Brazil) in which he needs to document protests against the government that occurred three times in a period of six years during the 1960's. "At one time we would have gone into this saying, 'Oh we need a mob, let's show a mob,' Now we are much more careful, because there is scholarship."

Although Stoney does not believe anyone can make generalizations about the types of documentaries being made, he does think the medium has gotten to be personal as well commercial. And he suspects that the spirit of independent documentary making has been around longer than the technology that has made independence a commercial viability. "I teach a course called 'Images of the Thirties' in which I encourage students to make videos about their grandparents and their families," Stoney says. "I am pleased to say that the students are beginning to bring in films that were shot by their grandparents. And in some cases, it's better than what the students are themselves making."

For the future, Stoney expects audiences to develop increasingly sophisticated attitudes towards storytelling techniques like reenactments. "The combination of real footage and reenactments like those in the best of documentaries today will continue and be more widely accepted," Stoney says. What will stay the same is the general feeling that the purpose of documentaries is to give people a heightened awareness of what other people experience in the real world. "Every documentary should be based not just on truth as we see it," according to Stoney, "but also on our own response to that truth. The idea of an impersonal, evenhanded documentary is a myth."

Finally, Stoney doesn't think most documentary makers are naive about the marketplace for their films. "We sometimes imagine that some other people are making a lot of money," chuckles Stoney. "But that's true in any field."

WORKS IN PROGRESS:

Whether you're lounging around a TV in your living room with a bunch friends, or leaning against the back wall of a movie theater watching a test audience of strangers, nothing is quite as nerve-racking for a filmmaker as a work-in-progress screening. As angst-ridden as they can be, work-in-progress (WIP) screenings are often a necessary step for documentarians who are looking for artistic feedback, funding, and/or distribution.

A fiction film is judged as a completed package, adjustments can be made with additional editing, but the actors, basic plot, and production values do not change. In contrast, documentaries can transform over the production period, because filmmakers are often shooting something as the story is unfolding, and there can be unforeseen developments. It is not uncommon to go back, reshoot, and re-edit. Many documentary filmmakers use WIP screenings frequently throughout the process as the story is defined and redefined.

After spending hours and hours either shooting or alone in the editing bay, getting someone else's thoughts on a project can be enlightening and inspiring. An outside voice can help a filmmaker step back from his or her work, view the project more objectively, and become more motivated to continue. When screening for artistic purposes, it is important to let the audience know where the film is in the production process. If they understand, for example, that the sound is not the final mix, they will not waste valuable time and energy telling you that they could not hear things.

Most filmmakers agree that it is better not to say too much when first getting feedback—just sit back and listen. Before the screening, make a list of specific questions you would like the audience to answer. If they do not cover an element you're concerned about, ask them to address it. Then go away and digest it all. Try not to take things personally. Figure out what will be helpful in getting the film to the point where you want it to be. Later, you can have additional conversations and to begin building a community that will support the project.

Unless a piece is commissioned by a broadcaster, documentary filmmakers have to overcome many obstacles. Marketability for these films is more limited than narrative pieces, and shooting often takes place over the course of several years, making it necessary to find additional funding as the story develops. Udy Epstein, principal of Seventh Art, distributor of *Havana Mi Amor, Hell House,* and *Long Night's Journey Into Day,* explains that since there is no script for funders and distributors to look at, "the WIP replaces the pitch of the fiction film. It provides the personal touch which can close the deal."

Mark Stolaroff of Next Wave Films adds that WIP screenings for documentaries are so commonly used because "there is so little money to make in documentaries, in general. The normal way most docs get financed is that they are commissioned by TV networks, and the producers get paid a producing fee. TV is still the number-one place for docs to show, so if you have a problem pitching an idea to a network but can later show them a WIP

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, LEFT, COURTESY OF 7TH ART, RIGHT, HEIDI GUTMAN; FACING PAGE, FAR RIGHT, 7TH ART

The Documentary 'Pitch'

by Tamara Krinsky

and get them to come onboard, then you've taken a little bit more risk but gotten the result you originally intended."

Director Ken Carlson put together a WIP screening for a group of potential investors for his film *Wild Bill: Hollywood Maverick*. The film tells the story of the prolific director William A. Wellman, who worked his way from silent films to talkies, helming over seventy-six films from the 1929 Oscar winner *Wings* to *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1943) to *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945). Carlson went out and shot key interviews for the film, including Nancy Reagan, Martin Scorsese, Clint Eastwood, and Robert Mitchum, and then put together a eight-minute teaser comprised of this footage.

While reasonably well-produced, the tape he showed didn't have a sound mix and was shown on a large-screen TV in a small screening room. Carlson knew the focus would be on the content of the film rather than the technical quality. After watching the teaser, the group of investors asked for a business report. By the end of the evening they had given Carlson the thumbs up to finance the rest of the film. The film was later released theatrically by Kino International.

While many filmmakers choose to conduct their own screenings, there are also more formalized ways to do so. One such program is In The Works, a monthly WIP screening presented by New York City's Docuclub. Through this program, documentary filmmakers screen their rough cuts in a theatrical venue, allowing an opportunity to solicit feedback during the editing process. Because the Docuclub audience is primarily comprised of working documentarians, the screening affords both critical response and networking opportunities.

"These screenings can be invaluable for filmmakers," says Docuclub program manager Liz Ogilvie. She points out *Sister Helen* as one film that was reworked after its In The Works screening. The film by Rebecca Cammisa and Rob Fruchtman went on Sundance, and will air on HBO.

"Filmmakers can be apprehensive before showing their work, but this is a really constructive process," says Ogilvie. Docuclub works with filmmakers to determine what feedback or information could be most useful, and following the screening, a Docuclub representative facilitates a discussion of the work. Filmmakers are not required to lead the discussions or defend their work, allowing them the space to better hear and reflect upon the feedback that is expressed. In fact, Docuclub tapes each discussion (useful for review once a filmmaker's rattled nerves have settled), and follows up with concrete suggestions.

"We are the only group I know of that conducts these screenings specifically for documentaries," says Ogilvie. The organization prides itself on screening every work that is submitted. Those that cannot fit into the monthly roster are vetted through the Home Screening Program, wherein experienced Docuclub

Top: (far left) George Ratliff's *Hell House*; (center) Cynthia Wade shoots *Shelter Dogs*; (right) Deborah Hoffmann and Frances Reid's *Long Night's Journey Into Day*.

filmmakers screen the work at home and provide feedback. Recently Docuclub has taken their show on the road, with In the Works: Festivals, WIP screenings as sidebars of festivals with a strong documentary presence.

One of the best-known opportunities for WIP screenings is at IFP/NY's annual IFP Market (formerly the IFFM), held every fall in New York. Previously known as somewhat of an independent cinematic madhouse, this year's Market (September 27–October 4) aims to be much different, fostering a festival-like, curated line-up. Screening a scaled-down roster of twenty narrative and sixty documentary works-in-progress, the Market now has the goal of positioning itself as a place for locating finishing funds and continued project development—a place where the distribution process begins, not necessarily the place where films are bought.

Life (and love) Cuban style, in Uli Gaulke's *Havana Mi Amor.*

Market WIP screenings each get a half-hour slot. Generally, a filmmaker takes three to five minutes to introduce the project, explaining its genesis, describing the current state of funding and production, and setting the tone for the screening. The next twenty minutes or so are devoted to the film. It's best to time the presentation so that there will be a few minutes remaining after the screening to meet people.

While there is often a stigma against showing unfinished versions of narrative features when trying to gain distribution, this is not the case for documentaries. The main reason for this is that few documentaries ever get paid advances from theatrical distributors, because these companies can rarely afford to do so. Fiction filmmakers are often advised not to show their films early, because history has shown that one of the best ways to score a lucrative deal is to arrive at major festival like Sundance or Toronto with a film nobody's seen, blow away the audience, and then set in motion a bidding war among the deep-pocket companies who will overpay for the film in the hopes of making a killing at the box office. This rarely ever happens for documentaries, because so few have the potential to do really well in the theatrical box office. The ones that do usually do so unexpectedly.

From a business standpoint, Carlson suggests taking the right group of people to the Market with you. "While ultimately content is king, going on your own isn't recommended. It's a small community and it's important to have the right representation." Jan Röfekamp repped his film, and the connections he brought to the project were very helpful.

"When putting together your Market WIP, you do not need to represent the entire movie, whether you are showing a trailer or a chunk of selected scenes. It's more important to show the potential for the things people are looking for in a good doc film (especially for films hoping to gain theatrical release): great characters (subjects), good access into the lives of those subjects, scope—the idea that the film is about a number of different things, filmic qualities, and stories that go beyond expectation and reveal something previously not known. "It is important to demonstrate a vision in terms of filmmaking in a WIP," Stolaroff suggests.

2001 IFFM participant Cynthia Wade screened an eighteen-minute sample of her documentary *Shelter Dogs*, about the fate of five dogs that come to an animal shelter in the Catskills. She spent the time tweaking the segment to make it right for the Market. She began her WIP by using tension and suspense to hook people right away so that they wouldn't leave the room. She carefully structured the piece to show audiences just enough so that they would have a sense of what the documentary was about, yet still be left on the edge of their seats at the conclusion, wanting to know what happened next. As a result of her Market screening, the film was picked up by HBO for the *America Undercover* series and will air this spring.

HBO gave both funding and creative input. Wade also had several trusted, experienced filmmakers look at the film during post production. One of the benefits she gained from the feedback was the elimination of elements that initially seemed necessary to her yet were extraneous to the audience. For example, she had title cards explaining certain things such as time of year. Her WIP audience didn't feel the film needed them, and removing them made the film a more organic piece.

She reminds filmmakers that when you listen to feedback, "It doesn't mean you're going to change your film, but that you are committing to listening seriously to what they have to say."

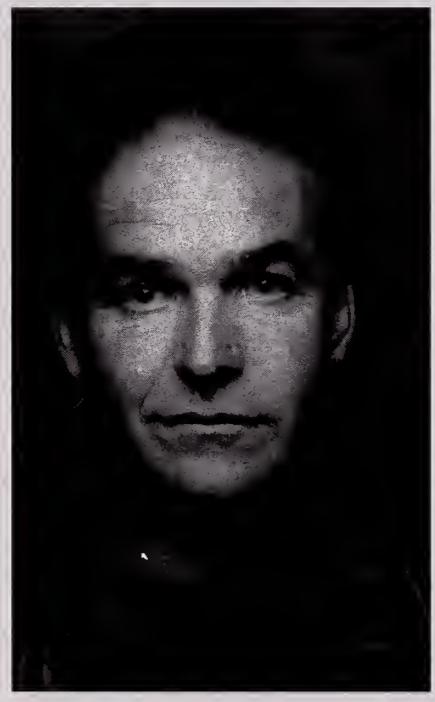
Tamara Krinsky is a freelance writer/actress and the associate director of the Film Program at HBO's US Comedy Arts Festival.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF 7TH ART

TESTING THE LIMITS OF CONTROVERSY

BY NICK BROOMFIELD
WITH ANN LEWINSON

If there's a sign that says "Don't go any further, private road," that's precisely the kind of thing that will encourage me. There are certain subjects that are off-limits, and often those are the most enticing because, if you can get to them, you learn amazing things. When I was making *Tracking Down Maggie: The Unofficial Biography of Margaret Thatcher*, and I started going into the arms deals that her son was involved in, which was strictly off-limits—in England it was under a "D Notice," so broadcasters weren't allowed to broadcast that kind of stuff—I learned an awful lot about what she and the British government had been up to.



In the same way there were elements of the *Biggie & Tupac* story which were very much off-limits: the extent to which LAPD officers were involved, the knowledge and involvement of the FBI. You learn the secrets of the society that we're a part of—for example, J. Edgar Hoover was obsessed with the idea of a black messiah, and people from the time of Paul Robeson on down to Biggie Smalls and Tupac Shakur were followed by FBI agents because the FBI was terrified that these men might become a focal point for an insurrection.

A reputation for controversy is a mixed blessing. I was going to do a film on Mohamed al-Fayed, the guy who runs Harrods (his son was involved with Diana), and when he realized who I was he just swept out of the room, horrified. But when I was doing *Kurt & Courtney*, people had seen *Aileen Wournos* and really liked it and went out of their way to help me.

It's also very useful for the filmmaker if there is a real controversy, like there was with Courtney Love. Although it was a complete nightmare and I kind of wished I hadn't made the film, that can be your best publicity if you don't allow it to sidetrack you.

When the film was removed from Sundance, I remember being overwhelmingly depressed. At my lowest moment I thought the film would never come out. And then, just because I'm stubborn and I stay with it, I suddenly realized that it was probably the best promotion the film was going to get, and that actually Courtney was its best publicist. The more she blew on about how much she hated the film and how she thought I was despicable—which she occasionally did in the middle of her concerts—the more she helped the film.

I do think *Kurt & Courtney* was a particularly negative film. It wasn't the film I set out to make—in as much as you set out to make any kind of film–and it turned into a train wreck. I don't think the same thing applies to *Biggie & Tupac*. It is essentially a positive effort to really find out what happened, and not a commercial attempt to cash in on these two well-known personalities.

It's obviously a tempting story—people are fascinated by it, and they were incredibly talented people—but initially I couldn't find a way into it. There are a lot of people much more suited to doing a bio on either of them, people who actually knew them and grew up with them. So when I was offered it, I turned it down because I thought I couldn't do it. Then I read about detective Russell Poole's resignation from the LAPD. I had always wanted to do a film about the Ramparts scandal, but I felt it was almost an academic story that only people who were really interested in the police force would want to follow. When the two stories became married, I thought they would support each other and potentially make an amazing story.

A controversial film can raise questions and reveal secrets about the world we live in. I think that we will have much better answers once David Mack, Amir Muhammed, and Rafael Perez are properly questioned about their involvement in the hits. Certainly I have questions about Suge Knight—why he lied about the bullet in his head, why he got Frank Alexander to lie about the shooting in the casino; lots of strange things that don't add up. Accusing someone of murder is a very specific allegation, but there are a lot of things that just don't fit. As a filmmaker, it is important to present those things and to push them hard enough that someone else will take them up in the appropriate areas.

Nick Broomfield's films include Kurt & Courtney, Heidi Fleiss: Hollywood Madam, *and* Aileen Wournos: The Selling of a Serial Killer. Biggie & Tupac *opens this month.*

Ann Lewinson has written about the arts and popular culture for Stagebill *and* Citysearch. *Her fiction has appeared in P.S.1's Special Projects Writers Series.*

Moviemaker Master Class: Private Lessons from the World's Foremost Directors
By Laurent Tirard
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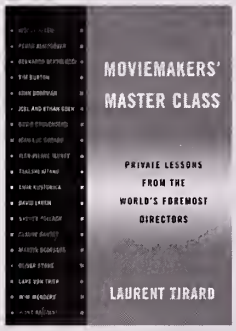
REVIEW BY MARY SAMPSON

IN AN INTERVIEW WHICH WOULD ULTIMATELY wind up as part of this book, David Lynch acknowledges a former teacher as having had "the ability to inspire and stimulate students..." No doubt Laurent Tirard intended exactly that effect on the readers of his first book, a compilation of interviews he conducted with twenty well-known film directors. Whether or not he succeeds is mostly a matter of how much filmmaking experience the reader brings to the book.



Tirard, who spent seven years as a film critic for the French film magazine *Studio*, interviewed each director as a part of a series for the publication and has reprinted the articles in English for a wider audience. The selection of the interviewees was based partly on a list of directors Tirard (a graduate of NYU film school) believes are the most influential in the world of film today, and partly on the circumstance that these twenty directors happened to come through France promoting their films during the time that Tirard was writing for *Studio*. This combination of convention and convenience helps explain why the interviewees are all male and predominantly white.

In *Moviemaker Master Class: Private Lessons from the World's Foremost Directors*, each director responds to the same questions, beginning with the strange query as to whether or not he has ever taught at a film school. (It is hard to imagine why any reader would care.) The interviews then settle down to more relevant topics, such as how the director chooses camera angles, how he works with actors, and what, in his opinion, makes a good film.

Tirard is a master interviewer. Each director is given the freedom to digress while answering the question posed to him. And the result is a rich, personality-revealing read on the art of filmmaking. Journalistic credit must also go to Tirard for including Woody Allen in this book, even though Allen offers up a disturbingly convincing argument that directing cannot be taught. "Just follow your instinct," he suggests, "and if you have talent, it won't be hard. And if you don't, it will be impossible."

And because Tirard has cleverly arranged the interviews according to when the directors came into their own as filmmakers, a good deal of commercial film history can be gleaned from the context. For example, it was not terribly long ago that Sydney Pollack was making Hollywood financed films in order to find out what it was he wanted to say. But four interviews later, Martin Scorsese describes a different reality: "You can experiment with $1 million, but with $40 million, I don't think so."

Each director's answers vary enough from the others that their opinions seem genuine. The one glaring exception comes in response to the question, should the director of a film write his own screenplay? Nearly all answer effusively that, in one form or another, a director should. This auteur theory coincidence, combined with Tirard's placement of Jean Luc Godard in a category by himself, makes it all too easy to imagine that some of the opinions expressed here were tailored to fit the ego of the original audience.

Worse, while much ado is made regarding the rules of filmmaking, and about that famous abstraction called "the language of film," neither Tirard nor the directors explain what they mean by these terms. So it is difficult to discern what rules a director follows, which ones he breaks, or even if all the directors are talking about the same thing. Far too often, questions of technique are answered with the word "instinct," and those regarding theory elicit only impenetrable generality. Tirard's too few footnotes are equally disappointing. An appendix would have been much more helpful.

Tirard's original motivation for conducting these interviews, as he explains in the preface, was to learn from directors he wishes he had encountered while in film school. At the same time, he needed to provide engaging text to the readers of a celebrity-spangled magazine. This dichotomy of purpose results in a book that should prove useful to someone who possesses a large amount of knowledge of film theory and technique, and will prove entertaining to someone who possesses none. Anyone falling in between these two circumstances will find these lessons more discouraging than inspiring and more frustrating than stimulating.

Mary Sampson is a writer and editor living in New York City.

Projections 12: Film-makers on Film School
Edited by John Boorman, Fraser MacDonald, Oren Moverman, and Walter Donohue
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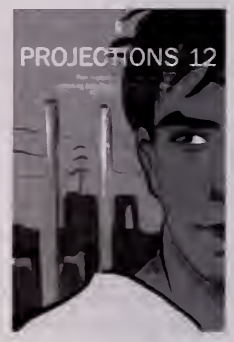
www.fsgbooks.com

REVIEW BY ELIZABETH PETERS

THE PROJECTIONS SERIES OF BOOKS celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. Originally subtitled, "A Forum for Film Makers," the series was started by director John Boorman and Faber and Faber film collection editor Walter Donohue "so that film-makers may reflect on their concerns with as much honesty as they can muster—and speak directly to their fellow practitioners." The intent was to publish one volume a year, providing an album of snapshots of an evolving landscape.



Boorman and company have actually produced twelve volumes over the past ten years. Each issue of the series contains an eclectic array of filmmaker interviews and essays, and one longer-form diary piece; about ten to twenty-five essays in all. Subjects and writers are almost exclusively male, white, and successful in independent circles. In recent years, the series has moved to organizing around themes: animation, the state of film criticism, Hollywood. This most recent edition devotes two-thirds of its pages to film schools, exploring the question: After three decades of nurturing successive generations of cinematic talent, do film schools still have a place in the digital era?

To examine this theme up close, Boorman brought on two guest editors: Fraser MacDonald, who earned a master's degree from Britain's National Film and Television School; and on our side of the

pond, Oren Moverman, who explores Columbia University and the film school culture of the East Coast. Each of the guest editors conducted a series of interviews with educators, working professionals, and current students, probing the culture of film school and its relative value.

These interviews pave an avenue of intimacy that transports a convoy of opinions: Collaboration is essential. Passion is paramount. Don't get subsumed by technical elements. Craft a good story and know how to present it. Have confidence.

The composite take on the nature of learning filmmaking in school goes something like this: A bunch of mature individuals come together knowing nothing about the subject. They have a vast body of technical knowledge and history to assimilate; the process is obstructed by preconceptions and learned behaviors. They work in a closed environment. Creativity and interpersonal relations roil for three years. Tens of thousands of dollars are on the line. Hopefully, the process is like fire for a phoenix: The student's old form is seared off and they emerge glistening in new feathers of possibility.

The issue is rounded out with profiles of four directors and Peter Weller's diary of working with Michelangelo Antonioni, as well as less conventional inclusions: fiction by Ethan Hawke, excerpts from the *Waking Life* coloring book, a poem for Henri Alekan by Wim Wenders.

I am a fan of the series, but counter to my expectations, I found *Projections 12* profoundly depressing. Perhaps it was the sense that the more things change, the more they stay the same, or maybe it was finishing with Ethan Hawke's fiction contribution that illuminates just how tawdry the tinsel can be. I rifled the pages looking for inspiration, and instead found myself more and more annoyed at the particular hubris of a class of young men who deem themselves important because someone wants to hear their story.

Projections 12 makes good fare for anyone debating the merits of investing in school over investing directly in a film project. And the series continues to deliver a feast for obsessive cineastes. I only hope that future offerings will help round out the menu.

Elizabeth Peters is director of AIVF and publisher of The Independent.

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Using Film, Music, and TV Clips

The perils and pitfalls of copyrights licensing

BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

MANY MEDIAMAKERS, ESPECIALLY DOCUMENTARIANS, contact me concerning the use of pre-existing film and television clips in their projects. I usually have to caution them that they are about to enter into a quagmire that is the legal version of "Where's Waldo?"

A single clip from a movie or television program can raise a plethora of clearance issues, especially if the clips come from studios and networks. The key issue is who owns the rights to the clip. The owner is generally the producer of the project from which the clip is taken by the mediamaker. But often the producer has either transferred the project's rights or produced the project for another party, leading a mediamaker who wishes to use it to have seek out a studio, network, independent distributor, foreign sales agent, cable company, or television station to license a clip. Some companies are willing to work with mediamakers in securing the rights to a clip, while other conglomerate-type entities often refuse to license the clip unless they know that the mediamaker can afford the clip's license fee or there is an assurance that the mediamaker's project has some form of guaranteed distribution, whether in theaters, on television, or home video/DVD. Clip licensors try to limit the number of licenses they provide because it is believed that over licensing a clip can decrease its value for future licenses.

Clip license fees can be for one lump sum for all media, whether now known or hereafter devised, throughout the world or universe, and in perpetuity. Since the license fees for such clips can be expensive, mediamakers can enter into clip licenses for certain rights (such as television, home video/DVD, and/or theatrical) for certain territories (such as US, North America, Europe, etc.), and for a certain period of time (twenty years). If the mediamaker's project goes beyond those designated markets, media, and time limit, a mediamaker can pay additional monies to a clip licensor by exercising a series of options to broaden the licenses. In the long run, the cost of securing a clip license in pieces is generally more expensive than a single payment, but it requires a smaller initial investment.

Before deciding whether to secure clip licenses by a single payment or in steps, mediamakers must discern whether potential sales agents, distributors, and licensees of the mediamaker's project will accept a project with a clip that is not licensed for the time frame, territory, and media that they are involved with. Not having a broad clip license may drop the price of a project or even become a deal-breaker. It is important to discuss the state of the clip licenses as early as possible in any negotiation for the project to see if a deal is possible.

If a clip contains music of any sort, the mediamaker must license the music separately. There are two types of musical licenses. One is for clips that are played over or in sync with the project's visual images, called a "synchronization license." Another covers a specific performance of the music and are called "master-use" licenses. Synchronization licenses are generally secured from the musical composition's copyright owner(s) or publisher(s). Master-use licenses are procured from the copyright owner of a sound recording, often the record company that released the sound recording or whoever owns the rights to the specific sound recording. Music rights require the same negotiation and licensing process as the clip itself, including time limits, media, and territories.

If musicians from such unions as the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) have performed on the sound recording used in the clip, they too will have to be tracked down and paid a union-regulated fee, because using he clip goes beyond the music's intended use, such as the soundtrack of a film or television show.

Depending on when the movie or television program was produced and released or aired, the mediamaker may have to make payments to talent unions for their members' performances. Traditionally, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) represents actors in film and television shows on film, and the America Federation of Television and Recording Artists (ATFRA) represents performers on taped programming. But with the growing use of digital video for motion picture features and television projects, this is too broad and simplistic a distinction. The mediamaker should be careful to ensure that he or she is speaking to the correct union.

Since a clip may contain the work of screenwriters and directors who are often members of the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and the Directors Guild of America (DGA), mediamakers should be prepared to deal with these unions, that each have minimum rates for the use of their members' works. Even if a mediamaker can afford to pay such new-use fees, the union member's consent may be required. If the union member refuses to give consent or

A single clip from a movie or television program can raise a plethora of clearance issues, especially if the clips come from studios and networks.

requests an exorbitant amount of compensation, the mediamaker must be prepared to pay such compensation or eliminate the clip from their project or find a suitable replacement.

Many mediamakers believe that securing these separate licenses to use a film or television clips can be avoided by invoking the "fair use" doctrine defense to copyright infringement. But the "fair use" defense generally does not extend to the issue of whether a union member, performer, writer, or director is entitled to compensation, since that issue does not concern copyright. Under US copyright law, the fair use defense is a four-part test that depends on the facts and circumstances of the use:

(1) the purpose and character of the use, whether it is for commercial, nonprofit, or educational use

(2) the nature of the copyrighted work, such as whether it was unpublished or published

(3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole

(4) the effect of the use of the work upon the potential market for or the value of the work.

In one recent court case, the rights holders of the movies *Invasion of the Saucerman*, *Aliens Invade Hollywood*, *I was a Teenage Werewolf*, and *I was a Teenage Frankenstein* brought a lawsuit against the producers of the documentary *It Conquered Hollywood: The Story of American International Pictures*, and American Movie Classics, which aired the documentary. A New York federal court ruled that the use of clips from such movies did not constitute copyright infringement and was protected under the fair use doctrine. The court understood that the use of the film clips was not to enhance the marketability of the project but was to provide a cultural, social, and political commentary on the "alien visitation" genre that was a staple of American International Pictures' film roster during the 1950's and 1960's.

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Another recent court case concerned the use of less than twenty seconds from the film *The Story of G.I. Joe* as part of obituaries for Robert Mitchum, aired by such networks as CNN, ABC and CBS within twenty-four hours after the actor's death. A New York federal court found that the use of a film clip from that movie for nine to twenty seconds, depending on the network, constituted fair use. The use of the clip in these television news segments was to show the late actor's acting skills in a performance in which he was nominated for an Academy Award and not to usurp the marketability of the film.

Many mediamakers believe that securing these separate licenses to use a film or television clip can be avoided by invoking the "fair use" doctrine defense to copyright infringement.

These decisions may seem to be a victory for mediamakers who wish to use such clips in their projects, but it should be noted that these cases are on appeal and that an extensive amount of time, effort, and money was spent to obtain these court decisions and neither of them addressed the issue of performers' rights. These decisions are not a substitute for recognizing and addressing the licensing issues before placing a film or television clip in your project.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a partner in the Daniel, Seigel & Bimbler, LLP law firm. He specializes in the representation of clients in the entertainment and media areas. For further information, contact Robert via e-mail: Rlsentlaw@aol.com or rseigel@DSBLLP.com.

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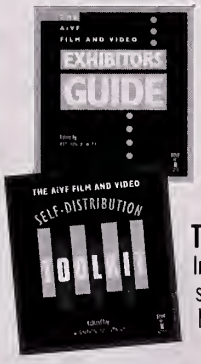

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THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

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Opening With Style

Using Photoshop to design professional-looking titles

BY GREG GILPATRICK

AS ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN TO MANY festivals or film school screenings can attest, for most independent and student filmmakers, title design is a rushed process at the end of a busy editorial cycle. While it may be easy to type titles and credits into the standard titling tool in a nonlinear editing application, the end result usually looks only a step above the character generators built into consumer home video cameras. Usually the title is the very first image an audience sees in a film, and as we all know, first impressions count the most.

Even if you do not have the resources to create a stunningly animated title sequence, a simple edit of title cards can be effective if they are designed with care. However, to design type effectively usually requires the use a separate program that is intended for the obsessive needs of graphic designers. For video, that program is usually Photoshop (Adobe, $599, www.adobe.com). To take advantage of Photoshop's design prowess there are a few tricks to ensure that the work will look right on a television monitor.

Designing text for video in a non-video-specific application requires a few extra steps because of the unique way that televisions display images. The following tips use Photoshop as the primary example for the design application, but should work for any bitmap image editing and design application. My examples here are also primarily for NTSC DV/DVD resolution video, although other interlaced resolutions and formats are also applicable.

The first issue to be aware of when using Photoshop to design titles that are destined for video is the difference between computer and television monitors. Each monitor breaks images into tiny pixels that display the image. Computer monitors' pixels are perfectly square while television pixels are rectangular. Titles and images created on a computer can appear "stretched" when displayed on a television if this difference is not taken into account.

Although some editing programs allow you to specify the pixel shape, or "pixel ratio," for imported files, a much simpler way to ensure that your Photoshop designs are displayed correctly on video is to create them at a nonstandard size and

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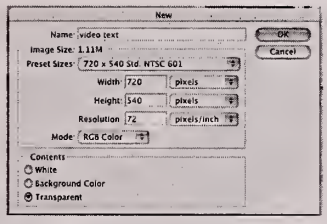
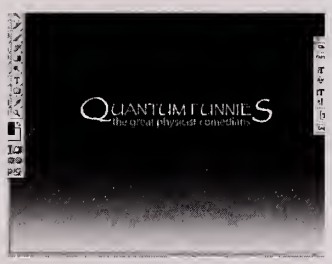
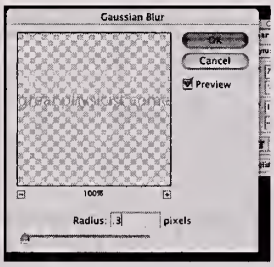


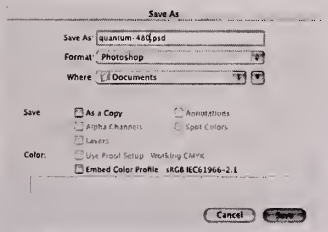
1 Create a new Photoshop document at 720 x 540 pixels at 72 dpi in RGB color.



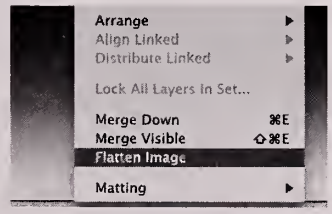
2 Create your text and images. Don't employ any very thin lines or super-saturated colors.



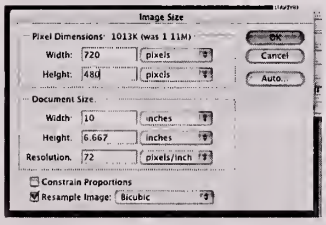
3 Blur your elements with a slight Gaussian blur.



4 Save a new version of your file.



5 Flatten the layers of your image into a single layer.



6 Resize the image to 720 x 480 and save it in the appropriate format.

To utilize the type, import the image into your editing program, and it will look great when shown on a TV monitor.

then resize to them video resolution once you are done. For example, to create titles in Photoshop that will look right when shown on NTSC D1/601-size video, create a new Photoshop document with a width of 720 pixels and height of 540 pixels (Note: It should be 720 x 536 for NTSC MiniDV/DVD). Once you have finished your design, go to the image menu and select "image size." In there, uncheck the "keep proportion" option and change the image size to 720 x 480, which is the size of DV and DVD video. Although it will look strange in Photoshop now, your file will look correct when seen on a video monitor. Make sure that you keep the original 720 x 540 file, because you will have to use that to make any adjustments.

Besides the issue of pixel shape, the other major issue facing text designers is how to deal with the quirky ways that televisions respond to images with lines that are very thin, colors that are too bright, or sudden contrast between two elements. Designers that are used to the relative freedom of print design may chafe at the number of restrictions that video imposes upon text design, but these restrictions can be easily met if the designer follows a few simple guidelines. First, don't use a font that has small, thin elements to it because, due to video interlacing, very thin lines may look like they vibrate on a television screen. If you just have to use a font with thin lines, use a larger version of it.

Second, depending on color usage and design, there may be some vibration on the screen at points, with a sharp edge between contrasting colors. To remedy this, a slight blur will help. I've found that a slight Gaussian blur set between 0.5 and 1 pixel helps, without noticeable blurring. The point of blurring is not to make text look less sharp, but to make the transition between contrasting colors smoother. Another option you might try is to blur just the edges by hand with the Blur tool.

Video can display a wide range of colors, but it's best to work with colors that are not too bright. Don't pick colors at full brightness or saturation. Also, make use of Photoshop's NTSC video filter that adjusts colors to make them "video legal."

Lastly, don't forget about the title and action safe areas of a television. Most televisions do not display all of the video signal, so video text designers need to make sure to stay inside the title safe area. Although Photoshop does not have a built-in title safe area overlay, there are several websites that have Photoshop templates for download. (Try a search on google.com for "title safe Photoshop.")

Some nonlinear editing programs can import Photoshop files directly (including Final Cut Pro and Premiere) but even if yours cannot, just about every program can import an image format such as JPEG or TIFF. Make sure that your image is in the RGB color space and 72 dpi. Although some video programs will import Photoshop's layer information, unless you plan on animating your text (a process too complicated to detail here), flatten the layers of your image by going into the layers menu and selecting "flatten layers." Make sure that you keep a working copy of your file with layers intact so you can still edit it later.

Designing titles in Photoshop is most effective for tiles that are still or have a minimum of animation to them. For title crawls, it is best to use the software that is included in most editing programs. Due to video interlacing, it is difficult to animate text with vertical movement, and it is best left to programs that are designed specifically for title crawls.

These guidelines will help somebody who is familiar with type design in Photoshop or another design program create titles for video. How to be a good designer is a different subject. If you are unaccustomed to the ways of type design, I strongly suggest consulting one of the many available introductory texts. I found Robin Williams' *The Non-Designer's Design Book* (Peachpit Press, $14.95) to be a fine introduction to the art of type design; it includes information on myriad topics, such as kerning and font selection.

If you don't feel like gaining an impromptu education in type design, try to find a print designer to create your titles. Many designers are interested in moving to designing for video and would appreciate experience on a real project—so they may not ask for much money in return. If you do find a designer who is new to video, start them out by giving them this article so they know how to prepare their work.

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact Greg, send an e-mail to greg@randomroom.com.

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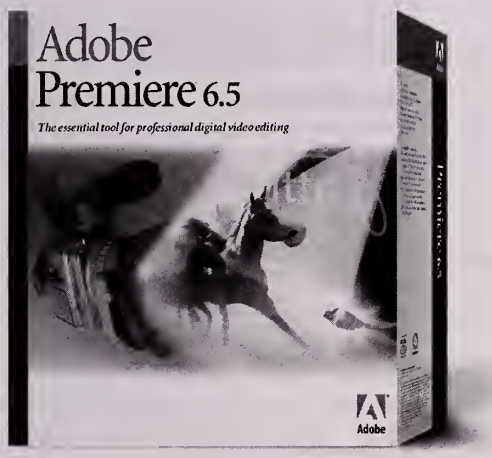
Premiere 6.5 Rounds Out Real-Time Effects Options



ADOBE HAS INTRODUCED AN UPDATE TO Premiere, its popular nonlinear video editing program. The update adds support for Mac OS X and Windows XP operating systems, furthers integration with DVD authoring and internet video compression, and adds new titling capabilities. Premiere 6.5 also adds real-time effects that can be previewed without a lengthy render time.

Similar to the real-time capabilities introduced in the past few months in Avid Xpress DV and Apple's Final Cut Pro, Premiere's real-time filters and transitions allow the addition of effects that can be previewed on the computer screen immediately. However, like the other desktop editing programs, all the effects need to be rendered before they can be seen on a video monitor or recorded to tape.

Adobe has focused on adding options and tools to complement Premiere's standard editing functions, which largely remain the same. Much of this update to Premiere comprises third-party products that allow greater flexibility in creating and publishing video content.

For audio, Premiere now includes SmartSound Quicktracks, an automated music creation system, and TC Works' SparkLE, which provides expanded audio editing functions. For Windows users, Premiere has a tool for compressing and exporting RealVideo format media for the internet. The Mac version uses the standard QuickTime export controls for internet media. The Windows version of Premiere includes a copy of Sonic DVDit! LE for creating basic DVD's, while for Mac users, Premiere includes an option to send video to iDVD.

Premiere 6.5 is available now and costs $649, or $150 for those upgrading from a previous version. See www.adobe.com.

— *Greg Gilpatrick*

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FILM & ELECTRONIC MEDIA POSITION. The Program in Film and Video Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, invites applications for a three-year, non-tenure track, Lecturer III position (renewable) in film and electronic media production beginning September 1, 2003. Teaching responsibilities consist of three courses each semester, including a broad introduction to film, video, and television production. Other courses may include 16mm film production, digital video and/or the use of multi-media platforms. Service focused at the departmental level expected. Candidates should possess an MFA or the equivalent, a proven teaching record of excellence, and a portfolio of work demonstrating a commitment to moving image media as an art form. The Program in Film and Video Studies integrates theory and practice within a liberal arts context. Applicants should submit a letter of interest, vita, statement of teaching philosophy, samples of recent creative work, proof of effective teaching, and three reference letters to: Chair, Film/Media Production Search Committee, University of Michigan, Program in Film and Video Studies, 2512 Frieze Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48109-1285. Review of candidates will begin November 15, 2002, and continue until the position is filled. The University of Michigan is a non-discriminatory/affirmative action employer.

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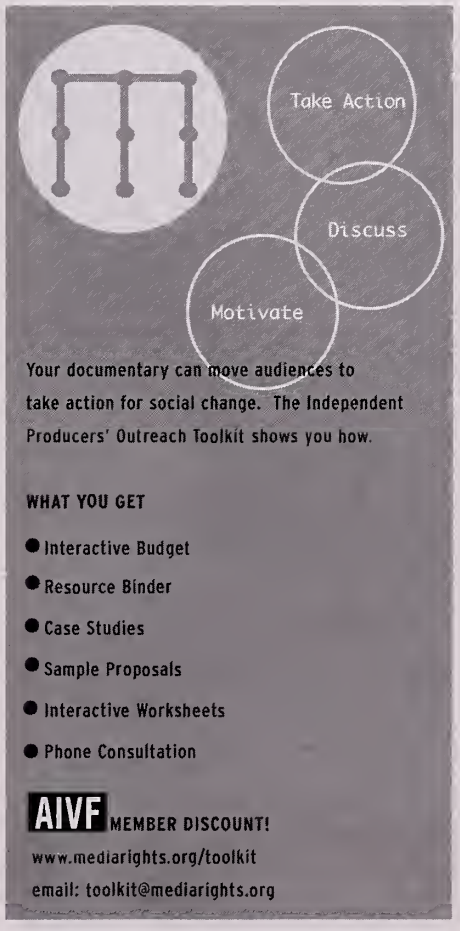

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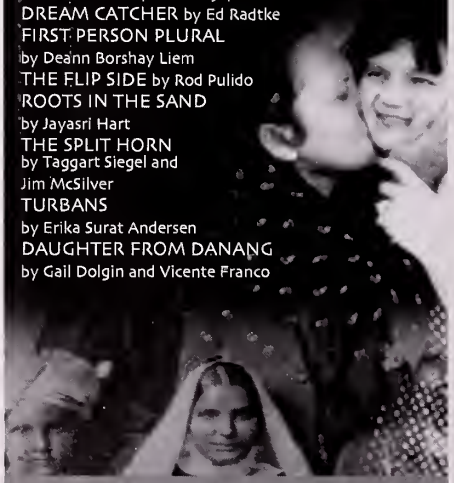

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Domestic

ASPEN SHORTSFEST, April 9–13, CO. Deadline: Nov. 17 (early), Jan. 5 (final). Fest is a premiere int'l competitive showcase for short films (30 mins & less). Fest seeks entries of originality, integrity & technical excellence. Student & int'l entries also welcome. Founded: 1992. Cats: comedy, short, animation, children, doc, drama, student, comedy. Awards: cash prizes total $20,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 70mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (early), $45 (final). Contact: Prima Trenton, 110 East Hallam, Suite 102, Aspen, CO 81611; (970) 925-6882; fax: 925-1967; shortsfest@aspenfilm.org; www.aspenfilm.org/shortsfest.

BLACK MARIA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, January–June, NJ. Deadline: Nov. 17. The Black Maria seeks to "identify, exhibit & reward compelling new independent media, reach audiences in a wide variety of settings nationwide & advocate exceptional achievement that expands the expressive terrain of film & video." Featured works are screened at over 65 venues throughout U.S. & Canada. Program also cablecast to 250,000 subscribers. Entries must have been completed within previous 3-1/2 yrs & may be up to 70 min. Founded: 1980. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Jurors' Choice Works (share $2,500); Jurors' Citation Works (share $2,000); Directors Choice Works (share $1,000); plus winners share $5,000+ in exhibition honoraria. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (shorts, 30 min. or less); $45 (features, 30–70 min.). Contact: John Columbus, Dept of Media Arts, Jersey City State College, 2039 West Side Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07305; (201) 200-2043; fax: 200-3490; blackmariafest@aol.com; www.black mariafilmfest.com.

BROOKLYN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 28–May 4, NY. Deadline: Oct. 15; Feb. 15 (late). Annual fest (formerly The Williamsburg Brooklyn Film Festival) held at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Incl. Q&A sessions, panel discussions & live broadcast over the Internet. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation. Awards: "Grand Chameleon Award" ($30,000 in services). Winners in each cat will be awarded the "Chameleon" statuette. Formats: All formats accepted, 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, Super 8, 8mm, Hi8, DV, DVD, Beta, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS (nonreturnable). Entry Fee: $20; $50 (late). Contact: Mario Pego, 180 South 4th St., Ste. 2-S., Brooklyn, NY 11211; (718) 388-4306; fax 599-5039; mario@wbff.org; www.wbff.org.

CINEQUEST FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 27–March 9, CA. Deadline: Oct. 12 (short); Oct. 31 (feature). Founded in 1990, "Maverick Filmmaking" is annual theme of fest, which showcases an eclectic mix of indie films. Competitive for features, docs & shorts. Maverick features & shorts of artistic, social, or stylistic merit eligible. Founded: 1990. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Maverick Spirit Award, Best Feature, Best Documentary, Best Short, Audience Choice, Best First Feature. Formats: digital, 35mm, 16mm, DV, Beta, digital, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35. Contact: Mike Rabehl, Programming, P.O. Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172; (408) 995-5033; fax (408) 995-5713; info@cinequest.org; www.cinequest.org.

CLEVELAND INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, March 20–30, OH. Deadline: Sept. 30 (early); Nov. 30 (final). Fest is one of Ohio's premiere film events. Presenting approx. 80 new features from around world in various cats & more than 100 shorts presented in collected programs. Film forums follow selected films, giving audiences opportunity to discuss films w/ filmmakers, critics & other guest panelists. The Midwest Independent Filmmakers Conference is held during last weekend of fest. Unique programs incl. Cultural Journeys & FilmSlam (high school student fest). Submissions must have been completed after Jan. 1 of previous yr. & not previously submitted. Works-in-progress not eligible. Founded: 1977. Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, feature, short, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35/$45 (short, under 30 min); $50/$60 (mid length, 30–60 min.); $65/$75 (features, over 60 min). Contact: William Guentzler, 2510 Market Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44113-3434; (216) 623-3456,ext. 11; fax: (216) 623-0103; cfs@clevelandfilm.org; www.clevelandfilm.org.

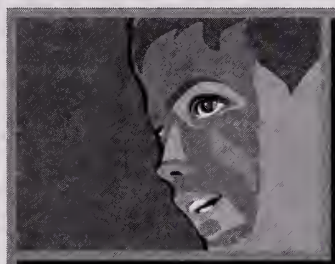
KANSAS CITY FILMMAKERS JUBILEE, April 1–6, KS. Deadline: Dec. 1 (early); Jan. 15 (final). Annual event open to domestic & int'l short films 30 min. or less. With screenings, seminars, receptions, jazz and BBQ, the fest promises "a laid-back environment where filmmakers can mix, share and celebrate their hard work and creativity." Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, 8mm, underground. Awards: Top film in each genre will win at least $1,000 of cash or prizes. Fest awarded over $66,000 in cash & prizes in the last four years. Formats: all formats accepted. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $25 (final). Contact: KCFJ, 4826 W. 77th Terrace, Prairie Village, KS 66208; (913) 649-0244; kcJub@kcjubilee.org; www.kcjubilee.org.

KEY WEST INDIE FEST, April 18–21, FL. Deadline: Nov. 30; Dec. 31 (late). An int'l event showcasing the best independent films & screenplays in the world—by the sea! Companion event w/ Telluride IndieFest (Labor Day) All genres acceptable. Limiting entries to 1,000 (total of all films, videos & screenplays). Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre, script. Entry Fee: $45 (1–10 min./pages); $50 (11–30 min./pages); $55 (31–60 min./pages); $60 (61–120 min./pages); Late entries (December 1–31) add $10. Contact: Micheal Carr, 415 Mountain Village Blvd. #1031, Telluride, CO 81435; (970) 728-3747; fest@keywestindiefest.com; www.keywestindiefest.com.

KIDFILM, January 6–21, TX. Deadline: October 18. Presented by the USA Film Festival, KidFilm is the oldest & largest children's film fest in the US. From regional premieres of high-profile films to shorts made by independent producers, KidFilm presents the best contemporary & classic children's films from around the world. Founded: 1984. Cats: short, feature. Awards: Incl. $1,000 prizes for narrative, nonfiction, animation & exp. Plus $250 Jury Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Nancy Fallen, USA Film Festival, 6116 N. Central Expressway, Ste. 105, Dallas, TX 75206; (214) 821-6300; fax 821-6364; info@usafilmfest.com; www.usafilmfest.com.

NEW YORK INT'L CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, March, NY. Deadline: Oct. 15. Competitive fest screens 50 new works, shorts & features; screen to an est. audience of 12,000 children ages 3–18, parents, filmmakers & media execs. Plus workshops, panels, sidebar events & presentations. Accepting passionate, creative work that doesn't speak down to children: shorts, docs, animation & more. Foreign language films must be subtitled in English. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media, family, children. Awards: competitive. Formats: Beta SP (PAL or NTSC), 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL, SECAM). Entry Fee: $75 (feature, 45 min. or longer); $50 (short, under 45 min.); $25 (student). Contact: Emily Shapiro, 295 Greenwich St. #426, New York, NY 10007; (212) 528-0500; fax: 528-8317; info@gkids.com; www.gkids.com.

NO DANCE FILM & MULTIMEDIA FESTIVAL, Jan. 18–24, UT. Deadline: Nov. 15. Alternative film fest based in Park City, Utah, during Sundance. Nodance caters to first-time filmmakers & digital filmmaking. Nodance screens all competition films on DVD. Founded: 1998. Cats: doc, feature, script, short, animation, music video. Awards: Grand Jury, Audience, & Golden Orbs Awards. Formats: DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30. Contact: James Boyd, 703 Pier Avenue #675, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254; (310) 937-6363; boyd@nodance.com; www.nodance.com.



Discover Your Inner Child

One of the few festivals geared towards children from three to eighteen, the New York International Children's Film Festival continues to be an immensely popular event. Last year's sold-out festival show-cased groundbreaking work, including Bob Sabiston's animated documentary *Snack & Drink* (pictured), which is part of the permanent collection of the New York Museum of Modern Art. This year's edition promises fifty new films in competition, along with premieres, workshops, and retrospectives. See Listing.

George Lindsey
UNA Television & Film Festival

George says "hey" and invites professional, student and faculty entries for the 6th annual festival in April 2003 in the following categories:

Narrative - Full-length & Short
Documentary - Full-length & Short
Music videos

For more information, call the University of North Alabama at
(256) 765-4592
or see the website at
www2.una.edu/universityrelations/festivalindex.htm
The email address is: filmfest@una.edu
Deadline for entries - February 28, 2003

Register online

Call for Entries

46th San Francisco International Film Festival
April 24–May 8, 2003

ENTRY DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 15, 2002

DOCUMENTARIES, SHORTS, ANIMATION, EXPERIMENTAL AND TELEVISION
Golden Gate Awards
San Francisco International Film Festival
39 Mesa Street, Suite 110
The Presidio
San Francisco, CA 94129 USA
FAX 415-561-5099
gga@sffs.org

NARRATIVE FEATURES
Programming Department
San Francisco International Film Festival
39 Mesa Street, Suite 110
The Presidio
San Francisco, CA 94129 USA
FAX 415-561-5099
programming@sffs.org

SAN FRANCISCO
FILM SOCIETY

www.sffs.org

ROCHESTER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 2–4, NY. Deadline: Nov. 30 (early); Feb. 15 (final). Annnual fest is the longest-running film event dedicated to the art of short film & video. Each fest incls. a wide variety of original & imaginative works by film students, advanced amateurs, & professional filmmakers from all over the world. Open to all films & videos completed since Jan. 1 of previous yr. & under 30 min. in length. Founded: 1959. Cats: any style or genre, shorts; no music videos or installations. Awards: hand-made Shoestring Trophies. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", 35mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $30 (final). Contact: Movies on a Shoestring, Box 17746, Rochester, NY 14617; (716) 234-7411; President@RochesterFilmFest.org; www.RochesterFilmFest.org.

SAN FRANCISCO INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Feb.6–16, CA. Deadline: Nov. 1 (postmark). Annual fest seeks features & shorts to compete for audience awards for best feature, best short, best animation & prize awarded to the IndieFest staff favorite. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, animation, short, doc. Awards: Audience award for best feature & short, doc & narrative; plus IndieFest staff favorite. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Shorts $20; features $30. Contact: SFIndieFest, 530 Divisadero St. #183, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 820 3907; info@sfindie.com; www.sfindie.com.

SLAMDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 18–25, CA. Deadline: Aug. 30 (early); Oct. 11 (final); Anarchy online section has year-round rolling deadline; Screenplay comp: June 15. Started by 3 filmmakers in 1995, fest's primary objective is to present new indie films by new filmmakers. Fest runs concurrent w/ Sundance Film Festival & takes place in the heart of Park City, Utah. Films showcased attract industry interest & several have received distrib. & agency rep. Founded: 1995. Cats: Short, Doc, Feature, Animation, Experimental, Any style or genre. Awards: Awards: $70,000 worth of prizes awarded last yr. for jury & audience awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, DVD, Web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20-$55. Contact: Brent Clarkson, 5364 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038; (323) 466-1786; fax 466-1784; mail@slamdance.com; www.slamdance.com.

WOMEN WITH VISION FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 1–21, MN. Deadline: Oct. 30. Annual fest of film & video by women directors, artists & filmmakers incls. world cinema, American independents, short works & Minnesota youth media. Festival incls. premieres, thematically linked shorts programs, as well as career retros. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media-Minnesota only. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic, DV, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Sheryl Mousley, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN 55403; (612) 375-7615; fax 375-7618; www.walkerart.org.

WORLDFEST HOUSTON INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 4–14, TX. Deadline: Nov 15; Dec 15; Jan 15 (late). WorldFest has reduced the number of films screened to a maximum of 60 feature & 100 short premieres, w/ a total & absolute emphasis on American & Int'l Independent feature films. Fest honors films from Mexico, Canada, France & Germany. Founded: 1961. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, experimental, animation, music video, student, youth media, TV, children, family. Awards: student awards program. Scripts & screenplays also have competition. Over $25,000 in cash, services & equipment awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS, DigiBeta, U-matic, DVD, CD-ROM, Web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40–$90. Contact: Team Worldfest, Entry Director, Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256; (713) 965-9955; fax: (713) 965-9960; mail@worldfest.org; www.worldfest.org.

International

ANIMA (BRUSSELS INT'L FESTIVAL OF CARTOONS & ANIMATED FILMS), Feb. 26–March 9, Belgium. Deadline: Oct. 31. Since 1982, fest has been showcase for new, interesting works in animation, providing opp. to be seen by Belgian film & TV distribs. While noncompetitive, it is one of top 8 European animation fests involved in nominating films that compete for Cartoon d'Or. Close to 34,000 spectators attend hundreds of film premieres, retros & exhibits. Founded: 1982. Cats: animation, long feature, CGI, short, children, feature, experimental, music video, student. Awards: Beligian Competition for Best Short Animated Film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 70mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Francoise Catahala, Folioscope a.s.b.l., Avenue de Stalingrad, 1000 Brussels, Belgium; 011 322 534 4125; fax: 322 534 2279; info@folioscope.be; www.awn.com/folioscope.

BERLIN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 6–16, Germany. Deadline: Nov. 5. One of world's top fests, w/ 14,500 guests attending fest & European Film Market. Fest offers participating filmmakers hospitable environment. Fest divided into sections, each w/ own character & organization. Int'l competition: newly released & unreleased 70mm & 35mm features programmed by invitation of fest director. Sections known for strong programming of US indie films are: Int'l Forum of New Cinema & Panorama (noncompetitive section of official program). Both screen narrative, doc & experimental works. Forum specializes in avant-garde intellectual & political films (60 min. & up, 16mm & 35mm) & also shows more commercial films. Panorama presents wide range of work from low-budget to more commercial ventures, incl. studio films (features & shorts under 15 min., 70mm, 35mm, 16mm). The main criterion for Panorama is the film's second life in Germany, either on TV or commercial distribution. Forum has its own two juries, w/ cash prizes. All entries must be produced in 12 months preceding fest & not released theatrically or on video in Germany. In recent years Independent Feature Project has supported "American Independents at Berlin" program, incl: market booth, message center for U.S. filmmakers & companies, orientation for newcomers & "Showcase of American Independent Films" at market. Notes: All films must have been completed during prior year. Shorts in 16 or 35mm must be under 15 min. Founded: 1959. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, children. Awards: Golden Bear, Silver Bear. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS or Beta SP/PAL or DVD. Entry Fee: $125 (features); $50 (shorts). Contact: BIFF, Int'l Competition, Director: Dieter Kosslick, Potsdamer Strasse 5, Berlin, Germany 10785; 011 49 30 259 20-0; fax: 011 49 30 259 20 499; program@berlinale.de; www.berlinale.de.

CINEMA DU REEL, March 8–17, France. Deadline: Nov. 1. Int'l fest of visual anthropology & social documentation, was set up in 1979 w/ aim of promoting doc cine-

ma. Fest is held at the George Pompidou Centre in Paris & followed by Overview of Ethnographic Films, held at the Musée de l'Homme. Films & videos not released theatrically in France or aired on French TV, & unawarded at other French int'l fests are eligible. Works w/ cinematographic qualities & emphasizing filmmaker's point of view likely for selection; informative docs or news reports not considered. Films must have been completed after Jan. of previous year. Cats: ethnological, doc. Awards: Awards, decided by int'l jury, incl Grand Prix (8,000 euro, approx $8,000), short film prize (2,500 euro), Joris Ivens Prize to young filmmaker (2,500 euro) & Multimedia Author's Society (SCAM) Prize (4,580 euro). Jury of librarians & professionals award the Libraries Prize (6,000 euro for films w/ French version or French subtitles) w/in int'l competitive section or French Panorama & Foreign Affairs Ministry awards, Louis Marcorelles Prize. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fee. Only send entry info for deadline, do not send tape until requested. Contact: Suzette Glenadel, Director, 25, rue de Renard, Paris Cedex 04, France 75197; 011 33 1 44 78 44 21; fax: 33 1 44 78 12 24; cinereel@bpi.fr; www.bpi.fr.

CLERMONT-FERRAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 31–Feb. 8. Deadline: October 19. Festival presents major int'l competition w/ over 50 countries represented, providing a spectacular event of worldwide cinematographic creation, screening over 70 films to enthusiastic audiences. Entries must be 40 min. or less & completed after Jan. 1 of preceding year. Directors invited get accommodations & food allowance paid. Festival also hosts short film market w/ large catalog listing over 3,300 prods. Several buyers have participated over the yrs, incl. Channel 4, Canal+, ZDF, BBC, YLE, La Sept-Arté, France 2; 2,000 professionals attend. Cats: Feature, Doc, Animation, Experimental, Short. Awards: incl. Grand Prix 4,000 E ($3,600); Special Jury Prize; & Audience Choice 4,000 E ($3,600) & Vercingétorix to director. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Michel Raluy & Christian Guinot (int'l), Calmin Borel (digital), La Jetée, 6 place Michel-de-l'Hospital, 63058 Clermont Ferrand Cedex 1, France; 011 33 473 91 65 73; fax: 011 33 473 92 11 93; www.clermont-filmfest.com; info@clermont-filmfest.com.

IMMAGINARIA INT'L LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 27–March 2, Italy. Deadline: October 30. Immaginaria has been organised since 1993 by VISIBILIA, the Lesbian-Feminist Cultural Association founded in Bologna, & numbering several hundred members all over Italy. The Festival team is composed of around 15 women from various parts of the country to present documentaries, fiction, experimental & animation films & videos, directed by women, w/ lesbian and/or feminist contents. Must be Italian premieres. Founded: 1993. Cats: doc, feature, experimental, animation, short. Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, Via Calori 13, Bologna, Italy 40122; 39 051 642 4276; fax: 39 051 642 4276; assclv@iperbole.bologna.it; www2.comune.bologna.it/assclv.

INT'L WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL DORTMUND, March, Germany. Deadline: Nov. Festival organizes every 2 years as an int'l film fest centered on one topical theme which also incls. historical aspects. They highlights those films that came into being largely as a result of women's efforts—either as director, screenwriter, sound technician, camera operator or editor. The fest is a non-competitive framework. Founded: 1987. Cats: Any style or genre. Awards: non-competitive. Formats: All formats accepted, 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Contact: femme totale e.V., c/o Kulturburo Stadt Dortmund, , Kuepferstr. 3, D-44122, Dortmund, Germany; 011 49 231 50 25 162; fax: 011 49 231 50 25 734; info@femmetotale.de; www.femmetotale.de.

NANTES FESTIVAL OF THREE CONTINENTS, Nov. 26–Dec. 7, France. Deadline: October 15. Founded in 1979, fest is a major European competitive forum/showcase for feature length fiction films from Asia, Africa, Latin America & African America. Features 70 films (12 in compet). This was one of the original fests focusing on cinema of the Third World. Founded: 1978. Cats: feature. Awards: Montgolfière d'Or (40,000 ff) & Montgolfière d'Argent. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Philippe & Alain Jalladeau, 19A Passage Pommeraye , B.P. 43302-4403 , Nantes Cedex 1, France; 011 (33-2) 40 69 74 14; fax: 011 (33-2) 40 73 55 22; fest@3continents.com; www.3continents.com.

POITIERS INT'L SCHOOL FILM FESTIVAL, March 11–17, France. Deadline: Nov. 1. Competition selects 60 films from submissions representing almost 200 cinema schools around the world. Multimedia & video are also accepted. Cats: animation, doc, feature, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Contact: Francois Defaye, 38 Boulevard Du Pont Joubert, Poitiers, France 86000; 33 (0)5 49 41 80 00; fax: 33 (0)5 49 41 76 01; fest-poitiers@rihl.org; www.rihl.org.

TRIANGLE TELEVISION LGB INTERNAT'L FILM & VIDEO FEST, February, New Zealand. Deadline: October 31. Triangle was New Zealand's first free-to-air, non commercial UHF television channel that reaches about 85 percent of Auckland's population. Originally a gay initiative to encourage positive images of gay & lesbian people on television, Triangle is now a broadcaster of programming provided by over 30 community groups & organizations each week. The Gay & Lesbian Television Festival presents an int'l perspective & allows filmmakers to reach the broader New Zealand viewing audience. Fest runs on television for 2-3 weeks coinciding w/ New Zealand Pride. Founded: 2001. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media, family, TV, any style or genre. Formats: Beta SP, DV, S-VHS, DV cam, DVC Pro. Preview on VHS (PAL). No entry fee. Contact: Hans Versluys, P.O. Box 78-034, Grey Lyn, Auckland, New Zealand; hans@tritv.co.nz; www.tritv.co.nz.

VICTORIA INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 7–16, Canada. Deadline: Oct. 26. The fest offers high quality films, activities & events, encourages artistic innovation & creativity, provides access for a broad audience segment & is committed to cooperation & collaboration w/ other arts organizations as well as the business community. Interactive programs incl. creative workshops, master classes w/ high profile directors & discussion forums. Founded: 1995. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Best Feature, Best Canadian Feature, Best Doc, Best Short, Best Canadian Short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Entry Fee: $10. Contact: Kathy Kay, 808 View Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1K2; (250) 389-0444; fax: (250) 389-0406; fest@vifvf.com; www.vifvf.com.

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APRIL 11th - 17th, 2003

A celebration of the art of cinema showcasing the best work of exceptional filmakers from around the world. Awards for Best Narrative Feature, Best Documentary, Best Short plus the Audience Choice Award. Deadline for entries is 1 December 2002. Works-in-progress welcome provided final print will be ready by 1 April 2003. See web site for entry form or contact us by phone or fax.

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E-mail: bdafilm@ibl.bm
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NOTICES OF RELEVANCE TO AIVF MEMBERS ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE AS SPACE PERMITS. THE INDEPENDENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH AND MAKES NO GUARANTEES ABOUT REPETITIONS OF A GIVEN NOTICE. LIMIT SUBMISSIONS TO 60 WORDS & INDICATE HOW LONG INFO WILL BE CURRENT. DEADLINE: 1ST OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G., NOV. 1 FOR JAN./FEB. ISSUE). COMPLETE CONTACT INFO (NAME, ADDRESS & PHONE) MUST ACCOMPANY ALL NOTICES. SEND TO: NOTICES@AIVF.ORG. WE TRY TO BE AS CURRENT AS POSSIBLE, BUT DOUBLE-CHECK DETAILS BEFORE SUBMITTING TAPES OR APPLICATIONS.

Competitions

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: Bridging the gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: 1st place $1,500; 2nd place $1,000; 3rd place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax 475-0193; awards@Hollywoodawards.com; www.Hollywoodawards.com.

COMMUNICATOR AWARDS: Deadline: Nov. 15. Awards program funded by video professionals; honors excellence in commercials, corporate videos, & television productions. Founded in 1995, over 200 categories highlighted, such as, internal & external communications, government, medical, religious, music videos, broadcast news, and cable television. Feature docs, shorts, animation, experimental, script, youth media, student, family, children, any style of genre. Certificates awarded. Formats 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40. Contact: Festival, 2214 Michigan St., Suite E. Arlington, TX 76013; (817) 459-4011; fax: 795-4949; www.communicator-awards.com; tca@imagin.net.

HOLLYWOOD SCREENPLAY CONSULTANTS SCREENWRITING COMPETITION: Finds quality screenplays for Hagan Productions, Inc., to produce & Cine-Vision 2000 to distribute. Seeking low budget (less than $1.5 million) character- or story-driven feature film screenplays. Should be live-action, 1 or 2 locations ideal, 10 or less characters, 90-120 pages. Any genre considered. Cats: feature, short, animation, TV movie, TV miniseries, TV series (currently in production or not). Each entry must not have been sold, optioned, in turnaround, in preproduction or have been produced at time of submitted deadline. Prizes: 1st. place $2,000; 2nd place $1,000; 3rd place $500. A prominent agent, a WGA signatory agency, will consider winners for representation to production companies & the major studios. Top 3 winners will receive free copy of Screen & Stage Play Marketing Secrets by James Russell. Each entry will receive 2-page critique & coverage of their screenplay from HSC. Entry fee: $75 per screenplay. Deadlines: Mar. 1, Sept. 1 & Dec. 1. Contact: 17216 Saticoy Street, #303, Van Nuys, CA 91406; (818) 994-5977; www.swiftsite.com/cine-vision2000.

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST: Provides new, valuable outlets for recognizing & promoting quality scripts of undiscovered writers worldwide. Registered feature films in English; motion picture standard master scene format required. Must be unoptioned, between 90 & 130 pages. Rules & requirements in full detail posted on contest website. Awards: Winning script loglines sent to agents & producers. Winning synopsis published on the Internet & marketed to production companies by Writers Script Network for 6 months. 1 year subscription to Scr(i)pt magazine. Winner's diploma posted on HSI website for 1 month. Entry Fee: $50. Deadline: monthly (postmarked by 15th of each month). Contact: HSI, 1605 Cahuenga Blvd., Ste. 213, Hollywood, CA 90028; 800-SCRIPTS; hwdscreen@aol.com; www.moviewriting.com.

MAN VS. MACHINE: Film/Video-short competition. Concept is designed to contrast the best manmade traditional short films against machine-aided digital shorts. Open to any genre. Winners will be awarded prizes and will enter a juried show held at a New York City venue the second weekend of February 2003. Entries close: Jan. 31. Entry fee: $20. Contact: Take 3 Films, Ste. 306, 7 East 8th St., New York, NY 10003; www.take3films.com.

SCREENWRITING SHOWCASE AWARDS: The 8th Annual $10,000 Screenwriting contest will be held Feb. 15, 2003. The winning scripts will get professional coverage, established industry contracts and also possibly see their script optioned by an independent production company. The $30 entry fee deadline is Oct. 15, the $40 deadline is Dec. 15. Log on to www.screenwritingawards.com to enter.

Conferences • Workshops

NALIP'S 2002 CONFERENCE: Taking The Next Steps: Television, Features, and Media Arts, Nov. 7-10, San Antonio, Texas. The National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) Annual Conference provides the Latino Community inspiration and instruction on the next steps towards success in projects and careers. Through plenary sessions, hands-on workshops, seminars and exhibits of the latest production tools, the Conference will examine what mediamakers must 'do next' in order to advance their films, their skills and their careers, whether they are just beginning or well along in their professional lives. See www.nalip.org.

NAMAC CONFERENCE: Join hundreds of filmmakers, youth producers, media artists, educators, funders, and more to view new work from filmmakers pushing the edges of cultural transformation. Along with that, challenge and debate leaders from dynamic grass-roots organizations and cultural institutions on current issues facing the field. October 2–5 in Seattle, WA. Log on to www.pullfocus.org to register.

PRODUCTIONEAST CONFERENCE: Two-day exhibition and networking event featuring the leading production equipment and services. Vendors include leading manufacturers of cameras, lenses, and lighting equipment, as well as regional services, including equipment rental companies, film and tape resellers, location services, and expendables. Online registration at www.ProductionEAST.com. The conference takes place Oct. 30–31 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center in New York City.

TWN FILM & PRODUCTION WORKSHOP: Commencing its 26th year, the event is a unique "hands-on" program. Workshop emphasizes training & support of people of color who have limited resources & access to mainstream educational institutions & traditional training programs. Intensive six-month, eight-participant, program focuses on preproduction, production & postproduction skills necessary to take a project from conception to completion. Prior film, video, or related experience recommended but not required; self-initiative, time & collaborative spirit is. Initial written app. required & second round of applicants selected for interviews. Cost: $500. Deadline: Jan. 24. Workshop begins early April 2003. For app. visit www.twn.org or send a S.A.S.E. to: Third World Newsreel, Production Workshop, 545 8th Ave., 10th fl., New York, NY 10018. For more info, call (212) 947-9277, x301.

Publications

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: A new literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. *Sanctuary* is devoted exclusively to creative work—thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. Visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com for more information.

Attack of the Shorts

Take 3 Films

Take old-school filmmaking and contrast it against the digital world of video and what do you get? The Man vs. Machine short competition. Sponsored by Take 3 Films, a company specializing in producing and distributing film and video shorts, the shorts will be judged in six categories—animation, music, comedy, documentary, student/amateur, and miscellaneous. Each category will have a winner chosen from film and video. All winners will be flown to New York to stay at the SoHo Grand in lower Manhattan for three days and two nights in February 2003. There they will attend the Take 3 Films launch party, where their films will be screened. There are cash prizes for films of each genre, with the grand-prize winner receiving a distribution deal with Take 3 Films. See Listing.

Films • Tapes Wanted

BIJOU MATINEE: A showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35 leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat. at 2:30 p.m. Submissions should be 25 min. or less. VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com.

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: The excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations and provide a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (773) 289-4261; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com.

THE DREAM SERIES: Seeks challenging social-issue documentaries that promote frank community discussions about issues of racial prejudice and social injustice that fall under the Martin Luther King, Jr., legacy. Selected works are screened for this on-going monthly series at the MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta, GA, and promoted, listed and reviewed in local print. Formats: VHS, Beta. Send nonreturnable VHS screeners to Mark A. Smith, IMAGE Film & Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Suite N-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; mark@imagefv.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA: Located in Madison, WI, Electric Eye is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30- to 90-minute works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts, 10 minutes or less, any genre, to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; for more information go to www.prolefeedstudios.com.

FLICKER FILM FESTIVAL: A bimonthly Super 8 and 16mm show which features 12 to 16 new short films by local filmmakers at the Knitting Factory. Film grants, Super 8 stock and $50 worth of Super 8 processing are also raffled off at the show. Find out more at www.flickernyc.com.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals for programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS web page, producing for PBS, for content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax (703) 739-5295; cjones@pbs.org; www.pbs.org/producers.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA: A quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on VHS (NTSC) are sought. Incl. synopsis of work, artist bio & contract info. Ongoing deadline. Tapes are not returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions and other special projects. Contact: Shifting Sands Cinema, c/o Jon Shumway, Art Dept., Slippery Rock Univ., Slippery Rock, PA 16057; (724) 738-2714; jon.shumway@sru.edu.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a nonprofit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHORT FILM SLAM: NYC's only weekly short film competition is looking for submissions. Competition on Sundays at 2 p.m., and at the end of each show the audience votes for a winning film, which receives further screenings at the Pioneer Theater. To enter must have a film, 30 minute or less, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater during operating hours and sign up directly, or get in touch with Jim at (212) 254-7107 or jim@twoboots.com.

THE SHORT LIST: The showcase for int'l short films airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.com. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266, or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

SHOW & TELL: Monthly film, video, music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music, and poetry, this event provides a much-needed venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15–20 minute film/videos. Show & Tell, c.o. Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave. #12H, New York, NY 10473. For more information, call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

SPARK VIDEO INTERNATIONAL: Spark Contemporary Art Space, a collectively run gallery in Syracuse, NY, is currently accepting submissions of short (under 15 min.) art videos for our next programming year (Sept. 2002 to April 2003). All types of independent non-commercial work is accepted. International and domestic submissions are encouraged. All programs will be posted on the web, and all participating artists will be contacted. Accepted formats: VHS and DV. Processing Fee: $5, payable to Jeremy Drummond. Include Synopsis, bio, CV and contact information. SASE required for tape return. Send to: Jeremy Drummond, Spark Contemporary Art Space, 535 Westcott St., Apt. #2, Syracuse, NY 13210. For more info, e-mail jeremydrummond@hotmail.com or call (315) 422-2654.

SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse-area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature-length non-fiction productions in all areas of the special-interest or instructional fields, cutting-edge documentaries, and children and family programming. Also seeking feature-length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural themed products wanted, both fiction and nonfiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot docu-mentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; (315) 454-5608; webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

TOTAL MOVIE MAGAZINE: Wants to see your shorts (under 20 minutes) and feature-length films for possible inclusion on the DVD that goes out with the magazine. Nonexclusive

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rights, filmmakers get paid, wide distribution. Send (NTSC) VHS copy of the work to: Total Movie & Entertainment, Attn: Scott Epstein, 2400 N. Lincoln Ave., Altadena, CA 91001; (626) 296-6360; scott@digitalideations.com.

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting-edge television station from Nantucket Island, Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast. Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

WIGGED.NET: Digital magazine is a showcase, distributor, and promotion center for media artists via the World Wide Web. Seeking works created in Flash and Director, as well as traditional animations and videos under ten minutes to be streamed over the Internet. Deadline: ongoing. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net.

WORKS PRODUCTIONS/WORK SCREENING: Currently accepting submissions of feature and short documentaries and fiction films for programming of its upcoming inaugural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials, including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include a SASE. Contact Julian Rad, Works Productions/Work Screening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com.

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO: Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands. Only NoodleHead Network distributes videos made with kids. Educational videos in all subjects. Check out our distributor FAQ at www.aivf.org/independent and get your students' voices heard. Call (800) 639-5680; www.noodlehead.com.

Resources • Funds

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS: Provide completion funding for educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration also will be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202; arthurvining@bellsouth.net; www.jvm.com/davis.

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in NYC, Richmond, VA & Austin, TX, offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super 8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the Foundation's 2 major programs (human & community sevelopment; global security & sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org.

PORTLAND, OREGON, FILMMAKING GRANTS: Digital Media Education Center of Portland is announcing an open call for submissions for Avid Film Camp program. AFC is a boost to indie feature directors looking to complete their films while offering Avid-authorized training to career editors. Films will also receive free Pro Tools audio finishing & Avid Symphony Online editing. Submissions need to be feature-length projects w/ shooting completed. Projects accepted on a rolling basis. Contact Deborah Cravey, Digital Media Education Center, 5201 SW Westgate Dr., Ste. 111, Portland, OR 97221; (503) 297-2324; deb@filmcamp.com; www.filmcamp.com.

AIVF members can search all benefits, classified, and notice listings with the AIVF interactive resource directory at www.aivf.org/listings

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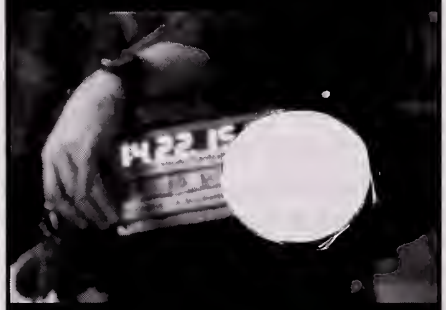

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AIVF BOARD ELECTIONS
Prepare to Vote!

Only active AIVF members are eligible to vote in the AIVF board elections. If your membership expires on or before October 15, 2002, and you do not renew, you will not be able to vote. To verify your membership status or to renew, contact members@aivf.org or call (212) 807-1400 x236.

Nominee statements and ballots will be mailed in late October, and responses are due by Friday, November 29, 2002.

AIVF Co-sponsors

The Chicago International Film Festival

October 4–14; Chicago, Illinois

Special AIVF Program
PITCHING TO THE PROS:
The Art of Verbally Selling Your Project
October 5; Time and Location: tba

Part panel discussion, part practice-pitch session, AIVF's Pitching to the Pros examines the perfect pitch, illustrating how producers can put their best foot forward when verbally presenting their projects to financiers, production companies, and commissioning editors. This event is the perfect opportunity for producers to meet and get advice from industry representatives in acquisitions and development, as well as learn from their peers on the best way to verbally convey their project.

For more information, call (312) 425-0944, or try www.chicagofilmfestival.com.

AIVF Online Salon:
MAPPING THE DISTRIBUTION HIGHWAY
October 8–14

What's up in the world of independent distribution? How do you get your work to an audience? Here is your chance to engage with diverse and passionate folks who navigate the distribution terrain professionally. Log on to an asynchronous conversation with a panel of indies and stalwarts focusing on current trends and conflicts surrounding the distribution of independent media. Panelists to date include reps from Electronic Arts Intermix, Seventh Art Films, and Antidote Films. The on-line conversation will be archived as a future resource.

Moderator Doug Block serves on the AIVF board and hosts a worldwide community of documentary filmmakers at The D-Word, (www.d-word.com). He has offered similar time-specific forums there for mediarights.org and the IFP.

To register, visit www.aivf.org.

In Brief:
LEGAL ADVICE FROM THE PROS

In this popular series, entertainment attorney Innes Smolansky conducts workshops on legal issues facing independent filmmakers. $20/AIVF members; $30/non-members

October 10, 6:30 pm
Production Legal Issues, Guilds and Unions
Discussion will address all types of clearances, including literary clearances, music rights, personal releases, clearing stock footage, and negotiating location permits. Errors and Omissions insurance will also be defined and addressed, as well as legal concerns specific to SAG, WGA, DGA, and IATSE contracts and regulations.

October 22, 6:30 pm
Financing: Public TV and the Nonprofit Sector
Business and legal issues in negotiating contracts with and for public television and the non-profit sector, including agreements for production, coproduction and acquisition. Topics include copyright, distribution rights, income and profit shares, clearances, and union agreements.

AIVF Co-sponsors
NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL
October 10-17th, New Orleans, LA

The 14th Festival will include diverse screenings and The Mentor Sessions; panel discussions and workshops with filmmakers and film advocates. This year's Mentor Sessions will feature discussions about the current state of the media industry. For further information, visit www.neworleansfilmfest.com.

AIVF Co-sponsors
SLAMDANCE FILMMAKER'S BOOTCAMP
October 11-13; Los Angeles Film School Los Angeles, CA

slamdance BOOTCAMP!

The inaugural Bootcamp presents an intense series of workshops and panel discussions designed for first and second time feature filmmakers, covering copyright issues, screenwriting, fundraising, the ins and outs of production crews and unions, technology, publicity, and distribution.

Contact Leslie La Page at (213) 387-3877, or see www.slamdance.com.

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY
HOURS: WED. 11-9; by apt. to AIVF members Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11–6. The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.–Fri. 2–5 p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

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AIVF Co-sponsors
LOS ANGELES SHORT FILM FESTIVAL
October 15–20
The LA Film School

LA Shorts Fest is dedicated to the celebration and cultivation of the short film. Entering its sixth year, LA Shorts Fest is one of the largest Academy-accredited short film festivals in the world. Last year's festival garnered over 1,000 film entries and drew more than 5,000 moviegoers, filmmakers and entertainment executives. See www.lashorstfest.com.

MAESTRO! Celebration of Denver Media Arts
October 18–19; Denver, CO
Denver Center Media Studio

Maestro! Denver, presented in conjunction with the Denver International Film Festival (October 10–20), brings together Denver media artists and organizations and is presented by Denver Center Media, AIVF, and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC) in partnership with Colorado Film and Video Association, Denver Film Society and Free Speech TV. This two-day event, focusing on the role of media in the sociopolitical sphere, is geared to bring together Denver's rich and diverse media making community with meetings, screenings and receptions.

Participants in the panel discussion, Media and Social Change, will include Free Speech TV and other local media advocates, as well as American University Professor Pat Aufderheide, journalist and author of *The Daily Planet: A Critic on the Capitalist Cultural Beat* and *The Threat to the Net*. A second workshop, Filmmaking 101, will provide a crash course in bringing your mediamaking inspiration into production; putting together production teams, budgets, and distribution strategies. The program also includes a Think Tank for Arts Organization Leaders. All of this will be followed by a curated screening of locally produced films and videos aimed at promoting social and political reforms.

For more information and to register, contact Kelly Roy at the Denver Center Media: www.dcpa.org; (303) 572-4477; kroy@dcpa.org. See also presenting organizations www.aivf.org, www.namac.org.

AIVF Co-sponsors
ACME SUMMIT 2002
October 18–20
Albuquerque, New Mexico

The Action Coalition for Media Education, ACME, is a strategic network of educators, activists, students and concerned citizens who are dedicated to creating change in media education through activism. Summit attendees will define how the organization will attain its goals, free from media industry funding, and will brainstorm tangible and positive responses to corporate censorship, commercialism in public schools, gender steroetypes, globalization and more. The Summit is open to anyone concerned about media issues. See www.acmecoalition.org.

PRESENTING FLAHERTY
Screening and reception
October 24, 6 pm
Donnell Media Center, NY Public Library
20 West 53rd Street, Manhattan
r.s.v.p.: See www.flahertyseminar.org

International Film Seminars presents selections from the 48th Robert Flaherty Film Seminar. Flaherty Seminar 2002, curated by Ed Halter, media critic and director of the New York Underground Film Festival, brought to light an exciting and edifying spectrum of work from the world of underground cinema, nonfiction filmmaking, and experimental art. The screening and reception also celebrates the spotlight on the Flaherty in this issue of *The Independent*.

AIVF Co-sponsors
UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL (UNAFF)
October 24–27; Stanford University

The theme for UNAFF 2002 is Humanity is Indivisible. UNAFF celebrates the power of international documentaries, dealing with issues such as human rights, environmental survival, and war and peace, and coming from Australia, China, Colombia, Nepal, Mozambique, Palestine, Peru, and Yugoslavia.

For more information: www.unaff.org; info@unaff.org; phone (650) 725-0012 Jasmina Bojic, festival director.

The AIVF Regional Salons provide an opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons website, www.aivf.org/salons, for more details.

Be sure to contact your local Salon leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesdays, 6:30 pm
Where: Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 366-1538
albany@aivf.org
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesdays, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225, x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Mondays, 7 pm
Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
austin@aivf.org, www.austinfilm.org

Boston, MA:
Center for Independent Documentary
Where: 1608 Beacon Street
Basement of the Waban Public Library
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
boston@aivf.org

Boulder, CO:
"Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesdays, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
boulder@aivf.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursdays, 6:30 pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun Street
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841, or Peter Wentworth, charleston@aivf.org

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org, www.ohiofilms.com

Detailed salon information is posted on the web! Visit **www.aivf.org** for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon programs as well as up-to-date information on programs.

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700
dallas@aivf.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711,
edison@aivf.org, www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:
Contact: Erik Mollberg, (260) 421-1248,
fortwayne@aivf.org

Resources Aplenty at the Lincoln, Nebraska, AIVF Salon

The Lincoln, Nebraska, AIVF Salon has been busy building up resources for the filmmakers in their community. The Film School Library that they are creating includes books, instructional videos, and CD-ROMs on filmmaking. They have also been compiling an equipment library that includes lighting and audio equipment for the low, low rental prices of $5 a day!

The salon has received nonprofit status, so they are now running a fiscal sponsorship program for local independent filmmakers.

The salon presents the biannual Middle of Nowhere Short FIlm Competition, which will take place this month. Jared Minary says they started it, "to give people the motivation to 'just do something' and have an opportunity to have the audience view their work, and maybe even win a prize."

An inventive new focus of the salon is on actors. Since the community is so small in Nebraska, they have decided to include resources for actors in the area. This includes workshops with local directors and producers, a space on the Lincoln, Nebraska, AIVF web page for actor headshots, and information for local directors to browse.

For more information contact:
lincoln@aivf.org
or visit
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesdays, 6:30 pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: Mary Lampe (713) 522-8592,
houston@aivf.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite, huntsville@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Mondays, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
losangeles@aivf.org

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesdays, 7 pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Laura Gembolis, (414) 688-2375
www.mifs.org/salon, milwaukee@aivf.org

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesdays, 7 pm
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: W. Keith McManus, (716) 256-3871
rochester@aivf.org

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
sandiego@aivf.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
Jane Selle Morgan (206) 915-6263
seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Mondays, 6 pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno, tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline
(202) 554-3263, x4
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
washingtondc@aivf.org

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!

First Inspirations

BY JASON GUERRASIO

Nearly every artist can identify certain formative moments when the work of a peer or predecessor struck a chord and changed the way they see their own work. For some documentarians, it may have been a film that showed them how to tell a story. For others, a book, perhaps, that taught them the purpose of their filmmaking. Whatever the medium and whatever the message, every artist interacts and draws inspiration from the body of work produced by their artistic forbearers and contemporaries. This month we asked ten documentary filmmakers to identify the works that most influenced their filmmaking.

1 ***Salesman***, dir. Albert and David Maysles, and Charlotte Zwerin
I watched it over and over, reconstructing what the original footage must have looked liked. I was struck by the realization that they were storyboarding and editing in their heads as they shot.

— **George Ratliff** (*Hell House*)

2 ***La Strada***, dir. Federico Fellini
Oddly enough, one film that affected me profoundly and taught me a lot about storytelling is Fellini's *La Strada*. How he tells the story of the waif Gelsomina, who is sold by her poor mother to a fairground wrestler, Zampano, still influences me today. His character development is unforgettable. The intimate nature of his characters' feelings, shown though incredible close-ups, convey more than anything spoken. Fellini's ability in *La Strada* to tell a seemingly simple story that illuminates complex thoughts and emotions; present characters who are cruel yet sympathetic; show the harsh realities of life in a sometimes comic yet heartbreakingly beautiful way, are techniques that I always strive for in my nonfiction films.

— **Susan Fröemke** (*LaLee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton*)

3 ***Ain't We Having Fun?*** dir. Chuck Statler
Statler's obtuse three-minute film rearranged my head more than [any other film]. I'll never forget how it surprised the hell out of me with such a simple long shot and an off-camera trombone sqwonk.

— **Jeff Krulik** (*Heavy Metal Parking Lot*)

4 ***Chronicle of a Summer***, dir. Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin
Instead of remaining passive observers, the filmmakers put themselves at the center of their film, focusing their camera on their own friends, a desperate group of students, intellectuals, foreigners, and workers living in Paris in the summer of 1906. The result was like no documentary I had ever seen before. For me, *Chronicle of a Summer* opened up a whole new way of using the camera, an approach to documentary that moved beyond surfaces to a more probing, and finally a more authentic, examination of the world.

— **Mark Jonathan Harris**
(*Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*)

5 **The films of Jean-Marie Straub**
Through the films of Straub, I understood a rather obvious truth—that documentaries were not a "window on the world," but indeed someone's analysis of their subject matter, and that the politics [are] manifest in the director's integrity and moral sense towards the subject matter. This simple understanding made me so excited about the freedom of the documentary medium and the pursuit of the exploration of the form.

— **Stephanie Black** (*Life and Debt*)

6 ***Grierson on Documentary***, written by John Grierson
My studies in African and African American history inspired me to get into film, but what galvanized my thinking about documentaries (and started me along this path) wasn't a film, but a book. Very early on, John Grierson, the pioneering British filmmaker, recognized the potential of the documentary film to enlighten and act as a force for social change.

— **William Greaves** (*Ralph Bunche: An American Odyssey*)

7 ***Harlan County, U.S.A.***, dir. Barbara Kopple
What stuck with me most was how she deftly took viewers inside the lives of people who were on both sides of a hard-fought labor dispute. The result was a wonderfully complex and nuanced portrait of her subjects.

— **Steve James** (*Hoop Dreams*)

8 ***Backyard***, dir. Ross McElwee
Land Without Bread, dir. Luis Buñuel
They made me think about how a film can be created through the counterplay of straight info and pure imagery.

— **Kate Davis** (*Southern Comfort*)

9 ***Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment***, dir. Robert Drew
The access, verité storytelling, and drama were unlike anything I have ever seen before. But what was perhaps most educational and inspirational to me was that the film didn't just tell the story of the events that it portrayed. What it really showed the viewer—and what it was really about—was the moral maturation of John. F. Kennedy. This film changed my life, and my art, forever.

— **R.J. Cutler** (*American High*)

10 ***Grey Gardens***, dir. David and Albert Maysles, Ellen Hovde, Muffie Meyer, and Susan Froemke
Brother's Keeper, dir. Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky
I came from a narrative and music video background. All of my film heroes were from fiction. I idolized Kubrick and Bergman, and still do. Having said that, I don't know if I would have ever [made a] documentary if it hadn't been for films like *Grey Gardens* and *Brother's Keeper*. To get close to something, to get inside, underneath, and behind parts of life that many times go unseen seemed like a great challenge for me both as a filmmaker and as a person. All of these influences have encouraged me to make documentaries with social conscience, that explore parts of life that are not always plainly out in the light.

— **Michael Dominic** (*Sunshine Hotel*)

Jason Guerrasio interns for The Independent *and is a contributing writer and editor for the online magazine* 1-42.

FIVF THANKS

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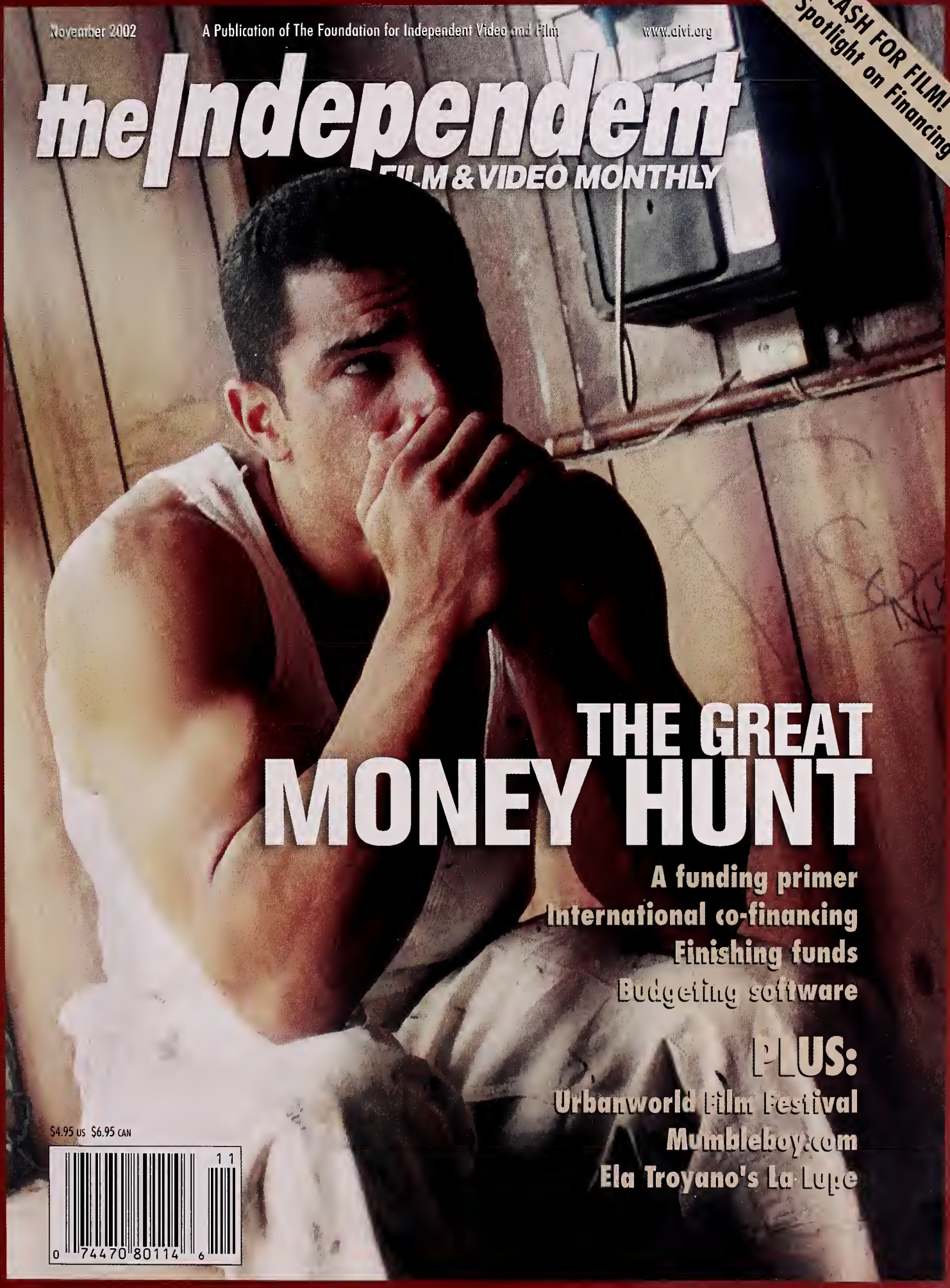

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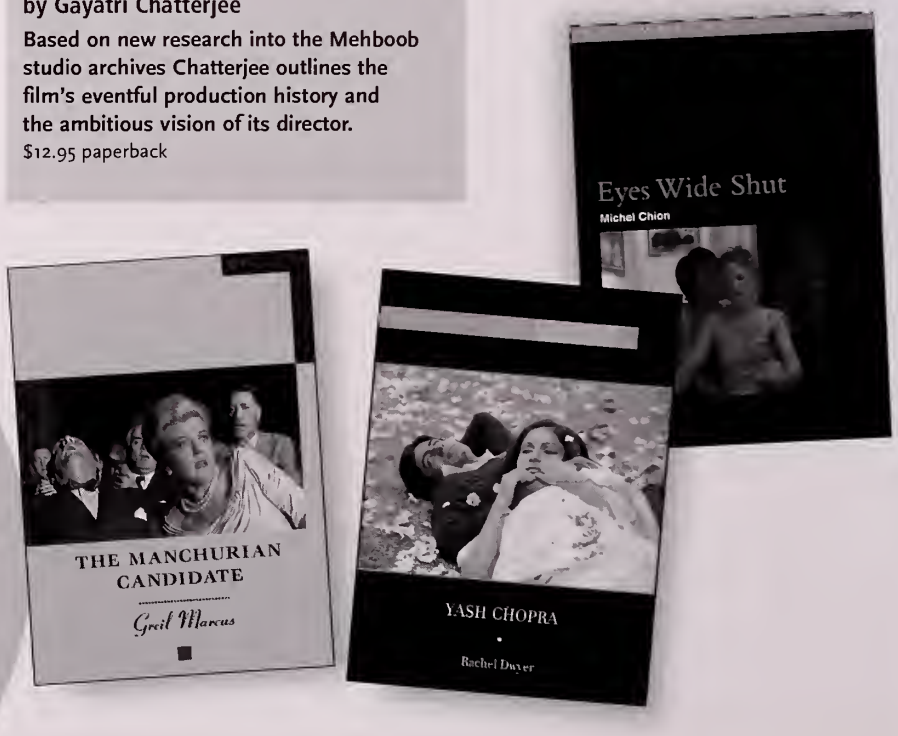

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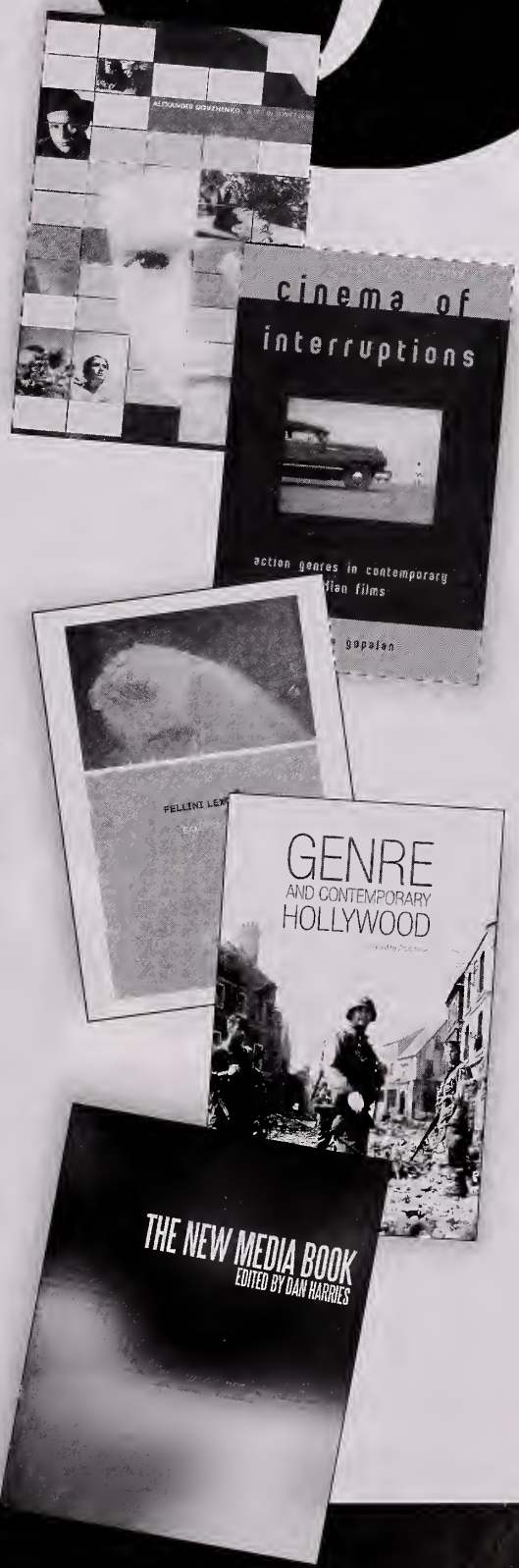

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On the cover: Franky G., as Junior in Eric Eason's *Manito,* struggles with his decisions to raise cash.

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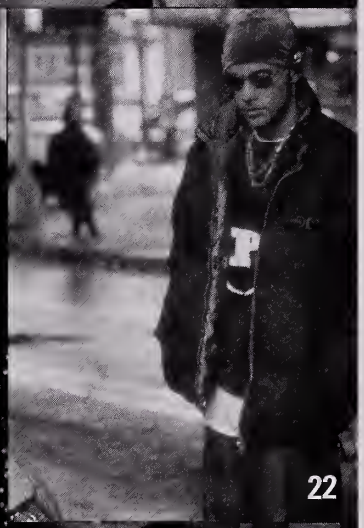

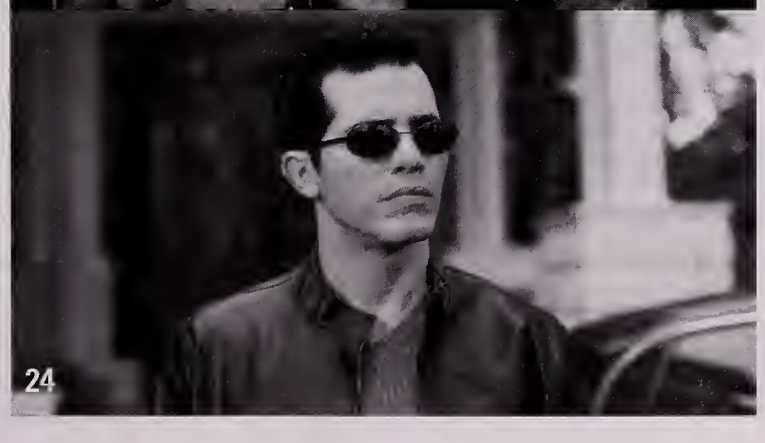

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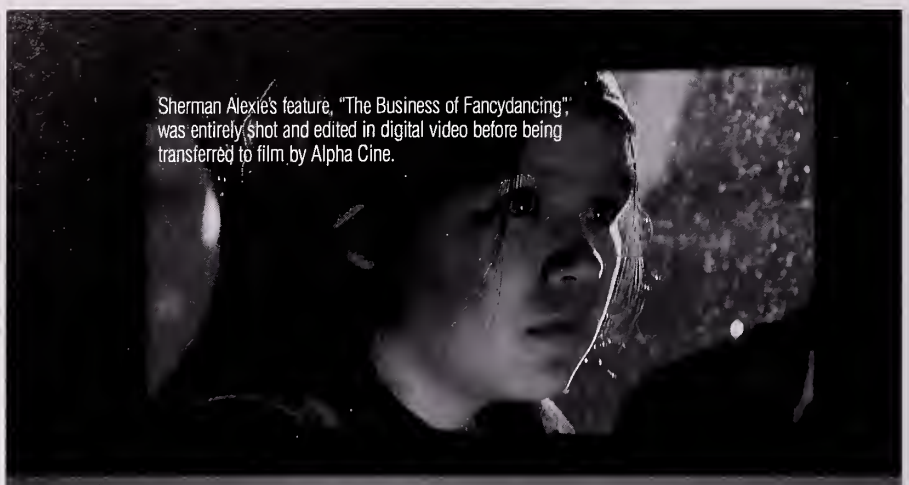
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Dear Reader:
About six months ago I was talking Micah Green of Cinetic Media about the nature of film financing and he said to me something that has shaped this issue more than anything else: "Maud, most of the people in the film world don't know the first thing about financing."

And I have to admit I was one of those people, even though over the past few years I have written a great many film business stories that centered on following the money. For most of us, our knowledge about film financing is somewhat like our knowledge of plumbing—it extends only as far as our personal experience and lack of cash requires. A documentary maker who is well versed in grantwriting and fiscal sponsorship may not even be aquainted with the vernacular of fiction film financing. And a fiction media maker who has managed to find backers for feature films will likely be equally lost when confronted with the lists of public funders and nonprofit organizations many experimental moving image makers wade through for each project. And as more and more moving image creators move between genres and formats, the intricacies of the many different ways media makers find the cash to pay for their projects has become key information every independent can use.

Because finding money to pay for projects remains one of the most mysterious and most taxing tasks moving image makers of all varieties are required to do, we have sliced this issue into several different, digestible pieces. Our staff writer, Jason Guerrasio, followed four very different projects down the financing road in *The Great Money Hunt*. To further illustrate how these projects worked, we have included sidebars showing how the budgets were actually spent on each film. Micah Green contributed a piece on one of his areas of expertise, the expanding world of international co-financing. And Michelle Coe, AIVF program director, has written a brief financing primer based on the questions she hears most often from AIVF's members. To round out the information in this issue, AIVF Info Services Associate Bo Mehrad reviewed some of the most popular texts concerning money and independent film, and producer Amanda Doss tells us how to keep track of all the dollars and cents with her Wired Blue Yonder road test of the leading budgeting software. In our legal column, Robert Seigel leads us through the contractual maze created by securing finishing funds. And wrapping it all up is The List on the back page. This month we explored a few extremes of creativity people will go to to get the cash to shoot their projects.

In other departments of the magazine, we enlisted Sarah Price to take us on a guided tour of her home town, Milwaukee, where she introduces us to some dedicated, original pillars of the local independent community. On the Festival Circuit we visit two festivals carving out a place for themselves on the festival map. Aaron Krach takes us inside the New York Latino International Film Festival, examining the upswings and shortfalls of this rapidly growing event. Avril Speaks searches for independents among the glitz and glamour of the Urbanworld Film Festival and finds quite a few.

We are also saddened to report the death of a documentary funder Jacqueline Donnet. Through the Donnet Fund, this no-nonsense woman quietly provided finishing funds for a number of important projects over the last decade.

Questions around money, whether personal or professional, are always difficult to ask and answer because the solutions are so different for each person or project. In these pages we had only enough space to cover a small percentage of the information available to filmmakers on the subject of finding money for independent projects. Hopefully you will find this issue not only informative but also inspirational. There is money out there to support independent media, though it may be hard to locate. It is often easy to believe that financing, both from nonprofits and investors, is all about knowing the right people. In fact, this is at least partly true, but what is important to realize is that the way you become one of those people who knows *the right people* is by being out there, swinging away and making good work.

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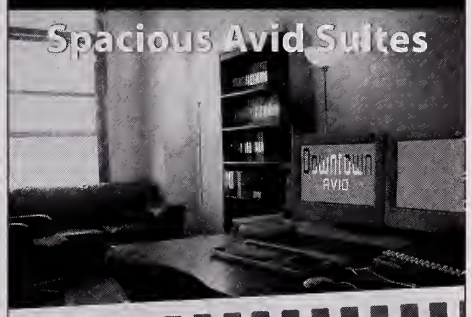
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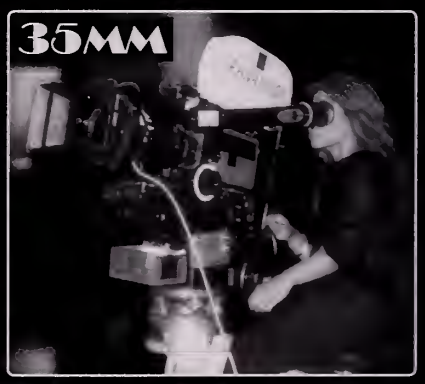

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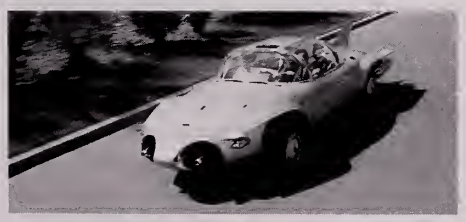
Washington, DC's, stately Thomas Jefferson Building is the new home of Richard Prelinger's massive archive of ephemeral film works.

Prelinger Archives Finds New Home

Library of Congress acquires ephemeral film collection

BY JASON GUERRASIO

WITH OVER 150,000 CANS AND REELS OF film in his possession, Rick Prelinger took the term "film buff" to a whole new level. Since 1982 Prelinger has been archiving completed and unedited footage of ephemeral films (amateur, educational, industrial) in his main storage facility in New York City's wholesale meat market district (Where else are you going to find a freezer big enough to preserve that much film?) Last August he sent it on to a better place, the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.



The Prelinger Archive is an endless source of goodies, like the next-millennium cars of this 1958 film, *American Look*.

Though he loved the convenience of having all that great material just a shelf away, Prelinger decided the archives would be better taken care of if he handed them over to a large public institution. "At least of quarter of our collection is unique, maybe more. It doesn't exist anywhere else," says Prelinger proudly. "We have tons of original material on a lot of very important films."

"This comprehensive collection provides a unique window into the world of twentieth-century American ideas and lifestyles," says Librarian of Congress James H. Billington in a written statement. "The picture it gives is quite distinct from that found in Hollywood feature films and newsreels. These are the films that children watched in the classroom, that workers viewed in their union halls, that advertisers presented in corporate boardrooms, and that homemakers saw at women's club meetings."

Prelinger first became intrigued with collecting film when he was a film researcher for the documentary *Heavy Petting*. "I got interested in collecting ephemeral film because those kinds were not in archives in any conventional way, so I kind of went nuts and started collecting," he explains. As the archive grew in size and increased in historical significance, Prelinger became increasingly concerned about his ability to maintain them. "I didn't feel in the long term we would be able to guarantee the kind of home that the collection needed," Prelinger explains. "It needs to be kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit and twenty percent relative humidity. There needs to be a preservation established, and people need to work on cataloging it."

In the late nineties, Prelinger starting thinking about how he could pass the

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archives on to a more able caretaker. After consulting people in the archival community, he approached the Library of Congress, who welcomed him, and his material, with open arms. After a few conversations and a handshake in February 2002, the deal was set. The official announcement was made in August.

Currently most of Prelinger's material is online at www.archive.org/movies. Images may be downloaded and reused for free and without permission. Ultimately the library will give the public access to the material on a larger scale, with the establishment of a conservation center. Prelinger is assisting the building of the database and is starting work on a feature film.

Massachusetts Film Office Closes

ENDURING ONE OF THE HARDEST ECONOMIC slumps it's ever gone through, Massachusetts was forced to eliminate its film office earlier this year. Mostly responsible for attracting studio films to shoot in the state, the office also helped provide independent filmmakers with the necessary information they need to shoot in the Bay State, as well as connect them to the appropriate departments. With the office now closed, many in the Massachusetts film community are left scratching their heads.

"We tend to get a lot of calls from people who don't know who to turn to now that [the film office] is gone," says Sandra Sullivan, public relations and development manager for the Boston Film and Video Foundation. "It's really difficult because we're not always sure what to tell them."

With the competition from New York to the south, with its famous skyline and openness to films of all magnitude, and the affordability of shooting in Canada to the north, Massachusetts has always been less appealing for filmmakers. But just as the office had made a major triumph by getting Clint Eastwood's next picture, *Mystic River*, to film in Boston, they also got the news that they were victims of the dreaded "trickle-down effect."

"The governor decided not to re-apply them from the budget," says a spokeswoman for the governor, Sarah

Magazine. "The state is in a very deep fiscal crisis, and while we certainly understand that the film industry having a particular contact in the state is a valuable tool, it was just something that wasn't affordable this year."

In the long run, this decision may backfire, because having a film office helps films to come to the area. That then brings in tourists and increases sales for businesses in the area of the shoot, which inevitably would help the state in this difficult time.

Since this decision, Massachusetts filmmaker Michele Meek feels that the state has turned their backs on the independent filmmakers in Massachusetts. "The state has certainly lost credibility in the eyes of the film community," says Meek. "I think this is one more strike against being an indie filmmaker in Massachusetts. Why stay here when basically you can go to any other state that is more film friendly?"

The film office duties have now been turned over indefinitely to the Massachusetts office of travel and tourism, but the Massachusetts Film Office website (www.state.ma.us/film) still exists and may be helpful to inquiring filmmakers.

New Leadership for NYC Media Hub

BY JAMES ELLIS

ONE OF THE NATION'S LARGEST CENTERS for public access television, the Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), recently hired a new executive director, Steve Mendelsohn, formerly the general manager of Razorfish, a website and internet-marketing company. Since May, Mendelsohn has served as interim executive director for the station, which serves a half-million cable viewers. "We believe Steve fits the bill perfectly for this demanding, highly visible media position," says MNN board chair Donald Suggs.

In his new capacity, Mendelsohn will focus on increasing access to broadcast media by creating new opportunities for traditionally underrepresented groups. As interim director, Mendelsohn was responsible for a program presented at the Harlem Media Center, which awarded $250,000 to nineteen Manhattan-based, nonprofit, grassroots, and cultural organizations. "At a time of more technologically advanced means of communication and commerce, MNN serves a vital function in assisting, supporting, and giving a 'voice to the voiceless'—the diverse racial, ethnic, and geographic grassroots communities of Manhattan," Mendelsohn says.

MNN's other immediate goals are to enhance the organization's training curriculum by opening new workshops, especially in the area of digital media; invest in video production equipment; extend the center's community outreach; and develop satellite facilities in other communities.

For information on MNN programming and workshops, see www.mnn.org.

Documentary Film Funder Dies

PATRON OF DOCUMENTARIES AND FOUNDER of the Donnet Fund, Jacqueline Donnet died earlier this year. The Donnet Fund granted finishing monies to over one hundered projects since the early nineties.

Donnet provided awards of $5,000 to $15,000 at a critical moment for a project, where her support could address a particular obstacle.

In 1994, Donnet stepped behind the camera, as executive producer for *Paving the Way*, an award-winning documentary film that charted the extraordinary lives of four great women leaders.

But in her capacity as a patron of media arts, Donnet was a rare blessing for the documentary community, not only because of her dedication to nonfiction films, but also because of the straightforward approach to everything, including reviewing films for grants. While many filmmakers wait for months as their film projects wend their way through tortuous applications, with Donnet, the process was short and simple. "You'd drop it off with her doorman, and a couple of weeks later she'd say yes or no," says AIVF boardmember Doug Block, whose co-production of Midel Negroponte's film *Jupiter's Wife* was completed with the aid of Donnet funds. "She just did it because she loved documentary and documentary filmmakers," says Block.

In accordance with Donnet's wishes, the last of the Donnet Fund was distributed this year.

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Collaborative Strategies

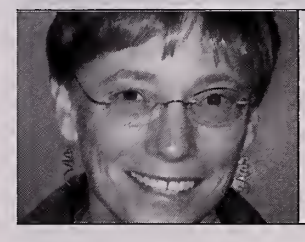
BY PAT AUFDERHEIDE

WHEN JUDITH HELFAND BEGAN WORKING on her second documentary feature, *Blue Vinyl*, a "toxic comedy" about the carcinogenic life cycle of polyvinyl chloride (PVC), she heeded a lesson she learned making *A Healthy Baby Girl*: partner with advocates. She found community and environmental organizations working on the same issue, especially near the Baton Rouge-area plants that produce PVC. Then she went to funders that fund community development and efforts to resist environmental toxins. The Ford Foundation's Community and Resource Development unit—which had never before funded a film—gave her an initial production grant of $150,000.

Filmmaker and photographer Ellen Frankenstein moved to the picturesque tourist spot of Sitka, Alaska, to make a film on Native American culture, and ended up staying. Her contacts with local schools led her to a group of restless teens. She won a Rockefeller Foundation grant from its Partnerships Affirming Community Transformation Project, to organize teen after-school activities. Long after the initial grant was used up, the group continued. And with the help of ITVS and Juneau public television station KTOO, one of its projects, to make a video on life in Sitka from a teen perspective, became the film *No Loitering*.

Stanley Nelson, whose award-winning work for public television includes *Marcus Garvey: Look for Me in the Whirlwind*, was the filmmaker the Carnegie Corporation of New York turned to when the foundation wanted to focus on election campaign reform. New York's reforms resulted in exciting races where grassroots candidates came forward. Nelson documented several of those races in *Running: the Campaign for City Council*. His ability to partner with WNET, which guaranteed an audience, was critical to Carnegie.

For these filmmakers and for many others, collaborating with foundations and organizations is key both to funding a project and to shaping it, even though these collaborations fly in the face of the heroic myth of the independent filmmaker. An updated version of the nineteenth century novelist in the garret, this mythic filmmaker now captures an incredibly powerful narrative without leaving a smudge of a footprint on history and then retires to her studio apartment to edit the piece on her PC, until it's Sundance-able. All this, obligatorily, after years toiling in obscurity.



Collaborating with foundations and organizations is key both to funding a project and to shaping it, even though these collaborations fly in the face of the heroic myth of the independent filmmaker.

Filmmakers generally understand that the lone artist image is fictional, given an artistic process that is collaborative at its core. But too many filmmakers avoid building bridges to organizations that can feed them information, critique their work (and thus ward off big mistakes and public embarrassment) and can find them audiences and even funding. Some documentarians do seek out the benefits of collaboration from the get-go. It's a way to deepen ties to communities in which the filmmaker will be working for some time. It's a way to find funders whose issues are promoted by the work. And it's a ready-made network to draw on for distribution, outreach, and action strategies when the film is released. When Arthur Dong was making *Licensed to Kill*, a film about hate-crime murderers, he worked with the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, which has more than twenty-six member organizations around the country. Members of the coalition held publicity screenings and discussions when the film was broadcast on public TV. The antitoxics coalition, Coming Clean, which Helfand turned to in her original research, helped get audiences for *Blue Vinyl* when it was cablecast on HBO.

Can partnerships and collaborations limit a filmmaker's creative freedom? This common concern is better stood on its head. Can isolation, lack of resources, and lack of feedback stunt a filmmaker's creativity? Media funders often want to see that filmmakers have solid relationships that enable their project. Among the many funders who contributed small amounts of money to Arthur Dong's latest film, *Family Fundamentals*, on religious families of gays and lesbians, the Fund for a Just Society looked carefully at his board of advisors to ascertain that he had a broad range of support from religious organizations.

Each collaboration has its own idiosyncratic design that fits the partners and the need. But a participatory, consult-the-stakeholders, involve-the-organizations approach is one that many funders respond to, and it certainly is one that helps filmmakers identify potential new sources of support. The Council on Foundations, a member association of private foundations, has for thirty-five years sponsored a film festival for its members, to demonstrate how different foundation agendas can be met with high-quality media funding. It has now developed a website (www.fundfilm.org) to help funders better understand the rich potential of media. The site includes the full text of a useful and highly readable book edited by Karen Hirsch, *Why Fund Media*, including some of the stories I've used here, and an essay (written by David Haas and myself) listing ten reasons why funders fund. Oriented to private funders, it's also useful reading for anyone trying to raise money from them.

Collaborations aren't contracts, and partners aren't clients. Collaborations extend the creative process that filmmakers already cultivate every day. They are flexible relationships that can enable the process of making a film, can enrich the product, and can enliven and deepen a film's connection with an audience.

Pat Aufderheide is professor and director of the Center for Social Media at American University.

Ela Troyano

Latina artist moves from fiction to documentary to pay tribute to a kindred Cuban spirit

BY MARY SAMPSON

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, ELA TROYANO has a lot to feel lucky about. With three successful fiction films to her credit, she now gets to pay homage to a fellow Latina artist, and she gets to stretch in a new creative direction while doing so. And she gets to do all this without having to stray an inch from the theme she loves and explores throughout all of her work. But Troyano will be the first to say that her story is not nearly as amazing as the one she is currently documenting.

In 1939, Lupe Yuli was born in Cuba, as was Troyano twenty-nine years later. La Lupe, as Yuli came to be known, left Cuba

Ela Troyano shifts between experimental to narrative to documentary format.

during the Castro revolution, spent time in Mexico City, and then settled in New York City, also Troyano's home. La Lupe recorded her first hit album, *Con el Diablo in el Cuerpo* (With the Devil in the Body), while still in Cuba. After moving to the United States, she recorded and performed with a variety of artists, including Tito Puente. Her music and performances were sexually charged and enormously popular with both Spanish and English speaking audiences. So much so, in fact, that many music historians refer to La Lupe as the Latin Elvis. "In the future, Latino culture will continue to influence US culture," says Troyano. "And the generation she was part of has, to some extent, been overlooked, even though La Lupe was singing on English speaking television at the same time of Castro's revolution. I mean, talk about crossover power." So Troyano decided to do a little crossing over herself, and make a documentary about the life and work of this extraordinary artist.

This latest labor of love, currently titled *La Lupe: A Mirror of the Times*, is Troyano's first documentary, but it is not her first project exploring the Latino experience in America, and specifically in New York City. Troyano's *Once Upon a Time in the Bronx*, a short fiction film, told the story of Spanglish rap artists. Another short, *Carmelita Tropicana* (which won an award at the Berlin film Festival and is still being screened in America), is a story of a Mexican American performance artist living and working in the lower east side of New York City. And her 1997 feature film, *Latin Boys Go To Hell*, tells the tale of a young Latino who discovers and comes to accept his homosexuality.

Although the final cut of *La Lupe* will likely resemble a traditional documentary in form, Troyano sees all her work as documents of the time. And the current trend of mixing fiction with nonfiction is no cause for alarm for her. "I personally like the blurring of the lines," she admits. "As a person who comes from a Latino culture, which is a hybrid of cultures always going back and forth between one language and the other, I have no problem with media being a hybrid as well." She cites the success of both *Once Upon a Time in the Bronx* and *Carmelita Tropicana*, which were both funded by the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and were both stories that took place in parts of society that had not been previously paid attention to, as evidence that fiction can do what documentaries do and vice versa. "In a very real way," Troyano explains, "these two films documented something that was taking place, and nobody in the media was paying attention to it." With *La Lupe*, Troyano takes her artistic interest in Latino-in-America experience to the past. "La Lupe was a female singer ahead of her time," she observes.

Guin Turner stars in Ela Troyano's *Dos Vidas*.

"And she was a very important figure in Latino culture." The documentary is funded in part by grants from Creative Capital, the New York State Council of the Arts, and the Latino Public Broadcasting Service. Troyano has also received a licensing agreement from the Independent Television Service, and *La Lupe* will air on PBS.

The success of her prior films, in combination with a beloved and compelling character for a subject, has Troyano confident her documentary will quickly find an audience. Moreover, she does not see other, bigger budget, nonfiction films as harmful to her chances for success with her current project. In fact, the art-versus-commercialism debate is, for her, a dead argument. "As long as I've been working in media," she says, "there has been a commercial element that uses whatever is new or underground. So to me, there is nothing threatening about it."

With a sick spouse to tend to, La Lupe retired from show business in 1980, at the age of forty-one. She became a Christian minister before she died of a heart attack in 1992. But her fans have kept her music from fading into obscurity, and Troyano credits this enduring popularity with helping her get funding for a documentary of La Lupe's life and work. "La Lupe was so beloved among her legions of fans that I feel lucky to have her as my subject for a documentary."

Mary Sampson is a writer and editor living in New York City.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, LEFT, COURTESY OF MARK KORNBLUTH, RIGHT, JAMES CARMAN; FACING PAGE, TOP, BAMBOO THEATER, BOTTOM, PETER DIANTONI

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

BY SARAH PRICE

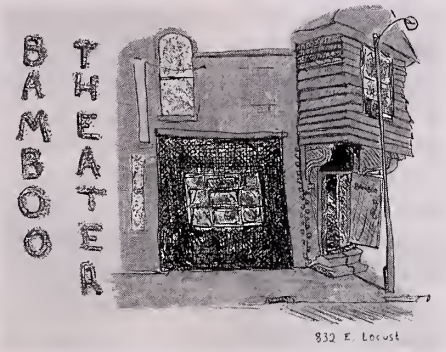
ALTHOUGH MILWAUKEE WILL ETERNALLY be known for beer, cheese hats, and the infamous Laverne and Shirley, the unique city is also home to a thriving and supportive art scene. The film and video community in Milwaukee has enjoyed an increasingly active past couple of years. Legend has it there was a hot film scene here in the eighties, and as the cyclical nature of history can attest, a resurgence of strong, active, and respected work is emerging from the present community. Besides people supporting and inspiring each other, a large factor is that people who once came to attend University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Film School chose to stay and make this their home.

Why Milwaukee? This city is hot. It's a gem in the rough, big enough to be a city, small enough to feel like a town. The architecture is a convergence of Old World ethnic distinctions. The spring/summer/fall weather is beautiful. The quality of life is high for its humble surroundings. And people can afford to travel for months at a time. The creative community has been tossed back and forth as a burgeoning "scene," for better or worse, most recently written up in *Art in America*. And although there are many great people and organizations comprising various circles of friends, the following three individuals are excellent ambassadors of the eclectic film/video community. Not only do they function as individual artists and are all in cool bands, but they run important establishments in and for the local community. They act locally, yet their reach is wide.

Stephanie Barber

Hailing from Long Island, New York, experimental filmmaker/artist/musician Stephanie Barber has been living and working in Milwaukee for seven years. I spoke with Stephanie at a bustling coffee shop on Milwaukee's flourishing east side as she just got off her East Coast tour with her latest rap/performance piece *Ms. Money Money*.

Barber, who has been making films for fifteen years, now has a collection of over twenty films to her credit. Best known for her titles *Metronome, Letters, Notes,* and *Flower, the Boy, the Librarian*, she boasts one-person shows at MoMA, San Francisco Cinemateque at the Yerba Buena Center, and Chicago Filmmakers. She has garnered success and critical acclaim at festivals such as the New York International Film Festival, Oberhausen International Film Fest, and Paris Cinemateque, among others.



Stephanie Barber's Bamboo Theater.

"My work could be described as literary, poetic, formally specific," says the highly productive Barber. Lauded film critic Henry Trial regards her work as "almost always involved in the emotionality of spaces." Her latest film *City at Heart* just premiered at the Chicago Underground Film Festival.

When she's not exploring filmic and musical boundaries, Barber runs and curates the Bamboo Theater. With the special blessing and spirit of a former Chinese restaurant, the Bamboo Theater showcases the work of visiting experimental filmmakers lucky enough to find themselves in Milwaukee. The list of recent artists reads like a who's who: Martin Arnold, Miranda July, Kirsten Stoltmann, Jim Trainor, Selina Trepp, and San Francisco graffiti artist Chuck Quarino. The theater is also the locale for a monthly showcase called Soup & Cinema (run with Xavier Leplae of Riverwest Film and Video). Bring some soup, show your work—it's a public forum for local film and videomakers—an "open-screen night," if you will—the first Tuesday of every month. "[Bamboo Theater] is an essential exhibition space for film and videomakers void of any commercialism. It is entirely focused on the art form and the intimacy of sharing that with your peers," Barber explains.

Barber also started, and continues to run, the Make-A-Film-in-Twelve-Hours contest, facilitated and supported by the UW-Milwaukee Film Department. Contestants form groups and are given a theme at the start of the day. They then have twelve hours to make the film (using the school's black-and-white reversal processing and facilities), screening at night in front of all the contestants and a panel of judges. Cash prizes go to the top three films.

For more information, contact Stephanie Barber, c/o Bamboo Theater, 832 E. Locust, Milwaukee, WI 53212.

Xavier Leplae

Belgian-born, French-speaking filmmaker/artist/musician Xavier "Xav" Leplae finds his roots in Milwaukee and has been active in the community ever since he can remember. He has operated various storefront hangouts for years, the latest answering the need for a film supplies store.

Xavier Leplae: I noticed back in the eighties that all my film school peers were graduating and, at best, getting sucked straight into the commercial film and advertisement world. Once the support system of the film department disap-

Xavier Laplae steps out in style.

peared, people could no longer afford to pursue film and video as a pure art form. So when the school in Milwaukee closed its film co-op in 1998, I gave it a try.

The store is a mixture of places. It is partly a business where I sell film supplies and used equipment, like a small-scale version of SMS in Chicago or Rafik's in New York. But I also rent videos and the store is actually a country shack built inside the store, if that makes any sense. Beyond the sales counter, we have a kitchen-like hangout area, and in the basement, a band room where many bands practice. Neapolitan Records produces its CD's and 45's, and we have a film and video editing space. The building itself (coined locally as "Pumpkin World") is connected through hallways to other people's apartments too.

Pumpkin World is nice because we can all meet in this one open space but also have privacy in our separate apartments and homes. Actually it's a lot like a tiny school minus the classes; just the people, spaces, and some supplies and equipment.

The store allows people in the neighborhood access to stuff they otherwise wouldn't be able to use. We rent out video and film cameras, we sell all necessary supplies to make a project, we have an editing room, and we maintain a creative and interesting gallery/storefront that adds decorative value to our neighborhood. Kids walking by and peering into the window or looking through videotapes can count on a positive and hopefully inspiring experience for them—a creative alternative to strip malls.

This place, in addition to other community establishments like Darling Hall, Bluemark and the Bamboo Theater, are all part of a unique convergence of good social chemistry. I've never understood why that doesn't happen elsewhere all the time. It really should. Part of it is allowing yourself to let go of fear of what will happen if you open your door to everyone.

Sarah Price: Are you making a living from this, or do you have to supplement?

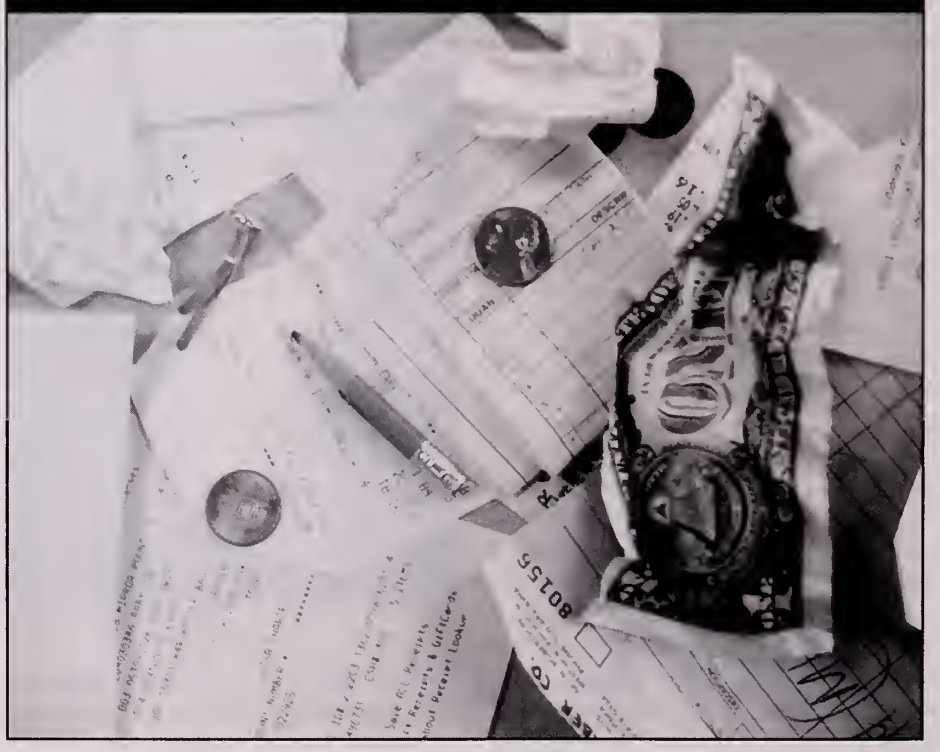
XL: I've been doing this for about four years now, and I haven't really had any other job.

SP: Do you have advice for someone wanting to start a place like this in their own community?

XL: I would say just copy me and everything will go fine. Call me and I'll tell you what to do.

Xavier Laplae's number is (414) A-OK-VIDEO, that's (414) 265-8433.

Goodbye Petty Cash ...



Steve Wetzel

Hailing from the greater St. Paul-Minneapolis area, videomaker-artist-musician Steve Wetzel has lived and worked in Milwaukee for four years. But, he says, "Milwaukee has been in me since I was a little boy. I used to hear stories about how dirty Milwaukee was, how there was so much pollution, and how restaurants close before 10:30 pm." At this point, only the restaurant part remains true.

SP: How long have you been making films and videos? What type of work do you generally make?

Steve Wetzel: For five years now I have been producing little videos, the bulk of them oriented toward a simple, single-shot performance. Some of my video work is geared toward installation—like, say, with Art Pro Team, a collaborative curatorial project in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where I was invited to build a piece in a storefront in downtown Ann Arbor—while others have a more traditional aim, like *Teaspoon Communications*, an ongoing public access TV show that I produce with the help of many others, including the institutional support of *Teaspoon*.

SP: What is *Teaspoon Communications*; what is the Tsp mission?

SW: *Teaspoon Communications* was initially charged with the responsibility of criticizing official media representations of all events linked to the attacks on the East Coast last September. The original founders of *Teaspoon* were writer Jennifer Geigel, filmmaker Jennifer Montgomery, Xavier LePlae, and myself. *Teaspoon*'s first broadcast was mired in what is now called the "copyright quandary." The program was shelved due to some copyright infringements, and it wasn't cleared to broadcast until a month or more *after* its completion. By this time, interest by the other founding members had waned; everyone had other projects in the works. Fortunately, I had committed *Teaspoon* to a year-long series at MATA Community Media [the Milwaukee Access Telecommunications Authority public access

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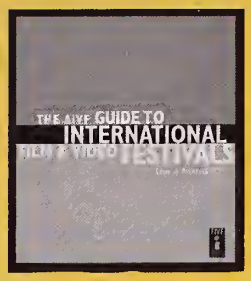

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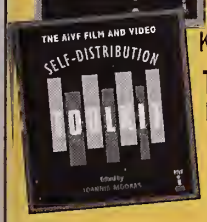

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channels], so I was kind of fortuitously stuck by a legally binding contract to produce twelve episodes of *Teaspoon Communications*.

Now the show has opened up a bit, dealing with a whole range of material and subject, including excerpts from essays by Karl Popper; a patriotic puppet painter; interviews with filmmakers, educators, and citizens of Panama with an insight on the Panamanian invasion (remember that?); an advice column that just whips the pants off any other advice column; a segment on the advances and inspiration of our national anthem; and, you know, tons of stuff. I have to fill twenty-eight minutes every month. Several local artists help with the show, some produce segments for it: Nick Frank's *National Anthem Monthly*; Jinnene Ross' advice column, *Henny Forest*; Christine Khalafian's film on the naturalization process; and Paul Druecke's monthly installment of *2381B N. Bremen St.*, a meditation on an interior space. It's all pretty exciting; pretty invigorating and good, at least from the standpoint of working with other people. The show itself is fine too. Sure, there are some stinkers, but, I don't know, overall I think it works just fine.

SP: Can you explain a bit more about MATA Community Media and how it functions in and for the community?

SW: MCM is this amazing public resource in the city of Milwaukee. It's a place where people, your uncle and my neighbor, can come and get trained on television production equipment for the purpose of producing grassroots, idiosyncratic TV. Anyone living in the city limits of Milwaukee can walk through the doors of MCM, pay an incredibly small yearly fee (small in relation to the equipment one gets access to, equipment that one can take home and use), and begin making a TV program about whatever he or she wants. I mean, that's serious stuff. Not enough people know about MCM. Not enough people know about public access cable TV. Every municipality has public access. Some don't have equipment, some do. MCM does. I'll tell you what, making a TV show sure beats the hell out of complaining about how awful TV is.

What's really amazing is that public access didn't exist until, I think, 1985, when cable took off. I don't get how a self-proclaimed free and open society didn't have a place where people could come and weigh in on whatever subject they felt was relevant until 1985. This institution now exists, but it takes more people getting involved for it to have any real staying power. Time Warner has been licking its chops in anticipation of ousting MCM. I have a lot more to say about this, but I think I've blown enough wind here.

SP: Any last thoughts?

SW: Cable public access is one of the last relatively open public spaces. It's sort of abstract in that it exists between a private television in a home and the public access studio. But, nonetheless, it is one of the last public spaces where public dialogue and expression can *happen*. Though this is changing a bit, and it is tenuous. Public access stations rely on funding from local cable providers and the goodwill of a city council, and in some cases underwriting and grants. The point is, I think, that public access TV—and other institutions like a free press, etc.—is crucial if we're to talk at all about a relatively free and open society without busting our guts laughing.

Teaspoon Midwest Regional Representative Bobert Dunkel interviews Jill Wojtusik, an educator from Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TEASPOON COMMUNICATIONS

***Teaspoon Communications* airs on:**

MATA Community Media (Milwaukee), CH 96 and CH 14 on Tuesday at 7 p.m., and Saturday at 5 p.m.

CTV (Eau Claire, WI), CH 11 in November.

Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (MTN), CH 17, Wednesday nights at 10 p.m.

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For more info, contact Steve Wetzel at (414) 342-4000 x317.

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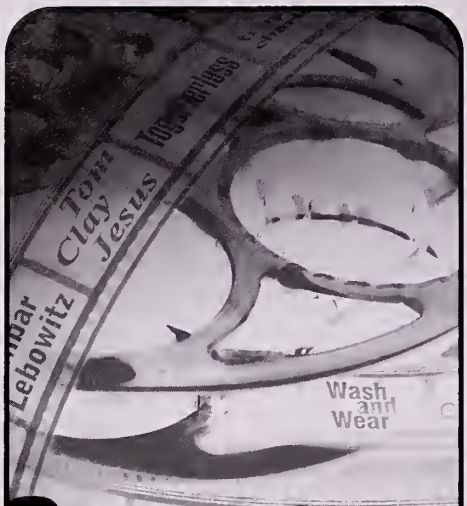

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UW-Milwaukee Film Dept
www.uwm.edu/SOA
A part of the Peck School of the Arts., this great film program focuses filmmaking as an artform. Contact Annie Melchoir at (414) 229-6015.

Community Media Project
www.uwm.edu/SOA/CMP
Offers artistic and educational programs to Milwaukee residents, particularly young adults and underserved and underrepresented communities. Contact Portia Cobb at pcobb@csd.uwm.edu.

Seattle youth participate in a MATA Community Media program put on by Students for Higher Achievement in the Courts and in the Classroom.

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Sarah Price is a filmmaker/musician most known for the documentaries American Movie *and* Caesar's Park.

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Ask the Documentary Doctor

When is a good time to make a trailer?

BY FERNANDA ROSSI

Dear Doc Doctor:
I've shot ten hours of footage. Should I cut a trailer now or keep shooting? What will make it an effective fundraising tool?

Your trailer, or demo, is your documentary's business card. Therefore it is never too early to have one. Even if the task of cutting a trailer seems daunting, the final result will yield two important benefits, one artistic and the other financial.

A trailer forces you to ask yourself some key questions about your film: Can my characters and/or topic hold audience interest? Am I shooting what I really need to tell this story, or should I reconsider my approach? Cutting a gives you questions that, if left for later, can cause unnecessary delays in the cutting room.

Don't spend more money making your trailer than it can realistically generate.

Be careful though, because you might find editing your first footage into a coherent story so satisfying that you will spend as much time and resources on the trailer as you would the final documentary. Your trailer needs to be as interesting and technically polished as the final product, but it is only a glimpse into the great film to come. Don't spend more money making your trailer than it can realistically generate.

Of course, predicting whether a trailer can effectively bring in the money you need pis closer to clairvoyance than filmmaking. Hollywood studio executives spend endless hours second-guessing audiences, and an independent documentary filmmaker can spend just as much time second-guessing funders. The variables are infinite and change according to funding the organization's mission statement, the particular panel gathered, the order your project is reviewed in, other projects competing for the same grant, and public interest or need for your topic.

But there are a some things in your control that can improve your trailer's chances of bringing funding. Julie Anderson, director of Documentary Programming for HBO, says, "I like to have a clear sense of who the characters are. Are they engaging and appealing? With the trailer, I not only evaluate the characters' potential for making the film interesting, but also the filmmaker's access and rapport with the people portrayed." If your documentary is not character-driven, then select those interviewees who best convey the topic in a clear and passionate manner.

It is also important to convey your film's stylistic approach, as Don Palmer, director of Individual Artists Program at the New York State Council for the Arts (NYSCA) pointed out during a panel at the Jewish Community Center. "Our panelists want to know more than just what the film is about. They want to make sure the film has a vision, its own unique voice to tell that particular story."

Dear Doc Doctor:
A year ago I cut a five-minute trailer. Since then I've shot another fifty hours of footage. Should I watch all fifty hours and cut a new trailer?

Some trailers can have a long life, but others become dated as the new footage reveals more interesting aspects of your characters and story. The question isn't whether or not to cut a new trailer, but whether the old one is doing its job. Filmmaker Dempsey Rice cut a five-minute trailer for her film *Daughter of Suicide* based on fifteen hours of footage. It conveyed the main idea of the film efficiently, but it lacked the visuals that could make the story more palpable and intimate. A week later she was back in the edit room recutting and adding footage. Each trailer took a day to cut, but the second one got her funding to shoot and cut a twenty-five-minute work-in-progress sample that in turn led to funding the completion of the film.

Doug Block, producer and director of *Home Page*, shot forty hours of footage and cut a fourteen-minute piece. More a work-in-progress than a trailer, it convinced HBO provided half of the total amount needed to finish the project.

Both Block and Rice chose to watch all their footage before cutting their trailers. While this does have the advantage of giving you a reason to spend time watching what you have shot, which is never a waste of time, you are also spending a lot of hours, which you may not have if there is a deadline looming.

I favor a more intuitive approach. Before you dive into your sea of footage, you can save yourself from drowning if you work on paper first. Once you've thought carefully about what you are trying to convey with your trailer begin by cutting it in your head—in other words, work from memory. When you think of your footage, what are the scenes that immediately come to mind? These scenes stand out for the same reason your viewers will find them appealing. Then watch the footage from those scenes, and cut them. Once those two or three memorable moments are lined up, you can work around them, adding the missing pieces.

With this approach, you might fear that something important will be left out. This fear usually remains throughout the editing process—and sometimes beyond the day of your premiere. But don't worry, this concern is more a by-product of the creative process than the result of any particular method of editing.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. This month she hosts a documentary master class presented by AIVF (See page 60 for details.) For further info, visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF TANIA RETCHISKY; ILLUSTRATIONS FACING PAGE, COURTESY OF KINYA HANADA.

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Fun With Flash

Kinya Hanada breathes life into online animation

BY MAYA CHURI

IT'S A LONELY TUESDAY NIGHT AND YOU'RE sitting in front of the computer watching little bits and pieces of flat, two dimensional, colored cutouts jump across your screen. This may sound like an early eighties video game, but it's not. It's Flash, a software program that gives designers the ability to add animation to websites. By now, almost everyone is familiar with the program. If it's animated and it's online, more times than not, it's

Macromedia Flash. For the past six years, Flash has been making its way onto websites all over the world. Corporations, individuals, and artists have been exploring Flash to make their sites more dynamic, more stylized, and more fun. But over the past year, Flash has lost some of its appeal. Visiting a website with quick-moving graphics on the splash page no longer inspires all-consuming awe. But as Flash animator Kinya Hanada (a.k.a. Mumbleboy) has made abundantly clear through his own work, just because it's no longer the hot new kid on the block doesn't mean it's not cool. Fitting snuggly between Friday night club culture and Saturday morning cartoons, the most common response to his work is, "What are you on?"

The visual poetry of Hanada's images cross-pollinate Japanimation with Dr. Seuss on ecstasy. In his Andy Warhol-laced animation *Tape Recorder Man*, which he did for the band Momus, a green-haired figure with a tape recorder for a face goes around destroying log cabins and other things with a guitar. Besides a soundtrack, there's not much more to it than that. As with most of his work, there is no plot, no story, and no dialogue. But when it is over, there is an almost addictive need to hit "one more time." At www.mumbleboy.com one can view dozens of his animations, including *Places*, a mesmerizing look at shapes, colors, and musical creatures, which was featured at the 2002 Sundance Online Film Festival.

Hanada has been working in Flash since 1997 and in the past few years has produced over forty short Flash cartoons. His animations have taken him to Sundance and Rotterdam. And though he has exhibited his animations on the big screen, he still prefers the computer screen to anything else. This is partly because, unlike video, Flash is specifically designed to send graphics and animation over the internet. So, on your computer, instead of watching the muddled picture of a film that was meant for the big screen, or a grainy video meant for television, you can have Flash animations, in all their glory, delivered to your desktop.

After graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1994, Hanada became inspired by artists like Rodney Alan Greenblat, and friends who were making art using the program Director. Hanada experimented with Director but never got used to the program and felt that he wasn't making anything substantial with it. During a trip to Japan he heard about a program called Flash from a friend who said it was similar to Director but easier. When Hanada got home he downloaded the trial version and knew right away it was something he could "make fun things with."

According to Hanada, one of the advantages of Flash "is the relative ease of making animations without needing a lot of staff or time." In addition, there is always the opportunity to make Flash interactive, something that is virtually impossible with traditional animation. Hanada stresses, "not interactive as in sitting in front of a computer, but something more dynamic." Currently, he is developing his own interactive projection piece. But in the long run, he's not sure how much Flash will actually grow over the years. "I used to think that it would evolve in ways that would make it more interesting from a visual standpoint," Hanada reflects, "but I don't know that it will go that way, after seeing the releases of Flash 5 and 6. Though I don't feel like I should be limited just to Flash—I am sure I will start using other programs and continue to try and make interesting visuals."

Just as a movie camera and a roll of film are the tools of a filmmaker, a brush and canvas the tools of a painter, Flash is a tool for the animator. The style and visuals of the animation depend solely on who's behind the keyboard. So whose work would Hanada like to see in Flash? "Well, the first person who comes to mind is Osamu Tezuka. Also, Jean-Michel Basquiat. I don't know if sitting in front of a computer for long periods of time would have been his style, but I'm sure he would have made some wonderful things with Flash if he had the chance."

But Flash isn't the only artistic outlet for Hanada. For the past few years he has been making and selling hand made dolls. Some of his dolls can even be seen in the animation, though he states that "people often ask me why I don't use the doll characters in my animations more often, and that's because they don't seem to work too well in the animation format. They are harder to animate, and I'm often not sure what to do with them once I have them in Flash."

Hanada's online animation has propelled a lot more in his life than just the creation of more Flash. "I think it definitely gave me more exposure than I could ever have gotten through other means of showing work, and with that came more opportunities like work and exhibitions. I think the best thing is people who I've met because of it."

Kinya Hanada's animation can be seen at www.mumbleboy.com, www.milky.org, or www.submarinechannel.com.

Maya Churi is a writer and filmmaker. She is currently working on a narrative about a gated community in Texas.

New York International Latino Film Festival

Road ahead is challenging for three-year-old event

BY AARON KRACH

THE HOTTEST WEEK OF THE YEAR IN NEW York City coincided with the Third Annual New York International Latino Film Festival, July 30–August 4. As the temperature never dipped below eighty degrees (even at night), fifty films divided into four categories (domestic features, documentaries, shorts, and international features) unspooled at two well air-conditioned venues on the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

The weekend of screenings began in earnest Friday night, and even an enormously powerful electrical storm (which would kill one resident in lower Manhattan watching the lightning from his roof) could not deter the crowds from the world premiere of Antonio Miranda's *Big Pun: Still Not a Player*, a highlight of the festival. In fact, so many people tried to attend the documentary's screening that the festival organizers made an unorthodox decision to the move the screening at the very last minute to a larger venue in order to accommodate the overflow. That this decision would push back all of the evening's other screenings was apparently not as important as getting those last few people in to see the show.

Tammy Trull stars as Venus, a young and troubled Latina growing up in Spanish Harlem, in *All Night Bodega*, directed by Felix Olivier.

Big Pun, born Christopher Lee Rios, was the first Latino rapper to have an album go platinum. He died of a heart attack in 2000, at the age of twenty-nine. His particular style of young, pull-yourself-up, creative Latino talent is exactly what the Latino Fest is trying to support, celebrate, and promote.

The festival officially began two nights prior, with a double shot of cinemania: two opening night screenings held on consecutive evenings. The first was a starry affair featuring a preview screening of *Spy Kids 2: The Island of Lost Dreams*, from Dimension Films (a.k.a. Miramax). *Spy Kids 2* was not chosen for the Latino Festival's most prestigious slot because of its subtitle (although that is how Latinos are still treated in most media—relegated to an island of lost dreams, as gardeners, bus drivers, and hot chica babies). *Spy Kids 2* was, instead, selected because its director is Robert Rodriguez, the once inspiring and plucky young director of *El Mariachi*, the in-the-can-for-$7,000 Sundance entry that launched a wave of imitators. *El Mariachi* was fresh and ground-breaking as opposed to this franchise sequel. The festival should have shown a repeat of *El Mariachi* instead of this inane spectacle.

The second opening night feature was more in tune with the ethos of the Latino Festival. Director Franc Reyes' boys-in-the-'hood-style drama, *Empire*, starred John Leguizamo as a hustler in the south Bronx selling dope he's dubbed "Empire." The film showed at Sundance earlier this year and is the kind of earnest, well-made indie project that should benefit from festival exposure. The official closing night film was *Manito*, another boys-in-the-'hood story, though this time directed by Eric Eason and focusing on younger men than those in *Empire*.

Other than that, the films unspooled slightly behind schedule, panel discussions were hosted, and nightly parties were held. It is safe to say that more people attended and enjoyed the parties than any other event (except *Big Pun*). One panel which was actually more of an interactive workshop became, for this writer, the strangest and most memorable event at the festival. Panel 3, as it was labeled, changed my whole perspective on the festival and cast a strange and not so flattering shadow across the rest of the proceedings.

Held on the final Sunday afternoon, Panel 3 was officially called "Latino Media Literacy 101." It was touted as an "interactive, entertaining, and reflective" attempt to "focus the audience's lens toward critically looking at films, commercials, and music videos" with the goal of learning to "define and recreate our vision of Latino and Latina media."

The workshop was led by a group of activists and filmmakers called Chica Luna, whose main activity is going around to schools offering this same workshop to educate students to the history of (mis)representation of Latinas in film and television. Their main points are obvious to anyone who has ever taken a media studies class: The state of Latina representation is only recently emerging from a painful history of limited and inaccurate exposure. The people in attendance (of which there were few) all seemed to have taken more than one such class in their lives, and so the women were mostly preaching to the converted. Yet as the participants discussed issues like whether or not "queerness is a Latina issue," or "whether or not West Side Story was good for Latinas," and "whether or not Jennifer Lopez is Latina enough," the festival itself began to feel like a failure. Here was a room of incredibly bright people talking about the who, what, when, where, and why of a media revolution—but they were only talking about it with each other.

The purpose of the New York International Latino Film Festival is to advance the role of Latinos behind and in front of the camera. The organizers seek to accomplish this goal by supporting films and filmmakers who support this agenda of more and more complex roles and stories of, by, and about Latinos.

But what if the films chosen to express

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL LATINO FILM FESTIVAL

this are only okay? What if the roles for Latinos in the chosen films are just as stereotypical, ghetto-based, drug and sex-riddled as the "mainstream" films Chica Luna's workshop was critiquing?

Of course all the films in the festival were not half as bad as *Fort Apache*. But here is the rub. The screening of *All Night Bodega*, the film I most enjoyed—an exciting girls-in-the-hood flick from director Felix Oliver—was only two-thirds full. And half that audience had festival "insider" badges hanging around their necks.

Antonio Miranda's *Big Pun: Still Not a Player*, which documents the life of rapper Big Pun, a.k.a. Christopher Lee Rios, was a highlight of the New York International Latino Film Festival.

If a good, award-winning film is shown—this one's lead actress, Jaime Tirelli, won best actress at the Los Angeles Latino Film Festival, and Oliver won the Lincoln-Mercury award of $5,000 in New York—and there's no one in the audience, does it (can it?) make a difference? I don't think so.

Where was/is the audience for *All Night Bodega* and for the rest of the festival entries? If a Latino Film Festival can't sell out a screening of an award-winning film, how is anyone supposed to hope for producers to spend money on projects of, by, and about Latinos? If screenings and panels and workshops are not overflowing with enthusiasm and ambition at a festival, how can anyone complain about what makes it onto the big and small screens.

First and foremost, festival organizers need to get people into the seats. Give the tickets away if they have to. Go to local universities, high schools, record stores—this is New York City, remember?—and give the seats away to people not likely ever to see an *All Night Bodega* at an art house cinema. Yet they may see themselves in the character Tirelli plays so fearlessly.

Secondly, young filmmakers need help to make more interesting, entertaining, and complex films. They need education, opportunity, and support. Let's start at the beginning, with scholarships to film school. Now that anyone can pick up a digital video camera and chase their friends through the streets and think they are making a movie, filmmakers need to learn the basics and then have the opportunity to hone their skills.

Both of these problems take money. Usually that is the biggest problem, but here it does not seem to be the case. For a festival in only its third year, the Latino Film Festival has hotels and screening rooms, world premieres and exciting parties, all provided by sponsorship from big names like American Airlines, Budweiser, NBC, and Lincoln-Mercury, not to mention a plethora of support from activist organizations and nonprofits, and public funding from the state and the city of New York.

Festival organizers should take half the money and give it to filmmakers so they can learn how to make a film the festival will be proud to show. They should take the other half and revamp audience services. They should do a better job of advertising; take the screenings out of the dullest part of Manhattan and bring them uptown, downtown, or wherever they want, as long as the films are brought to the people. Spend money on unorthodox approaches to festival programming, like Chica Luna's workshop. Teach, entertain, and enlighten more than just the filmmakers, their friends, and the industry. Break down the insider clique that gets built up around all film festivals.

Why? Because I should not be the only white person at the New York International Latino Film Festival. Especially because I was only there to write this article, a situation that makes me feel ashamed.

Aaron Krach is the arts editor at Gay City News *and* The Villager *newspapers. To reach him via e-mail, write to aaron@aaronkrach.com.*

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Urbanworld Film Festival

Balancing between Hollywood and the indie world

BY AVRIL SPEAKS

THE WORD ON THE STREET IS THAT THE New York-based Urbanworld Film Festival is a black film festival, but inside the theaters it becomes clear that Urbanworld is a showcase for a diverse group of minority filmmakers. From the pulsating hip hop beat of the Clipse's *Lord Willin'* in the opening trailer to the broad range of the sixty films screened, Urbanworld's niche as a premiere minority festival is undeniable. But their attempt at a balancing between Hollywood and the independent world is a little shaky. According to executive director Joy Huang, the six-year-old festival exists to "enrich, encourage, and inspire minority filmmakers; to create a community, a home where people know they can come and share their works in a supportive environment."

Neema Barnette's *Civil Brand* was a big hit at this year's Urbanworld Film Fest.

Each year, Urbanworld boasts of a number of well-known filmmakers and entertainers who grace the festival with appearances, Q&A's, and even film screenings. This year, *ER*'s Eric LaSalle presented his feature directorial debut, *Crazy as Hell*. And for closing night, rappers Eve and Ice Cube made appearances for the premiere of *Barbershop*, in which the two co-starred.

Ice Cube was selected for another festival highlight, the Actor's Spotlight, an Inside the Actor's Studio-style interview. Many in the audience questioned Ice Cube's qualifications to lead a discourse on the craft of acting, particularly since past honorees include Samuel L. Jackson, Billy Dee Williams, and Rosie Perez. But Ice Cube was surprisingly insightful and honest. When moderator George Alexander of *Black Enterprise* asked why rappers seem to be taking all the jobs away from trained black actors, Ice Cube responded, "This is a business. Rappers have a lot of fan base that will come see the movie. I've created more jobs than I've taken away. We're not just coming in and taking, we're coming in creating." In addition, Ice Cube shared what he has learned about the craft of screenwriting after writing box-office hits like *Friday*—mainly the importance of the basic three-act structure. He also encouraged audience members to do work that they're going to be proud of.

Urbanworld's focus on supporting and acknowledging minority filmmakers has long won favorable marks from the community the festival is designed to serve. This year the festival forwarded this goal with the introduction of the Mecca Awards, which honor minority entertainers for their accomplishments within the media field. Festival chairman emeritus Stacey Spikes comments that the Mecca Awards are a chance to "honor ourselves in a higher fashion." This year, *Monster's Ball* producer Lee Daniels received the Visionary Award, and Kerry Washington, best known for her role in *Save the Last Dance*, was given the Future of Film Award. It is gestures like this that endear Urbanworld to minority filmmakers. "We make an effort to have a support system," says Huang.

Several films combined hip hop with large, complex issues. *Civil Brand*, by veteran filmmaker Neema Barnette, scored one of the biggest hits. The film exposes the abuse and corruption that permeates the women's prison system. Thanks to a compelling story, good production, a hip hop flair, and stars such as Da Brat, Tachina Arnold, Lark Voorhees, MC Lyte, and N'Bushe Wright, every screening sold out. Barnette and her film were inspiring for filmmaker Clairesa Clay, film curator and founder of the Reel Sisters Film Festival. For Clay, Barnette's work was one of the highlights of the festival. "[It was encouraging] to see people of that stature making feature films." In addition, Urbanworld held its traditional Grand Jury Award Ceremony, where Barnette picked up the prized Audience Award. She thanked Urbanworld for supporting independent cinema, hailing it as "the way of the future."

Bertha Bay Sa Pan won Best Director for her film *Face*, which blended traditional Chinese culture with contemporary hip hop as two generations of women try to maintain their identity in a fast and changing world. As the result of one woman's struggle to break free from her mother's traditional Chinese culture, she becomes the mother of a child who ends up in the same state of rebellion. Eric Eason's DV feature *Manito* represented the Dominican community with a gritty adolescent tale of a young man with a promising future. On his way to college, he is forced to make a decision that will alter his life forever. Eason garnered the award for Best Feature Film.

Ice Cube receives the MECCA Movie Award for Career Achievement during the Urbanworld Film Festival.

The Documentary Short prize was taken home by Sandra Krasa and Bianca White for *Ocoee: Legacy of the Election Day Massacre*, a film about the elimination of the prosperous African American community in a Florida town when two

PHOTOS: LEFT, COURTESY NEEMA BARNETTE; RIGHT, JEN LOMBARDO/IMAGEDIRECT

black men defended their right to vote. Rick Derby won the Documentary Feature prize for *Rocks With Wings*, which profiles Jerry Richardson, a black man from Texas who takes a job coaching a girls' basketball team in a New Mexico Navajo community after a severe losing streak.

And if there was an award for Most Shocking Film, *Quiet* would easily have taken home the gold. This film by Sylvain White gave a warped, twisted view of pristine suburban life through the eyes of the quiet recluse Herbert, who constantly reflects on the meaning of life. Between the memories of his murdered son, Jacob, and the dry, callousness of his nagging wife, Eleanor, Herbert is forced to take out his frustrations on a canvas by painting—that is, until he gets his hands on The Club, the baton-like lock for car steering wheels.

Urbanworld is a dose of industry narcissism mixed with a smaller measure of true independent spirit. Particularly when it came to panels, the festival leaned a little too much to the former. The panel listed as "The Eternal Question—What Does a Producer Do," boasted names such as Lee Daniels, Leah Keith of Dreamworks, and George Tillman and Bob Teitel, the writer and coproducer of *Soul Food.* Although some indie-related topics were addressed, such as the difference between a manager and an agent, tips on how to get funding, and the value of a producer's rep, a good portion of the discussion was geared toward identifying how each person started in the business.

During the discussion "Before You Shoot," panelists, directors Charles Stone, H.M. Coakley, Tim Story, and casting director Alexa Fogel, urged filmmakers to stand up for their vision. Yet, even in this panel, conversations tended to veer towards advice on how to become an industry player, which left some festivalgoers wondering what's in it for independent filmmakers? How do we make a living at our craft? And still asking questions like, "I'm an independent with little money and a script, what do I do now?" Probably the best person on the "Before You Shoot" panel to answer that question was Eric Eason, who shot *Manito* for $24,000. But even he remained silent amidst the studio representatives beside him. (See page 32.)

Look for the 12th Annual Florida Film Festival to start a little sooner this year. We've changed the dates to March 7-16th when filmgoers can enjoy all the best that Florida has to offer. For more information visit www.floridafilmfestival.com or call 407-629-1088, xt. 222. See you in March.

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There was talk about the role that African Americans play in Hollywood. "There is a difference between being a producer in Hollywood and a black producer in Hollywood," Daniels stated. The goal as a black producer is "to show Hollywood that we have the same insight as whites in Hollywood and we can do things with class and taste," according to Daniels.

But even with all the awards and industry hype, Urbanworld continues to prove itself to be a home for minority filmmakers who often walk away from other festivals feeling as though their voice was not represented, and their issues as minorities were not addressed. Many of the filmmakers in Urbanworld value the festival because it's a forum for people of color, regardless of whether they make studio-driven or independent movies. Maurice Dwyer, whose film *Whoa* won honorable mention in the shorts category at Urbanworld, says that of all the film festivals he's been to, he has never come across one that is as nourishing and embracing as Urbanworld. When Dwyer volunteered for Urbanworld in 1999, seeing so many black films helped inspire him to write his own material. "[The festival] put the fire underneath my butt to do my own stuff," he explains. The following year he shot *Whoa*, which made it into Urbanworld. Roderick Giles, director of the short *Gully*, starring Tyson Beckford, commented, "[Urbanworld] is a really great platform and forum for filmmakers of color to show their wares. There are three festivals that are really powerful—the Pan-African Film Festival, obviously the American Black Film Festival, and Urbanworld. Without these, we wouldn't have a voice."

The festival is launching year round programming, including a high school screenwriting program and a college tour. Urbanworld also plans to hold satellite festivals in Tokyo, London, Frankfurt, and Marseilles, as well as filmmaker and screenwriting labs.

For more information, see www.uwff.com.

Avril Speaks currently serves as the executive assistant at AIVF. She is also an MFA candidate at Columbia University for Film Directing. As an independent writer and director, she is currently in postproduction of her latest project, Sophisticated Romance.

The Cologne Medien Forum

Germany's largest media conference sails on

BY CLAUS MUELLER

GUIDED BY THE THEME "FACE THE FUTURE of Communication," the 2002 Cologne Medien Forum, the largest German media event, was held against the backdrop of declining advertising revenues, the bankruptcy of a major film/television company, and sobering predictions for many key media outlets. The traditional euphoria of Medien forums was replaced this year by a more realistic appraisal that shaped all the parallel conferences that make up the forum: the Cologne Conference and Screenings; the International Film Congress; the interactive, electronic media prong MeCon; the youth media section Generation M; and the citizens festival Medienbuergerfest, that marks the close of the Medien Forum.

The forum attracts a huge professional and lay audience. This year attendance totaled 170,000 visitors. Organized by state agencies of North Rhine Westphalia, the Cologne Medien Forum has retained its political emphasis. In addition to sessions addressing industry issues, the forum incorporated politically oriented panels with themes such as media and violence, the dangerous liaison between the media and politics, the digital divide, and pending media regulations. The scale and diversity of these publicly funded initiatives, aimed at developing the German film industry, has no parallel in the United States or, for that matter, any country other than France.

Cologne Screenings and Conference

Each year the Cologne Conference features industry seminars and screenings of both fiction and nonfiction television programs from around the world. US productions introduced this year included HBO's *Six Feet Under* and *Band of Brothers*, and Fox's series *24*. Dutch documentaries excelled in the nonfiction section with controversial projects such as *ASH (Alt.Suicide.Holiday)*, by Walter Stokman, which chronicles a group of people addicted to a website focusing on methods of suicide; *First Kill*, by Coco Schribjer, about the satisfaction and pleasure soldiers derive from killing and destroying; and Simone de Vries' portrait of an American Jewish country singer in *Kinky "Big Dick" Friedman: Proud to be an Asshole from El Paso*.

In 2000 a long-overdue international market, the Cologne Screenings, was added to the conference to facilitate the sale of German and international television productions.

In addition to showing pilot productions, the Cologne Screenings featured more than 350 programs and television series. Seminars covered coproductions, distribution strategies, and media market developments. Among noteworthy productions was the Swedish-German crime series *Die Fuenfte Frau*, featuring a poignant feminist subtext, and the German serial *Bloch*, about a psychotherapist who solves criminal cases with a detective's aplomb.

This year the conference added a new program, Young Talent, which screened first features and documentaries by unknown makers and film school graduates. Media groups such as the BBC, ARD, ZDF, Channel 4 International, and the Film Office of North Rhine Westphalia acted as presenters. Young Talent could become an important entry point for US independent productions into the European marketplace. The program featured outstanding productions such as Jenz Schanze's *Otzenrather Sprung*, a well paced and moving documentary in sepia tones about the destruction of rural communities by strip mining.

During an enlightening seminar on international programming needs, it was pointed out that Channel 4, not the BBC, is becoming the logical outlet for US independent producers looking to sell content in the UK. David Liddiment, program director for ITV, noted that the BBC has in the past few years pursued a "dumbing down" strategy and drastically reduced the amount of air time devoted to cultural, documentary, and science programs. In contrast, Channel 4 airs several documentaries a week during primetime and relies solely on commissioned work. To date, Channel 4's principal sources for US documentaries have been established entities such as the Discovery Channel and National Geographic Television, but independent US producers are encouraged to directly approach Channel 4, according to Barbara Bellini Witkowski, director of coproductions and sales. Other established venues within the European Union include ARTE (the German-French television venture), ZDF, and Scandinavian public broadcasters.

Festivalgoers board a Rhine riverboat, the site of the 2002 Cologne Conference and Screenings.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF COLOGNE MEDIEN FORUM

International Film Congress

The International Film Congress, which focuses on fostering contacts and building relationships, included not only a daylong networking platform, but the return and expansion of the Co-Production [also known as cofinancing; see page 40] Meeting, the highlight of which were pitch sessions featuring forty-four independent international film projects. The projects were presented to an audience overflowing with German producers, industry observers, and investors, many interested in partnering with non-German productions. Such a partnership enables the production to apply for financial support from the meeting's organizer, the North Rhine Westphalia Film Foundation, which controls Film Stiftung Nord Rhein Westfalen, the second largest

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European funding source for feature and documentary productions. Over a ten-year period, the foundation spent about $250 million dollars to cofinance four hundred film, television, and documentary projects. Large public and private German broadcasters, such as ZDF, WDR, and RTL, partner with the State of North Rhine Westphalia and secure these funds. In spite of economic constraints in Germany, the budget of the foundation has grown each year. Several of the twelve projects pitched last year found such partners and are now in production.

This year, only one US company was present at the congress, the New York-based Cinequest Films. They participated only as a guest and did not pitch a project. However, the foundation encourages submissions by independent US producers for the 2003 congress, which has a February 2003 deadline. Producers must already have twenty to thirty percent of their financing in order to be selected for the pitching session. They must also provide standard information such as a synopsis, identification of key production personnel, specification of genre, and length of production. Accepted proposals are presented during the Medien Forum. If a German coproducing partner signs on at this time, a funding proposal can be submitted to the foundation.

In addition to the condition that filmmakers have a German partner to receive funding from North Rhine Westphalia Foundation, the following qualifications need to be met:

- The production must meet the quality standards of the foundation and have a strong chance for commercial success.
- The applicant must finance at least five percent of the production with her or his personal funds.
- The interest-free loan from the foundation cannot exceed fifty percent of the total production cost of the film and is expected to be repaid if the film project becomes a commercial success.
- A sum corresponding to at least one hundred fifty percent of the loan amount must be spent in North Rhine Westphalia production and/or postproduction.

Among recent productions with US participation which have been supported by the foundation are *Heaven*, by Tom Twyker (Miramax), *Bookies*, by Mark Ilsley (International Arts Entertainment), *Investigating Sex*, by Alan Rudolph (Surreal Productions and Janus Films); and *Teza* (Kino), by Haile Gerima (Pandora Filmproduktion, Negod-Gwad Productions, WDR/arte, et al.)

Most German producers only have experience with the few US independents who have set up their own companies in the European Union. Karl Baumgarten of Pandora Film believes coproduction funding will increase in the coming years, especially for productions in the two- to seven-million-dollar/euro range. Although Baumgarten is interested in coproducing opportunities with US independents, his company has yet to engage in such an agreement, since none of the US-based proposals submitted to him have had any funding in place.

As the largest European media conference, the Cologne Medien Forum offers a comprehensive orientation, political accents, and the incorporation of both professional and lay audiences. It provides an outstanding opportunity for networking and establishing viable contacts with the European production community and the most important German funding agency, the NRW Film Foundation.

For more information, log on to:
Medien Forum www.medienforum.nrw.de

Cologne Conference
www.cologne-conference.de
info@cologne-conference.de

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NRW Film Foundation
www.filmstiftung.de
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International Film Congress and Co-Production Meetings
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www.c4International.com

Claus Mueller is a New York-based writer who teaches media analysis at Hunter College/CUNY and curates the annual New York Screening Days Conference. To reach Claus, write to cmueller@hunter.cuny.edu.

Palm Pictures

JASON GUERRASIO INTERVIEWS DAVID KOH

What is Palm Pictures?
We're a film and music company. We have five music labels [that] release twenty CD's a year, and on the film side we're a production company, and we acquire and distribute [films]. We funded our first eight pictures. They've been in the two-to-six million-dollar range. Our digital movies are in the $500,000 to $1-million range. We're very much positioned as a high-end DVD label, similar to Criterion but less artsy, and also specialize in anything music related. We market all of our properties through our online entity, which is www.sputnik7.com. We have an anime label too called Manga Entertainment. Manga releases about twenty DVD's a year, and they produce a movie a year. It's the largest Japanese anime label outside of Japan. We do our own theatrical release and we can release up to about 150 prints in-house. Some of the movies we've made went out of house because they were much wider release than we can do, like James Toback's *Black and White.*

When and why did Palm Pictures start?
It began in 1998 by Chris Blackwell. The company was formed as a very artistic company [with] very eclectic tastes.

How many projects have you funded since your inception? What has been the (distribution/exhibition) path of some of those projects?
The first movie we made was a Buddhist soccer movie called *The Cup*, by Khyentse Norbu, which Fineline released. The second movie was called *Black and White*, by James Toback, with Mike Tyson and Robert Downey Jr. We did another movie that's coming out later this year called *The Last Minute*, by Steven Norrington. We did an experimental music project called *1 Giant Leap* (featuring Michael Stipe, Baaba Maal, Maxi Speech and many others), which is kind of a time capsule but it's a visual album, and that's coming out later this year. Acquisitions-wise we have put out an eclectic slate. We have a Spanish movie in release now called *Sex and Lucia*, by Julio Medem, that's playing around the country. We bought it at Sundance. We just released Doug Pray's *Scratch*, that's a music doc, and just did another doc called *Dark Days* by Marc Singer. We have a Hong Kong movie coming out called *Fulltime Killer* Johnny To and Ka-Fai Wai, and we're also releasing Harry Bean's *The Believer* on DVD and VHS.

Paz Vega plays the alluring young waitress of Julio Medem's *Sex and Lucia.*

What's the philosophy of having Palm work in both music and film?
The philosophy of the company [in] Chris [Blackwell's] mind is that as media matures, people who are into music are also into film. They're also doing music videos. They're into television. He really wanted a company that had a cross-pollination. He thinks the new thing is visual records. Which is why he's so interested in DVD's. He thinks that these new digital technologies, these new formats, are changing things, and there's a hybrid of progressive DVD's that will be coming out.

How many projects do you fund on average each year?
About four. We're looking for feature films that are very director-driven but also progressive DVD projects.

How many submissions do you receive annually?
We get a really wide base of submissions. About seventy percent comes from the agencies, and about thirty percent is unsolicited. But we'll look at everything.

What types of projects do you seek?
We're much more director-driven and not so much cast-driven, and even something very eclectic would fit the mix.

What types of projects would Palm Pictures definitely not fund?
Pretty much anything above $6 million.

Does Palm Pictures have hard deadlines or can producers approach you year round?
People approach us year-round. We travel to all the film festivals, film markets, and television markets.

How do you prefer a producer to submit a project to you?
It really comes in all over the place: e-mail, a lawyer or agent; sometimes it's easier if someone we do business with brings it in and gives it a little high life. The festival Res Fest gets a tremendous amount of submissions, and they're sort of an A&R beacon for the company as well.

What are the financing decisions based upon, and who makes these decisions?
That would be me and Blackwell. Every two weeks we sit down in a small group and break down who the people are, how much it's going to cost, and what it looks

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Palm Pictures' head of aquisitions, David Koh

like. If it passes there, it'll go to the next stage, and we'll actually see if we can hammer out something with whoever's representing the project and work it out.

Do you fund projects only in development, or can producers approach you for finishing funds?
We actually don't develop a lot. We look to producers to come with packaged products. We're mostly interested in North American rights, including Canada and the UK, also the Caribbean. Those are the places we directly distribute, but it kind of comes in all stages. We've contracted people to write scripts for us, and we've bought properties to develop, but we mostly look for packaged products with a director and talent attached.

What distinguishes Palm Pictures from other funders?
We get a lot of projects, because Chris' tastes are really wide and he's not interested in the straight down the middle. He's interested in something over to the left and over to the right. So we're sort of counter-programming to the studios. We don't want to directly compete with the much bigger companies.

What's rewarding about funding films?
It's exciting when you work on something that's very organic and you see it take shape and go out into the world and have affect a lot of people.

What advice do you have for producers about putting forth a strong application or proposal?
It's all about a very good idea, and whether or not it's ingenious. It's not so much about the cast and the director and what they've done before. It's really about the idea, and utilizing the available technology out there to execute it. That's what we're most excited about. I think Chris is one of those handful of people left that will really give an unknown a chance.

What's the most common mistake a producer makes when they apply to you?
Sometimes people are really too aggressive and have to realize that they are people we are going to work with on a day-to-day basis. Some people get so aggressive that even if the project's good, we could never think of working with them because they will call eight, ten times a day, and they've just dropped off the script a day ago. To their credit, it's a really tough market out there, and it's hard to get things made, especially in New York. There are fewer and fewer places to go to. Let the material speak for itself, that's what's really going to sell it.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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David Koh – Head of Acquisition & Co-Productions for Palm Pictures

The Slate:

Theatrical

American Mullet
Jennifer Arnold, early 2003

Fulltime Killer
Johnnie To, early 2003

Paper Boy
Mike Mills, early 2003

The Last Minute
Stephen Norrington, early 2003

DVD/VHS

The Believer, Henry Bean, December 2002

Work to Watch For

BY JASON GUERRASIO

Theatrical

Derrida

Dirs. Amy Ziering Kofman, Kirby Dick
(Zeitgeist Films, Oct. 23)

"SITTING IN THE AUDIENCE LISTENING TO him lecture, I thought there should be some kind of record of him, because he's one of the greatest thinkers probably of all time," explains filmmaker Amy Ziering Kofman about why she did a documentary on philosopher Jacques Derrida.

Derrida explores the very private life of the creator of deconstruction, which Kofman defines as, "a way of critical thinking that makes up some kind of sense or meaning." This radical thinker has spent most of his life observing and analyzing western culture, but has rarely allowed himself to become the subject of observation.

One of the greatest minds of the 20th century, philosopher Jacques Derrida is the subject of Amy Ziering Kofman and Kirby Dirk's documentary.

A student of Derrida's in the eighties, Kofman was always intrigued by his work. After sitting in on a lecture of his ten years ago, she decided he would be the subject of her next project. But Kofman soon discovered why no one had successfully profiled him. Derrida is an elusive character, reluctant to open the door into his life outside of the lecture hall. "That became clear from the start, that he was going to be a reluctant subject, a gracious, but skeptical host to our endeavor. So the whole thing became about 'How do you respect his right and respect what you're trying to accomplish at the same time?'" explains Kofman.

Hoping Derrida would let down his guard, codirector Kirby Dick and Kofman spent as much time as they could with their subject. "Whenever we had the opportunity to run long, that's how I got a lot of the off-the-cuff moments," says Kofman.

The film, which follows Derrida from France (where he lives) to Australia, South Africa, and America, was never intended to unlock the hidden life of the private genius. Instead, Kofman sought to capture a small moment of Derrida's life on film for future thinkers to study upon. "I didn't need the bedroom scenes or the unlimited-Osborne effects," says Kofman.

Also showing:

Interview with the Assassin

Dir. Neil Burger
(Magnolia Pictures, Nov. 8)

THIS CLEVER MOCKUMENTARY TOYS WITH the theory of a second gunman in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Struggling cameraman Ron Kobeleski (Dylan Haggerty) is asked by his spooky neighbor, Walter (Raymond J. Barry), to tape his confession as the second gunman on the grassy knoll. Soon both of them are in danger as the government is hot on their tails to stop the video from getting out. But is Walter even telling the truth?

Talk to Her

Dir. Pedro Almodóvar
(Sony Pictures Classics, Nov. 22)

LEGENDARY SPANISH FILMMAKER PEDRO Almodóvar shows no sign of slipping as he diagnoses the male psyche the same way he did the female in *All About My Mother*. In *Talk to Her*, we follow two middle-aged men through the ups and downs of being in love. In true Almodóvar fashion, there is much comedy to match the sensual tone of the film.

Television

Alcatraz Is Not An Island

Dir. Jim Fortier
(PBS, Nov. 7)

SEARCHING FOR A NATIVE AMERICAN STORY to do a documentary on, filmmaker Jim Fortier read *Alcatraz! Alcatraz! The Indian Occupation of 1969–1970*. He soon found his subject in this group of Native Americans who were on the leading edge "Red Power" movement of the 1960's.

"I definitely had to do this, because it's a profound story," remembers Fortier after reading the book. "It's never been told, and it's just an incredible piece of American Indian history."

Using archival footage shot by a filmmaker who was on the island during the occupation, *Alcatraz Is Not An Island* shows a forgotten race of people taking charge of their own future by taking back land that was once rightfully theirs.

Fortier found the footage of the Alcatraz occupation hidden in a few cardboard

Richard Oakes was one of the leaders of the Alcatraz occupation, and is a subject of Jim Fortier's documentary *Alcatraz Is Not An Island*.

boxes in a garage in Berkeley, California. "This guy had reels upon reels," says Fortier. "We just started looking at the stuff and taking notes and cutting right off the reel and assembling our own."

Alcatraz received the award for Best Documentary Feature at the American Indian Film Festival in 1999 (which marked the thirtieth anniversary of the occupation), and it is now being used as part of an outreach program to educate the Indian youth about their heritage. "[It's used] to initiate discussions about Indian self-determination, especially kids. Indian kids in high school don't really know the history of what happened in the sixties and seventies, but a lot of them are benefiting from it. There's a lack of understanding about what it took for that to come about." (See *The Independent*, May 2002.)

Legacy

Dir. Tod Lending
(PBS, Nov. 29)

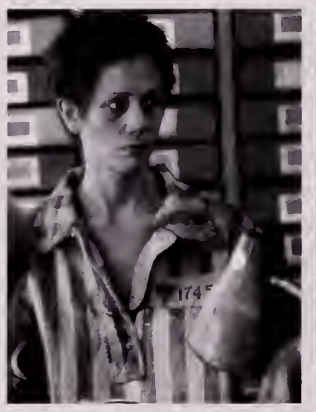
HIGHLIGHTING THE LIVES OF AN AFRICAN American family's determination to move out of the housing projects of Chicago, this documentary spans three generations of women battling through their own personal demons to live a better life for themselves and their kids.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

The Great Money Hunt

Filmmakers share their stories

by Jason Guerrasio



PHOTOS, 1ST ROW: COURTESY OF KAREN SAS, KAREN SAS, THE FUNK BROTHERS, 2ND ROW: 7TH FLOOR, 3RD ROW: DEYAN OONEV/LIONS GATE FILMS, 4TH ROW: BRADLEY BEESLEY. FACING PAGE: KAREN SAS.

There are many ways to finance a film. In some cases, financiers want to get involved because the material has touched them in a certain way. Other times, they're intrigued because they always wanted to work with the director or an actor. Then there are people with money and want to get into movies. The hardest part, of course, is finding the people with the deep pockets. Sometimes it takes months, sometimes years, but that's the rush of the moviemaking process.

Standing in the Shadow of Adversity

Pitching a movie about a group of background musicians doesn't tend to get financiers excited enough to open their checkbooks. But Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky was committed to getting the story of Motown's hit-making machine, the Funk Brothers, on the big screen, even if it meant committing financial suicide.

In 1989, Slutsky was awarded the Ralph J. Gleason Award (for best music book of the year) for his biography of Funk Brothers bassist James Jamerson, *Standing in the Shadows of Motown: The Life and Music of Legendary Bassist James Jamerson*. With the surprising success of the book, Slutsky started shopping around the idea of making a film about the Funk Brothers. "I made over a thousand pitches. We went to every record company, every film company, nobody was interested. [They would say] 'Who cares about background musicians, we want to know about the stars.'"

What no one realized was, the Funk Brothers were the stars. Creating most of the beats and riffs to some of the most famous songs of all time, the Funk Brothers have more number-one hits than the Beach Boys, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and Elvis Presley, combined.

But a few people did commit to the project and drove it forward. Veteran rockumentary and music video director Paul Justman signed on early. And in 1997, the film caught the eye of entertainment lawyer Sandy Passman, who jumped on as a producer.

Through the years, Slutsky, Passman, and Justman received more rejections than they can count, and saw a lot of near deals turn sour. At one point, an Oscar-winning actor offered to play Jamerson in a feature film. But there was a catch: The actor wanted to produce the film, and Slutsky, Passman, and Justman would have to bail out. "I called [the actor's agent]," recalls Passman. "I said to him, if he makes this the very, very, very next project and guarantees he'll green-light this movie, then we will seriously consider it. Well, that was the end of that conversation."

After that, the three decided their best chance of getting the film made was as a documentary. The *Motown* project had come to its eleventh year of searching for financing when a good friend of Slutsky's, and a major supporter of the film, died suddenly. Another close friend flying back for the funeral ended up sitting next to a man named Paul Elliott. That seating assignment changed everything. "They strike up a conversation and find out that they're both musicians," Slutsky remembers. "[My friend] told him about the movie, and the guy said, 'Have him call me,' and my friend said, 'Well, they need $3 million, are you in a position to help on that level?' And he said, 'I wasn't last week, but I am now. I just sold my company for half a billion dollars.'" Elliott and his business partner, David Scott, funded the entire film. "The only way I can look at it is, my friend left me a going away present," Slutsky says.

Photos, facing page: FIRST ROW—*Standing in the Shadows of Motown*: (from left) Bob Babbitt, Ben Harper, and Eddie Willis performing *Ain't Too Proud To Beg*; Funk Brothers with Joan Osborne (from left) Jack Ashford, Pistol Allen, Joe Hunter, and Eddie Willis; (clockwise from left) Joe Hunter, Larry Veeder, Benny Benjamin, producer Clarence Paul, James Jamerson, Mike Terry, Stevie Wonder. SECOND ROW—*Manito*: Leo Minaya as Manny; Junior (right, Franky G.) with his band of day workers; on the set of *Manito*. THIRD ROW—*Grey Zone*: Harvey Keitel (center) as Oberschaarfher Erich Muhsfeldt; Mia Sorvino as Dina; David Arquette as Hoffman. FOURTH ROW—*Okie Noodling*: Noodlers with their catch.

Standing in the Shadows of Motown

BUDGET: $2 million

Cost of Principal Photography: Much of $2 million

Length of Principal Photography:
Music: 1 week
Doc: 3 weeks

Cast: $90,000, including travel

Concert: $1 million

Transportation: Included in performer fees

Cost of Postproduction: $800,000

Length of Postproduction: 8 months

Film Editing: $75,000

Archival Footage: $50,000-$75,000

Insurance: Albert Rubin package, standard fee

Motown's legendary Funk Brothers perform at Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit, Michigan.

"The film is so emotional for us, because when we look at the movie, we see the men who are no longer there. We see the struggle we went through and the bullshit that was heaped upon us, and we're proud of ourselves in the sense that we were able to overcome great adversity," says an emotional Passman. "We already got our reward."

Slutsky spent over a decade to get *Motown* made. He liquidated his life's savings and logged over 30,000 hours to pull one of the last unmined stories of the sixties up onto the big screen. Why go through all that for a movie? "I was once in a supermarket with [Funk Brother] Joe Hunter," Slutsky remembers. "We're standing there, and on the speaker is *Shop Around*, and a girl next to us is singing it, and here's Joe Hunter, the guy who played it, and she has no idea. They've had to endure that their whole lives, the obscurity." After forty years of playing, the background musicians finally have their time in the spotlight.

Big Hit for a Low Budget

When you're hungry to make a movie, most up-and-comers don't mind that they're not going to see a dime for their hard work. To make *Manito*, the producers did a lot of begging and pleading for money, and tried to get everything else they needed for free.

Having done a few shorts together, filmmaker Eric Eason and producer Jesse Scolaro decided they were ready to embark on a feature film. *Manito* follows two brothers, Manny (Leo Minaya) and Junior (Franky G.), who are on two different tracks in life. Manny is graduating from high school and headed to the University of Syracuse in the fall, while older brother Junior tries to stay on the straight and narrow after a childhood of crime and jail time. On the night of Manny's graduation, a chain of events destroys both their dreams and leaves their family in disarray.

Manito was made on a tight budget. Financing for the film we realized with the help of donations from family, friends, and a lawyer from Queens—who they would return to throughout the film's production. Using every budget-saving methods they could think of, the filmmakers put what money they did have to careful use. "We had one cargo van, which was also the van Junior uses in the film, and transported some of the cast and crew to and from set. We shot in real locations. We shot in the actors' homes. We used their children. They wore their own clothes. The art director went to each actors home and literally went through their closets and told them what they were going to wear for each scene. So everything was on the cheap," says Scolaro.

Scolaro says from the start no one had a problem contributing, knowing that they weren't going to get anything in return for the work they put in. "Everyone knew what kind of project they were getting involved in. We basically said, 'If you're going to do this film, you're going to do it as a collaborator to help us pull this off.'"

At times it meant going to extreme measures to get the shot. One scene takes place during Manny's high school graduation. Of course, they didn't have the budget to create their own graduation ceremony, so the cast and crew just went to one. "You need invitations to get into a high school graduation, so we kind of went in with the crowd and acted like the person ahead of us had the tickets. They were so overwhelmed that they just let us in," explains Scolaro. And thanks to the miniDV cameras they were using, they looked the part. "We borrowed some kid's uniform and just threw it on the actor. [We just looked like] a family videotaping one of their family members graduating."

But the search for financing did not end once the film was finished. When *Manito* got into Sundance, there was a major festival trip to pay for. Money was needed for hiring a publicist, making prints of the film, throwing in subtitles, and paying for all the miscellaneous things you need to get your film noticed at a big festival, such as flyers, press packets, etc. Scolaro found two

Manito

BUDGET: $150,000

Cost of Principal Photography: $24,000

Length of Principal Photography: 4 weeks, plus reshoot week

Cast: $10 per diem; $25,000 deferments; SAG experimental (when distribution deal comes, SAG gets paid first)

Screenplay Fee: Deferred (after everyone gets paid back)

Director/Producer Fee: Deferred

Set Construction: none

Wardrobe: none (provided by actors)

Props: gun rental: $175; party misc.: a few hundred dollars

Transportation: subway fare out of per-diem; whoever wanted could pile into the van

Catering: Out of $10 per diem

Total Postproduction: $125,000, including editing, film transfer, original music, sound mix, sound edit, three prints, subtitles, publicity, posters, post cards, press packets

Length of Postproduction: 5 weeks

Music and band performance: $30,000–$35,000 deferred

Number of staff:
Preproduction: 10
Postproduction: 10

Film Editing: $400 a week

Insurance: none

Leo Minaya (Manny) and Jessica Morales (Marisol) play young lovers in Eric Eason's *Manito*.

AOL-executives-turned-producers to help the film get over this second financial hurdle. "I showed them the film and told them we got into Sundance. They basically said, 'How much money do you guys need?' They each gave us $25,000."

Currently finishing its festival run, it has just inked a distribution deal with Film Movement. Though it's unlikely anyone involved in the film will make a profit, they are pleased that their film has caught the attention of so many people across the globe. "We're still playing in other places in the world, because we feel like the film is never going to get a chance to be seen in some places," says Scolaro.

Courageous look at an Uncourageous Moment in History

When Tim Blake Nelson's *The Grey Zone* was playing off-Broadway in 1996, people asked him if he was planning to turn the play into a film. He'd made the transition from stage to screen with his last play, *Eye of God*, but *The Grey Zone* wasn't the intimate Southwestern story *Eye of God* was. This was a story about the Holocaust as told, in "a very frank, unflinching, and unsentimental way.," as Nelson describes it. If he ever did consider making it into a film, he had no clue how to do it or who would pay for it.

Based on a book Nelson read in the mid-nineties, titled *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, the film is about the Auschwitz's Sonderkommandos, a "special squad" of Jewish prisoners who helped exterminate fellow Jews in exchange for a few more months of life. Chronicling the only attempted revolt, the film highlights two different groups in the camp: those who want to revolt so they can escape, and those who want to use the revolt as a way to destroy the camp.

Making the World War II epic *The Thin Red Line* with director Terrence Malick in 1998 gave Nelson the tools, and the confidence, to start our own film. Four months after *The Thin Red Line* wrapped up, he had written the script for *The Grey Zone*.

When he passed the screenplay on to his agent, Nelson was told it would take seven years to get the movie made, if ever. Since Nelson also wanted to be a producer on the film, he began searching for a producing partner who could lessen the load of finding financing. The first on his list were already Pamela Koffler and Christine Vachon, copresidents of Killer Films. Known for taking on films that have trouble finding financing (*Series 7: The Contenders, Happiness*, and *Storytelling*) Koffler and Vachon jumped on board as producers for the film. "[We] pretty much agreed that it was going to be one of the hardest movies to get money for because of the nature of the material," says Pamela Koffler. "We got consistent refrains of, 'It's a fantastic script, but it's just too heavy.'"

At the end of 1999, Nelson, Koffler, and Vachon were still looking for a backer when Nelson took a meeting about possibly directing a film for action/adventure production house Millennium Films (*The Peacekeeper, Platoon Leader, American Ninja 2, 3 and 4*, and *Replicant*). After declining to make their film, he soon heard back from Avi and Danny Lerner, the owners of Millennium Films. *The Grey Zone* script struck a nerve with the Israeli brothers, and they were willing to put up the cash to get it made. "Once Avi and Danny had read the film and put it in the context of their having grown up in Israel around a lot of Holocaust survivors, I think they found the subject matter irresistible," says Nelson.

"We made the movie for our souls," says Danny Lerner, who told Nelson, Koffler, and Vachon at their first meeting that he and his brother never expect to make any money on this movie. "I wondered even to believe it, because here was a financier saying point-blank to me that he would subsidize the insane vision of this movie," says Nelson.

The Lerner brothers not only brought money to the film, but a location to shoot it. Their production apparatus in Bulgaria, where they film their action movies, was a blessing for Nelson, whose only other location option was Canada. "I did not want to

The Grey Zone

BUDGET: $3.8 million, with a $200,000 contingency

Length of Pre-Production: 3 months, 6 days a week in Bulgaria

Cost of Principal Photography: Around $2.7

Length of Principal Photography: 41 days (originally 45)

Cast: SAG scale (four actors with top billing received slightly more)

Transportation: $1,500 a person. "We did not fly people first class."

Screenplay Fee: Used to build the second crematorium

Special Effects: $80,000

Set Construction: $250,000

Wardrobe: $40,000

Total Postproduction: $200,000–$250,000

Length of Postproduction: 14 weeks editing

Number of staff:
Preproduction: 5-member core for 3 months
Postproduction: 3 people

Film Editing: Done in New York for less than union scale

Insurance: The Millennium package self-insures everything

Doctor Mikols Nyiszli (Allan Corduner) attends to the young girl (Kamelia Grigorova) in Nelson's *The Grey Zone*.

PHOTO: FACING PAGE, COURTESY OF 7TH FLOOR; THIS PAGE, DEYAN DONEV/LIONS GATE FILMS

shoot in Canada," says Nelson. "I wanted to take a cast and crew to film at least in the region in which these events occurred."

After shooting forty-one days in Bulgaria, Nelson had his vision on screen. He even went as far as giving up his screenplay fee to build the second crematorium building. Now it is in the hands of the public to see if they are ready for a Holocaust film that doesn't have a heroic or uplifting theme. "I think there is an audience out there which has been waiting for this kind of film," says Nelson. "An audience that is tired of Holocaust films, even the extraordinary ones, which offer cheap redemption out of an event that had few, if any, cheap redemptions."

High Credit and Waterlogged Dreams

Financing your film with credit cards is the film business version of hand-fishing, better known in Oklahoma as "noodling." You stick your hand in the water and wiggle your fingers to entice the prey. You'll either get your fingers repossessed, or you'll catch the big fish. Luckily for *Okie Noodling* filmmaker Bradley Beesley, it was the big fish.

After two summers in the murky creeks and backwaters of Oklahoma, chronicling the art of noodling, Beesley had to figure out how to pay off the four credit cards he maxed out to shoot his documentary. With most of the project shot and $40,000 in debt, Beesley just hoped that he would get the grant that he applied for six months earlier to cover the bills.

The idea of shooting a documentary about this peculiar hobby first came to Beesley when he was fourteen years old, listening to the adults in his family talk. "I had gone to family reunions when I was a kid and met some fourth and fifth cousins that did it," he explains. "I was just fascinated by it and knew it was bizarre. I figured that if I thought it was bizarre, being from Oklahoma, that people from other parts of the nation and the world would think it doubly as bizarre."

The idea brewed in his mind for years, and in 1999, he finally decided to make the film. Beesley put together a ten-minute trailer and sent it out on the fundraising rounds, hoping grown men getting their hands chewed on by catfish would intrigue someone. With ITVS showing the most interest, Beesley applied for their LiNCS program (which helps join filmmakers with PBS stations) and waited in anticipation to start shooting. "We were not going to find out for six months, and I decided to make the movie, funding or not." With a restlessness to get his film made, Beesley did the only thing he could think of: Charge it. Charge everything.

Fortunately, Beesley did get the grant—$128,000. Beesley recalls the concerns he had going to San Francisco to sign the deal: "I was quite pleased to learn that all the money I spent on credit cards I was able to pay off, [but] I kind of had to be careful and not divulge the fact that I was ninety percent done with the film, because ITVS doesn't fund completed projects."

The money from the grant was more than enough for Beesley to pay for his debts and finish editing the film. But he soon realized he wasn't out of the woods (or creeks) yet. To show a clip of a noodlers who had gotten national attention, Beesley bought one minute of footage of the hand fishes on *The David Letterman Show*, which cost $3,300. And getting Oklahoma's own Flaming Lips to do the good ol' boy soundtrack took a $6,000 bite out of the budget.

By 2001, not only was *Okie Noodling* selected for the South by Southwest Film Festival, but it left with the Audience Choice Award and first runner up for Best Documentary, which launched the film on the festival circuit, including Toronto and AFI.

The ITVS money may have covered his debts for *Okie Noodling* but Beesley is still $53,000 he is in the hole for projects he has done in the past. "That's sort of my problem in life, I've never had a budget for anything. In fact, I just get big credit cards and buy what I want."

Guess it's back to sticking his hand in the water to test fate one more time.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

Okie Noodling

In the course of filming the documentary *Okie Noodling*, director Bradley Beesley also learned how to "noodle."

BUDGET: $128,000

Cost of Principal Photography: $38,000

Length of Principal Photography: 2 summers, with interviews in spring and fall.

Director/Producer fee: $2,800 "[What] I had left after I paid everyone and paid everything off."

Transportation: helicopter rental $600 an hour, with pilot

Postproduction: "It was supposed to be in-kinded to us, but the station didn't give me much time, so I just bought a G4 Mac and some software and a couple of drives, and just cut it in it my bedroom."

Length of Postproduction: 6 months.

Video to Film Transfer: $10,000

Number of staff: Principal Photography: 3 (camera assistant, audio engineer, and Beesley)

Postproduction: 4 (editor, assistant, business manager, and Beesley)

Insurance: Errors and omissions, $3,000

Archival Footage: $3,300 for one-minute clip from *David Letterman Show*

Music: $6,000—Flaming Lips soundtrack

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BRADLEY BEESLEY

How to Raise Money

Hints for embarking on the fundraising journey

BY MICHELLE COE

Probably the most common can-of-worms question pressing the emerging filmmaker is, How do I find money for my film? It's never an simple question to answer, since film/video funding and financing involves a lot of time, research, skill, and perseverance. Today's funding climate is extremely competitive. Government funds have just about dried up. The stock market is squeezing private investors. And both commercial and nonprofit companies are trimming their budgets. There is still money out there, but this is a time to think creatively on where to find it and how to ask for it.

There are two basic streams to go down to raise money for a media project—fundraising and financing. Fundraising involves grants and contributors who do not expect any financial return. This is mostly for noncommercial projects, such as social-issue documentaries, short films, and experimental projects. Financing involves investors who expect a return on their investment and is generally the direction pursued by commercial projects such as feature films. Both these categories are fluid. Some fiction films do receive funding from nonprofits, and there are documentaries that may be enticing to investors. Whatever source you pursue, creative thinking and detailed preparation are your most important tasks.

FUNDRAISING

Asking a foundation for money may seem more overwhelming than actually making a film. First you must find a good match for your subject, and then there are endless forms and proposals to hand in. The thing to remember is that it is a foundation's job to give away money. It is your job to convince them to give it to you.

How to Approach Foundations

Do your research carefully. It's important to know who would truly be interested in your project. Most foundations do not have specific media funding programs, but they do have mission statements. Your job is to study the foundation, their guidelines, annual report, anything that will help you evaluate how your project advances their mission. Once you're confident that you have found a foundation that meshes with your

Packaging Your Project

Whether you apply for grants or approach investors, the better "packaged" your project is the greater the likelihood you'll end up with a check.Well packaged does not mean you should put naked girls or exploding cars on the cover of the packet of materials you send out. What it does mean is that you should present your project as creatively and professionally as possible. Your packet should include:

- the script
- a thorough synopsis of the project
- résumés of key personnel
- the project's budget
- a fundraising plan
- a distribution plan
- letters of intent from funding entities, cast, or advisors
- a sample reel of past work and/or footage of the project

It is very important, even in this early stage, to consider where your project will ultimately end up. While theatrical release, broadcast and/or cable distribution may be your goal, the truth is many projects are never picked up for distribution by these outlets. Don't limit your project's life by not addressing how you will reach your audience if the project is not bought by a distributor. The people investing in your project—whether they represent a foundation or are an investor—will want to know this, and being prepared will only make you a more attractive prospect.

topic, call their offices. If they do not fund media projects directly, explain that while you are aware that they do not traditionally fund media, the subject of your film/video directly fits into their funding goals. Never write a generic proposal and send it out randomly. Proposals must be tailor-made to fit your project with the funder's mission.

The Application Process

Funds from foundations, the government, and corporate giving programs require an application process. Here begins the intensive phase of grantwriting. If your writing skills are not solid, never fear; there are grantwriters who fundraise for a living, and producers who have honed their grantwriting skills, who you might bring on as a consultant or coproducer. Your local media arts center will have membership directory or résumé bank to help you find these people. Bringing on a producer with a track record may also improve your chance of actually getting the grant, because some funders hesitate to fund lesser-known mediamakers. A producer with a longer résumé helps assure that the project will be completed and look professional. Even if you don't need help with grantwriting, consider developing a board of advisors to assist you on some level. Having a person of stature onboard can make all the difference.

It's also important to mention other grants or contributions already received. Commitments from other entities or individuals are always reassuring to a prospective contributor.

Read the application carefully. Yours is one of hundreds of requests for money; a weak or incomplete application can be the deciding factor of who gets set aside and who gets a check. Remember, the grant proposal isn't just about procedure and jumping through hoops; this is your vehicle to present yourself as a professional, and your project as worthy of funding.

The most common application mistakes:

- not reading the guidelines
- not filling in all the blanks or providing enough information
- not fully comprehending the foundation's mission (i.e., your project is not a good fit)
- inflating or low-balling the budget (not paying yourself is an immediate red flag!)

Where to Find Them

The Foundation Center (www.fdncenter.org) A comprehensive resource of grants and funding entities online, in print, and in person through facilities (New York, Washington, DC, Cleveland, San Francisco) and Cooperating Collections Networks in other US cities.

Foundations Online (www.foundations.org) Links to foundations and corporate giving programs.

The Independent (www.aivf.org/independent) The Notices section, as well as the Funder FAQ (see page 29). Past Funder FAQ's are posted online.

Film Arts Foundation in San Francisco (www.filmarts.org)

Your local media arts center—They often post deadlines for grants, both local and national. They may also offer equipment/services grants. Also, if you're shooting your film in another city, out-of-town productions may be eligible for local grants, provided you use of local crew and resources.

Read the fine print

Once you've gotten a contribution or grant, be sure you know what is expected of you in return. Fundraising guru Morrie Warshawski advises clear communication with donors, and reading the fine print. "[While a granting agency] may not expect financial return, they may have other expectations for other types of things (i.e., free tapes, a mention in the credits, etc.)" He notes that the lines between financing and fundraising are beginning to blur: "Some donors, like the NEH, ask that you pay back that grant if you see a profit; others, like ITVS, are not grants at all but have an application process similar to that of a grant."

FINANCING

Most first features and usually all short films are paid for at least partly through contributions of friends and family. Most often these are gifts, not investments. But at some point you may want to pitch your project to private investors or possibly a studio or independent production company that is open to working with new directors. You'll need do the same type of research to target for-profit companies that you would for nonprofits.

About Investor Financing

An investor will make a contribution or buy a share of the film's equity. To get investors involved, you need to know who is interested in your film's subject or theme, and who has money to give. An investor may also contribute because of her support of you. People support people, not just projects. Know who believes in you, and start from there.

No filmmaker should approach investor financing without a good lawyer. Your attorney (one who specializes in entertainment law) can help you determine what kind of legal entity to set up (S-corporation, limited liability corporation, limited partnership, sole proprietorship, etc.) and can draw up the necessary contracts. Contact your local media arts organization (or AIVF) for referrals.

How to Approach Financiers

Never randomly send out your script! Always make contact ahead of time. Most production companies won't accept unsolicited scripts. Usually, they require that an agent or lawyer lawyer send it in. Others ask for a one-page query letter detailing your project, including a brief synopsis and a description of any attached elements such as financing, cast, and key personnel. If they do invite you to send your script, expect a response in no sooner than six weeks. Your script will most likely be read by a reader (entry-level staff or intern), who will recommend it or not.

Funding and Financing Sources:

- The government (the NEA, the NEH, State Arts Commissions & Humanities Councils)
- Private foundations
- Corporate giving programs
- Individuals (donors and in-kind goods/services)
- Production companies and studios
- Investors
- Coproductions

Try not to be discouraged if they pass. Companies are often looking for a certain type of film. It's a little like casting your film—the most amazing actress in the world might not be right for the part. This is why it's important to research the company first.

Where to Find Them

Again it's all about research. Browse industry trades (*Variety*, *Hollywood Reporter*, *indieWIRE*) to find out what types of projects companies are producing. Visit the companies' websites. Rent their films. Pay special attention to the credits. What production companies have their name on films like yours?

Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com and www.imdbpro.com) lists films and key personnel. Like what one producer did with a particular film? Look them up on IMDB to see what else they've done.

The Hollywood Creative Directory (www.hcdonline.com) lists production and financing companies, including names of development executives. Published three to four times per year, online and in print.

The Blu Book (www.hollywoodreporter.com/hollywoodreporter/thrblu/letter.jsp), published by the *Hollywood Reporter*, lists industry companies.

The Independent. Check out Funder FAQ, column (page 29).

About Fiscal Sponsorship

Most foundations require applicants to have nonprofit status, and many do not offer grants directly to individuals but to organizations for an individual's project. Plus individuals can only make a tax-deductible contribution to your project if you have nonprofit status. This is where a fiscal agent comes in. A fiscal agent, sometimes referred to as a sponsor, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization which takes legal and fiduciary responsibilitiy for a project and can, in return, receive and administer grants and donations made in the name of the producer's project. The production basically borrows the organization's nonprofit status.The fiscal sponsor often takes a percentage fee for administration of the project, averaging five to ten percent.

Any nonprofit 501(c)(3) is qualified to be a fiscal agent. Just be sure its mission matches yours, and think of ways in which you can work together: Are you creating a film on a topic they care about? Can they assist with resources other than funding, such as interview subjects, perhaps promotional help in their newsletter, or provide a venue for meetings or events?

Production companies can apply for nonprofit status, but it's a complicated process that's generally not worth it unless the company will be producing noncommercial work for a number of years.

Many media arts organizations often have official fiscal sponsorship programs offering advice and assistance throughout the production process. Film/Video Arts (F/VA) in New York is one. F/VA director Eileen Newman advises, "Be sure the organization has worked with film projects before and knows how to be a fiscal sponsor, meaning they have adequate staff and systems in place."

Newman recommends knowing what you want from your sponsor ahead of time. "Both parties should be clear on what kind of relationship they will have, how much interaction and support will be given, and how much paperwork is needed."

The Business Plan, or Prospectus

Many producers don't use business plans; the script sells the film. But this is when pitching to film financiers, who understand the business, its probabilities and risks. In these cases, predicting anticipated returns (i.e., comparing your film to *The Blair Witch Project*, and predicting similar box office receipts) can make you seem unprofessional and unreliable.

Know who you're talking to. If you're appealing to professional investors such as venture capitalists who don't know the entertainment business and who need facts and figures, then a prospectus is needed.

CREATIVE FUNDRAISING

Raising money is an unpredictable process. Even if you've gained the support of a foundation's program officer, or you're a favorite of Wealthy Relative #3, there's no guarantee. Try not to take rejection personally. Funders and financiers have missions to fulfill and limited resources. They may well like your project but not have the means to support it.

Think creatively about how you can raise money, such as putting on special events and parties, and inviting people you know are interested in your film's subject or theme (see page 64). Also, donations don't only come in the form of cash. You can save a lot on your bottom line if you can acquire goods and services.

Filmmaking is a group effort; engage community support. Take a look at where you are shooting and form relationships with businesses nearby: A neighborhood restaurant can donate lunch for one day; a few discounted hours in an edit facility can get a trailor cut; some free copies from the local copy shop can provide new script pages for the cast. This not only helps with immediate resources, but connects people to your film and develops its future audience.

Recommended Reading

Achieving Excellence in Fund Raising: A Comprehensive Guide to Principles, Strategies, and Methods, Henry A. Rosso

The Art of Winning Corporate Grants, Howard Hillman

Film Finance & Distribution: A Dictionary of Terms, John Cones

Film & Video Financing, Michael Wiese

Fiscal Sponsorship: 6 Ways to Do It Right, Gregory Colvin

43 Ways to Finance Your Film, John Cones

The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing, Jane C. Geever

The Fundraising House Party: How to Get Charitable Donations from Individuals in a Houseparty Setting, Morrie Warshawski.

The Grassroots Fundraising Book: How to Raise Money in Your Community, Joan Flanagan

Shaking the Money Tree: How to Get Grants and Donations for Film and Video Projects, Morrie Warshawski. (Out of print; order online at www.warshawski.com. Site also has extensive bibliography for grantwriting.) (See page 64.)

Michelle Coe has worked in various capacities for a number of film/video festivals and media arts organizations. She is currently the Program Director for AIVF.

Seducing Foreign Investors

International co-financing for US projects

BY MICAH GREEN

A new class of US-based film producers is positioned to access money from across the globe to support their independent film projects. Propelled by the internet, e-mail services, and an evolving global marketplace, these producers are working to tap an invaluable source of project finance heretofore accessible almost exclusively to the studios and a limited number of independent producers focusing on genre and mainstream fare. However, before you jump on a plane to Cannes, be aware that the process of seducing foreign money can be more complicated and unforgiving than soliciting investment domestically.

International co-financing refers to a film financing package that involves more than one entity taking either an equity position (owning a percentage of the film itself) or pre-buying some territorial sales or distribution rights for a film, or some combination of the two. For example, Todd Haynes' latest project, *Far From Heaven*, was financed through a combination of a US pre-sale/equity investment (Focus Features), a French pre-sale (ARP), private equity (Vulcan Films) and international sales agreements with two foreign sales companies (TF1 and Focus International). *Party Monster*, the upcoming Macauley Culkin picture, was financed by only two parties, a US-based equity funded producer (Content Film) and a Hong Kong-based international sales company (Fortissimo).

Julianne Moore and Dennis Quaid star in Todd Haynes' *Far From Heaven*, which enlisted the support of five investment groups on its trek to the big screen.

International co-financing provides US producers with several advantages, many of which can also be achieved through domestic equity financing. If you access all of your financing outside of the US distribution system, you may retain the potential to sell your project's domestic rights at a premium after its successful completion. Furthermore, if you can generate simultaneous interest from a number of potential financiers, you will have greater leverage in negotiating and structuring your financing agreements, which usually means more control and more money at the end of the day.

In addition, many international companies can take advantage of regional tax incentives and other subsidy programs that may significantly reduce your film's budget, increasing its potential to turn a profit. German tax funds and the UK sale and lease-back schemes are two popular examples of these programs, which have been used to great effect to finance scores of domestic productions. Though frequently complicated in structure, these programs essentially provide tax shelters and write-offs for a country's local investors and then use the invested money as cash flow for film productions meeting certain criteria outlined by the programs. The criteria vary, but generally involve the citizenship of key cast and crew, some percentage of the film's budget being spent in the program's country of origin, and the status of domestic distribution partners for the film.

Despite its advantages, the process of isolating appropriate international funding sources and structuring the resulting agreements remains inefficient. Historically, even experienced producers have approached international co-financing with a scattered methodology. This is because most lack the resources to independently navigate the entire landscape of potential funding options and partners. The universe of companies is simply too large and changes too frequently for even the most prolific producers to justify comprehensively tracking it. Nevertheless, timely access to predisposed executives, and the ability to efficiently manage a financing campaign, often deter-

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY DAVID LEE/FOCUS FEATURES; FACING PAGE, TOP: PAMELA HANSON

mines whether a film gets made at all, let alone turns a profit.

The absence of a clearly mapped highway between quality projects and relevant funding sources is as much a burden for financiers as it is for producers. By default, they often end up doing business with the people who seek them out, and these are frequently not the best producers or the best projects. Thus, many international financiers have resorted to investing in lower quality projects than their US counterparts. Anyone who has flipped through the American Film Market (AFM) product guide has speculated on the amount of money that has been "squandered" by international companies on low quality US productions that will probably never see distribution in the States, commercially or at festivals.

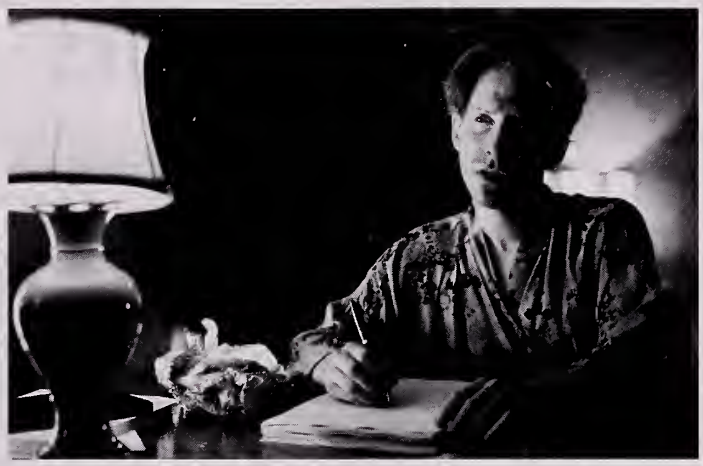
This inefficiency is being addressed to some degree by several of the larger talent agencies (CAA, Endeavor, ICM, UTA, WMA, etc.), but these efforts are generally tied to their own clients' projects. My own firm, Cinetic Media, takes a somewhat broader and more comprehensive approach. Rather than align with a particular stable of talent, Cinetic operates as an independent service company. The firm focuses all of its resources on charting and establishing relationships with every legitimate source of production financing worldwide (whether equity investor, end-user or government subsidy), and then works strategically to complement the existing resources of a project's producers and agents to maximize its potential in the international marketplace.

As one might expect, the number of projects that Cinetic or the agencies can accommodate is limited, which means that a great majority of producers will be left to explore, or avoid, international waters on their own. If you find yourself in this challenging position, here are some general guidelines that may help improve your chances of generating interest in your project:

Have a Plan: The most significant principle governing the process is the same whether approaching international or domestic financiers: Financing a film is an act of seduction. Producers should treat potential financiers as an audience, and should strategically approach them, just as film distributors strategically approach their consumer audience. Don't tell everyone about your project just because you can. Be strategic.

Find the Right Exec: Unlike most industries, film companies do not stick to generalized executive titles or hierarchical structures. The best executive to pitch is not always the executive with the most senior or obvious title. The key is uncovering the taste and political structure of the pivotal executives at each company. Before setting up a meeting or contacting an executive about your project, do some research to determine which executive received credit for bringing in the most similar projects to the company. The trades frequently credit a company's executive for "bringing the project" to the company, or state they will be "overseeing" the project.

Timing is Everything: The right time to pitch your project is generally when you have gone as far as you can go without external financing. This means at least completing the final draft of your script and possibly packaging the project with a director and principal cast. If you do not have the relationships to achieve this, consider approaching a more experienced producer who may have better access to the talent agencies and casting directors.

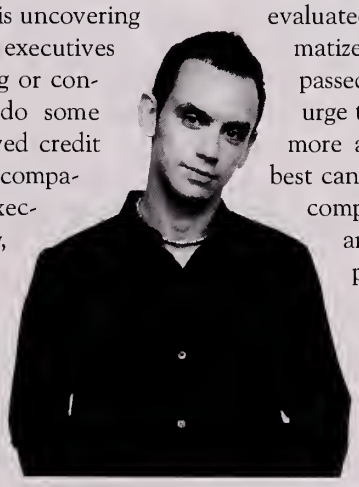


Randy Barbato's *Party Monster*, starring Seth Green, relied on both domestic and Asian capital.

Stars and Genre: Two key elements to consider when preparing your projects for international co-financing are how any attached cast or the genre of the film will play in a specific country. Although taste varies greatly from country to country and from company to company, almost every major financier is initially turned on to a project that possesses a certain caliber of star power while exploring a proven genre such as horror or thriller. These considerations may seem obvious, but it is remarkable how many producers do not consider them.

US Distribution: When dealing with international co-financing, this is always a chicken-and-egg game. International financiers are averse to risk, and as such are always more interested in projects that they know will receive US distribution from a large distributor. Sometimes there is no way around this scenario but to enter a less attractive domestic deal to trigger the international financing. Still, a compelling case is made for keeping this territory open whenever possible, so work to explore all options before accepting a less-than-favorable US deal.

Don't Waste Your "First Look": The right to evaluate a project first is a valuable thing. Studios pay for the privilege all the time and with good reason: They allow the studio to bid on the best material without real competition. But when a company has evaluated a project and failed to act on it, the project is stigmatized. The more companies who have ignored or passed on the project, the greater the stigma. Resist the urge to immediately pitch your projects to the larger and more active investors before exploring all options. The best candidates for project financing are often less obvious companies. Research the trades for recent press releases and blurbs on smaller companies looking to finance projects similar to yours. Include those companies on your initial campaign so you can offer a greater number of companies a "first look" at your project.



Micah Green is a founding member of Cinetic Media, a motion picture financing and sales company based in New York City. He is also a critically regarded recording artist.

Budgeting in Books

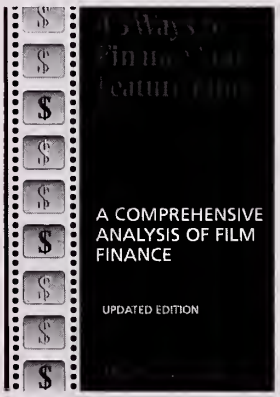
BY BO MEHRAD

WHEN MOST OF US FANTASIZE ABOUT making films, we envision the glossy world of "lights, camera, and ... action." But what about the money to run the lights and rent the camera? That just *somehow* comes from *somewhere*. The unfortunate reality that hits most novice indie filmmakers like a brick to the head is that financing doesn't just happen. It takes information and hard work not only to raise the money but to spend it wisely and keep track of every precious dime. To help you we have reviewed three books that cover different areas of independent film finance.

43 Ways To Finance Your Feature Film—A Comprehensive Analysis of Film Financing
By John W. Cones
©1998, Southern Illinois University Press
www.siu.edu/~siupress

WITH A TITLE THAT DECEPTIVELY SOUNDS like a Richard Simmons infomercial, *43 Ways to Finance Your Feature Film* is actually a great introductory guide to the world of film financing.

The book, written by securities and entertainment attorney John W. Cones, reads at times like a shopping list. Chapters are numbered one through forty-three, with each section giving an often too brief explanation of the distinct financing option, in a language that is somewhat stiff and snooze-inducing. But Cones definitely knows his subject inside and out. He provides a rather ample "Further Reading" list at the end of each chapter. For those with a phobia of being bombarded by too much information, the book manages to be succinct in its explanations and offers a nice overview of the topic at hand and for readers desiring more information.



Cones breaks up the financing game into four main parts: industry financing, which covers everything from studio development to talent agency financing. Lender financing and investor financing, which are separated into active investor vehicles (nonsecurities) and passive investor vehicles. And finally there is foreign financing. By the way, if none of these terms makes any sense, don't worry, the book does a decent job at giving an overview of each option and helping the reader understand and appreciate the advantages and disadvantages of each.

43 Ways is not a one-stop shop for film financing information, but a comprehensive introduction to the wide array of options available to producers, and a useful reference tool.

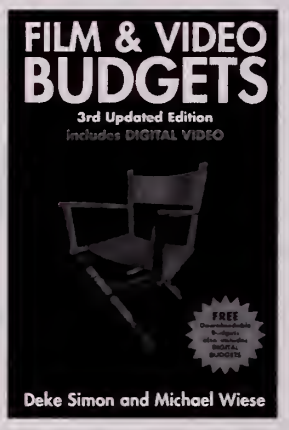
Film & Video Budgets, Third Updated Edition
By Deke Simon and Michael Wiese
©2001, Michael Wiese Productions
www.mwp.com

BY NOW A STAPLE IN THE CROWDED FIELD of production how-to books, this newest edition of *Film & Video Budgets* is short, sweet, and to the point.

The writers wisely start out by warning us not to read the book cover-to-cover in one sitting. Besides being an enormously tiresome read, this book is really designed to help the budding, or not so budding, producer get through the maze of creating a budget. It starts out easily enough, explaining the steps of putting together your production company, the legal entity that represents the producer, by briefly explaining the different options (corporation, LLC, dba, etc.). The chapter also covers how to set up accounting, pay corporate taxes, and become a signatory to various guilds and unions. The second chapter concentrates on pre-production, which the writers consider the most important stage of any successful production, since this is when all the planning is done and where many filmmakers skimp, paying dearly for it later. Various aspects of pre-pro are discussed: staff contracts, the script/budget connection, negotiating with crews, music clearances—yes, you have to start this in pre-pro, not in the midst of editing—and setting payroll. Each part is given a nice-size explanation in easy-to-understand language.

From there the book delves deep in to the budgeting matrix. The authors again break the process down into its smallest parts. Each category in the budget is introduced and further explained in its sub-parts (the line items). Best of all, we are given rough dollar amounts for each category and line item in question (for example, the DGA day scale for a second AD), so the reader can get a general idea of the costs involved.

The last half of the book is dedicated to sample budgets. The writers provide examples of budgets for the $5-million feature, the short documentary, the DV feature, the no-budget DV feature, the industrial, the music video, the student film, and the tape-to-film transfer (an essential ingredient in making a DV film, sensibly given its own individual budget). Again, the book doesn't skimp on information, but does not overwhelm the reader by providing too much.



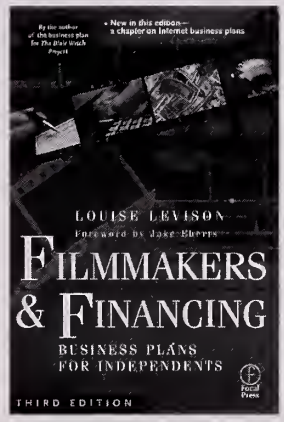
Finally a word of warning to readers and budding producers: The writers express again and again throughout that the book is absolutely *not* a cost guide. One of the most prominent characteristics of a good producer is the skill to negotiate: Prices and rates will vary from state to state and from season to season. It's a producer's job to find the prices and manipulate or negotiate them to fit a certain budget. With that said, *Film & Video Budgets* is an easy-to-use and indispensable tool for anyone embarking on that process.

Filmmakers & Financing—
Business Plans For Independents,
Third Edition By Louise Levison
©2001, Focal Press
www.focalpress.com

WITH A CLEAR, CONCISE, AND FRIENDLY approach, Louise Levison demystifies the process of creating a business plan for an indie film. The book is unique in its approach, concentrating solely on the task of putting together the business plan, something other books usually mention either in passing or dedicate one or two chapters to.

Filmmakers & Financing is laid out in a very logical manner, with each chapter concentrating solely on a specific section of the business plan, while also providing a sample business plan for a fictional company, so the reader can see all the parts working together and then dissect them piece by piece.

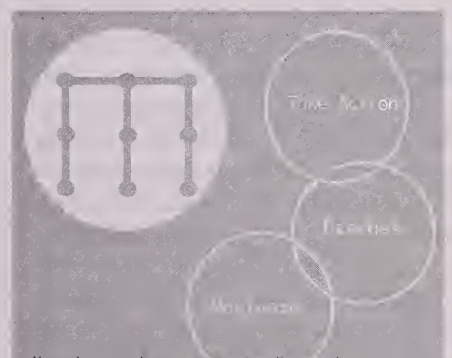
What's most refreshing is Levison's approach. She knows her readers and understands that most filmmakers are not necessarily the most savvy of business people. The tone of the book feels as if Levison is sitting across from us, talking us through the process, yet stopping often to punctuate her points by providing an example. The examples she uses are from a vast yet recent crop of projects, and she uses them in precise measurements, which further illustrates that she's studied these projects and their position in the marketplace. The minute any film/business book uses the films *Sex, Lies and Videotape*, *Clerks*, or *Brothers McMullen* as sole examples of what indie films are or can be, it sends a clear signal that the writer doesn't know the subject matter. Besides being dated, these examples are the exceptions, not the norm, as far as indies go. So, it's a joy to see that Levison clearly knows what she's talking about.



The drawbacks, which are very few, are that sometimes Levison's info can come across as a bit cryptic. After reading certain chapters, like the one entitled "The Industry," it's unclear what *exactly* should or shouldn't be included in the business plan. Also, on few occasions Levison goes off on tangents, and we're lost by the time she gets back on point. Finally, the fact that Levison's business plan model is a hybrid of a more traditional plan, modified to work for indie films, has advantages or disadvantages depending on who will be reading the plan. A traditional business investor may not be as familiar or necessarily care about some of Levison's details, but a more film-friendly investor will appreciate the tailor-made approach of this plan.

Regardless, *Filmmakers & Financing* achieves the near impossible: making a book about business and finance come off as an easy, yet highly educational read.

Bo Mehrad is a NY-based writer/director and edits the Festivals section of The Independent. *He and his producer are currently sweating through the budget and business plan for their next film.*



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Making it Across the Finishing Fund Line

BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

IT IS A FAMILIAR STORY: A MEDIAMAKER raises sufficient funds to get the project "in the can" and then the money runs out. At this point, since the mediamaker has usually completed the shoot, or at least the principal photography, he or she can probably get the project through some kind of "rough cut" on film, or a "fine cut" by editing in AVID or Final Cut Pro. But there is not enough money to finish editing, mix the sound, deal with music issues, and perhaps transfer the video project to film and blow it up to 35mm, or blow up that 16mm or Super 16mm to 35mm for festivals and/or the marketplace.

In order to finish the project, the mediamaker will call in favors or fervently persuade (i.e., beg) likely and even unlikely prospects to provide in-kind services or more money. If and when the required amount of money and services cannot be raised from family, friends, and benefactors, the mediamaker must then begin seeking and raising "finishing funds" or "completion monies" for the project from third-party individuals, companies and organizations.

The first step for mediamakers seeking finishing funds is to prepare a budget that explains how the funds shall be allocated and spent. This "Use of Proceeds" budget helps mediamakers determine how much money will be required from potential funding sources. Mediamakers should be as thorough as possible, since they do not want to go back to the same finishing fund sources or find a new one to request even more money.

In an ideal world, all investors would be paid on the same basis, prorated according to how much money the source contributed to the project. But, potential finishing fund sources realize that they have a certain degree of leverage, since without their money, the mediamaker may not be able to complete the project. Mediamakers often agree to some kind of "last monies in, first monies out" (LIFO) arrangement, so that finishing funders can recover their money plus any premium before the other investors recoup their monies and receive their premiums. Besides recouping their investment, finishing funders are looking for a premium of anywhere from ten to fifty percent on their investments. If a completion funder insists on a 50 percent premium, which adds up, mediamakers should acknowledge that once the finishing funder gets that 150 percent return, no more monies should be due to the finishing funder. Still, the finishing funder may want additional monies "on the back end" or profit participation, and the negotiations may still continue.

While these negotiations between the mediamaker and the potential finishing funder continue, a mediamaker has to be aware of how to deal with the original, or the pre-finishing fund, investors. These investors took a chance on the mediamaker and his or her project when there was no assurance that the project would be completed or even begin shooting. They can argue that their money is just as green as that of the potential finishing funder who would get these preferential investment terms. (These early investors generally are entitled to a return on their investment in addition to a ten- to thirty-percent premium.)

In addressing this dilemma, mediamakers often will have to have a serious and pragmatic discussion with these initial investors, explaining that if the finishing funds are not raised, the project will not be completed, and no rights can be licensed or otherwise exploited in the incomplete project. The project, therefore, will not get released and no one will get a return on his or her monies, much less any premiums. This can be a bitter pill for such investors to swallow.

Pre-finishing fund investors usually grumble but eventually give their assent. Mediamakers should address this issue in advance in their financing documents with investors, explaining that there is the possibility that additional funds may need to be raised to complete the project and that the mediamaker has the right to enter into such LIFO finishing fund arrangements with the possibility of a premium that may be greater than that of other investors. However, such premiums should be capped. In order to offer a premium to a potential finishing funder that would exceed such a cap (or even to enter into a LIFO arrangement with a finishing funder if there is no provision in the financing documents which addresses this issue), mediamakers may have to obtain the consent of a majority in interest (and not number of) investors in the project.

Mediamakers should also be aware that some potential finishing funders may not want to be passive equity investors or lenders. Such funders provide finishing funds on the condition that they become the project's producer representative, distributor, or sales agent. In this case, they have significant input concerning (or even the right to determine) a project's marketing and distribution future. These finishing funds are somewhat similar to the advances distributors and sales agents pay mediamakers that are recouped from first monies received from the exploitation of the rights

In a mediamaker's pursuit of new sources for finishing funds, he or she should not overlook the initial investors, who may want to invest additional monies after screening some version of the project.

in and to the project. But, unlike conventional advances, which generally are paid to mediamakers when they deliver the finished project to a distributor or a sales agent, these funds are contributed earlier so that the project can be completed.

These industry or "end user" finishing fund sources may also want some percentage of profits as opposed to just accepting a fee or a commission and recoupment of their monies. These completion funders are using their money to build a slate of films that they can represent at film markets and festivals.

Besides considering the financial component of any finishing fund arrangement, mediamakers should be mindful that such finishing funders might be seeking a producer credit either for themselves (such as executive producer, coproducer, associate producer, depending on the amount and the need for their funds) or for their companies (such as, "...in association with..."). These individuals and companies are using such finishing funds to establish a track record of production credits at an obviously less risky point in a project's evolution. There is nothing inherently wrong with this plan, it is a perfectly legitimate way for people and companies to get a foothold in the media and entertainment industry.

Whether a mediamaker should agree to give such credits depends on various factors: the amount of the finishing funds offered; what services or facilities the finishing funder can provide in addition to money; and how prior investors may react to the finishing funder receiving a credit (even if the finishing funder's contribution is less than an initial funder). Mediamakers should attempt to maintain some sort of correlation between the amount offered by the potential finishing funder and the type of credit being offered by the mediamaker to the finishing funder. For example, if the finishing funder were to provide only part of the finishing funds, the credit accorded to the finishing funder should be different (an individual as opposed to a company credit) than if the finishing funder were to provide the entire amount of money needed.

Mediamakers must determine for themselves when finishing funds are just too expensive

In a mediamaker's pursuit of new sources for finishing funds, he or she should not overlook the initial investors, who may want to invest additional monies after screening some version of the project. They may be impressed with how the project has progressed given the monies that a mediamaker has raised to date under the "in for a penny, in for a pound" rationale.

To further complicate matters, a mediamaker's need for finishing funds may be time-sensitive, since his or her project may have been accepted into a major festival, such as Sundance, Toronto, or Cannes. Unfortunately, many other mediamakers in the same position will be scrambling for completion funding during the same time period.

Eventually mediamakers must determine for themselves when finishing funds are just too expensive, given the amount of money being offered, and whether the funds have too many conditions attached to them—conditions which may affect a project's creative and business decisions. Like most things in life, it comes down to a judgment call.

NEGOTIATING POINTS FOR FINISHING FUNDS

- When the funder will receive return of investment (last in, first out?)
- Percentage of premium over original investment, 10–50%
- Profit sharing, if any
- Screen credit for finishing funder
- Role of funder (silent partner or active)

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a partner in the Daniel, Seigel & Bimbler, LLP, law firm. He specializes in the representation of clients in the entertainment and media areas. To contact Robert, write to rseigel@DSBLLP.com.

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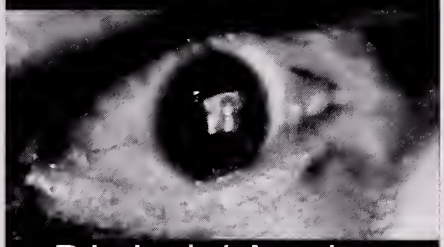
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What's Your Budget?

Navigating the software jungle

BY AMANDA DOSS

BEFORE SHOOTING A FILM OR VIDEO, LONG form or short form, narrative or documentary, before beginning development, fundraising, or even casting, there is one thing every filmmaker should have, a budget. It is a crucial part of every production. It's one of the few constants in every type of filmmaking. It's the thing that almost every other decision hangs on. The ever elusive, ever-changing budget. One of the first questions everyone who touches your project will ask is, "What's your budget?" The investors will ask it, the banks will ask it, the crew will ask it, the casting agents will ask it, the lawyers will ask it, the distributors will ask it, and even most festivals will ask it. What is your budget? *What* is your budget?

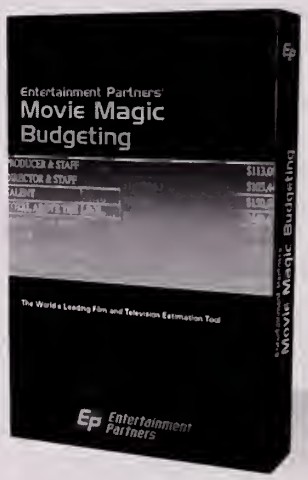
To have a budget, you must create one. Unfortunately, it's not as easy as collecting price quotes from vendors, crew, cast, and consultants, putting them in a list, and finding the sum. There are many hidden costs, and filmmaking has so many components to it that generating a realistic budget is always difficult. Most filmmakers fall back on computer programs that are specifically designed to help create an estimate. They are basically spreadsheets with built-in macros that help delineate every single expenditure you plan on making throughout your project. There are several programs out there to choose from, three of which I test-drove for this article: Movie Magic Budgeting, Easy Budget, and BoilerPlate.

Movie Magic Budgeting

Entertainment Partners
www.moviemagictechnologies.com

Movie Magic Budgeting is the most widely used film budgeting program. It is also the most expensive—about $650. Movie Magic is a stand-alone program, meaning it runs on its own format, not off another platform, such as Excel. It is not simple to learn, but is easy to use once you master it. The manual for the tutorial is over a hundred pages long, and I recommend reading it in full. It will take about a day or two to go through. The tutorial and manual teaches how to use every aspect and every shortcut of the program, but it does not teach you how to make a budget if you have neve put one together before.

Movie Magic has about a dozen different budgeting forms from studios and companies such as HBO and Disney you can choose from. You can also create your own. All the forms are fairly similar,



differing only slightly in account numbers and line-item details. Union and guild rates can also be accessed through Movie Magic. But, I was unable to access any Screen Actors Guild (SAG) rates lower than the Standard Low Budget rates, and these rates did not list the weekly Principle rate. If you are planning to use a union crew, it is recommended to contact IATSE (International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees; www.iatse.lm.com) and the Teamsters (www.teamster.org) about how you can work together within your budget. You may be able to negotiate something other than the rates listed on Movie Magic. Also, many unions have other costs, like overtime and how many members need to be present at a shoot, that Movie Magic won't be able to tell you this either. Basically, you have to do some legwork.

The program is built on the idea that a budget contains three levels. The first level is the Top Sheet. This is the first page of any budget. It is the page that lists the totals of every subsection of the budget (talent, production, editorial, etc.) and adds them together for the grand total. The Top Sheet is what investors, insurance brokers, lawyers, union leaders, and everyone else will want to see. The next level is the subcategories section, called Accounts. The Accounts section lists all the main articles in a budget, from each crew position to the camera package to insurance. The third layer of Movie Magic is the Details, which is simply a list of all the components of the subcategories. For example, the Top Sheet layer of Movie Magic Budgeting has a line item called Production Staff. In order to enter a rate for a Production Manager, the Production Staff line must be clicked, which opens the Production Staff section of the Accounts page. From the Production Staff list, the Production Manager line must be clicked, which opens the Production Manager Details page. The Details layer is where the rate can finally be entered. Seems like a lot of work to simply type in a number, but we're not done! Because before any of this is done, Globals and Fringes must first be set up.

What are Globals and Fringes? Globals are usually fixed periods of time that will be used on more than one item. For example, if a shoot is going to last for four weeks, a Global must be set up in Movie Magic Budgeting that prompts it to automatically multiply any crew rate by four whenever the word "shoot" is typed into the specified area controlling the length of the crew member's time with the company. But not every crew member's rate is based on the same period of time. Some work on a weekly basis, some on a flat fee, some on a deferred basis and some on a day-rate. In that case, several Globals will need to be set up. Luckily, Movie Magic allows for that.

Fringes are taxes and other percentages that need to be applied to different sections of a budget. For example, a fourteen and one-half percent Pension and Health (P&H) cost needs to be added to SAG rates. By programming a Fringe, this percentage is automatically factored into the budget. Fringe amounts can add up

quickly,, so it's important to know what they are and when to apply them. All labor, even non-union, has fringes, and the amounts vary . Because there are so many organizations and they vary for each area, budgeting programs will not provide this information. Again, extra research is required.

One of the benefits of Movie Magic is that it is extremely flexible, from the number of budget forms to the multiple Globals and Fringes that can be created. Movie Magic also offers a number of companion programs which all interface. For instance if the script has been broken down using Movie Magic Scheduling, all the information can be transferred into your budget using a few fairly simple steps, saving a great deal of time and energy when creating a budget. Another particularly interesting product is the Purchasing Card, which can be used instead of cash during a shoot. Each card can have a set amount and expiration date, so when you send a PA out to get some more gaffer's tape for the best boy, and coffee for the DP, and aspirin for the director, you don't have to worry about whether or not she has enough cash or if she is bringing back the correct change. At the end of the day, you simply download the transaction information from the card, which can then be transferred into an accounting program called Vista, and compare what you are actually spending to what is in your budget. How cool is that?

Movie Magic also has great tech support. I had a few problems downloading the program, and they were quick and really nice about helping me. Unfortunately they are only open during regular business hours, Monday through Friday—what producer works normal office hours?

The biggest downfall of Movie Magic Budgeting is the expense. Six hundred and fifty dollars is not an easy sum to part with for a low-budget producer. Also, the security they have on the program is incredible; it can only be used on two computers. To load it on more computers, a second program must be purchased. So if you were thinking of chipping in with a half dozen of your producer friends, it won't work. All the other applications that can interface with Movie Magic Budgeting cost about the same amount; Movie Magic Scheduling costs another $650. This can all add up quickly. But Movie Magic is still the most-used budgeting program out there. Forensic Films, The Seventh Floor, and This is That (Good Machine's new incarnation) all use Movie Magic. Most film financiers and distribution companies want to see budgets done on Movie Magic. With that in mind, even if you do not own it, you may want to learn to use it.

Easy Budget

The Easy Budget Company
www.easy-budget.com

For a budgeting program that is a bit easier on the budget, I took a look at Easy Budget. This is an Excel-based program, which means that without Excel, the program can't be used. While Easy Budget costs around $190, obviously much cheaper than Movie Magic, if you need to purchase Excel, it will cost another $400 or so.

Easy Budget's setup is a bit simpler than Movie Magic. It looks much more like a spreadsheet, made up of separate Excel worksheets that are all intertwined through specially set up macros. Though it is an Excel-based program, it looks quite

nice and professional. There is a Top Sheet and fourteen worksheet pages that are separated according to the line items on the Top Sheet. Each worksheet page contains the line-item details. Easy Budget also contains a Specs page where Fringes and Globals are entered and then automatically figured into the budget as other amounts are entered. Pretty

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nifty–except for the fact that many crew and cast members get paid differently, and Easy Budget doesn't allow for more than one type of shoot Global to be applied. To alter this problem, the macros would have to be changed, which can be daunting if you do not know that much about Excel. I also found that some of the other built-in macros that the manual states should happen, don't.

In certain fields of the budget, small red tabs are present which, when touched, prompt handy pop-up messages to appear. These messages are meant to help navigate the program and serve as a reminders. In theory, this is great, especially for someone new to the budgeting process. But many of the comments are cut off mid sentence, and I couldn't, for the life of me, figure out how to scroll down or open up the full comment. I even enlisted two friends that work in tech support at their companies to help figure it out. They were stumped too. After consulting the Help menu and fiddling for an hour, I gave up. There is no mention of the pop-up notes in the instruction manual, and it seemed ridiculous to try to find help for using the Help. I had no trouble using the program without the use of the pop-up comments.

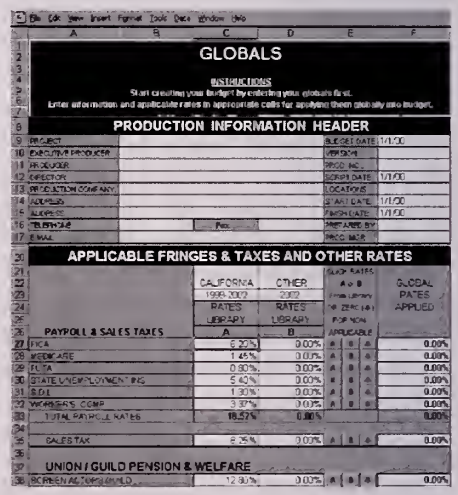
The instruction manual was the most informative, for newcomers to the budget process. It wasn't terribly long, and it explained each category in detail and even gave tips on hidden items and costs that could be overlooked. The tone of the manual was unpretentious and could even get wittily sarcastic at times. Typos, misprints, and general bad printing should be ignored—at one point it went from page fifty back to page forty-nine—but a lot can be learned from it. They also have a website that lists current union rates. This part of the site can only be logged onto with a password that is given when the program is purchased.

BoilerPlate

BoilerPlate Software, www.boilerplate.net

Last, but not least, is BoilerPlate, probably the most inexpensive budgeting program out, running at only $99. In addition, I found BoilerPlate to be the easiest to learn. The instructions only took a few hours to go through—this may be because it was the last program I test-drove, and I just caught on a bit faster. Also based on an Excel platform, it has a set-up very similar to Easy Budget in that it is a spreadsheet with many different worksheets attached by macros. The look isn't as slick as Easy Budget, but it has more detailed worksheets (line-item subcategories).

The cool thing about BoilerPlate is that the budget is attached to several worksheet lists for location, props, crew, cast, and equipment. When specific information is entered into the budget, such as all



the different props that need to be purchased and/or rented for a production, it will automatically show up on the props list part of the program. This is a great time-saver, as generating many different lists for all departments can be very tedious (Movie Magic Scheduling makes these lists too, but their budgeting program doesn't).

BoilerPlate also has a Cash Flow worksheet that is attached to each section of the budget. Money spent can be entered into the properly labeled Cash Flow Worksheet. Within the worksheet the amount budgeted shows up in the top corner and under that appear lists of the total costs entered and a total of the difference between the two. This is the closest thing to an actuals column I have seen in any of the programs. (The soon-to-be released version of Movie Magic Budgeting also has an actuals section.) This section is excellent for fast assessment when on set.

Like the other programs, there is a Top Sheet. There is also a page they call Globals, where Globals and Fringes are set up. I have the same problem with their Globals page as I did with Easy Budget's Spec page—it is virtually impossible to attach different Globals for different crew

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members unless the macros are altered. BoilerPlate doesn't have a website to reference crew and talent rates, and their manual is not as instructive in the art of budgeting as Easy Budget or even Movie Magic. The worksheet pages are very detailed though, probably more so than any other program. The Camera Package page lists every aspect of a typical Arri BL camera package. This serves as a nice reminder of what to negotiate for with vendors. The Globals of shoot days are set into the program for the equipment as well. So, for example, if one type of camera is being used for part of a shoot and another type for the other, the shoot days for each package will have to reflect the whole shoot time, not a fraction of it. This could be a problem. Another annoyance is that I couldn't adjust the cell sizes or the font type and size. There was one cell that I couldn't read the numbers in because the cell size was too small and couldn't be adjusted. I was told by the makers that the PC version of BoilerPlate is better, but I was working on a Mac, as do seventy percent of the independent filmmakers I know.

It's Up to You

On the whole, every program has its pros and cons. It is really going to depend on your ultimate goal and level of experience. If you are a working producer that plans on making several films over the next few years for $500,000 or more, I would recommend investing in Movie Magic. It has become the industry standard, and if you are going to be a player, it is worth spending the time and money on it. But, if you are a newcomer to the filmmaking game and are making your first film, Easy Budget would be a more reasonable choice. The manual is friendly and the program easy to use. BoilerPlate would be a great program to use if you have made one or two budgets before, but aren't interested in spending the $650 for Movie Magic. It is a great in-between and would be good for short films and low, low-budget filmmakers.

Amanda Doss is a New York-based producer, consultant, and partner in Ugly Betty Productions. She is a founding member of Producer's Action Network, a workshop geared towards helping filmmakers develop business plans and budgets. She can be contacted at uglybetty@hotmail.com.

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BY BO MEHRAD

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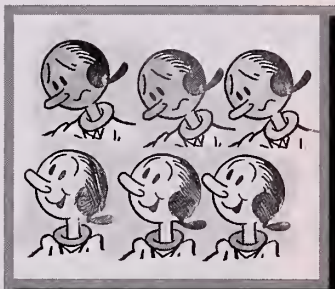
DOMESTIC

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 11-16, MI. Deadline: Dec. 1. Fest welcomes all cats & genres of independent filmmaking in this fest of 16mm film w/ either optical soundtrack or silent. Foreign entries should have subtitles. One of oldest ind. film fests in country. Awarded films & highlights programmed into 4-hr program that tours colleges & film showplaces across U.S. for 4 months following fest, w/ rental fee of $2/min. per tour stop paid to filmmakers. Founded: 1963. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: $18,000 in cash prizes awarded. Formats: 16mm. Preview on VHS or 16mm. Entry Fee: Entry fee: $35 ($40 Canadian & foreign). Contact: Festival, Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107; (734) 995-5356; fax: (734) 995-5396; aafilmfest@aol.com; www.aafilmfest.org.

ASPEN GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 20-26, CO. Deadline: Dec. 1. Festival is presented as part of the annual Aspen Gay & Lesbian Ski Week. This int'l celebration draws gays & lesbians from across the United States, Europe & Australia & is the oldest such event in the world.Nearly 5000 men & women arrive here the last week of January for a week devoted to skiing, partying & film fare. The Aspen Gay & Lesbian Film series has been presented as part of the week's events for the past twenty years. Cats: feature, short, doc. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10. Contact: Jon Busch, 300 Puppy Smith St. #203-270, Aspen, CO 81611-1454; (970) 544-8228; fax: (970) 925-6431; busch@rof.net; www.gayskiweek.com.

ASPEN SHORTSFEST, April 9-13, CO. Deadline: Nov. 17 (early), Jan. 5 (final). Fest is a premiere int'l competitive showcase for short films (30 mins & less). Fest seeks entries of originality, integrity & technical excellence. Student & int'l entries also welcome. Founded: 1992. Cats: comedy, short, animation, children, doc, drama, student, comedy, . Awards: cash prizes total $20,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 70mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (early), $45 (final). Contact: Prima Trenton, 110 East Hallam, Suite 102, Aspen, CO 81611; (970) 925-6882; fax: 925-1967; shortsfest@aspenfilm.org; www.aspenfilm.org/shortsfest.

BARE BONES INT'L INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 21-27, OK. Deadline: Dec. 15; Jan. 15 (late). Projects budgeted for less than a million dollars are eligible to enter the fest. Seven days of screenings, workshops, screenplay readings, location tour, youth film projects. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, script, music video, student, youth media. Awards: Auteur of the Year, Audience Choice Award, Grand Jury Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, super 8, 8mm, Hi8, DV, No PAL. Entry Fee: $30 (shorts); $40 (features). Contact: Shiron Butterfly Ray, 401 West Broadway, Ste. 308, Muskogee, OK 74401; (918) 391-1313; fax: (775) 307-1545; www.barebonefilmfestival.com.



Sweet Home Ann Arbor

Held at the restored Michigan Theater in downtown Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, now in its forty-first year, the festival continues to go strong, exhibiting approximately 125 films throughout the festival week. The fest also selects a handful of awarded and highlighted films to travel across the country, from March through December. The four hour touring program is made up of about twenty-five films, to be screened by audiences in small film venues, college campus auditoriums, and other arts centers across the country. See Listing.

BLACK MARIA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, January-June, NJ. Deadline: November 17. Seeks to "identify, exhibit & reward compelling new independent media, reach audiences in a wide variety of settings nationwide, & advocate exceptional achievement that expands the expressive terrain of film & video." The Festival was founded in honor of Thomas A. Edison, who developed motion picture medium & whose film studio, the Black Maria in West Orange, NJ, was the world's first. Festival seeks any combination of inventive, incisive, responsive & provocative work of any style or genre. Featured works are screened at over 65 venues throughout U.S. & Canada. Program also cablecast to 250,000 subscribers. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 3-1/2 yrs & may be up to 70 min. Recognition by fest helps qualify films for Academy Award nomination. Founded: 1980. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (shorts, 30 min. or less); $45 (features, 30-70 min.). Contact: John Columbus, Fest Dir., c/o Dept of Media Arts, New Jersey City University, 2039 Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City, NJ 07305; (201) 200-2043; fax: (201) 200-3490; blackmariafest@aol.com; www.blackmariafilmfest.com.

CLEVELAND INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, March 20-30, OH. Deadline: Sept. 30 (early); Nov. 30. Fest is one of Ohio's premiere film events. Presenting approx. 80 new features from around world in various cats & more than 100 shorts presented in collected programs. Film forums follow selected films, giving audiences opportunity to discuss films w/ filmmakers, critics & other guest panelists. The Midwest Independent Filmmakers Conference is held during last weekend of fest. Unique programs incl. Cultural Journeys & FilmSlam (high school student fest). Submissions must have been completed after Jan. 1 of previous yr. & not previously submitted. Works-in-progress not eligible. Founded: 1977. Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, feature, short, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $45 (short, under 30 min); $60 (mid length, 30-60 min.); $75 (features, over 60 min). Contact: William Guentzler, Associate Programmer, 2510 Market Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44113-3434; (216) 623-3456, ext. 11; fax: (216) 623-0103; cfs@clevelandfilm.org; www.clevelandfilm.org.

CUCALORUS FILM FESTIVAL, March 19-23, NC. Deadline: Dec. 10 (early); Jan 10 (final). The annual Cucalorus Film Festival is held in historic downtown Wilmington, NC. It is a non-competitive show case; all formats, genres & lengths are accepted. Cucalorus is known as a "summer camp" for filmmakers, w/ tours of Screen Gems Studios, Joe Dunton's Camera House & numerous panel discussions throughout the week. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, any style or genre. Awards: Non-competitive. Formats: all. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: $20(early); $30 (final). Contact: Dan Brawley, 420 Orange Street, Wilmington, NC 28401; (910) 343-5995; fax: 343-5227; info@cucalorus.org; www.cucalorus.org.

DIRECTOR'S VIEW FILM FESTIVAL, February 13-17, CT. Deadline: Sept. 30; Oct. 31; Nov. 25. The Director's View Film Festival is dedicated to the director's craft & firmly believes film to be a director's medium. It honors & presents directors who have raised the artistic level of the medium. The fest features narrative shorts & features from established directors as well as to newer filmmakers, w/ their Independent & Int'l Student segments.rFest takes place in Stamford, CT & is competitive, juried by a panel of film critics. Founded: 1999. Cats: short, feature, doc, student. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", DVD, DigiBeta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Nov: $100. Contact: Festival, PO Box 312, South Salem, NY 10590; (914) 533-0270; fax: (914)533-0269; info@thedirectorsview.com; www.dvff.org.

DOCSIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Spring, TX. Deadline: Sept. 15, Nov. 15 (late). Fest is organized by the Doc Film Project, the only non-profit doc film society in Texas. The fest will be a touring fest in selected cities in Texas. DFP's objective is to showcase the best documentaries from Texas, the US, & the world, w/ the purpose to form alliances w/ other film organizations & media groups. Founded: 1999. Cats: short Doc, feature Doc, experimental Doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta SP, DigiBeta, Hi8, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $35 (late). Contact: Doc Film Project, attn: Lucila Betz, 339 Fairview, San Antonio, TX 78223; (210) 826-2386; betzdfp@yahoo.com; www.docfilmproject.homestead.com.

GEN ART FILM FESTIVAL, April 2-8, NY. Deadline: Dec. 20 (early); Jan. 17 (final). Gen Art is New York City's

foremost curated, non-competitive fest championing American independent film & its audiences. Fest offers gala New York premieres attended by enthusiastic filmgoers, critics, & industry professionals followed each night by a spectacular party at one of Manhattan's trendiest nightspots. A unique format of screening only one feature & one short film per night for seven nights allows Gen Art to truly highlight the work of all participating filmmakers. Submitted work should be completed after Jan of prvious year. NYC theatrical premiere required. No works in progress will be shown. Founded: 1996. Cats: animation, feature, experimental, short, doc. Awards: Audience Favorite Award incls. $25,000 worth of goods & services. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: $15 shorts, $20 (late); $25 features, $30 (late)- $5 discount for w/outabox.com members. Contact: Jeffrey Abramson, Festival Director, 133 W. 25th Street, 6th Flr., New York, NY 10001; (212) 255-7300, ext. 505; fax: (212) 255-7400; film@genart.org; www.genart.org.

HAZEL WOLF ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, March 28-31, WA. Deadline: Oct. 15; Nov. 15 (late). Fest (formerly Equinox) presents the best in environmental films from around the world & an environmental media workshop series. Seeking works in all genres, addressing environmental issues. Special consideration to works associated w/ environmental campaigns. Max length 60 min. Formats: VHS (w/ your name & contact info written on the tape; s.a.s.e. optional). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $40 (late). Contact: Caroline Cumming, Hazel Wolf Environmental Film Network, c/o KCTS, 401 Mercer St., Seattle, WA 98109; (206) 443-7239; fax: 443-6691; info@hazelfilm.org; www.hazelfilm.org.

KANSAS CITY FILMMAKERS JUBILEE, April 1-6, KS. Deadline: Dec. 1 (early); Jan. 15 (final). Annual event open to domestic & int'l short films 30 min. or less. With screenings, seminars, receptions, jazz & BBQ, the fest promises "a laid-back environment where filmmakers can mix, share & celebrate their hard work & creativity." Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, 8mm, underground. Awards: Top film in each genre will win at least $1,000 of cash or prizes. Fest awarded over $66,000 in cash & prizes in the last four years. Formats: all formats accepted. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $25 (final). Contact: KCFJ, 4826 W. 77th Terrace, Prairie Village, KS 66208; (913)649-0244; kcJub@kcjubilee.org; www.kcjubilee.org.

KEY WEST INDIE FEST, April 18-21, FL. Deadline: Aug. 31 (early); Nov. 30 (regular); Dec. 31 (late). Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre, script. Entry Fee: $45 (1-10 min./pages); $50(11-30 min./pages); $55 (31-60 min./pages);$60(61-120 min./pages); Late entries (December 1-31) add $10.00. Contact: Micheal Carr, 415 Mountain Village Blvd. #1031, Telluride, CO81435;(970)728-3747; fest@keywestindiefest.com;www.keywestindiefest.com.

LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 16-23, CA. Deadline: Dec. 14 (early); Jan. 11 (final). Fest was established in 1983 to promote & present best in Asian Pacific cinema & has grown from a two-weekend event consisting of a dozen films to a major showcase presenting nearly 100 productions by Asian Pacific American & Asian Int'l media makers. World & local premieres of major new works, media panels, & a wide variety of special events have become important elements of this world-class event which attracts audiences from throughout Southern California & the world. Works in all genres by Asian & Pacific Americans w/ themes involving, but not limited to, Asian Pacific American culture, history & experiences are welcome & encouraged. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Golden Reel Award for Best Short Film; New Visions Award for Innovation in Filmmaking; Adience Awards for Best Short & Feature-Length film. Formats: Super 8, 16mm, 35mm, 3/4", Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: U.S. $20 (early), $30 (final); Int'l $30 (early); $40 (final). Contact: Fest Dir., c/o Visual Communications, 120 Judge John Aiso St., Basement Level, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462 x.68; fax:687-4848; viscom@apanet.org; www.vconline.org/filmfest.

METHOD FEST INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 11-18, CA. Deadline: Dec. 15 (early); Feb. 1 (late). Named for the 'Stanislavski Method,' fest highlights the great performances of independent film. Seeking story driven films w/ outstanding acting performances. Founded: 1999. Cats: Feature, Short, student, children. Awards: Sculpted statuettes in various cats, film services & 5000 feet of Fuji Motion Picture Film to winning film. Awards to Best Actor, Actress, Screenplay . Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DV, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Student: $25; Shorts: $30 (early), $40 (late); Features: $40 (early), $50 (late). Contact: c/o Franken Enterprises, 880 Apollo St. Ste. 337, El Segundo, CA 90245; (310) 535-9230; fax: 535-9128; Don@methodfest.com; www.methodfest.com.

MIAMI GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, April 25-May 5, FL. Deadline: Dec. 14; Jan. 11 (late). Annual fest is seeks work of all genres, lengths & formats incl. dramatic, doc & experimental works, by, about and/or of interest to lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered communities. Previous fests have drawn audiences of over 7,000 w/ films screened from around the world. Works must be Miami premieres; awards given in numerous cats. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $35(late). Contact: Philip Matthews, Festival Director, 1521 Alton Rd. #147, Miami Beach, FL 33139; (305) 534-9924; fax: 535-2377; festinfo@the-beach.net; www.miamigaylesbianfilm.com.

NASHVILLE INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 28-May 4, TN. Deadline: Dec. 5 (early); Jan. 6 (final). Formerly the Sinking Creek Film & Video Festival, fest is the longest-running film fest in the South w/ an int'l reputation for its support & encouragement of independent media. Festival programs over 150 films & provides high-end industry level workshops. Founded: 1969. Cats: incl. short narrative, animation, doc, feature, student, experimental, young filmmakers, TV (episodic & pilots only), family/children, short, youth media, children. Awards: Cash prizes awarded for all cats plus a special award, The Regal Cinema/Nashville Independent Film Festival Dreammaker Award which grants the award-winning film a week's run in a Regal Cinema in Los Angeles county, also qualifies the winner for Academy Award consideration. 1st prize in the short narrative & animation cats also qualifies winner for Academy Award consideration. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10

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(young filmmaker-high school or younger); $30/$35 (under 60 min.); $40/$50 (over 60 min.). Contact: Mandy McBroom, Admin Asst., Box 24330, Nashville, TN 37202; (615) 742-2500; fax: 742-1004; niffilm@bellsouth.net; www.nashvillefilmfest.org.

NEW ARTS PROGRAM BIENNIAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 2001-August 2003, PA. Deadline: December 16. The New Arts Program is a non profit art resource organization committed to providing the general public w/ educational opportunities w/ artists from the performing, literary, & visual arts. The winning videos will be shown to the public in New York City, Philadelphia, Reading, Lehigh Valley & other venues upon request. Founded: 1995. Cats: Doc, Experimental. Awards: up to $2,100. Formats: S-VHS, DVD. Preview on VHS. Contact: James Carroll, P.O. Box 82, 173 Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530; (610) 683-6440; fax: 683-6440.

NO DANCE FILM & MULTIMEDIA FESTIVAL, Jan. 18-24, UT. Deadline: Nov. 15. Alternative film fest based in Park City, Utah during Sundance. Nodance caters to first-time filmmakers & digital filmmaking. Nodance screens all competition films on DVD. Founded: 1998. Cats: doc, feature, script, short, animation, music video. Awards: Grand Jury, Audience, & Golden Orbs Awards. Formats: DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30. Contact: James Boyd, fest director, 703 Pier Avenue #675, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254; (310) 937-6363; boyd@nodance.com; www.nodance.com.

NORTEL PALM SPRINGS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 9-20, CA. Deadline: Nov. 15. Festival, founded in 1990, presents Opening & Closing major films, a black-tie gala w/ awards to film industry legends, retros, foreign language films submitted for Oscar consideration, audience awards, industry & foreign consulate receptions, seminars, panels, an industry showcase. Must be completed w/in 18 mo. of fest; must be in original language w/ Eng. subtitles if applicable. Films must be 60 min. or longer; shorts not accepted; prints must be avail. for delivery by Dec. 30; deadline for industry accreditation is Dec. 15; line-up announced on Dec. 1. Founded: 1990. Cats: feature. Awards: Audience Favorite (non-competitive). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $50. Contact: Mitch Levine, NPSIFF, 1700 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite #3, Palm Springs, CA 92262; (760) 322-2930; fax: 322-4087; info@psfilmfest.org; www.psfilmfest.org.

OUT FAR! PHOENIX INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, February 14-16, AZ. Deadline: December 1. Feature length & short films are geared towards the alternative community at large. A variety of subjects, themes & messages are programmed. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Audience Awards: Best Film, Best Short, Best Lesbian, Best Gay. Formats: 35mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Amy Ettinger, 619 East Vista Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85020; (602) 410-1074; outfarfilmfest@aol.com; www.outfar.org.

ROCHESTER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 2-4, NY. Deadline: Nov. 30, 2001 (early); Feb. 15 (final). Annnual fest is the longest-running film event dedicated to the art of short film & video. Each fest incls. a wide variety of original & imaginative works by film students, advanced amateurs, & professional filmmakers from all over the world. Open to all films & videos completed since Jan. 1 of previous yr. & under 30 min. in length. Founded: 1959. Cats: any style or genre, short, No music videos or installations. Awards: hand-made Shoestring Trophies. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", 35mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $30 (final). Contact: Movies on a Shoestring, Box 17746, Rochester, NY 14617; (716) 234-7411; president@rochesterfilmfest.org; www.rochesterfilmfest.org.

SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Feb 28- March 9, CA. Deadline: Nov. 29. Fest is "dedicated to enriching local culture and raising consciousness of film as an art form". It presents American Independent, Foreign and Documentary cinema. In addition to film exhibition and celebrity tributes, fest has produced panel discussions, covering aspects of filmmaking, from the craft to the business. Founded: 1986. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DigiBeta, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC& PAL). Entry Fee: $30 (shorts under 30 min.); $40 (features). Contact: Candace Schermerhorn / Brittany Ballard, 2064 Alameda Padre Serra, Suite 120, Santa Barbara, CA 93103; (805) 963-0023; fax: 962-2524; info@sbfilmfest.org; www.sbfilmfest.org.

SEDONA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 28-March 2, AZ. Deadline: Dec. 1 . Annual fest features the finest in current American & int'l independent cinema, tributes, panel discussons & an in-depth workshops. Cats: dramatic & doc (features & shorts), animation, feature, short, doc, script. Awards: Audience choice—Best of Festival for full-length & short films. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (shorts, 30 min. & under); $50 (features); $10 discount for entries postmarked before Nov. 1. Contact: Festival, 50 Cultural Park Place, Sedona, AZ 86336; (800) 780-2787 or (520) 282-0747; fax: 282-5358; filmfest@sedonaculturalpark.org; www.sedonafilmfest.com.

TAMBAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 10-13, FL. Deadline: Dec. 16. Festival strives to present work to the public, potential distributor & other filmmakers, as well as creating a film forum for Florida filmmaking. Founded: 1999. Awards: cash & non-cash prizes in Best New Director, Reel Humanitarian Award, Best of Show & Jury Award cats. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, S-VHS, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (35mm); $30 (16mm/all video formats); $25 (student). Contact: TFVF, PO Box 340367, Tampa, FL 33694; (813) 964-9781; Tambayfilm@yahoo.com; www.tambayfilmfest.com.

U.S. COMEDY ARTS FESTIVAL, Feb. 26-March 2, CO. Deadline: Dec. 6. Festival is the annual HBO-sponsored event held in Aspen, Colorado that features the best comedic film, theater, standup, & sketch to an industry-heavy audience. Approximately 25 features & 25 shorts are selected from over 800 submissions. Cats: Feature, Short (under 60 min.), . Formats: 35mm, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Attn: FilmProgram, 2049 Century Park East, Ste. 4200, L.A., CA 90067; (310) 201-9595; fax: 201-9445; kevin.haasarud@hbo.com; www.hbocomedyfest.com.

WISCONSIN FILM FESTIVAL, March 27-30, WI. Deadline: Dec 2 (early); Dec 20 (final); Student: Jan 24. Presented by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute. The fest features talks, panels, filmmaker discussions & showcases the work of Wisconsin filmmakers. Cats: feature, doc, short, student. Awards: Jury

prizes in each category (Student/Wisconsin's Own/General). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: short: $15, $20(late); feature: $25, $30(late). Contact: University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute, 6038 Villas Hall, 821 University Ave., Madison, WI 53706; (877) 963-FILM; info@wifilmfest.org; www.wifilmfest.org.

INTERNATIONAL

BERLIN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 6-16, Germany. Deadline: Nov. 5. One of world's top fests, w/ 14,500 guests attending fest & European Film Market. Fest offers participating filmmakers hospitable environment. Fest divided into sections, each w/ own character & organization. Int'l Competition: newly released & unreleased 70mm & 35mm features programmed by invitation of fest director. Sections known for strong programming of US indie films are: Int'l Forum of New Cinema & Panorama (noncompetitive section of official program). Both screen narrative, doc & experimental works. Forum specializes in avant-garde intellectual & political films (60 min. & up, 16mm & 35mm) & also shows more commercial films. Panorama presents wide range of work from low-budget to more commercial ventures, incl. studio films. The main criterion for Panorama is the film's second life in Germany, either on TV or commercial distribution. European Film Market is important meeting place for screenings & sales, w/ reps from over 40 countries. Forum has own theater, Arsenal, for year-round commercial exhibition occasionally of fest titles. Forum has its own two juries, w/ cash prizes. All entries must be produced in 12 months preceding fest & not released theatrically or on video in Germany. In recent years Independent Feature Project has supported "American Independents at Berlin" program, incl: market booth, message center for U.S. filmmakers & companies, orientation for newcomers, & "Showcase of American Independent Films" at market. Shorts in 16 or 35mm must be under 15 min. Founded: 1959. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, children. Awards: Golden Bear, Silver Bear. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS or Beta SP/PAL or DVD. Entry Fee: $125 (features); $50 (shorts). Contact: Dieter Kosslick, BIFF, Int'l Competition, Director: Potsdamer Strasse 5, Berlin, Germany 10785; 011 49 30 259 20-0; fax: 011 49 30 259 20 499; program@berlinale.de; www.berlinale.de.

BLOWING BUBBLES, Dec. 1, Italy. Deadline: Nov 10. The fest's goal, the only competition of its kind in Europe, is to select & screen independent films & videos that deal w/ subject matter related to HIV & AIDS; for example: prevention campaigns, new treatments info, solidarity & understanding of contemporary issues related to HIV & AIDS. Both competitive & non-competitive section incls. film & videos up to 10 min. Blowing Bubbles does not require reference to homosexuality. Founded: 1985. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: 700 Euros. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Programming Committee c/o MBE, Box 207, Via Del Torchio 12-20123, Milano, Italy; 011 +3902 3319118; fax: 001 +390 72002942; marzig@energy.it; www.blowingbubbles.it.

GALWAY FILM FLEADH, July 9-14, Ireland. Deadline: Dec. 1. The foremost fest for presenting new Irish films alongside cutting edge int'l cinema. Over 60 features &

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INT'L WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL DORTMUND, March, Germany. Deadline: Nov. Festival organizes every 2 years as an int'l film fest centered on one topical theme which also incls. historical aspects. They highlight those films that came into being largely as a result of women's efforts—either as director, screenwriter, sound technician, camera operator or editor. Founded: 1987. Cats: Any style or genre. Awards: non-competitive. Formats: All formats accepted, 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Contact: femme totale e.V., c/o Kulturburo Stadt Dortmund , Kuepferstr. 3, D-44122 , Dortmund, Germany; 011 49 231 50 25162; fax: 011 49 231 50 25 734; info@femmetotale.de; www.femmetotale.de.

MALMO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLES FESTIVAL-BUFF, March 12-17, Sweden. Deadline: Dec. 1. Annual competitive fest features about 100 titles shown to audiences estimated at 13,000 over 5 days. Main feature is latest films from Nordic countries plus Int'l Panorama. Fest also incls. debates & seminars for people working w/ film. Fest is also meeting place for the Children & Youth film in Northern Europe. Categories include: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short, Animation. Founded: 1984. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, . Awards: City of Malmo Award SEK50.000 ($5,400) to best film.. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No Entry Fee. Contact: Lennart Strom, Box 179, S-201, Malmo, Sweden S-201 21; 011 46 40 30 91 64; fax: 46 40 30 53 22; info@buff.nu; www.buff.nu.

OPORTO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL/FANTASPORTO, Feb. 24-Mar. 1, Portugal. Deadline: Dec. 15. Founded by editors of film magazine Cinema Novo, fest has evolved into a competitive fest for features that focus on mystery, fantasy & sci-fi. Festival runs in 4 theaters w/ 2,000 seats altogether & screens nearly 250 features & shorts. Entries must have been completed in previous 2 years. Awards: incl. Best Film, Best Direction, Best Actor/Actress, Best Screenplay, Best Special Effects, Best Short Film, Special Award of the Jury. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Mario Dorminsky, Director, c/o Cinema Novo, Rua Anibal Cunha, 84 - sala 1.6, Porto, Portugal 4050-048; 011 351 222 076 050; fax: 351 222 076 059; www.fantasporto.online.pt.

SYDNEY MARDI GRAS FILM FESTIVAL, February 12-23, Australia. Deadline: Nov. 15. The fest is Australia's largest Gay & Lesbian film fest. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, short. Awards: Audience Awards: Best feature, Doc, Short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fees. Contact: Festival, Queer Screen, P.O. Box 1081, Darlinghurst, Australia NSW1300; 61-2-9332 4938; fax: 61-2-9331 2988; www.queerscreen.com.au.

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COMPETITIONS

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: Bridging the gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: 1st place $1,500; 2nd place $1,000; 3rd place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax 475-0193; www.Hollywoodawards.com.

COMMUNICATOR AWARDS: Deadline: Nov. 15. Awards program, funded by video professionals, honors excellence in commercials, corporate videos, & television productions. Founded in 1995 over 200 categories highlighted such as, internal & external communications, government, medical, religious, music videos, broadcast news, cable television. Feature docs, shorts, animation, experimental, script, youth media, student, family, children, any style of genre. Certificates awarded. Formats 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40. Contact: Festival, 2214 Michigan St., Suite E. Arlington, TX 76013; (817) 459-4011; fax: 795-4949; tca@imagin.net; www.communicator-awards.com.

MAN VS. MACHINE: Film/Video-short competition. Concept is designed to contrast the best man-made traditional short films against machine aided digital shorts. Open to any genre. Winners will be awarded prizes and will enter a juried show held at a New York City venue the second weekend of February 2003. Entries close: January 31, 2003. Send $20 submission fee by check or money order to: Take 3 Films, Ste. 306, 7 East 8th St., NY, NY 10003; www.take3films.com.

SCREENWRITING SHOWCASE AWARDS: The 8th Annual $10,000 Screenwriting contest will be held Feb. 15, 2003. The winning scripts will get professional coverage, established industry contracts and also possibly see their script optioned by an independent production company. $40, deadline is due Dec. 15. Log on to www.screenwritingawards.com to enter.

SHORT FILM SLAM: NYC's only weekly short film competition is looking for submissions. Competition on Sundays at 2 p.m., at the end of each show the audience votes for a winning film, which receives further screenings at the Pioneer Theater. To enter must have a film, 30 minutes or less, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater during operating hours and sign up, or get in touch with Jim at (212) 254-7107 or jim@twoboots.com.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

DV FILMMAKING WORKSHOP: An intense 8-session 3-hour weekly workshop in Los Angeles for the novice filmmaker. Study of mechanics in all format video and film production for professional or personal use. In this high-performance workshop, filmmakers develop their understanding of what creates emotional impact from concept to screen using their personal video camera. Topics covered: camera shots, lens and angle techniques, composition and movement, specific cinematic effects, production scheduling, lighting and equipment basics, sequences building and continuity, sound and editing. Course fee: $500. Sessions: November 12–January 4. January 14–March 11. Tuesday or Thursday 7:00–9:30 pm. For more info log onto www.videoworkshop-la.com or e-mail phoenixcanyon@yahoo.com.

NALIP 2002: Committed to promoting the advancement, development, and funding of Latino/Latina film and media arts, the NALIP Conference will be an opportunity for inspiration and instruction on the next step towards success in your projects. Event takes place in San Antonio, Texas, November 7-10. For more info on the conference and how to sign up, log on to www.nalip.org.

TWN FILM & PRODUCTION WORKSHOP: Commencing its 26th year, a unique "hands-on" program. Workshop emphasizes training & support of people of color who have limited resources & access to mainstream educational institutions & traditional training programs. Intensive 6-month, 8 participant, program focuses on preproduction, production & postproduction skills necessary to take a project from conception to completion. Prior film, video or related experience recommended but not required; self-initiative, time & collaborative spirit is. Initial written applic. required & second round of applicants selected for interviews. Cost: $500, Deadline: Jan. 24th. Workshop begins early April 2003. For application, visit www.twn.org or send a SASE to: Third World Newsreel, Production Workshop, 545 8th Ave., 10th fl., New York, NY 10018; for more info call (212) 947-9277 x301.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

ALLEY FILMS: A short film distribution company seeks narrative short films under 20 minutes for exhibition in public areas such as onboard entertainment and retail environments. If you have a film, or know of one, please e-mail us with a brief description at shorts@usa.net and we will let you know how to submit.

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bimonthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in Austin, TX, offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super 8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX 78745; send e-mail to flicker@flickeraustin.com; or consult the website, www.flickeraustin.com.

MIND IGNITE: Imaginites, distributor of features and TV series in the US, Australia, New Zeland, Eurpoe, and South America is loking for short films for a TV series. Called Mind Ignite the show centers around short story concepts and at the end of the season audiences will vote for their top ten short films. All shorts must be no longer than 28 minutes in lenghth. Format, 35mm, 16mm, DV, mini-DV, SP, Super 8mm, 8mm. All genres welcome. Along with film the filmmaker must also submit a press kit, clearence for all music and sound, artistic release, and signed non-exclusive licensing agreement, which can be found on www.mindignite.com. For more info log onto site. Deadline: December 6th.

THE SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a nonprofit organization created to promote short film "as a means to itself." For more information, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

THE SHORT LIST: The showcase int'l short films, airs nat'ly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266 or ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

SHOW & TELL: Monthly film, video, music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music, and poetry this event provides a much-needed venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-minute film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave., #12H, New York, NY 10473. Call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

THINK TANK FILM SCREENING: TTFS is a film, video, motion graphics and animation event showcasing the very best in creative socio-cultural commentary. Past

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TOTAL MOVIE MAGAZINE: Wants to see your shorts (under 20 minutes) and feature-length films for possible inclusion on the DVD that goes out with the magazine. Non-exclusive rights, filmmakers get paid, wide distribution. Send (NTSC) VHS copy of the work to: Total Movie & Entertainment, Attn: Scott Epstein, 2400 N. Lincoln Ave., Altadena, CA 91001; (626) 296-6360; scott@digitalideations.com.

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting-edge television station from Nantucket Island, Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast. Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. SASE to Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

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FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bi-monthly short film festival held in cities across the country. Flicker in Austin, TX, offer film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in super-8 or 16mm. Send short proposal to the Flicker near you. Contact Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX 78745 or flicker@flickeraustin.com; www.flickeraustin.com.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the foundation's 2 major programs (human & community development; global security & sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org.

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PRODUCTION JUNCTION RENTALS: Cameras, decks, lights, mics, etc. Rates available at www.ProductionJunction.com or phone (212) 769-8927 and ask for Chris. For package rates email details to info@ProductionJunction.com.

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THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational & animation programs for distribution. Send videocassettes or discs for evaluation to: The Cinema Guild, 130 Madison Ave., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 685-6242; gcrowdus@cinemaguild.com; Ask for our Distribution Services brochure.

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ACCOUNTANT/BOOKKEEPER/CONTROLLER: Experience in both corporate & nonprofit sectors. Hold MBA in Marketing & Accounting. Freelance work sought. Sam Sagenkahn (917) 374-2464.

ANDREW DUNN, Director of Photography/camera operator Arri35 BL3, Aaton XTRprod S16, Sony DVCAM. Experience in features, docs, TV & industrials. Credits: Dog Run, Strays, Working Space/Working Light. (212) 477-0172; AndrewD158@aol.com.

BRENDAN C. FLYNT: Director of Photography w/ many feature & short film credits. Owns 35 Arri BL3, Super 16/16 Aaton, HMIs, Dolly, and Tulip Crane. Awards at Sundance & Raindance. Call for quotes & reel at (212) 208-0968; www.dpFlynt.com.

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COMPOSER MIRIAM CUTLER loves to collaborate w/filmmakers - docs, features, Highlights: 2002 Berlin "Lost In La Mancha", Sundance/POV "Scout's Honor" & "Licensed To Kill", Peabody "The Castro", "Pandemic: Facing Aids" & more.(310)398-5985 Email: mir.cut@verizon.net.

COMPOSER: Original music for your film or video project. Will work with any budget. Complete digital studio. NYC area. Demo CD upon request. Call Ian O'Brien: (201) 222-2638; iobrien@bellatlantic.net

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COMPOSER: Wealth of collaborative experience composing imaginative music for award winning films. Complete digital audio studio. Sound design, surround mastering. Extensive sound/sample libraries. Craig Slon; (718) 369-3058; aracu@juno.com.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Aaton Super 16/16mm and Arri 35BL-2 camera pkgs. Expert Lighting & Camerawork for independent films. Create that "big film" look on a low budget. Great prices. Matthew (617) 244-6730; (845) 439-5459; mwdp@att.net.

DP WITH FILM, VIDEO & LIGHTING/GRIP PACKAGES. Extensive documentary & independent project experience. Well-traveled, multi-lingual and experience field producing as well. Call Jerry for reel/rates: (718) 398-6688 or email jryrisius@aol.com.

EDITOR: FINAL CUT PRO BETA SP & DV, editor with private suite. Wide range of experience: narrative, music videos, documentaries, industrials & promos. Reel available, affordable prices. East Village location. Call (917) 523- 6260, or check www.HighNoonProd.com.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: Frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in *The Independent* & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition, & educational projects of media). Successful proposals to NYSCA, NEA, NEH, ITVS, Soros, Rockefeller, Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation. Fast writers, reasonable rates. Wanda Bershen, (212) 598-0224; www.reddiaper.com; or Geri Thomas (212) 625-2011; www.artstaffing.com.

INDEPENDENT PICTURES: EXPERIENCED LINE PRODUCER available to help with your Detailed Budget, Script Breakdown, Shooting Schedule, and/or Day-out-of-Days. Specialty is low budget but high quality. Email AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates and references.

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50 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR VIDEO BUSINESS. FREE REPORT. http://videouniversity.com/50web.html. Grow a successful video business in Legal, Wedding, Corporate, TV and more.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Film-Digital Media Production/Cinema Director. The Department of Communication at Messiah College invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professorship in film-digital media production beginning August 2003. M.F.A. in film or digital media required. Teaching responsibilities include courses in film-digital media editing and production as well as overseeing the operation of the college's on campus cinema. Evidence of strong commitments to teaching undergraduates in the liberal arts tradition and to producing original creative media is expected. Messiah College is a Christian college of the liberal and applied arts and sciences located in a suburb of Harrisburg, PA. The College is committed to an embracing evangelical spirit rooted in Anabaptist, Pietist, and Wesleyan traditions of the Christian church. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Send two sets each of: A cover letter explaining your teaching and creative interests, a detailed curriculum vitae, transcripts, a brief description of courses prepared to teach, and three letters of recommendation to Kay Dunwoody, Assistant to the Chair, Communication Department, Messiah College, One College Avenue, Box 3018, Grantham, PA, 17027. Review of applications begins November 15, 2002. Messiah College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

FELLOWSHIPS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS AVAILABLE: The MFA program in Film/Video/Digital Production at the University of Iowa located in the Department of Cinema & Comparative Literature offers full fellowships and teaching support to qualified applicants to its 3-year MFA. For more information on how to apply, visit: http://www.uiowa.edu/~ccl or call (319) 335-0330.

MONEY-MAKING OPPORTUNITY. Do you know a celebrity? Independent feature seeking a well-known actor for a 3-4 day shoot and is offering a substantial finder's fee to any individual who can make that connection. E-mail info to EG6886@aol.com.

WELL-ESTABLISHED freelance camera group in NYC seeking professional cameramen and soundmen w/ solid Betacam video experience to work w/ our wide array of clients. If qualified contact COA at (212) 505-1911. Must have video samples/reel.

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BUDGETS/INVESTOR PACKAGE: Experienced Line Producer will prepare script breakdowns, shooting schedules & detailed budgets. Movie Magic equipped. Credit cards accepted. Indie rates. Mark (212) 340-1243 or LineProducerNYC@aol.com.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH: Any subject - News Events, Personalities, Sports, Crime, Medicine, The Arts, etc. From Library, Internet, and Special Collection Sources. Experienced Researchers. Free estimates. Cumberland Research (718) 522-6478.

SU-CITY PICTURES clients win awards and get deals! Susan Kouguell, Harvard/Tufts instructor, author The Savvy Screenwriter analyzes: scripts/films/treatments/queries/synopses/pitches. Credits: Miramax/Warner Bros/Fine Line. Rewrites available. (212) 219-9224; www.su-city-pictures.com.

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FINAL CUT PRO SYSTEM RENTAL: Dual 800mHz G4 with Dig Voodoo 1:1 for broadcast, or 450mHz G4 for DV quality. Also, Apex DVD player w/o mvision for digitizing. Will deliver. Consulting avail. Rick Brown (917) 518-2896, rickbnyc@aol.com.

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PRODUCTION TRANSCRIPTS: Verbatim transcripts for documentaries, journalists, etc. Low prices & flat rates based on tape length. Standard 1 hr., 1-on-1 interview is only $80: www.productiontranscripts.com for details or call: (888) 349-3022.

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AIVF members can search all benefit, classified, and notice listings with the AIVF interactive resource directory at www.aivf.org/listings

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AIVF BOARD ELECTIONS

Vote for the AIVF board of directors and corporate amendment! postmark deadline November 29!

It's time to vote for the AIVF Board of Directors, who provide support and vision to the organization. This year, members will also vote on a corporate resolution to merge AIVF and FIVF. Play an active role in AIVF's direction by voting! See www.aivf.org/annualelect

Only paid AIVF members are eligible to vote. If your membership expired on or before October 15, 2002, and you did not renew, you are not eligible to vote. Nominee statements and ballots were mailed in late October, and responses are due postmarked November 29, 2002.

AIVF Presents...

MEET AND GREET

third world newsreel

when: **November 7, 6:30–8:30 pm**
where: **AIVF**
cost: **$10 members/$20 general**

AIVF's Meet & Greet Series brings filmmakers and industry professionals together to exchange information in an informal atmosphere. Third World Newsreel (TWN) is an alternative media arts organization that fosters the creation, appreciation and distribution of independent film and video by and about people of color. It supports the innovative work of diverse forms and genres made by artists who are intimately connected to their subjects through common bonds of ethnic/cultural heritage, class position, gender, sexual orientation and political identification. See www.twn.org.

AIVF Presents...

DOCUMENTARY MASTER CLASS

Fernanda Rossi, Instructor

Learn how to structure your documentary, in all stages of production, to ease the pain of organizing shots, information delivery, the cutting room floor, and establishing an editing style.

Preregister for both classes for $95, AIVF members, $140 general. Hosted by Fernanda Rossi, author of Ask the Documentary Doctor (see page 20).

DOCTORING YOUR DOC

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR DOCUMENTARY

when: **November 9, 10 am-5:30 pm**
where: **Millennium Film Workshop, 66 East 4th Street, NYC**
cost: **$75 AIVF members/$100 general; register by Nov. 16**

A full day experiential hands-on workshop for producers, directors, writers, editors and composers. You will be instructed on how to structure a documentary from the time before you shoot to post-production and first cut. We will screen and analyze work, discuss the theories of narrative structure, and perform hands on exercises with structural formats.

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY
HOURS: WED. 11-9; by apt. to AIVF members Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11–6. The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.–Fri. 2–5 p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

TRAILER MECHANICS

when: **November 16; Two sections: 10 am–1 pm or 2–5 pm**
where: **AIVF**
cost: **$40 AIVF members/$55 general; register by Nov. 16**

"Can I see your trailer?" Let's face it, a trailer can make or break your film. It can get you funded or it can put you on the "passed" list. Trailer Mechanics is a three hour workshop for producers, directors, writers and editors on building a short trailer/demo of a documentary film. We will consider principles of narrative structure and screen and analyze different trailers, including those of workshop attendees. Bring your footage (raw or cut) for discussion. Register early—space is limited.

AIVF Cosponsors...

reel roundtable

REEL ROUNDTABLE'S FILM MEDLEY

WITH THE SUNDANCE CHANNEL

when: **November 11, 7:30–8:30 pm**
where: **Daryl Roth Theater 20 Union Square East, NYC**
cost: **Free**

Acquisitions Executive Cynthia Kane will bring a film and discuss how the Sundance Channel works with indie filmmakers. The Sundance Channel brings television viewers daring and engaging non commercial programming. Event kicks off with music at 7:30. Go to www.reelroundtable.com for more information.

In Brief:

PRODUCER'S LEGAL SERIES

The AIVF Producer's Legal Series addresses specific issues of concern to independent producers. These small group sessions not only answer common questions but connect producers to individuals and introduce them to resources which can assist them in their projects on an on-going basis.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, and information services. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

State of the Arts NYSCA

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The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation
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The National Endowment for the Arts
New York Foundation for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Sony Electronics Corporation

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

Nonprofit Members: **AL**: Sidewalk Moving Picture Fest.; **CA**:The Berkeley Documentary Center; Filmmakers Alliance; Media Fund; NAATA; Ojai Film Soc.; San Diego Asian Film Festival; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; USC School of Cinema TV; **CO**: Colorado Film Commission; Denver Center Media; **DC**: Media Access Project; **FL**: Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival; Sarasota Film Festival; University of Tampa; **GA**: Atlanta Black Film Festival, Inc; Imagae Film and Video Center; Savannah College of Art and Design; **HI**: Pacific Islanders in Communications; U of Hawaii Outreach College; **ID**: Center for School Improvement; **IL**: Art Institute of Chicago/Video Data Bank; Community Television Network; Light Bound; PBS Midwest; Rock Valley Coll.; Roxie Media Corp.; **KY**: Appalshop; **MA**: CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Lef Foundation; Long Bow Group, Inc.; Lowell Telecommunications Group; Projectile Arts; Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College; WGBH Education Foundation; **MD**: Laurel Cable Network **MI**: Ann Arbor Film Festival; **MN**: Intermedia Arts; IFP/MSP; Walker Art Center; **MO**: Webster University Film Series; **MS**: Magnolia Independent Film Festival; **NC**: Cucalorus Film Foundation; Doubletake Documentary Film Festival; Duke University-Film and Video; Empowerment Project; **NE**: AIVF Salon / Lincoln; Great Plains Film Festival; Ross Film Theater, UN/Lincoln; **NH**: Telluride Film Festival; **NJ**: Black Maria Film Festival; College of NJ/ Dept. of Communication Studies; Freedom Film Society; Great Vision Filmwork, Inc.; **NM**: Taos Talking Pictures; **NY**: American Museum of Natural History; Art21; Center for New American Media; Cinema Arts Center; Children's Media Project; Communications Society; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Creative Capital Foundation; Crowing Rooster Arts; Department of Media Study, SUNY Buffalo; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community Television; Electronic Arts Intermix; Experimental TV Center; EVC; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Film Video Arts; Globalvision, Inc.; Hudson Valley Media Arts Center; International Fil m Seminars; John Jay High School; Konscious, Inc.; Listen Up!; Mimetic Media; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Foundation for Jewish Culture; National Video Resources; National Museum of the American Indian; New School University Film Department; NW&D. Inc.; New York Film Academy; New York Women in Film and Television; Paper Tiger Television; POV/The American Documentary; Projectile Arts; Ross Media Center; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stanton Crenshaw Communication; Stony Brook Film Festival; SVA; Swimming Elephant Productions; Syracuse University; Upstate Films, LTD; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH**: Athens Center for Film and Video; Cleveland Filmmakers; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio Independent Film Festival; Ohio University School of Film; Prince Music Theater; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR**: Media Arts, MHCC; Northwest FIlm Center; **PA**: Desales University / Department of the Performaing Arts; PA Council on the Arts; Department of Film and Video, Carnegie Museum of Art; Great Lakes Film Association; Prince Music Theater; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI**: Flickers Arts Collaborative; **SC**: South Carolina Arts Commission; Hybrid Films; **TN**: Nashvile Independent Film Festival; **TX**: Austin Cinemaker Co-op; Vicheier Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; Worldfest; **UT**: Sundance Institute; **VA**: PBS; VA Department of Drama; **VT**: The Noodlehead Network; **WA**: Seattle Central Community College; **WI**: UWM Department of Film; **France**: The Camargo Foundation; **Germany**: International Shorts Film Festival; **India**: Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Peru**: Guarango Cine y Video; **Singapore**: Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Business/Industry Members: **AZ**: Aaquinas Productions, Inc.; **CA**: Action/Cut Directed by Seminars; Attaboc, LLC; Busk Entertainment, LLC; Eastman Kodak Co.; David Keith Company; Groovy Like a Movie; HBO; The Hollywood Reporter; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; **CO**: The Crew Connection; Makers Muse; **FL**: GeekPower; Vision Films; **DC**: 48 Hour Film Project; **GA**: Tomorrow Pictures, Inc.; **IL**: Buzzbait; Roxie Media Corporation; Screen Magazine; Wiggle Puppy Productions; **MA**: CS Associates; Glidecam Industries; **MD**: The Learning Channel; Walterry Insurance Brokers; **MI**: Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; **MN**: Aquaries Media; **NH**: Kinetic Films; **NJ**: Monkey Rant Productions; **NY**: American Montage; Analog Digital Int'l, Inc.; ArtMar Productions; Asset Pictures, Inc.; Black Bird Post; Bluprint Films; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cataland Films; Code 16/Radical Avid; Corra Films; Cypress Films; Daniel, Seigel & Bimbler, LLP; Dekart Video; Docurama; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Earth Video; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Gartenberg Media Enterprises; Harmonic Ranch; HBO; Hello World Communications; Highdrama Productions, Inc.; Historic Films Archive; Island Media International; Jalapeno Media; Lighthouse Creative, Inc.; Lowel Light Manufacturing, Inc; Mad Mad Judy; MacKenzie Culter, Inc.; The Means of Production, Inc.; Mercer Media; Mercer Street Sound; Metropolis Film Lab, Inc.; Mixed Greens; One Kilohertz; The Outpost; Persona Films, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Prime Technologies; Robert Seigel Entertainment Law; Robin Frank Managment; Seahorse Films; Solar Films; Son Vida Pictures, LLC; Studio 4J; Swete Studios; Triune Pictures; Webcasting Media Productions, Inc.; Wildlight Productions; XEL Media; Van Vliet Media; Zanzibar Productions, Inc.; **PA**: Cubist Post and Effects; Smithtown Creek Productins; **TX**: The Media Cottage, Inc.; Shootz Production Group; Tempest Production Company; **VA**: Dorst MediaWorks; The Project Studio

Friends of FIVF: Sabina Maja Angel, Marion Appel, Phillip Aupperle, James J. Baxter, Doug Block, Dana Brisco Brown, Margaret Brown, Michael J. Camoin, Liz Canner, Hugo M.J. Cassirer, Aaron Edison, Marilys Ernst, Christopher Farina, Daniel Fass, John Franco, Giovanni G., Sarah Jacobson, Jane Jaffin, Jewish Communal Fund, John Kavanaugh, Vivian Kleiman, Lyda Kuth, Bart Lawson, Michelle Lebrun, Rhonda Leigh, Jim McKay, Diane Markrow, Sheila Nevins, Pamela Pacelli, Elizabeth Peters, Amalie Rothschild, Larry Sapadin, Robert L. Seigel, Esq., Mary Smith, Rahdi Taylor, Temple University, Joyce Vaughn, Cynthia Veliquette Ph.D., Bart Weiss, Mary H. Wharton

The series moderator and co-producer is Innes Smolansky, an entertainment attorney with Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, who specializes in independent film, representing independent producers, writers and directors.

COPYRIGHT AND THE LAW OF IDEAS

when: **November 12, 6:30 pm**
where: **AIVF**
cost: **$20 members/$30 general**

Discussion will address all types of clearances, including literary clearances, music rights, personal releases, clearing stock footage, and negotiating location permits. Errors and Omissions insurance will also be defined and addressed as well as issues pertaining to SAG contracts and guilds and unions.

Save this date!

AIVF'S HOLIDAY PARTY

Come and celebrate another successful year at AIVF!!! December 2, 8–10 pm, at AIVF

BUYING OR SELLING A SCREENPLAY

when: **December 10, 6:30 pm**
where: **AIVF**
cost: **$20 members/$30 general**

Unscramble the legal issues involved in selling or buying a script; how do you retain rights and when do you give up rights. Learn the legal language and process of screenplay exchange that protects both the writer and the producer.

AIVF Presents...

DOCUMENTARY DIALOGUES: THE ART OF THE INTERVIEW

when: **November 19, 6:30–8:30 pm**
Wine and goldfish reception till 9:30 pm
where: **AIVF**
cost: **$5 members/$20 general**

"Is the mic on?" Interviews are not just about putting a microphone in front of someone, much less about simply getting a list of questions answered. Interviewees, like supporting actors in the movies, give dimension to your documentary. This workshop will open up the doors to quality and relevant interviews for your project by addressing the questions where to interview; what to ask and in what order; how to choose among several potential interviewees; how to get your interviewees talking; and how organize material in the cutting room.

MAESTRO! CHICAGO

November 22 and 23
Chicago, IL

MAESTRO! A two-day event to bring together Chicago's media making community and the arts organizations that serve them.

- **Media Advocacy Roundtable**
- **Self-Distribution Panel w/ Video Databank**
- **Screening of Local Work**

This celebration of Chicago Media Arts is presented in conjunction with The Video Data Bank, Street Level Youth Media, Chicago Filmmakers, IFP/Midwest, and the Gene Siskel Film Center along with the Association of Independent Video and Film (AIVF) and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC). For more information please see www.aivf.org/maestro

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The AIVF Regional Salons provide an opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Visit the Regional Salons website, www.aivf.org/salons, for more details.

Be sure to contact your local Salon leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesdays, 6:30 pm
Where: Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 366-1538
albany@aivf.org
www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesdays, 7 pm
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Mondays, 7 pm
Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
austin@aivf.org, www.austinfilm.org

Boston, MA:
Center for Independent Documentary
Where: Waban Public Library (basement), 1608 Beacon Street
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
boston@aivf.org

Boulder, CO:
"Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesdays, 7 pm
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Patricia Townsend, (303) 442-8445
boulder@aivf.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursdays, 6:30 pm
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun Street
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841, or Peter Wentworth, charleston@aivf.org

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org, www.ohiofilms.com

Detailed salon information is posted on the web! Visit **www.aivf.org** for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon programs as well as up-to-date information on programs.

Salons Across the Country

AIVF links a network of filmmakers you can rely on.

When New York City filmmaker Ruth Sergel was invited to show work at the recent 9/11 memorial ceremony in Washington, DC, she immediately thought to contact the local AIVF Salon, to find a community to connect to, and to get some pointers about the city.

When the Albany, New York, Salon decided that they wanted to be more involved with the Lake Placid Film Festival, they contacted the national AIVF office in New York to see if they could arrange for AIVF to cosponsor the festival. The national office did, and the Albany group were able to secure discounted admission into the festival for local AIVF members.

Some salons have been sharing work or screening with each other, or suggesting programs or activites that worked well. If you are planning a road trip to screen your film, these salons could be very useful. Your target audience for your film could be in their attendence lists.

Talk to your community. There are no secrets for making contacts across the country. Write an e-mail, make a phone call, find a new friend.

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700
dallas@aivf.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
edison@aivf.org, www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:
Contact: Erik Mollberg, (260) 421-1248
fortwayne@aivf.org

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesdays, 6:30 pm
Where: SWAMP, 1519 West Main
Contact: Mary Lampe, (713) 522-8592
houston@aivf.org

Huntsville, AL:
Where: McClellan's Studios for the Dramatic Arts
Contact: CharlesWhite, huntsville@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 pm
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Mondays, 7:30 pm
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
losangeles@aivf.org

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesdays, 7 pm
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Laura Gembolis, (414) 688-2375
www.mifs.org/salon, milwaukee@aivf.org

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesdays, 7 pm
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: W. Keith McManus, (716) 256-3871
rochester@aivf.org

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
sandiego@aivf.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
Jane Selle Morgan (206) 915-6263
seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Mondays, 6 pm
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno, tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263 x4
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
washingtondc@aivf.org

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or e-mail members@aivf.org for information!

Extreme Financing

BY JASON GUERRASIO

When it comes to getting a film financed, sometimes it takes more than a good story. After all the logical methods have failed to produce the cash to get your masterpiece made—and you still can't swallow your pride and hit your rich uncle up for some cash—it's time to take the financing road less traveled. Here are a few ideas to inspire you.

Become a Guinea Pig for Medical Science

To fund his first feature-length film, *El Mariachi* director Robert Rodriguez spent a month with Pharmaco, a drug research facility that pays healthy specimens to test the latest pharmacological breakthroughs. Already working two jobs and going to college full-time back in 1991, Rodriguez was determined to start shooting his first feature, but had no time to write the script and still be able to pay the rent. Pharmaco provided the perfect solution. In his book, *Rebel Without a Crew*, Rodriguez explains why Pharmaco was the ideal place: "I can leave work for a month, make more money there than at my two part-time jobs put together, have my room and board paid for, and have plenty of free time to write my script." For his time there, Rodriguez made $3,000.

Party on, Dude

Take a page from political fundraising and throw a party, with the guest list made up of everybody you know who has money. Morrie Washawski, author of *Shaking the Money Tree*, recently released *The Fundraising Houseparty*, where he advises that the best way to make the party a success is to:

1. Get a host who likes the project and is willing to have it at their home.
2. Invite people who are willing to donate.
3. Show a compelling video clip that will get people interested in donating their money to the project.

House parties net, on average, around $3,000 to $7,000, but Washawski warns, "If your project is not emotionally compelling, then it's hard to drum up support at a houseparty."

To contact Morrie Washawski or order his books, log on to www.warshawski.com.

Robbery as an Option

Legend has it that two University of Texas film school students robbed a series of motels to fund their films in the early 1980's. Whether this was the truth or an unusual defense tactic remains unclear. "I thought it demonstrated the desperation at the heart of all filmmaking," says Don Howard, a lecturer in the Department of Radio, Television, and Film at the University of Texas, who was working on campus when the two students were arrested.

Try Your Luck on a Game Show

Filmmaker David Franklin not only paid for his short out of his *Jeopardy* prize money, he based the short on his game show experience. After winning $11,500 for his two nights on the show, he and his partner, Alicia Erian, wrote a script for *Contestant*, a film about a guy preparing to go on a game show. The short has screened at several festivals and recently had its theatrical debut, opening for Gary Winick's *Tadpole* in Washington state. Now Franklin is itching for a go at the winner's circle again. "I can't go back on *Jeopardy*, because once you're on, you have a lifetime ban. But I have thought about *Millionaire*."

Put Your Money on a Winner

While living with his mother and driving a cab, filmmaker Eric Schaeffer was willing to do anything to get his film, *My Life in Turnaround*, made. When he and his partner, Donal L. Ward, met a guy who knew some rich businessmen that went to the same high-stakes horse race every year, The Gold Cup Race, they packed up the treatment of the movie and the script and went down to DC to get the film financed. After talking to several people, they met with a man who had just won big and gave them $6,000, a quarter of their budget. Not a bad day at the track.

Go Corporate

Filmmaker Chris Smith finished his first full-length film, *American Job*, with $10,000 he received from Hostess when his short about animated Twinkies won the film contest honoring the spongy sweet snack's sixty-fifth birthday. Talk about a sweet deal.

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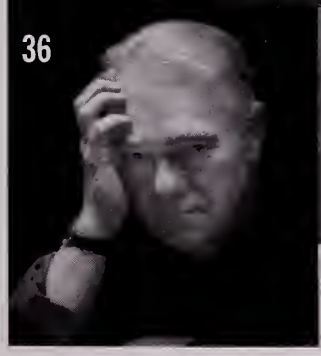

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Photos, from top left: Liev Schreibner and Ned Beatty star as opposites who find friendship in Tom Gilroy's *Spring Forward* (Victor Sira/IFC Films); Brian Flemming (right) readies Bill Gates lookalike Steve Sires on the set of *Nothing So Strange* (Unsharp Mask LLC); Kyra Sedgwick stars as Delia in Rebecca Miller's *Personal Velocity* (Inge Morath/Magnum Photo); Robert McKee, author of *Story*, screenwriting guide and seminar (McKee Seminars); David S. Freeman's screenwriting seminar is the subject of a biting short, *Screenwriting: An Exact Science*, by Keythe Farley and Brian Flemming (Flemming)

On the cover: Fairuza Balk stars as Paula in writer-director Rebecca Miller's award-winning drama *Personal Velocity*, based on Miller's book of short stories (Inge Morath/Magnum Photo).

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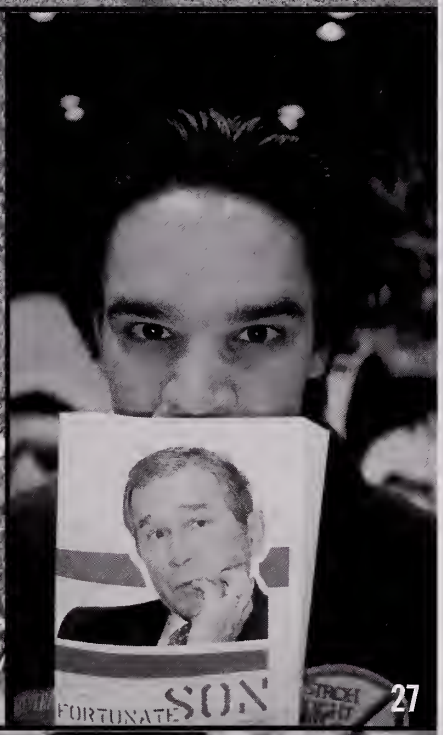

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Photos (clockwise): Ready to Roll: Kirk Adam and Russell Walls sport Super 8's and Schwinn Stingrays (Glitter Films); Underground publisher Sander Hicks struggles to publish a controversial Bush bio in Suki Hawley and Mike Galinsky's *Horns and Halos* (RumR Inc.); Mena Suvari is Cookie in Jonas Akerlund's *Spun* (Spun Inc.); Kinnie Starr on the street in Kurt Voss's *Down and Out With the Dolls* (Whitehouse Productions).

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Dear Reader:
Writers are an odd bunch. They are people who regularly confront nothingness in the form of the blank page. They alternately love and hate their chosen profession with equal passion. And they are also the best procrastinators in the world. If you are feeling lonely, find a writer who is trying to work on something. They are always up for having a late lunch, visiting museums, or shopping for sheets if they have a deadline. A writer pushing a deadline is a mean and vicious creature and it is best not to stick your fingers inside the cage.

But screenwriters swan dive from even greater heights than most of us because they create things out of thin air (or cigarette laden air, depending on the writer) with the intent of handing the script over to somebody else to realize, nurture, or butcher, as the case may be. Even screenwriters who try their hand at directing always seem to me to be committing an act of faith because they are allowing actors to breathe life into characters that existed only in the writer's mind. For their bravery and their faith we have chosen to focus this issue on the independent screenwriter, a creature rare to find and hard to hold.

The independent landscape is often a barren place for scribes. After a few years, many move on to the greener, more lucrative pastures of Hollywood studios or the thickets of the mini-majors. Most who do maintain their independence generally do so by turning to directing, and even those often balance between the two worlds, selling big-budget scripts for cash and keeping smaller, more intimate stories for risk-taking, independent productions. In our feature article *When Writers Direct . . . and When They Don't* (page 32), Andrea Meyer examines the pros and cons of directing your own script with a collection of writers and directors, all of whom, not surprisingly, have strong opinions on the writer-director independent film phenomenon.

For writers looking to send their scripts out into the world to be read, Jacque Lynn Schiller, who has won, placed, and just plain entered over a dozen scriptwriting contests in the last two years, shares her experience on the wild rides of the competitive writing world and offers some advice from herself and others in *Step Right Up to the Screenwriting Competition* (page 36).

And for those searching for help with the actual writing process, Mary Sampson takes a look at the various products and ideas out there which were created to aid screenwriters, in *Tools for Scriptsmiths* (page 39). With input from writer, director, and scriptwriting seminar critic Brian Flemming, Sampson analyzes books, software, seminars, and old-fashioned good advice, all designed to get you past the blank page, over the hump of writer's block, and on to a finished script. Writers with finished scripts or ideas they are planning to pitch to production companies should take a look at Innes Smolansky's article on what copyright protects and how to activate it.

In other departments you will find staff writer Jason Guerrasio's interview with Bob Berney of Newmarket Films in this month's Distributor FAQ (page 23). Our Site Seeing columnist, Maya Churi, launches down the path of web navigation for storytellers with *Born Magazine.* In the technology department, Greg Gilpatrick explores the internet's dominate animation program, Macromedia's Flash. Macromedia recently disclosed the Flash standard to the world, allowing other companies to use Flash for new and exciting programs, several of which are specifically designed for moving-image makers who create content for the web. And our Doc Doctor, Fernanda Rossi, picks up the screenwriting theme by answering questions about scripting documentaries.

I hope you will find this issue informative and inspirational if you are a screenwriter. And if you are not, I hope it will give you insight into and empathy for the people whose scripts you work with and all the other writers in your life.

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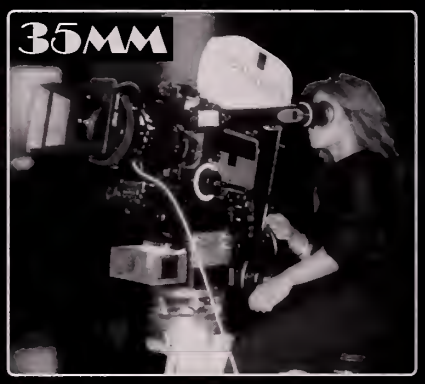

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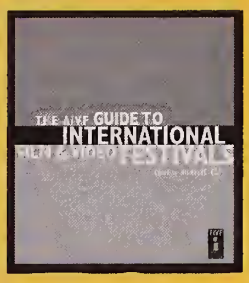

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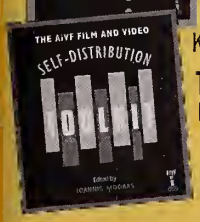

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Milena Zardo and Felipe Monaco are featured in Jorge Furtado's *O Sandwiche*.

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Short List Turns Ten

Award-winning short film showcase hits the decade mark

BY CHARLIE SWEITZER

THE SHORT LIST, THE EMMY AWARD-winning television series showcasing short films from around the world, celebrated the premiere of its tenth season on November 3. Produced by Jack Ofield, San Diego State University's filmmaker in residence, and veteran writer/producer Helen-Maria Erawan, this season boasts forty-three shorts—ranging from documentary to fiction to animation—from sixteen countries, all making their North American television debuts. "We have a lifelong love affair with the art of the short film," Ofield says, "the genre that was the birth of the motion picture and that, in the hands of gifted filmmakers, is a way of presenting stories and ideas from many cultures briefly and arrestingly."

Among this year's highlights are *Copy Shop*, a 2002 Academy Award nominee by Austria's Virgil Widrich, and Irish filmmaker Barry Dignam's *Dream Kitchen*, which won Best Short Film at Galway Film Fleadh in 1999. Other notable films this year include Brazilian filmmaker Jorge Furtado's *O Sandwiche*; Félice Dutertre's *Good Luck Mr. Grosky*, a French filmmaker's look at the famous message sent from the moon by Neil Armstrong to his childhood next-door neighbor; and *Day and an Arabian Night*, by Los Angeles filmmaker Francesca Galesi. "Francesca manages to reflect the loneliness of urban singles, corporate downsizing, the worldwide refugee problem, cultural clash, and simple human need for companionship all in one twelve-minute film," Ofield notes.

This year *The Short List* will feature more documentaries, including, for the first time, several Iranian pieces. Other prominent documentaries include Russian director Evgeny Solomin's *Katorga*, about a Siberian prisoner, and *The Life of Elves*, Janina Lapinskaite's piece about a Lithuanian woman and three dwarf children.

Major funding for *The Short List* is provided by Cox Communications and Eastman Kodak. Each year, the series awards five Kodak Product grants of film stock (worth $2,000 apiece) to the series' most exceptional filmmakers. Past recipients have included noted Norwegian filmmaker Pål Sletaune (for *Eating Out*) and Mexico's acclaimed experimental videomaker Ximena Cuevas (for *Corazon Sangrante*). The program is produced at the Production Center for Documentary and Drama at San Diego State University. Headed by Ofield, the Production Center houses the University's Master's Program in Media Production, and also produces a renowned documentary series for Cox Channel 4 about contemporary life in San Diego County.

Ofield, who started out directing social and anthropological documentaries for the National Film Board of Canada, first began assembling programs of short films for New York museums and television in the 1980's. In 1992, Ofield created *1st Frames*, an anthology series of short films by local emerging filmmakers. The show garnered a Corporation for Public

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Broadcasting Silver Award and three Emmys. In 1998 the program changed its name and scope, incorporating both established and new filmmakers from all over the world. Since then *The Short List* has won four consecutive Southwestern Emmys for Visual and Performing Arts, and gathered an estimated seven to ten million viewers. "Jack [Ofield] was very interested in making a series of snapshots of history," Erawan says, "these tiny portraits that suddenly grab you."

The Short List airs on Cox Communications cable channels, most PBS affiliates in the United States, and Movieola in Canada.

For more info, visit www.theshortlist.cc.

New Report on Media Arts

Study packages field's issues for public policy debate

BY ERNESTO MARTINEZ

RAND, THE NONPROFIT RESEARCH INSTITUTION by the beach (Santa Monica, California), has just published a new report on trends in independent media arts. The report, *From Celluloid to Cyberspace: the Media Arts and the Changing Arts World*, is a companion to a 2001 RAND study on the state of the performing arts, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts in the United States. Commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation, the study investigates the changes in the structure of the nonprofit media arts environment in the United States. The Rockefeller Foundation, noticing that media arts were not included in the previous study, saw an opportunity to partner with Pew and tap into the research already underway at RAND. "As a former mediamaker, I didn't want the arts in the twenty-first century not to include the twenty-first century art which is media," says Joan Shigekawa, associate director of the Creativity and Culture program at Rockefeller. "The media arts," Shigekawa continued, "will be a part of this overall ecology of information, research, and data about the arts in the twenty-first century."

The research findings conclude that changes in the structure of the media arts environment are focused on four key aspects of the field: audiences, media artists, media arts organizations, and funding. Technological developments are changing how independent media art is produced, distributed, and exhibited. An increase in numbers and diversity of media artists, along with the increase in potential and actual distribution channels, are creating a potentially productive period for media arts. Yet, given this seemingly ripe period, media arts exist precariously. The demand for audience attention is growing with increased demands on their leisure time. Changing finance models and funding policies are changing how organizations pursue money. Federal and state money is going to institutions based on an instrumental model of economic benefit that is limiting the discourse of the arts.

The study has produced a schematic that suggests pressure points within the field. The sketch suits the study's twofold intentions. First, to "provide a benchmark that can be used to measure progress in advancing the state of knowledge of the arts in years to come (as a policy document)." Second, to influence media arts cultural policy by informing funders, nonprofit media arts organizations, media artists, and most importantly government policymakers about the state of media arts in the US.

Much of the information detailed in the study, such as the decreasing funds and increasing distribution alternatives for media arts, may not be new to most artists who experience the daily realities documented in the RAND study. The document is designed to help bridge the gap between policymakers who require comprehensive studies, and mediamakers who need the tools to be able present their field as a social policy concern.

"The environment of arts in America is changing in some very major ways," explains Kevin F. McCarthy, coauthor of the study. "It's going to change in some ways that are going to affect you [media artists] very directly, and because those decisions are being made not by you but by others, making it all the more important that, A) you find out what is going on . . . and, B) you don't just let it happen to you but you do something to intervene."

Ernesto Martinez is a doctoral candidate at UCLA's Department of Film, Television and Digital Media. He is focusing on independent media arts in the US.

Our Shrinking Public Domain

US Supreme Court mulls copyright extension law

BY CHARLIE SWEITZER

THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE LATEST attempt by Congress to extend the length of copyright is currently under review by the US Supreme Court. Stanford law professor Lawrence Lessig recently argued before the court that the 1998 Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act, which lengthened copyright protection by twenty years, is one of a series of Congressional acts which infringe on the rights of the public.

Ninety-nine percent of the books whose copyrights were extended are out of print. Similarly, the majority of the film copyrights affected by the 1998 act are not only out of circulation but also decaying or otherwise damaged. Many fear these films will be neither preserved nor restored if they are not allowed to pass into the public domain.

Over the past forty years, Congress has lengthened copyrights eleven times. Copyrights currently last ninety-five years for works created for corporations, and seventy-five years after the death of the holder for works created by individuals. The United States Constitution grants "limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries." The first American copyright law interpreted "limited Times" as fourteen years.

On May 20, 2002, Eric Eldred, who runs www.eldritchpress.org, a website which offers free texts of literature in the public domain, and others filed suit against the attorney general.

On October 8, Lessig addressed the Supreme Court on behalf of the plaintiffs. "[I]f this Court does not adopt a reading of the form we've offered, then there is no limit to the ability of Congress to extend subsisting terms," Lessig said. "We are asserting . . . that the public domain be permitted as a source for cultivating work about culture without unnecessary legal restriction."

A ruling is expected next spring.

Charlie Sweitzer is an intern at The Independent *and also works for Channel 13 in New York City.*

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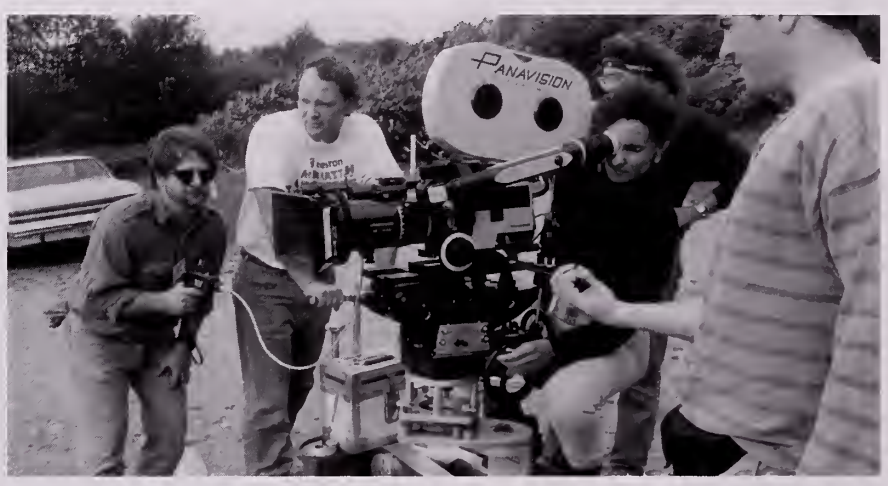

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The Kundalini Boys

Digvijay Singh, Dileep Rathore, Emmanuel Pappas

BY ANGEL VELASCO SHAW

FIVE YEARS AGO A SHORT NEWSPAPER article about a girl just entering puberty who was dedicated to a Hindu temple by her family and, as part of the ceremony was ritually raped, caught the eye of aspiring filmmaker Digvijay Singh. Incensed by this easy–to-miss article the twenty-four-year-old assistant director in Bombay vowed to bring this concealed practice, banned and denied by the Indian government, onto celluloid. "I just couldn't believe something like that still went on, and that it goes on in my own country," explains Singh, who at first hoped the newspaper was reporting an isolated incident. He soon found out that an estimated 5,000 to 15,000 girls endure similar rituals, although the names and details differ from region to region. "[I had this] desire to combine these various practices and tell a fictitious story rather than a documentary, because for me the thing that grabs me the most about any of these practices is what a brutal end to childhood it is." The resulting film, *Maya*, is now making waves on the international festival circuit but is banned in India.

With *Maya* as their first project, Singh and collaborators Dileep Rathore and Emmanuel Pappas formed Kundalini Pictures, a unique familial creative and business partnership. Rathore, age thirty-six, the big brother, brings experience in the Bombay film industry as well as in the independent scene in Los Angeles. Singh fills the role of the middle brother, and Pappas, twenty-seven, a Greek Australian, rounds out the trio as the younger brother. Singh and Pappas met at an intensive four-month producers' workshop in UCLA, and Rathore is Singh's cousin.

Dileep Singh Rathore and Emmanuel Pappas on location during the filming of *Maya*.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KUNDALINI PICTURES

Kundalini Pictures is in many ways is a studio without the Hollywood mentality. As individuals who each wear several hats within their company, the three partners' camaraderie is built upon their mutual respect for each other's ideas and creative processes. Singh is a director/writer and an integral part of decisions about which projects go into production. Rathore and Pappas are producer/writers who often also collaborate on scriptwriting. And as producers, they think about the logistics of production, financing, and distribution.

Digvijay Singh goofs off with Nitya Shetty during the filming of *Maya*.

Not surprisingly, *Maya* was a difficult film to raise money for. Because the topic is taboo in India, the partners looked outside the country for financial backing, but this often meant approaching people who did not understand the film or the trio's ideas for it. One potential LA investor's response to the pitch was: "It's a very interesting story, but if you could put a white character in there, then I'm sure it could be easier to put it together … maybe you could have someone, a journalist from the United States backpacking in India to find himself or herself, who chances upon this," Singh remembers. In the end, *Maya* received its funding from a generous investor from Silicon Valley who understood and respected the Kundalini founders' vision.

The partners are interested in working with talent, as well as financiers, from all over the world, blending the diverse genres, peoples, and experiences that they have been influenced by while working in India, France, the UK, and the US. Their term for this mixture of people, places, and ideas on celluloid is "independent global cinema," an idea that is still in the burgeoning stages of imagining moving image art that is borderless, yet carefully thought through by artists and businessmen. This cinema is neither art house nor popular, but rather films that can be seen anywhere by anybody in theaters, on the internet, and on DVD's, without hierarchical acceptance or high profit-making percentages. A model where artistic freedom is retained, and the knowledge of what is at stake and for whom, is essential.

Distinguishing the fine line between a more commercial global cinema and globalization, where well-known studios and their subsidiaries have offices strategically placed in cities worldwide, is essential to the Kundalini Boys' own vision for an independent global cinema.

Maya is the first piece of this expanding world vision. While it has screened at many of the A-list film festivals—Cannes Film Market, Montreal, Toronto, among others—distributors have shied away. The film recently got picked up by Roxie Cinemas and Distributions for a limited run in San Francisco, and based on this may get a run nationwide. More inspired by the challenges of hard-to-handle content than daunted by the resistance of larger distributors, Kundalini Pictures currently has three feature films in development—a comedy thriller, a black comedy, and a drama.

Angel Velasco Shaw is the acting executive director of Asian CineVision and producer of the Asian American International Film Festival, where Digvijay Singh received the Remy Martin Emerging Artist Award. Shaw is a film/video maker and adjunct professor in the Asian/Pacific/American Studies Program at NYU.

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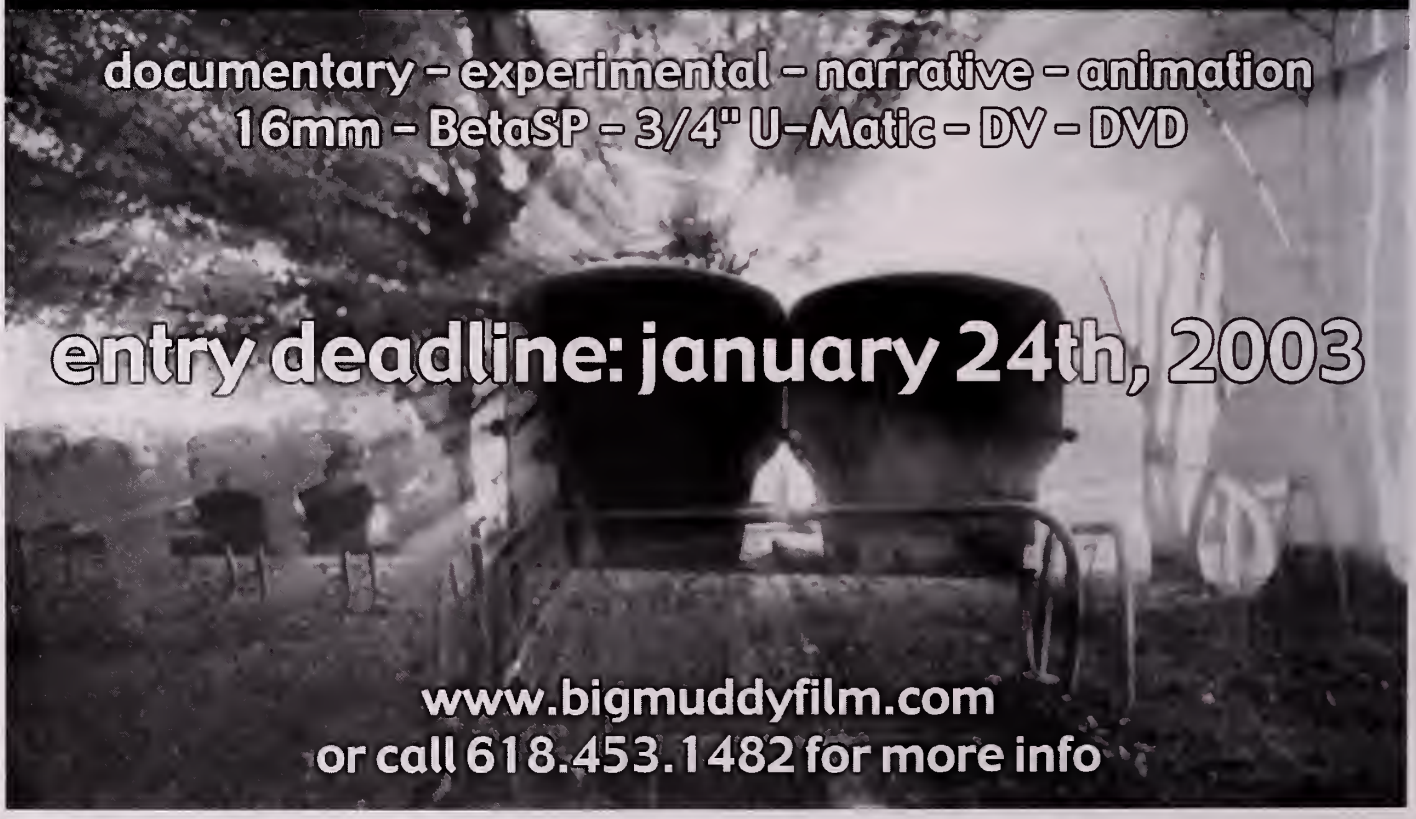

Jim Taylor

Basking in the success of collaboration

BY JASON GUERRASIO

FINDING TWO PEOPLE WHO CAN WORK together without letting their egos get in the way is like finding a needle in a haystack. But for the past ten years, Jim Taylor and Alexander Payne have not only worked on every film together, they've written their scripts using the same computer, at the same time. How do they do it without killing one another? For Taylor the answer is simple: "Basically we're able to put our egos aside when we're writing."

With Payne at the helm as director and co-writer, the duo have created a collaboration that, for a screenwriter, is very beneficial. "My advantage is that I work with a director. In a development situation, it gives [the screenwriter] a really strong voice," Taylor says. "If you're just a screenwriter without that when you go into meetings, you're going to have a much more difficult time."

Taylor first met Payne ten years ago, when he was broke, in debt, and looking for a place to live in LA. This was the only time the collaborators would be on the same coast. After working on a few shorts together—Taylor calls them, "the test"—they wrote their first feature-length script, *Citizen Ruth*, while roommates. Taylor soon left to hone his skills behind the camera at NYU's film school. He got the money to pay off his debts by going on *Wheel of Fortune*. "Oddly enough, I won exactly as much money as I was in debt," Taylor remembers. "I was out of debt for about two days, and then I went to NYU and got $100,000 in debt."

Screenwriter Jim Taylor has successfully collaborated for years with Alexander Payne, creating *Citizen Ruth*, *Election*, and *About Schmidt*.

Though they reside on different coasts, Taylor and Payne still reunite to write scripts, using two keyboards plugged into the same computer. They usually rotate travel, spending a couple of weeks in the other's company to write. "We write a certain kind of stuff that has a lot of comedy to it, so it helps because you get instant feedback," says Taylor.

Their satiric humor soon found a loyal audience with the release of their second film, *Election*, in 1999. Adapted from the novel by Tom Perrotta, the film spring-boarded Reese Witherspoon as a recognizable face and brought a newfound credibility to former teen star Matthew Broderick. Taylor and Payne's dry comedy, using the characters' pain and uncomfortable situations to evoke pity and laughter, was rewarded with an Independent Spirit Award and an Oscar nomination for *Election*'s screenplay. Though Taylor sometimes finds it hard to enjoy the acclaim. "I have trouble taking credit for things, but I'm proud of our movies."

In their latest film, *About Schmidt*, Taylor and Payne once again use pain to inflict comedy. Returning to the theme from *Election*, where a high school girl turns a teacher's life into a living hell, *About Schmidt* shows how one man is his own hell. The idea to do a film of the Louis Begley novel came to the two after the realization that Payne had written a screenplay (which had been sitting in his drawer for over ten years) that was similar to Begley's book. "Alexander always had an interest in somebody retiring," Taylor says. "He had written a script many years ago, and when this book came along he got himself attached to it." The film version of *Schmidt* has few similarities to the novel—the same is true of *Election*. Taylor sees the books as a starting point for ideas. "On *Election* we pretty much lifted the story and characters right out [of the book] and wrote a lot of new dialogue," says Taylor. "*About Schmidt* we ended up melding with this other story, so it's almost unrecognizable except for certain story elements. It's nice to start with a bunch of characters in a story rather than starting with a blank page."

But success raises the ante, and for these two the higher stakes means making their own mark. Taylor, who shot second unit footage on *Election* and a few shorts at NYU, is currently working a script that he intends to direct himself. But he admits writing is not as much fun alone as it is when he has Payne sitting next to him. "When I write on my own, I write incredibly slowly," Taylor says. "I just don't like it. It gets worse after you've won awards. Then you think, 'Oh shit, everybody thinks I'm talented,' [then] I can't write the smallest little thing."

Dermot Mulroney, Hope Davis, and Jack Nicholson star in *About Schmidt*.

Taylor says it has become a lot harder to find time for them to sit down and write. "Life has definitely gotten more frustrating and complicated to carve out time to work together," he says. "But a lot of it has to do with doing publicity for the movie having to read submissions, and meetin I wish Alexander had moved to New York. There are far less meetings in New York than in LA."

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

PHOTOS: LEFT, COURTESY OF JIM TAYLOR; RIGHT, CLAUDETTE BARIUS/NEW LINE PRODUCTIONS

FIELD REPORT

The Triangle

Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, North Carolina

BY FRANCESCA TALENTI

LOCATED IN THE HEART OF NORTH CAROLINA, THE TRIANGLE IS AN AREA DEFINED BY the cities at its three points (Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh) and the universities within it (the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Duke University, and North Carolina State). Each point of the Triangle is about half an hour away from the others.

In recent years other cities in the state, such as Wilmington (on the coast, east of the Triangle) and Asheville (in the mountains west of the Triangle), have become popular locations for Hollywood films. These towns are far more film industry dependent than the Triangle, because the studio spaces and rental houses need sustained business. But in the Triangle, with its heavy concentration of universities, the film community is firmly staking out indie ground with screening series, film festivals, and production projects.

A/V Geek Skip Elsheimer is keeper of the countless educational films you slept through in grade school.

Resources

The Empowerment Project

Shortly after Barbara Trent and David Kasper won an Oscar for the film *The Panama Deception*, they moved their headquarters from Santa Monica, California, to Chapel Hill. In 1984, Trent and Kasper cofounded the Empowerment Project.

"Its purpose is to work towards democratizing access to the media, and to provide the resources necessary to put the power of media in the hands of individuals and organizations working to further important human purposes," according to the organization's website. True to its mission, the Empowerment Project provides low-cost training and access to video and computer facilities in Chapel Hill.

Internships with the Empowerment Project offer the opportunity to have a comprehensive documentary production experience. Interns come from all over the world and work in research, grantwriting, community organizing, production, or postproduction.

Current projects include: *A Day of Resistance*, a series of pieces dealing with community reaction in New York's Union Square following September 11, many calling for peace, not simply retribution; *Is War the Answer?* which covers public outcry against US aggression in the Mideast; *Iraq*, a look at the effects of sanctions; *Maud Gatewood: Out of the South*, a biographical profile of the North Carolina artist; and *The Final Gift*, a documentary which looks at the aging process in the US, with the intention of improving the way our culture deals with the elderly.

Empowerment Project producer Barbara Trent (right) interviews activist Laura Flanders at a New York anti-war rally in the documentary *A Day of Resistance*.

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Freewater Productions

Freewater Productions is dedicated to the production of short Super 8 and 16mm films. A series of training workshops, access to equipment, and small filmmaking grants ranging from $1,000 to $2,500 make their goal a reality.

This student-run cooperative is housed at Duke University and funded by student activities fees, but is not affiliated with any university academic department. It is also open to members of the community at large, in addition to students. Anyone can learn about and play a part in any aspect of the filmmaking process. Their web page says it best: "Freewater Productions. Guerilla cinema with a vengeance."

Duke University, Durham
www.duke.edu/web/duu; click "committees," then "Freewater Productions"
ilinx@duke.edu

The Carolina Production Guild

Similar to Freewater Productions, the Carolina Production Guild is student-run and is open to all members of the community. Making its home at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Guild is also funded by student activities fees from the university. The guild offers workshops and loans of 16mm

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, LEFT, COURTESY OF THE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT; RIGHT AND FACING PAGE, SKIP ELSHEIMER

film equipment, a Final-Cut Pro system, and provides one production grant ($1,000 to $2,000) a semester to the screenplay which wins a majority of the members' vote. The Carolina Production Guild then produces that film, and all members are welcome to take a part in the production process.

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
www.unc.edu/depts/comm;
click on "Carolina Production Guild"
amwilson@email.unc.edu

The Center for Documentary Studies

Founded in 1989, the Center for Documentary Studies "connects the arts and humanities to fieldwork, drawing upon photography, filmmaking, oral history, folklore, and writing as catalysts for education and change," according to a Duke News Service press release. With respect to film and video work, the center is a resource for area university students as a cosponsor for courses at Duke University. Through the Duke Continuing Education program, anyone from the local community can receive a certificate in documentary studies.

The center also offers the "Literacy Through Photography" program, which trains teachers and children from the Durham area in the use of cameras and the written word. Other projects include "Behind the Veil: Documenting African American Life in the Jim Crow South," a major historical research project which has gathered over 1,000 oral history interviews and photographs.

Lyndhurst House,
1317 West Pettigrew St., Durham
http://cds.aas.duke.edu
docstudies@duke.edu

Tar Heel Films

This website is a great regional resource. You can find information regarding area festivals, screenings, and independent workshops. Also, all manner of film productions, ranging from industrials to independents to commercials, post their actor and crew needs on this site.

www.tarheelfilms.com

Screening Series

A/V Geeks

The A/V Geek was the kid in school (usually a boy) who got the hall pass so he could go get the audio-visual equipment for the class. Not only did he pick it up from the basement, he also always managed to get it running, no matter how old or recalcitrant the projector was.

Now A/V geeks have their own screening series to call home.

Skip Elsheimer has turned this high school calling into an art. He has purchased, rescued, and collected more than 8,000 16mm educational films, and in so doing has salvaged a genre that otherwise might have literally found its end in a dumpster. To remind us of the pain and pleasure we all found in the process of being indoctrinated into the educational culture, Skip curates

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www.aivf.org

Filmmaker Nilesh Patel accepts the Jury Award for Best Documentary Short (*A Love Supreme*) at the 2002 Full Frame Documentary Festival. Presenting the award are Bob Mastronardi, center, and jury chairman Kent Jones.

shows with titles like *Those Naughty Druggies*, or *Women—Then and NOW*. A/V Geeks shows will make you laugh and make you cry several times a month. Most screenings occur in the Triangle, but they have also been shown outside the area, including at the Whitney Museum in New York.

check local listings or website for locations
www.avgeeks.com
skip@avgeeks.com

Hi Mom! is a Chapel Hill film festival with attitude.

Flicker

Every two months, this screening series presents any and all Super 8 and 16mm projects that originated on film and are less than fifteen minutes long. Jen Ashlock, current head of Flicker, says, "I don't do much. It's mostly the crowd and the filmmakers that do the storytelling." Flicker provides a social, informal setting to view films, drink beer, eat cookies, swap ideas, and draw inspiration.

This works. Flicker chapters have sprouted all over the country, often at the instigation of Chapel Hill Flicker attendees who have moved elsewhere. Asheville, Athens, Austin, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Richmond, and New York now all host Flicker screenings.

Cat's Cradle, 300 E. Main St., Carrboro
www.chapel-hill.nc.us/flicker
flicker@ipass.net

Glitter Films

Flicker's equivalent in Raleigh, Glitter Films takes place in a bar and is even more low-key. Twice a month, Russell Walls and Kirk Adam screen films made with little to no budgets. "Someone right now is probably putting together a small-screen classic in their bedroom or basement. Glitter Films plans to keep supporting the art of short filmmaking," they say. At the end of one screening, Walls offered his

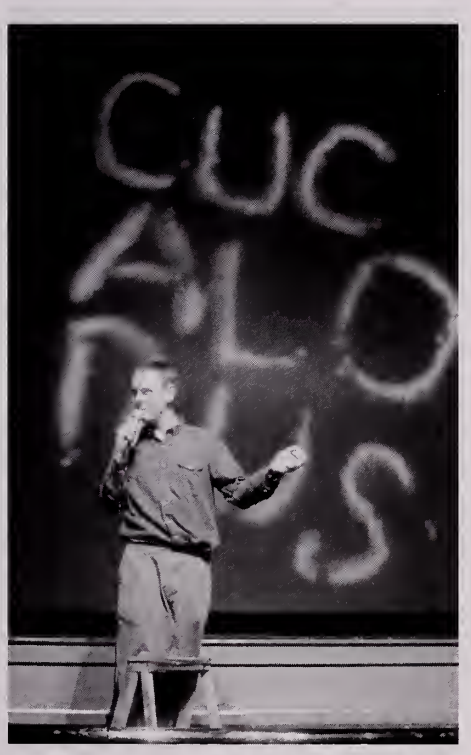
PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, TOP, COURTESY OF FULL FRAME DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL, BOTTOM, HI MOM! FILM FESTIVAL; FACING PAGE, CUCALORUS FILM FESTIVAL

Super 8 camera to anyone interested in picking it up.

KINGS Bar, 424 S. McDowell St., Raleigh
http://glitterfilms.tripod.com
(note: no "www")
glitterfilms@mindspring.com

North Carolina Visions

Local PBS station UNC-TV hosts an independent film series called "North Carolina Visions." Starting in September, the series showcases work by North Carolina independent filmmakers and runs for six consecutive Saturdays at 11:00 p.m. The station broadcasts throughout the state, but is based in the Research Triangle Park (a triangle inside the Triangle).



Cucalorus top man Dan Brawley emcees a gala event.

The submission deadline is mid-May. This season, seventeen of the fifty-six films submitted were selected. You or your talent must be from or living in North Carolina in order to submit. Documentary, fiction, experimental, and all other genres are welcome.

www.unctv.org/ncvisions

Festivals

Full Frame Documentary Festival

Formerly known as the Double-Take Film Festival, Full Frame is one of the country's premier documentary film festivals. It is also one of five qualifying festivals for the Academy Awards Short Documentary category. Only five years old, this festival nonetheless boasts a board that includes D.A. Pennebaker, Barbara Kopple, Ross McElwee, and Ken Burns.

Over 100 films are screened each April at the Carolina Theater, a newly renovated film and theater complex which functions as a multiscreen art house theater the rest of the year. The high-end space draws big crowds and makes documentarians feel grand.

www.fullframefest.org
The Carolina Theater,
309 Morgan St., Durham
ddff@duke.edu; (919) 660-3699

Hi Mom! Film Festival

At the other end of the festival spectrum is the Hi Mom! Film Festival: short films by people "with deep thoughts and shallow pockets." Three days of music, movies, flaming trophies, and pancakes in the shape of your initials—all of it in April. Last year special guest Albert Maysles showed some of his films.

The festival offers $2,000 in prize money and charges no entry fees. No wonder organizers say, "Hi Mom! loves you more than any festival EVER could."

various indoor and outdoor venues in
Chapel Hill and Carrboro
www.himomfilmfest.org
himomfilmfest@yahoo.com

Cucalorus Film Festival

This May festival is actually outside the Triangle, in Wilmington, a few hours east. The noncompetitive event provides a relaxed atmosphere that celebrates the diversity of voices in independent film of all forms. One of my all-time favorite festival venues is the City Stage Theater. It's on the top floor of a high-rise, and adjoins a bar and a large terrace where you can watch the sun set over the nearby river and chat with other filmmakers as you sip your drink.

seven venues in Wilmington
www.cucalorus.org
info@cucalorus.org

Francesca Talenti is an independent filmmaker and a professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

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Work to Watch For

BY JASON GUERRASIO

Down and Out with the Dolls
(Indican Pictures, Dec. 27)
Dir. Kurt Voss
From the Sex Pistols to Public Image, Ltd., director Kurt Voss has always loved punk rock. *Down and Out with the Dolls*, his new project with a script inspired by his girlfriend, former punk rocker Nalini DD Cheriel, combines his two passions: punk and film. "[DD] was in some girl bands in Seattle and Portland in the mid-nineties," Voss says. "The movie grew out of her telling me funny anecdotes."

With Cheriel's help, Voss wrote and directed this dark comedy about the rise and fall of a fictitious all-girl punk band, Paper Dolls. Throughout the film, the Dolls battle the male-dominated music business in hopes of making it big, even if it means backstabbing each other

This isn't a glam rock, eye candy film. Voss and Cheriel's film looks through the realistic eyes of young punk rockers, which meant the beautiful people were

Nicole Barrett, Nicole Poledouris, Kinnie Starr, and Melody Moore jam in *Down and Out With the Dolls*

out. "It was important for us not to do a *Coyote Ugly* (a.k.a. cast drop-dead gorgeous girls to play the leads)," Voss says.

THEATRICAL

Love Liza
(Sony Pictures Classics, Dec. 30)
Dir. Todd Louiso
After the sudden loss of his wife, Wilson (Philip Seymour Hoffman) copes with the pain by sniffing gas fumes and playing with remote control planes. The film follows Wilson through his sometimes hilarious journey to figure out what went wrong. While lost in a miasma of hazy self-pity, his mother-in-law (Kathy Bates) tries frantically to get him back on track.

The Pianist
(Focus, Dec. 27)
Dir. Roman Polanski
After a three-year absence, director Roman Polanski returns with his most personal film. This moving story chronicles the journey of Polish Jewish pianist Wladyslaw Szpilman (played remarkably by Adrian Brody) during World War II. Separated from his family, Szpilman survives with the help of revolutionaries and another unlikely source. *The Pianist* received the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 2002.

The Outskirts
(Facets; for dates and locations, contact theatrical@facets.org)
Dir. Peter Lutsik
Four Russian villagers' lives are turned upside down when an oil well is built on their farm and they realize the government is trying to take over their land. Determined to hunt down the people involved, they drift across the continent to find answers. Using a mixture of comedy and drama, Ukraine filmmaker Peter Lutsik creates a visually stunning film.

TELEVISION

Uncle Saddam
(Cinemax, Nov. 26)
Dir. Joel Soler
Some documentarians strive to explain social or political issues, while others are thrill seekers, searching for that next high. Case in point: French filmmaker Joel Soler. Two years ago, Soler spent a month and a half gaining the trust of and traveling with Saddam Hussein's entourage.

In *Uncle Saddam*, Soler exposes the folly of this modern-day dictator in his own backyard. Saddam is shown as a charismatic leader who is also extremely sensitive to body odor, conscience of his weight, and never eats anything until his assistant tastes it. His pleasures are: himself. He has rebuilt the city of Babylon (each hundredth brick bears his name) and is overseeing the construction of the world's largest mosque (part of the design is based on his thumbprint). In his spare time, he goes fishing with grenades.

Soler was threatened several times

Joel Soler's *Uncle Saddam* offers a look inside the household of Iraq's ruler.

while shooting the film and was eventually told to leave the country. "I'm still wondering if I'm going to survive," says Soler. When the French citizen returned to Los Angeles, he found his home vandalized and a death threat waiting for him telling him to destroy the footage he shot in Baghdad. The FBI is currently investigating the incident.

Graduating Peter
(HBO, check local listings)
Dir. Gerardine Wurzburg
Revisiting Peter Gwaxdauskas, the subject of Gerardine Wurzburg's 1992 documentary *Educating Peter*, we find the young man years later on the verge of graduating high school. Gwaxdauskas was the first child with Down's syndrome included in the Virginia public school system.

Daughter From Danang
(ITVS, check local listings)
Dir. Gail Dolgin & Vicente Franco
As the Vietnam War ended, thousands of Vietnamese orphans were brought to the United States as part of "Operation Babylift." This doc tells the touching story of one child who reunites with her Vietnamese mother twenty-two years later. During the reunion, cultural differences soon put a damper on the festivities and ultimately on the new relationship.

The Main Stream
(PBS, Dec. 17)
Dir. Roger Weisberg
Humorist Roy Blount Jr. travels the mighty Mississippi River to examine what has become of American's mainstream. Like Mark Twain before him—but traveling on dirtier water—Blount meets a cast of unforgettable characters, including a group of hippies who have lived on the river since the sixties, and a fisherman trying to hold onto the family business.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, LEFT, COURTESY WHITEHOUSE PRODUCTIONS, RIGHT, AP WORLDWIDE PHOTOS; FACING PAGE ELISABETH LAHTI

www.bornmagazine.org

New Paths in Storytelling

Navigating your way through the web story

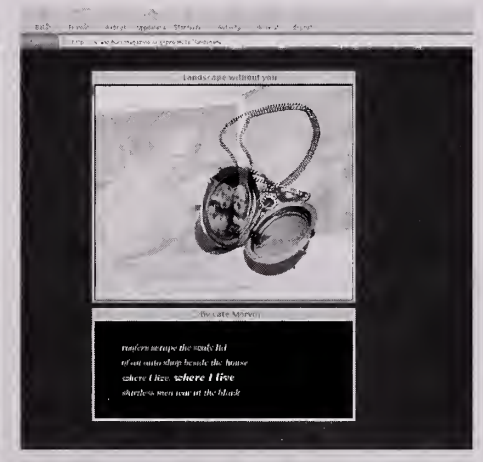
BY MAYA CHURI

WHEN YOU BEGIN READING A BOOK, IT IS A given that if you start on page one and read each successive page you will eventually get to the end of the story. The same goes for watching a film or a play. We sit. We watch. We leave. From childhood we are trained that there is a known route that will get us to the end of stories. Presented in these formats, stories are easy to navigate through. The only thing hindering our voyage is our mind; are we paying attention or are we sleeping? But online, stories do not always follow the course that we are accustomed to, and we must stay alert if we are to move forward. In web stories your well-worn directional knowledge no longer takes you through the story. Each time you begin a new story, you must find the starting point, chart a new path, then head out onto unstable waters.

Founded in 1997, *Born Magazine* is a literary venue that gives writers and artists an opportunity to tell stories online by taking full advantage of everything the technology has to offer. "We publish poetry and short prose as well as textual and other experiments in storytelling and narrative structures created in collaboration with an interactive artist. We are dedicated to fostering experimentation in this new medium, and nurturing literary arts on the web in a way that can only exist on the web," states Anmarie Trimble, *Born*'s editor. "Original projects are brought to life every three months, created by a continually evolving community of poets, writers, interactive artists, programmers, photographers, and musicians." Focusing on short pieces that, according to Trimble, "enhance the reader's experience of the poem or prose," the site is full of diverse and thought provoking interpretations of storytelling by interactive artists and graphic designers.

"We have several stories that illustrate how our artists' experimentation with navigation transform the storytelling and reading experience," Trimble states. A good example of that is *The Itch*. The poem, written by Shirley Stephenson, is interpreted for *Born* by Bryce Nihill. In the web interpretation, Nihill made it impossible for viewers to read the poem without using the mouse to scratch an image of a red, swollen, almost infected body part that looks as though it has been rubbed raw. As you scratch, the words of the poem appear: "Don't scratch, He said. Don't even say you scratched." Unfortunately, by the time you read that line, it's too late. *The Itch* uses the poem's metaphor as its inspiration for navigation; the reader must literally enact the poem's metaphor in order to read the poem. The navigation becomes inseparable from the story," Trimble points out.

Damion Tripplett, whose *Born* project, *Remote Medical Services*, takes us through the pharmacological neurosis of everyday life, says that, "I often imagine [navigation] primarily as the type of pause that you would have in turning the page of a book. Yet, with some programming you can create more dynamic facets to your content, (introducing cause-and-effect transitions, animation, etc.). It's the balance of navigation and content that I'm always drawn to when it comes to online content. I think that on sites such as *Born Magazine* you should push the boundaries of navigation towards perhaps unfamiliar territory, but always toward the enhancement of your content."



Elisabeth Lahti's *Landscape Without You* moves forward with changing words and images.

In online storytelling, navigation and interactivity, while interrelated, are not the same. In an e-book, let's say, navigation is not particularly important. It follows the same formula as reading the bound pages of a book—when you get to the end of one page, turn or "click" to the next. But for a true online story, navigation can alter how a story is told. It can take you in multiple directions, it can manipulate your interpretation, and most of all, it allows you to apply your own structure to a story. "There is a human desire in many of us to want to figure things out, to discern and decipher," Tripplett notes. "Navigation can pique the level of interest to keep exploring or coming back to a story."

The interactivity of the story, in the best examples, is determined by how the

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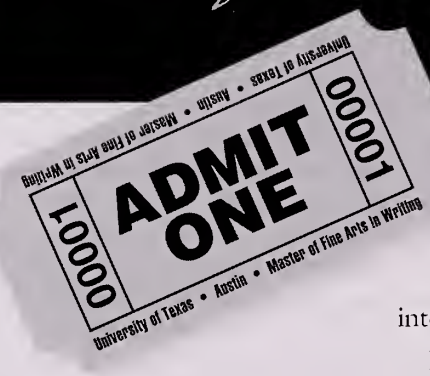

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Entry Forms: Download at www.magfilmfest.com or write to: Ron Tibbett, Festival Director 2269 Waverly Drive West Point, MS 39773 Phone: (662) 494-5836 Fax: (662) 494-9900 email: ronchar@ebicom.net

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creator wants the viewer to navigate through the plot. For artists working online, determining the extent to which an audience interacts with the story is a complex task. Just how exactly will the viewer navigate through, and how interactive will they need or want it to be? Elisabeth Lahti, creative director and president at the Stockholm-based company Strange Ways, which produced the *Born* project entitled *Landscape Without You*, points out that "Since navigation in online storytelling differs from traditional storytelling, it can make life difficult for the one trying to follow the story. We all agree how to read a book or look at a movie, but navigation online isn't standardized in the same way. This makes storytelling online a bit difficult but also challenging."

It is important for an online storyteller to realize that utilizing navigational facets of the web for a story can hinder the viewing process. Many times, too much navigational interactivity can become frustrating for the user who prefers sitting back and letting the story just happen, especially if the interactivity is not bound to the content. "It can be a detriment if you get too clever and lose your audience. It's difficult not to get caught up in the bells and whistles of some of these facets and lose sight of your intent/content," Tripplett points out.

Lahti stresses, "When you are not sure how a reader is going to navigate through your story, you have to think in a different way. Instead of just telling something from the beginning to the end, you have to try to make the story evolve depending on how the reader reacts. This can mean that there are no definitive ends or beginnings."

As a viewer, when starting a story online where the beginning is not apparent and the end is completely out of sight, you must pay close attention to the signs and signals the creators have put on the screen. Both the audience and the creators have to look beyond the traditional storytelling formats and open their minds to a new kind of narrative. So, as you set out to view a web story, whether at *Born Magazine* or another site, don't forget to explore the territory, chart your course and be patient as you navigate towards the artificial horizon.

www.bornmagazine.org

Maya Churi is a writer and filmmaker. She is currently working on a web narrative about a gated community in Texas.

Newmarket Films

JASON GUERRASIO INTERVIEWS BOB BERNEY

Why was Newmarket Films created?
Will Tyrer and Chris Ball [co-presidents of Newmarket Capital Group] had produced and financed *Memento*. I met them when they had difficulty getting a successful deal to distribute the film. I came in, at that point, undertaking it as a one-off project and released *Memento* under the Newmarket Films banner. It was a big hit and they were excited about it. Then it just took them a while to decide to fully go into distribution. So recently I left IFC Films and partnered up with Will and Chris to do a full theatrical distribution company.

What's the difference between Newmarket Capital Group and Newmarket Films?
Newmarket Films is a theatrical distribution company; it was born out of the financing company Newmarket Capital Group. Newmarket Capital Group has been around for fourteen years and has financed around eighty films—everything from studio to independent to art films.

What's the mission of Newmarket Films?
[To distribute] quality films of any genre that we believe in, that we have [both] an emotional attachment and a business attachment to.

How is Newmarket different from other independent distributors?
I think the different thing about Newmarket is it has a real business and financing background. We're approaching it in the right way, in that we're blending art and commerce. We also realize that partnerships are great with agents and studios, video companies, and particularly HBO—who are partnering up with Newmarket Films to release *Real Women Have Curves*—they give us a strength and particularly help in starting our company. I think it's important for us to start out in an aggressive manner, to show exhibitors and other producers that we'll really get behind [a film] and push it hard. I think that we're in a position to take advantage of that, based on both Newmarket's success with *Memento* and the films I've worked on at IFC [*Y Tu Mama Tambien*, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*]. So we've got a nice position in the marketplace with exhibitors.

What types of films are you seeking?
We want to find something like *Memento*, [which] had genre elements that enabled it to broaden out and cross over. We'd love to be able to find films that we can aggressively release in kind of a crossover manner.

How many projects will you acquire per year, and at what stage should filmmakers approach you?
We hope to gear up to do ten or twelve films a year. We will start out mainly acquiring completed films.

What festivals do you look at?
We try to cover everything. Obviously Sundance, Cannes, Toronto, but also I normally go to Telluride. Will and Chris are able to cover some of the meetings, screenings, and premieres in London. We split up Seattle, Chicago, South by Southwest; somebody will track all those festivals, probably some of the European ones as well.

How do you work with the filmmaker during the distribution process?
I'm always very inclusive and believe the marketing, particularly for independent films, kind of comes organically out of the writer and director knowing the story and what audience they're going to reach. I try to work with the filmmakers to use the assets that they've brought to the production to ultimately sell the film. In doing that, I try to establish a sort of relationship that hopefully can be ongoing on another project. I think it's important to try to have a continuity of filmmakers you're working with. You can tell pretty quickly if they really want to be involved, and if they are it's usually productive. I think that sometimes if a filmmaker is superficial and doesn't want to get down and do the work, it's better off if they aren't involved. It depends on the individual.

Brittany Murphy plays Nikki in Jonas Akerlund's *Spun*.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SPUN INC.

What's rewarding about distribution?
I think that you're trying to get filmmakers

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America Ferrera plays Ana, a young Latina struggling with family and her future in Patricia Cardoso's *Real Women Have Curves*

seen or films out that are risky and would be left behind perhaps by the major studios, so you get a real sense of satisfaction to deliver a message or an experience to an audience. Films like *Greek Wedding*, *Y Tu Mama*, *Monsoon Wedding*, and *Memento* have shown that it's potentially a really good business, and there is an upside: [They'll help to] make a lot of other films successful. It's that blend of doing something you believe in and having fun.

What are some of the issues concerning Newmarket?

Other than the staggering logistics of just starting up, it's looking forward to putting the plan in action.

Is there extra pressure after the success you've had with past films, which included *Memento*, *Y Tu Mama Tambien*, and *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*?

There is, because *Greek Wedding* was such a wild success. The pressure's on myself. I feel it from everybody. We all really want the first one to work coming right after *Greek Wedding*. With *Real Women Have Curves*, I'm trying to manage the expectations. Independent films are so difficult. It takes so much work to get to even a modest success like a couple million. Most films don't make that. I try to keep that in perspective and hope that if we stick to our business plans and stick to our instincts about movies, we'll win out on some films. If we pick good films that have a certain amount of quality, they'll have their own level of success, whether critically or box office wise.

Bob Berney – President

Newmarket Films
1180 6th Ave., 14th Fl.
New York, NY 12010
(212) 899-5623

The Slate:

Real Women Have Curves, dir. Patricia Cardoso (in theaters now)

Open Hearts, dir. Susanne Bier (2/03)

Spun, dir. Jonas Akerlund (3/03)

Lilya 4-Ever, dir. Lukas Moodysson (4/03)

Whale Rider, dir. Niki Caro (6/03)

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, ABOVE, AND FACING PAGE, COURTESY OF NICOLA GOODE/HBO-NEWMARKET FILMS; BOTTOM, IFC FILMS

Will you consider it a failure if the first couple films don't get critical or box-office acclaim?
No. You can't do that. You really have to look at it from a relative space. *Real Women Have Curves* is a beautiful film, but it's a very small film that needs to have word-of-mouth and a groundswell push it up. I know very well how difficult that is

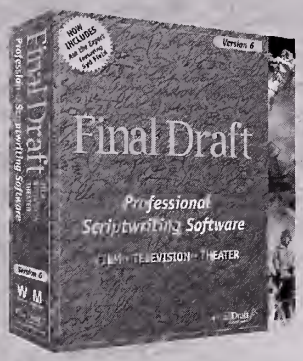
Director Patricia Cardoso on the set of *Real Women Have Curves*.

and how lucky I've been in the past with the films. I'm not counting on it, but I have a lot of faith in the movie.

What advice would you give to filmmakers who are looking for distribution?
You have to think it through before you commit to throwing [a film] into a festival. You have to do a lot of research about distribution, festivals, marketing, grosses, who's worked with who before. It's [about] just doing the homework before you make that initial decision. There are so many films that don't find a way out [to theaters] that probably deserve to [be distributed]. How do you think your film can be marketed? What venues are there? I think a lot of it is research on your film.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent. *He has also written for* 1-42 *and moviefone.com.*

WHEN YOU'RE READY TO WRITE...



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Ask the Documentary Doctor

How do you script a doc, and should you?

BY FERNANDA ROSSI

Dear Doc Doctor:
I'm shooting abroad and want to make sure I don't miss anything since I can't go back to reshoot. Is there a way I can know the "story" or "script" of my documentary in advance?

You would be better off investing your time in learning a meditation technique than trying to write the script. When it comes to documentary filmmaking, your mantra should be "Be in the moment." Or, if you prefer, "Here, now." Screenwriters will tell you that their own attempts at controlling everything from paper are futile efforts even in the fiction world.

Documentary filmmaker Albert Maysles says, "The very essence of filming is not controlling, but uncontrolled. You have some sort of idea of what your story might be, but you are ready at the same time to abandon that if it doesn't happen or if something better comes along." As I said, an exercise in Zen meditation.

Still, your concerns are valid. Abandoning yourself to the chaos of reality can be costly when filming abroad or with highly time-sensitive topics and characters. It's crucial to find a balance between planning and being open to new approaches. But there are some things you can do in advance.

First of all, do your research! You might think that because your film is character-based doing research is unnecessary. But you will still need to do research in the broad sense. If you don't need to learn more about your characters, learn about their culture, or similar historical circumstances. The more you know, the more you will be able to make decisions in the moment or under pressure, and be confident that they are the right ones.

Outlines are also helpful, but be careful not to limit your film to only one case scenario. When I am working with a client, I explore several possible structures, not just one storyline, leaving lots of room for new situations. The advantage of experimenting in advance with two or three models is that you become less anxious during the shoot. There is a sense of ease in knowing that all the material you are shooting will find a meaningful place once in the cutting room. And a calm filmmaker is a productive, approachable human being we all like to be around during a shoot.

If your film calls for interviews, these provide another opportunity to plan ahead. Think of lots of questions. Write down every single one of them. Read them a day or two later. Try to imagine how you would feel if you were asked these same questions, with the exact same wording. Is there a better wording for the question? You can fine-tune and edit your list until you are completely satisfied with it. But remember to listen during the actual interview. It is important to adjust your questions to what the subject actually says. Interviewees hold in their answers the seeds to the most interesting questions.

Go ahead and daydream "scripts" and stories of all the things that could happen when you point the camera, and then let reality be more magical than your imagination.

When it comes to documentary filmmaking, your mantra should be "Be in the moment."

Dear Doc Doctor:
I have 120 hours of footage, half of which are interviews. Should I transcribe everything and create a script from the transcription before I cut anything?

Even today, after the waves of cinema verité have crashed on the shores of reality TV, the structure of many nonfiction films still rests on the precise editing of interviews. The most crucial part of editing interviews is that of the text on paper, not necessarily the work with the physical film.

In general, filmmakers with a strong background in writing or journalism prefer working with transcripts. If this is your case, I would encourage you to use the tools that you are more familiar with. But bear in mind that though transcripts can be very practical, sometimes what looks great in writing is mumbled on the tape. Other times, weak lines on paper are so passionately delivered in front of the camera that they are highly effective. By relying exclusive on a transcription, you might unknowingly overlook a great moment.

Working with text is a great tool, but ultimately documentaries are an audio-visual form, and approaching the edit from a purely textual perspective can eventually stiffen the flow of your film. After editing a tightly cut interview based on a transcript, filmmakers are often tempted to just throw B-roll, or descriptive footage, on top of it. In doing so you are blurring your vision as a filmmaker and cutting short the narrative potential of your film. It corners your documentary into the show-and-tell format, a mere step above a slide show.

So before you spend $2 per page on a transcription, try this less expensive and more productive option: First watch your footage, focusing on the topics covered by the interviewees. During this viewing you should jot down the timecode of the quotes that sound interesting. Once you have a list of all the topics discussed, look for verité or action footage that relates that experience from a visual point of view, rather than illustrating it with matching images. By cutting this footage first and then adding the meaningful quotes, your documentary will grow in an organic way. With this tactic, you can also ensure that no footage will be overlooked or forgotten, as you will be searching for both images and words without giving one more importance over the other.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. For further info, visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF TANIA RETCHISKY; FACING PAGE, TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Toronto International Film Festival

Politics, Sex, and Sin Up North

BY BRIAN BROOKS

MENTION TO THE AVERAGE CANADIAN THE Toronto International Film Festival and its stature in the highest echelon of the world's film festivals, and one easily detects an air of disbelief. As filmmaker Michael Moore suggested during a news conference for his latest film, *Bowling for Columbine*, Canadians tend to shy away from praise. In fact, mention that the event is the third or even second most important film festival in the world, and skepticism evolves into lively debate, with the out-of-towner arguing on behalf of the Toronto Film Festival to a skeptical local audience. Yet, make no mistake, locals have, year after year, demonstrated their enthusiasm for the event with their wallets, buying up tickets to public screenings and filling up the city's comfortable cinemas. Certainly the seemingly ubiquitous celebrities, paparazzi, and big parties covered in detail by the city's local media lure locals' interest, but despite the spotlight on the nightly galas and Hollywood-style glam, Toronto also hosts another tier of work that is decidedly more challenging and unique.

This year's twenty-seventh annual event included a healthy dose of critical examination of the Catholic Church as well as the US and the president. Additionally, moviegoers crowded theaters to view work hailed as both breakthrough and pornographic, and also films focusing the lens on suburban tweakers, rape, and sexual "deviation" of various sorts. Audiences juggled packed schedules of offerings included in the festival's various sections, filled with a bounty of celluloid guaranteed to firmly plant the most ardent cineaste satisfyingly in the dark with a dizzying scope of film from around the world.

Gael Garcia Bernal and Ana Claudia Talancon confront a crux of the faith, celibacy, in Carlos Carrera's *The Crime of Father Amaro*.

An unprepared filmmaker, however, may find Toronto's thick roster a bit daunting. "Like Sundance, it's a bit of a madhouse," commented Michael Galinsky and Suki Hawley, the directors of the documentary *Horns and Halos*, on their participation this year. Still, the married directing duo, who's film follows the alliance between *Fortunate Son* author James Hatfield and punk publisher Sander Hicks, found the audiences right on the money. "The audiences were amazing, they seemed very politics-savvy and seemed to know a lot about our political system in the US. The Q&A's were lively and packed." *Horns* struggles against the current prevailing political climate in capturing an ugly cover-up by the Bush campaign to bury the then Governor Bush's cocaine use in the seventies through a smear campaign aimed at discrediting the author who exposes it.

The directing team did their homework before traveling to Toronto. Prior to tackling an event of this size, the two recommend doing research and encourage fellow filmmakers attempting to succeed at a festival such as this to find publicists to work with who care about the film and can spearhead interest in it.

Peter Brunette, a journalist who has been covering the event for thirteen years, grudgingly agrees. "Ideally, if the money is available, I would suggest hiring a PR firm to represent the film in Toronto. I must admit that my screening decisions (beyond the films that have distribution) are often based on recommendations I get from publicists I trust and have worked with at a lot of festivals." Hawley and Galinsky do recognize capturing the press' attention at a festival like Toronto as key to making the experience worthwhile. "The first factor [for successful promotion] is if there is anything about the film which makes it something that the press might be interested in," explain Hawley and Galinsky. *Horns and Halos* capitalized on its inherent controversy and garnered attention. "While we didn't get as much notice as a film like *Bowling for Columbine*, we did get mentioned along with it on many occasions," say Hawley and Galinsky.

Sean Penn's short about a widower (Ernest Borgnine) in a post-Sept. 11 New York was part of the controversial collection *11.09.01*.

Another less overtly political, yet controversial film that managed to pack screenings was Larry Clark's *Ken Park*. Despite the amount of press attention this film, written by Harmony Korine (*Kids*) received, it is still without a distribution deal in the United States. The prevailing chatter among press and acquisitions people in Toronto was that the film's explicit sex, group sex, auto-asphyxiation, subsequent close-up cum shots, and near-homosexual incest were too much for the American palate. To be fair, even the normally staid European press seemed shocked at the film when it screened in Venice. Moviegoers in Toronto seemed split during one screening. In a scene, a high school boy who's having sex with his girlfriend's mother gingerly asks how his penis size compares to her husband's. The question caused an eruption of laughter in the theater, and one shocked person shouted back, "OK! I think that's enough!"

Sin and vice were featured prominently throughout the festival. Swedish music

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video director Jonas Akerlund, who has won MTV praise with such prominent videos as Madonna's *Ray of Light*, and Prodigy's *Smack My Bitch Up*, screened his first feature, *Spun*, about a group of suburban kids "tweaking in the 'burbs." The feature's after-party at the Bovine Sex Club, complete with pyrotechnic S&M lesbians, penis balloons, and grilled cheese hors d'ouvres, was as much of a spectacle as the film. *El Crimen del Padre Amaro*, by Carlos Carrera, with *Y Tu Mama Tambien* star Gael Garcia Bernal, a film about a nympho priest, attracted a packed house. The film had received widespread condemnation by Roman Catholic bishops in Mexico, which resulted in record-breaking box office numbers for the film. Meanwhile, French director Gaspar Noe shocked moviegoers with his latest film, *Irreversible*, with a sustained rape scene, and US director Paul Schrader told the story of the shocking true-life account of television star Bob Crane's lascivious late-night orgies in *Auto Focus*. TriBeCa Film Festival winner *Roger Dodger*, a film by Dylan Kidd about a misogynist smartmouth played by Campbell Scott, who attempts to teach his innocent nephew how to unleash his latent sexuality, charmed audiences. The film's amazing dialogue and fantastic performances by Scott and newcomer Jesse Eisenberg provide an intelligent counterweight to the methodic material produced by most in Hollywood.

Toronto International Film Festival director Piers Handling.

And, although not typically "indie," Todd Haynes' *Far From Heaven*, starring Julianne Moore and Dennis Quaid, is also a story-driven film that caused a ruckus during the festival. Crowds packed into two press and industry screenings with hopefuls, including uber-critic Roger Ebert, waiting in long queues hoping for a seat. Quite simply, the hassle was worth it! Nearly everyone leaving the screening agreed the Douglas Sirk-inspired film was brilliant.

Not quite as universally loved were some of the shorts on September 11 in the French produced *11.09.01*. Eleven esteemed directors from around the world were asked by artistic producer Alain

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Brigand to create shorts inspired by events of that day. Included in the collection is work from Danis Tanovic, Mira Nair, Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, and Sean Penn. Among the most controversial was the short by Ken Loach, who interviewed an exiled Chilean left-winger who recalled a September 11 in the early seventies when the US aided general Augusto Pinochet in toppling the democratically elected socialist president Salvador Allende. Outside the theater, one reporter asked a colleague, "As a New Yorker, how much do you want to punch Ken Loach in the face?" The response, however, was simply, "Actually, Loach's was the best of the eleven."

So what should a filmmaker eager to screen his or her shocking (or otherwise) story do before landing at Pierson International Airport in order to conquer the film world congregating each September in the Hollywood of the North? "Be organized and do research. The entire film industry is there, and you want to make sure your film gets the attention it deserves. You should research sales agents and find one that has handled films like yours before. You want to make sure the distributors have all the information they need on the film. You should also remember to alert film festival programmers," says Ryan Werner, VP of acquisitions and distribution, who travels annually to Toronto seeking films for Magnolia Pictures (*Late Marriage*, *Read My Lips*) distribution.

Whatever the case, Niki Caro's *Whale Rider* certainly did something right, entering her film in the festival and managing a surprise coup, winning the Audience Award for best film. Toronto festival director Piers Handling was delighted with the win. The film, by a relatively unknown director, had been submitted with the regular call for entries and ended up charming moviegoers all the way to the ballot box.

So the famous Toronto Film Festival manages to reward film that is not attached to an industry machine. As Werner notes, "Toronto is a great place to launch your film." The experience can be truly exhilarating if one works the festival touting his or her film. And without a doubt, there will be many a Canadian waiting to see it.

Brian Brooks is an associate editor for indieWIRE.

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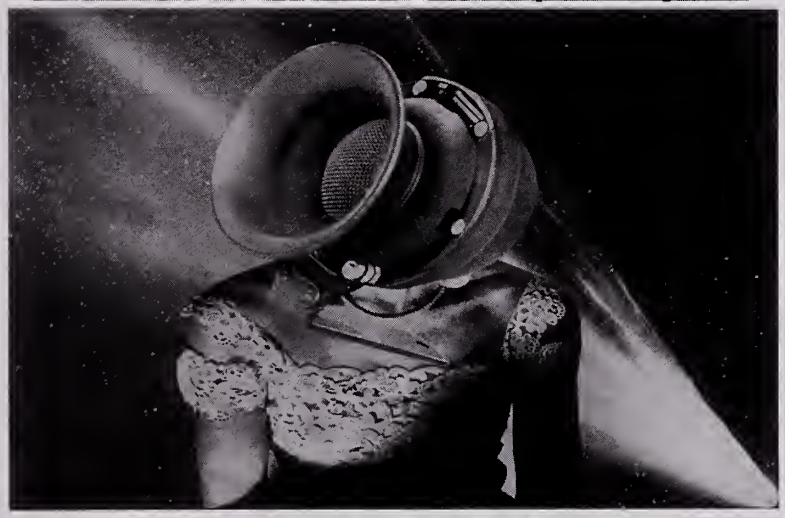

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2002 IFP Market

Works in progress and screenwriters take the foreground

BY JAMES ISRAEL

THOUGH IT APPEARED TO BE BUSINESS AS usual when the IFP Market returned to New York this year, the twenty-four-year-old event had actually undergone yet another retooling—The Puck Building was again filled with film industry panels, and the Angelika Film Center with wall-to-wall screenings. But this year the Market hosted forty percent fewer projects. The new focus was on works in progress screenings and opportunities for screenwriters. Gone was the underused Script Library and the dreaded Friday 4 p.m. empty screening. This year's Market consisted of highly informative industry panels (broadcast live on the IFP website), networking meetings, work-in-progress screenings, a daylong think tank, and last but not least, parties.

With projects organized into three sections (No Borders International Co-Production, Spotlight on Documentaries, and Emerging Narrative), the Market was more approachable not only for filmmakers but for the healthy number of distributors and festival programmers in attendance. Producer Gill Holland, who has a long history with the Market, was pleased that the Market was taking a more curatorial approach. "This year it was like, Which one am I going to see?" Holland has four projects at the Market this year, including Amy Grappell's documentary *Soviet Meditation*, which is about a troupe of American actors visiting the USSR for a cultural exchange program in 1991 who wind up in the middle of a political revolution, and *The Pink House*, by Ian Williams and Tessa Blake, a comedy about the rivalry between five liberal college students and a conservative sorority on a southern college campus.

Paul Harrill screened *Gina, An Actress, Age 29* at IFP Market as part of a larger collection of shorts called *Christmastime and Other Stories*.

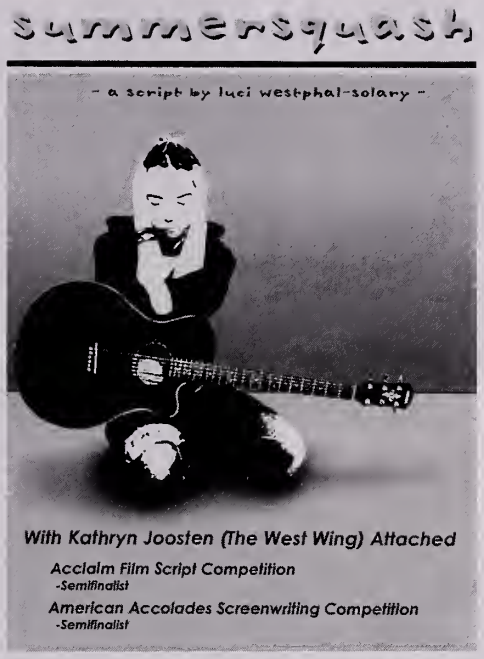
There were also many IFP Market veterans present. Liz Garbus, whose award-winning doc *The Farm* was in No Borders in 1997, returned with her latest doc, *Girl Hood*, a coming-of-age story about two teenage girls with violent pasts. Thomas Allen Harris, who was in last year's Market with his expressionistic personal doc *That's My Face*, presented a trailer of his latest project, *The Twelve Disciples of Nelson Mandela*, which follows the journeys of twelve African men (including Harris' father) who leave South Africa to expose to the world the horrors of apartheid and raise support for the African National Congress and Nelson Mandela. Ross McElwee, who directed the doc classic *Sherman's March*, returned with *Bright Leaves*, the story of McElwee's great grandfather and the tobacco industry.

Since the Market focused primarily on works in progress, screenings consisted of trailers, selected scenes, and rough cuts. Dempsey Rice's intriguing documentary *Memory and Forgetting*, which explores memory and amnesia, screened a combination of melodramatic scenes from old Hollywood films about amnesia and abstract descriptions of memory, which required that Rice describe her specific intentions for the project. For the screening of *Christmastime and Other Stories*, director Paul Harrill showed his contribution, the film short *Gina, An Actress, Age 29*, the first segment of the five stories that will eventually make up the entire film, which takes place in Tennessee over one year. Harrill's film, which won the Sundance Jury Prize in short filmmaking last year, served as a useful way for Harrill to showcase his filmmaking abilities and also be part of a feature production. Rodney Evans' narrative *Brother to Brother* was a true definition work in progress. Since Evans could not attend the screening because he was shooting, producer Jim McKay was on hand to present the carefully selected scenes from the story about a black writer from the Harlem Renaissance, and a black, gay teenager who he meets in a New York City homeless shelter.

With the challenge of presenting work in progress, the question quickly arises: Is it wise to screen a rough-cut or a trailer to distributors and festival programmers? A few blocks away from the Angelica screenings, at the Puck Building several panelists involved in the sessions warned against showing *anything* but a finished, polished film to a distributor, regardless of how much pleading is involved. One panelist noted: "You get one shot with a distributor, which is when they'll decide whether or not to pass on your film and you want to show them the best possible product, not just a rough-cut or an unfinished film." First impressions are important, while many projects managed to screen work that was polished enough to get an idea of the intent, at least one presentation seemed to be shooting the film in the foot by showing lengthy, unedited scenes of talking heads.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF PAUL HARRILL; FACING PAGE, LUCI WESTPHAL-SOLARY (PHOTO) AND SCOTT WESTPHAL-SOLARY (ILLUSTRATION)

The Market also revamped the way screenplays are handled. In the past, this section of the Market, which mainly consisted of a script library, was criticized for not being useful to either sellers or buyers. Stephen Savitz, who came to the Market this year with his script *Ratgirl*, noted that in previous years the script library wasn't beneficial for him. "The Market is like a social event, and who has time to sit around and read scripts," Savitz says. This year was different. Instead of scripts sitting in the library unread, screenwriters were given two ninety-minute networking meetings with representatives from production companies. Savitz got to pitch *Ratgirl*, the story of a romance between an introverted painter and an eccentric girl, to over a dozen companies. "If seven are relevant, that's not so bad," says Savitz. Luci Westphal-Solary, a first-timer at the Market with her script *Summersquash*, about the friendship between a punk girl and an elderly woman, was very pleased with the format. "The IFP definitely made an effort to match us up with companies that would possibly be interested in our project," says Westphal-Solary. "Fifty percent of the people I sat down with asked me for a script immediately. Some companies were very intrigued with the actual stories we had to tell, the script we had, the project we had. One company asked if I had a budget. They wanted to see my budget, my script, my reel."



Luci Westphal-Solary pitched her script, *Summersquash*, at this year's IFP Market.

This isn't the first time that the Market has altered its format. But it hasn't had a high profile "discovery" since the days of *Clerks* and *The Brothers McMullen*, which brings up the vital question, Is it really a market when no one is buying? "They had very much prepared us for the fact that there is nobody with a contract in their bag or money or a checkbook or anything like that," noted Westphal-Solary. Sarah Kramer, another first-timer to the Market, whose documentary *Time Out: Three Weeks with Bunk 22* examines troubled children at a summer camp in Alaska, noted that her original impression of the Market was incorrect. "On some level I thought it was, you either get picked up or you don't and that's the end of it." She realized afterwards that the Market's strength is its networking opportunities. "It just gets the ball rolling, and that allows you to follow up with people or keep them in your back pockets for the future," says Kramer.

Holland shared similar aspirations: "I was hoping somebody would write us a check to finish [*The Pink House*] because we need finishing funds. We also knew realistically that's probably not going to happen, so instead it was good to get some buzz going. There's a thousand people that know about the movie now."

The Market nowadays seems to function more as a way to get on the industry's radar and meet people instead of actually selling anything. "I think it's now more of a professional networking venue," says Holland. "I met one guy who I'm hiring to do a music video." Thomas Allen Harris noted that he met his producer's rep at last year's Market. Westphal-Solary enjoyed meeting so many of her peers in the film community. "It was like a great party that one of your friends threw that lasted for a whole week." Savitz concurred regarding the jovial atmosphere. "The week before I was just sitting in my apartment doing nothing, checking my e-mail and stuff, and suddenly you're thrown into this party atmosphere. You're surrounded by enthusiastic people. It inspires you to be creative again."

James Israel is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker. He also provides information services for AIVF, and edits AIVF's newsletter, SPLICE!

Kyra Sedgwick as Delia in Rebecca Miller's *Personal Velocity*.

When Writers Direct ... and When They Don't

Observations from both sides of the writer-director phenomenon

BY ANDREA MEYER

> Larry: *Doesn't it just rip you to pieces what they do to your scripts?*
>
> Burton: *You can't get involved with it. You'd kill yourself. You can't worry what they're going to do to it. Start something else; take your four hundred thou and split.*
>
> Burn This (1987)

Burton, from Lanford Wilson's play Burn This, is the kind of screenwriter most independent filmmakers are committed never to become. He writes brilliant stories, hawks them to Hollywood for enormous sums (in the recent New York production, that $400K was updated to $750K), and doesn't look back as a studio transforms his genius into the worst kind of drivel. This is just one possible version, though, of the process that has resulted in some of the most revered films in history. The majority of Best Picture Academy Award winners—from *Casablanca* to *Midnight Cowboy* to *A Beautiful Mind*—were the result of a director applying his vision to somebody else's story. The theory being that to create the best movie possible, a script is written by the best writer for the project and directed by the best director—and only rarely are the two the same person.

There are, of course, stunning exceptions. Even in the studios' heyday—long before writing and directing became standard practice for independent film—there was the occasional virtuoso who wrote as well as he directed. Joseph L. Mankiewicz wrote and directed *All About Eve* (1950); Billy Wilder wrote and

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF INGE MORATH/MAGNUM PHOTO; FACING PAGE, UNITED ARTISTS

directed *The Apartment* (1960).

Even today, the practice is infrequent in Hollywood. Stephen Spielberg directed but did not write *Schindler's List*. Alan Ball wrote but did not direct *American Beauty*. The rise of the director as cinema artist that launched such filmmakers as Spielberg and Scorsese to international renown still involved a director making a highly personal mark on someone else's script.

But some of the most distinct, personal, and original voices in American cinema belong to directors who work primarily from their own scripts—Jim Jarmusch, Spike Lee, Woody Allen—following the largely European tradition of Bergman and Truffaut. In the United States, the hyphenate phenomenon remains largely the domain of independent film, in which idealistic film school grads dream of becoming indie auteurs who write and direct all their own work. Is it an unrealistic dream?

"Independent film is trying to be like the *Nouvelle Vague*, where you had Truffaut and Godard, who were consummate auteurs," says Gill Holland, the New York-based producer of such independent films as *Hurricane Streets* and *Spring Forward*. "It's great that indie filmmakers want to build themselves in that image, but there are some that are good writers and some that are good directors. There are very, very few that can do both."

Writer-director Rebecca Miller adapted the script for *Personal Velocity* from her own book of short stories.

While independent filmmakers might recognize that either writing or directing is their forte, many are intent on doing both nonetheless, at least when working on personal stories in which they've invested a tremendous amount of time, work, and emotion. Rebecca Miller directed her 2002 Sundance Grand Jury Prize-winning film *Personal Velocity* from a screenplay that she adapted from her own book of short stories. "I write for myself," she says. "I taught myself to write screenplays just so I could direct them." Deeply invested in the book she had spent two years writing, Miller would never have considered letting someone else realize it. "It would not be any fun," she says. "Half the pleasure is directing these things. Why should I go through writing it if I don't get to direct it?"

Morgan J. Freeman also won the Sundance Grand Jury Prize, in 1997, for his debut film, *Hurricane Streets*, which he wrote and directed. Freeman agrees that both writing and directing a movie far outweighs doing just one or the other. "What I love most is realizing a story that I created out of thin air," he says. "I love having a blank page become a script and a script become a company that hires 200 people who spend the next eighteen months of their lives working on this thing; and the adventures and ups and downs of shooting, and remembering back to the time I was sitting at my computer, and then actually watching the story I wrote become a movie, and seeing it in the movie theater. These are all payoffs that you don't get if you're directing a script you didn't write."

While this determined idealism has been the foundation of many great films, the realities of filmmaking—practical, creative, and financial—sometimes demand a division of labor. Philip Noyce, the Australian director of *Clear and Present Danger*, *Dead Calm*, and the upcoming *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, has co-written scripts in the past, but feels his strength lies in interpreting the works of others. "For me, writing is the hardest part of filmmaking," he says. "I like to work in conjunction with a writer, contributing thoughts, sorting out the structure, building on the characters, working on how the story is best told, and then helping the writer refine those ideas. Having to do all that and physically write is impossible for me."

Noyce doesn't think that this type of collaboration diminishes his creative role in the completed film. "As a director you are a writer, because you interpret the written word," he says. He describes how he worked with Christine Olsen, the first-time screenwriter of *Rabbit-Proof Fence*. Olsen had only made documentaries in the past, so she had a lot to learn from Noyce's experience with narrative film. "It was a case of me encouraging her to reorganize the material in a way that might be more compelling for an audience. She was very open to that."

While Noyce has learned through his years as a filmmaker that he is a better director than screenwriter, younger filmmakers who are intent on doing it all might be reluctant to acknowledge their limitations. "You see it even at the short-film stage," says Holland. "You see shorts that have great scripts and either don't look good or get bad performances. And then you see shorts that don't have any script but are so beautiful and lyrical and visual that you're like, 'Wow, give that director a good script and that could be a really good movie.'"

How are beginning filmmakers supposed to identify their talents? Holland recommends that they make a short film. "I think sometimes screenwriters think they can direct because they're so close to the material," he explains. "This one [aspiring director-writer] had this great script, but I said, 'Look, take my camera, go make a short film. If it's halfway good, it will be much easier to get the money to make the movie.' She went off and made the short film and absolutely hated it. She said, 'I'm so not a director. I'm a writer. I like writing. I don't like dealing with all these people.'"

Another potential problem with a filmmaker directing her own material is an inability to take criticism about the story she's intimately attached to, an inherent lack in objectivity. Miller says this has never been a problem for her. "Once you're finished, you need to treat it like someone else's screenplay," she says. "I'm pretty merciless. If something doesn't work, it just goes. Even though I go to great pains to write the screenplay, once it's done, I think of it as a blueprint. It's there for me to use to get something else."

Up until this point in his career, screenwriter Mike Jones has never directed one of his own feature scripts, although he directed several shorts in film school. As a screenwriter, Jones rewrote *City of Ghost*, a script by Barry Gifford and Matt Dillon (Dillon also directed and starred); he wrote *Automata*, a big-budget science fiction script he sold to Columbia Pictures; and sold another script, *Evenhand*, to an independent producer who will premiere the film

at this year's AFI Film Festival. In April, however, Jones goes into production on *Miller*, the first of his feature-length scripts that he will direct himself. He agrees that the key to directing your own script is to be open to criticism. "If you don't have a director, you don't have an opposing view. You don't have a devil's advocate," he says. "So, you have to listen to criticism from everybody, from the lowliest production executive to your wife or your brother. I listen to everything, and through the course of four years, that got *Miller* to a place I really love."

Holland, who agrees that a good director has to be willing to integrate feedback about his or her script, recounts a story about a fifteen-year-old African American actor in *Hurricane Streets* who questioned the script's language. "He was supposed to say something like, 'Yo, that was awesome,'" Holland recalls. "And the kid was like, 'I've never said that word in my life. I'd be like, "Yo, man, that was buttuh."' Morgan said, 'Perfect,' and that was in the movie."

In a perfect world, most independent filmmakers would probably say they'd like to direct all of their own screenplays, but that isn't always possible. Finances, for example, have a way of messing up people's plans. Even though he wanted to direct *Evenhand*, Jones sold it because he needed the money. "I had so many bills to pay and I needed to option the film," he says. Luckily, Jones was already working on *Miller*, which made it easier to part with the earlier script. "The script becomes theirs," he says. "You have to let it go. If you don't, you're in for a lot of heartache. It was really hard. You start hearing from other people what other directors are doing with this film that you wrote and conceived of, and you have nothing to do with it whatsoever. It's like a baby that's running around rampant with a knife. You hope this person grows up to be a good adult, but you don't know."

Part of Jones' attachment to *Evenhand* comes from the fact that he wrote it assuming he would direct it himself. But he never intended to direct his special effects extravaganza, *Automata*. He didn't know how. So, he happily handed the script off to the experts at Stan Winston Productions. But Jones wondered, Does the fact that he didn't plan to direct it affected his writing. "I wonder if I could have written it better had I known that it was going to be my eyes behind the camera," he says. Miller also feels that the level of investment shifts when she's hired to tell someone else's story. About a script she is currently writing with Niels Mueller (*Tadpole*) and Gary Winick, the producer of *Personal Velocity*, she says, "It's a very different process. In some ways I'm freer in terms of just seeing it structurally, but it's a completely different emotional involvement, because it's not my story."

Liev Schreibner and Ned Beatty star as opposites who find friendship in Tom Gilroy's *Spring Forward*.

In Freeman's case, he found work as a director-for-hire on *American Psycho II*, a script to which he had no emotional attachment whatsoever, and encountered challenges of a different nature. While the opportunity to save a damaged script bolstered his confidence as a writer and director, Freeman found it difficult to relinquish the control he was used to having over his work. "If you're a director for hire, you're a tool," he says. "You're there because they're paying you to be there. Yes, they want good material at the end, but they control the final cut, the title, the publicity, the marketing, the release date. And if you make a movie on your own, you can say, 'This has to be a fall release, and you have to spend X amount of dollars on P and A, and it has to come out on X number of screens, or you can't buy the movie.' But if you come in to a movie that's already at a studio, all that's gone. They have a grand plan and you're just a little piece of it."

Despite the possible challenges and heartaches, there are sit-

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF VICTOR SIRAVIFC FILMS; FACING PAGE, PENNY TWEEDIE.

uations in which dividing up the writing and directing duties can lead to a happy marriage that benefits both parties and, more importantly, the final product. Films succeed when the producers are able to make a perfect match, to put a team together that will combine its talents to make the best movie possible. On Matt Dillon's film *City of Ghost*, for example, Jones feels that he was able to take the first draft of a script and, with the writer-director-actor's input, improve it significantly. "I was there to help piece it together," he says. "Matt would act out pretty much every scene. He would act out all the dialogue to find the right rhythm, because he was also directing it. There was a certain freedom in letting Matt take over certain things, and Matt let me take over certain things. We butted heads a lot, but some of the best stuff comes out of that. That was a really good writer-director collaboration." They plan to repeat the process with another project for which Dillon is currently negotiating a deal.

On the flip side, Freeman mentions *Good Will Hunting* as an example of a script that improved substantially with the influence of its director, Gus Van Sant, proving that the right collaboration can not only save a project, but turn it into an Oscar-winning success story. "If you go back and read the original, it's the worst script. No one wanted to make it," he says. "But then it wins Best Screenplay, because it was rewritten by the writers with the director, and any great improvisation and anybody's great ideas on set went into the script."

There are no rules dictating whether filmmakers should direct their own scripts or not. Each situation must be evaluated, taking financial, practical, and creative factors into account. While Jones, for example, had no desire to direct *Automata* and agreed to sacrifice *Evenhand*, there is no way he's letting anyone else touch *Miller*. "It's a very personal story. I had a lot of people who wanted to option it, and I said no. It was a story I wrote for me to direct," he says. "The dialogue in *Miller* comes from the area where I grew up in south Texas. Nobody talks exactly how they feel; they talk around it and kind of move their bodies around it. There's a certain aspect of that kind of communication that I really understand. On that fact alone, I think I'm the best person to direct it.

"But," he continues, "Bruce Beresford and Peter Bogdonavich directed two of the best Texas films ever, *Tender Mercies* and *The Last Picture Show*, and they're not Texans. So that's another argument for a director who's not from the area coming in and giving an objective eye. You go back and forth. But, if Peter Bogdonavich wanted to direct *Miller*, I'd probably say no. There's an emotional bond with *Miller*. It's an answer to how I grew up, so I want to direct it. This one has got to be mine."

From left, Laura Monaghan as Gracie, Tianna Sansbury as Daisy, and Everlyn Sampi as Molly in Phillip Noyce's *Rabbit-Proof Fence*.

Jones is fortunate in his ability to approach each script on a case-by-case basis, acknowledging his limitations and the various obstacles that keep him from directing all of his scripts. "It's very hard to be a career writer-director," he says. "Very few people are able to do that. You have to be able to direct other people's scripts or, as a writer, let some of your work go. If you insist on directing everything you write, you'll be working that second job for the rest of your life."

Andrea Meyer is a New York-based freelance writer who's done just about everything in the film biz, from extras casting to photo research to holding writers' hands at ICM. She currently covers film for Interview, Time Out New York, indieWIRE, *and the* New York Post, *and reports on relationships and celebrities for* Glamour. *She's also working on a romance novel and, of course, a screenplay.*

Step Right Up to the Screenwriting Competition

BY JACQUE LYNN SCHILLER

In the last year I've won some screenwriting contests (Pillage Hollywood, New Century Writer finalist) and lost some (Slamdance, American Accolades) and entered about a dozen others. The scripts are now in revisions based on feedback either from the contests themselves or producers who requested copies of the screenplay. When I was asked to write this article I found myself facing the same questions that I had when I finished my first screenplay and didn't know what the hell to do with it. It's a daunting task, especially when you're trying to lead someone else in the right direction.

On that note, here's my guide to the funhouse commonly referred to as the screenplay writing competition. Check your height, fears, and spare change at the door, kids, as this hall of mirrors ride is an ever-changing reflection of the biz.

Choosing the right ride

There are a lot of contests out there and each one will cost you. You'll pay for copying your script. You'll pay for postage. And since most competitions an charge an entry fee of $30 to $60 you'll pay just to be considered for the crown. (Most competitions have early bird specials for entrants who send their scripts in before a specified deadline.) Unless you have a magic piggy bank full of infinite funds, you'll want to target the competitions looking for your specific type of script. If you're into gore, look for those contests out for blood, literally. There's simply no use in laying out hard-earned, easily burned cash at Kinko's only to send in a copy of your script to a group of people looking for the next *Titanic* or *A Beautiful Mind* if your script is more along the lines of *Memento*.

There are a couple of different types of organizations throwing these contests: film festivals, writing competitions, media centers, some schools, production houses, and most of the major studios. If the piece you're sitting on revolves around a two-hour conversation between friends or the less glamorous sides of life and skips the happy ending, you might want to save the extra postage and pass on the Disney competition for one of the more autonomous options. If your script is running long or short, you also might want to steer clear of competions sponsored by companies that specialize in films with action figure tie-ins. Find the proper nest for your potential nest egg.

Buying your ticket

Aside from the masochists out there, I'm assuming you wouldn't willingly get involved in a relationship with nothing better to offer than a bruised ego and barren pockets. Therefore, it only makes sense to find out a little bit as to what to expect from "winning," and in some cases even "losing," a particular screenwriting competition. In other words, check into the benefits damnit!

With all the time and money you're investing you'd better know what's in it for you. Some competitions don't hand out jack-squat unless you're deemed worthy of the top accolade, and others will provide praise/suggestions/criticism for the price of admission. You might even score some dough. But if it happens that there's a production promise hidden in the ol' rules and regulations, make sure you're not selling something that could be worth a pretty penny down the road, for a wooden nickle now.

Frederick Mensch of moviebytes.com, a site that lists several hundred of these contests a year says, "When writers ask me for advice on this topic, I urge them remember what they're hoping to accomplish. Some writers want feedback on their scripts, and in that case they should be sure the contests they're entering offer feedback to all contestants, and not just winners. Others want exposure to the industry at large, and in that case they should enter contests with an established track record for publicizing their winners, and at the same time they should probably stay away from contests sponsored by production companies, since those folks are presumably looking for their own material, and not material for the rest of the industry."

Addresses reveal a lot, and the last I checked, there wasn't much filmmaking going on in Geronimo, Texas. Cred is important. It's probably one of the major things you're hoping to get out of a contest. It only takes a bit of common sense and research to figure out which contests are worth the time, effort, and loose coins under your futon mattress. Many well-known film festivals now promote their own screenwriting competitions and dole out various prizes, from labs to readings to everything in between. Since production houses usually hold contests in order to increase script flow, remember to pay attention to what you may get out of it, and what they'll get. Look into their past work. If *Abbie Does Albany* is listed as their latest output, you should probably steer clear, unless you're writing a porn script. According to Peter Scott, director of the American Accolades competition, "One specific way to see if a competition is legit: Find out who judges their material. The next thing to check is who runs the competition and how long the competition has been running. Longer = better."

Being named a finalist or actually winning one of the more prestigious competitions can get your name, and more importantly your script noticed, but be aware of the company you keep. Contests that ask you to pay extra for them to push your script probably aren't reputable and most people in the business will know it. All your money will buy is an association with a group of people who don't have your best interests at heart and are only looking at their bank account. Those 120 pages of text you laid down shouldn't be wasted on fifteen minutes or less of fame. "In my opinion, no competition should charge a fee for 'introducing' a writer to Hollywood. That should be one of the free perks that comes with the entry fee. Ideally the competition has ties to the entertainment industry and can link screenwriters to executives during the course of competition," Scott explains.

Like everything else in life you have to be pragmatic and read the small print.

Read the posted rules before entering

It doesn't matter if your script is the cinematic second coming of Hamlet, if you don't submit your work in the competition's format, it might as well be labeled "Forward to Wastebasket." Every competition has their own R&R. If you thought I was referring to Rest & Relaxation, you should pay particular attention to the specifications section of every entry form, also known as rules and regulations. Submitting a script without the requested font size, bind number, page limit, and title page can tip off the jury that you're an amateur and that you didn't take the contest seriously enough to send in a properly formatted

entry. It's all in the details, so show a little respect for the bug-eyed intern sifting through all those scripts. Yes, it takes extra time to put together differently formatted scripts for every competition, but it's a bigger waste of time to send out a script that will spend more time bumping nasties with last night's takeout than on somebody's desk, because it didn't follow the specifications. This is one case in which conformity is your friend. The amount of time you'll spend reading the rules and regulations and reformatting your script is another good reason to target your submissions rather than sending out your masterpiece to every competition you can find.

Other areas to pay special attention to are the logline and synopsis requests. The logline is the sentence under the title encapsulates the movie. *Pulp Fiction*'s logline was "Three stories about one story," followed by a definition for "pulp." The synopsis gives you a page to do pretty much the same thing. It may sound easy to wrap up your story in a page or mere sentence, but try it. Studios have entire sections of their marketing departments working on these things. It will take you some time and effort to come up with something that works. This is a good activity to enlist the help of a trusted friend or two. The logline's got to convey the idea of the film while at the same time sounding witty and tight enough to sell a greeting card. And not your mother's hallmark. Your first efforts will probably be more akin to an unfortunate advertising campaign than the clever tag you hope to see gracing the poster of your movie some day.

As for a synopsis, keep it simple but let your personal style and passion for the narrative come through. Don't write a whole treatise on your screenplay. The work should sell itself. Keep your writing tight and clear. It's not a great idea to use overly flowery language in this exercise either. And since later this same synopsis will be what the money guys are most interested in, catering to short attention spans is most advised. More than likely, your first draft will be a few thousand words over the single page limit most festivals impose. Just treat it like any other writing: Trim it. Edit it. Distill it, until it's as strong as it can be. This is your cover letter; give yourself to time to get it right.

Riding the ride

There it is, an e-mail or a letter printed on an official stationary: Your script, "TITLE," has been singled out of all the other sweat squeezing scribbles for recognition. Screw all those who said, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Your prayers have been answered. Bright lights, big city, here you come.

Whoa, Nellie! Not so fast. If you'll remember, a couple of hundred words ago I mentioned you've got to approach this whole deal a little more pragmatically than a starry-eyed contestant gazing at the goodies behind door number one. Know what to expect from winning. The likelihood of Daddy Warner-Bucks knocking on your door the next day and begging for your script, is slim to none. This ain't no charity ball, even if you are wearing a crown.

If you were hoping to get an agent as part of your prize package, think again. While a few contests actually guarantee representation, most only promise to grant you "consideration for representation" as a prize. "I can't imagine any really good agent wasting their time on a project they didn't like just because it was the winner of a contest. Winning a contest is no guarantee of an agent's enthusiasm, and that's really what you need," Mensch comments. "What happens to scripts that win contests? It really depends on the script and the contest. In many cases nothing at all happens, but in others writers can win the exposure they need to start their careers."

The most proactive thing to do is make some edits, make some more edits, then start shopping your script around. Go ahead and tell your mama. She'll probably provide the most word-of-mouth out there. Even a quick write-up to your alma mater wouldn't hurt. But ride the wave without expecting someone else to do the surfing. Self-promotion never hurt anybody. Hell, look at Anna Nicole Smith! Okay, perhaps a bad example, but what I want to make clear is you can make yourself hot. And you can use a contest to help you sizzle, but *you have to do it.*

Don't bask in the glory too long—write another! "What's next?" will be the first question of any legit inquirer.

Jacque Lynn Schiller is a regular contributor to IFC Rant *magazine. Her first book,* Porcelain God Speaks, *will be coming out next fall from Ig Publishing. Would it be redundant to add she's got a screenplay up for grabs?*

Resources

www.moviebytes.com
Offers a comprehensive list of upcoming competitions and a reader-submitted report card on contests they've entered.

www.oscars.org/nicholl/index.html
One of the big guns.

www.chesterfield-co.com
The other big gun.

www.newcenturywriter.org
If I can <beat, beat> make it there . . .

www.americanaccolades.com
Good rep + feedback.

www.emmys.org
If you're still in school, check out the education department of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Student Internship Program, and College Television Awards.

www.slamdance.com
Script coverage, boys and girls, from the established anti-Sundance.

www.austinfilmfestival.com/screenplay/rules.html
So I'm a UT graduate, does that make me biased?

www.zoetrope.com
Three words: Francis Ford Coppola

www.google.com
Do a bit of browsing on your own. There's a plethora (word of the day!) of competitions out there.

Tools for Scriptsmiths

Can screenwriting tools help a writer who already knows the basics?

BY MARY SAMPSON

There is at least one car in southern California with a bumper sticker that reads, "It's okay to not be writing a screenplay." With this kind of interest in the craft of writing for movies, it is no wonder there is more advice available for screenwriting than there is for buying a new home. Learning how to write a screenplay without wasting great amounts of time and money requires a combination of luck, pluck, and perseverance. Along the way, most writers intuit that the writing of a screenplay is different each time. And so once someone has finished with one, she knows she has to start all over again and face the same uncertainty she started with in order to write another one. Add to that the self-doubt all writers possess, and you have a condition ripe for exploitation by those who cannot do and therefore decide to teach. Whether a beginner or a pro, someone stuck in the muck of writer's block while writing a screenplay is going to be tempted to look for an easy way to solve problems of plot, character, or theme. And there will always be plenty of get-productive-quick scams to waste time and money on. That said, most successful screenwriters will point to at least one tool that helps them or inspires them while they write.

With thanks to writer, director, writing seminar critic Brian Flemming for his generous contribution of time and input, here are some thoughts on available screenwriting tools and their potential helpfulness to independent screenwriters.

Software

Originally marketed as a formatting device, scriptwriting software now claims it can virtually write your story for you, com-

Director Brian Flemming (*Hang Your Dog In the Wind; Bat Boy: The Musical*) sets the scene for the Bill Gates assassination sequence in *Nothing so Strange*.

plete with character arcs and well-developed themes. Nearly all scriptware comes with this feature, the most popular among them Final Draft. Included in the recent releases of this program is an "Ask The Expert" feature which is based on Syd Field's numerous books and videos on the subject of screenwriting. The feature assumes the writer can self-diagnose script problems, so it seems at first glance to be suited for experienced writers. But the advice it dispenses is surreal in its banality and uselessness. Consider this suggestion for help with a saggy second act: "The midpoint occurs in the middle of Act II." This sage text is followed directly by: "The mid-point connects the first half of Act II with the second half of Act II." It goes downhill from there. But far worse for a writer facing a script problem, these programs offer a plethora of nifty, time consuming, and utterly useless features that can seduce you into spending hours of writing time playing with them. Computerized voices speak the dialogue; reports can be generated on things like how many times a character appears in the script; there is even a feature that invites you to log on to the internet and chat with another writer, presumably about your script. Someone should have told the creators of these programs about writers and distractions.

Still, there are some time-saving features included in these tools. In addition to the formatting ease (and Final Draft is the best at that), most programs contain an index card feature which can help you move scenes around quickly and gives you a place to start with action and dialogue ideas without having to type them out as script. Software can now also track changes to scripts, which can be useful as a way to go back to other scripts you have written to see if you had a similar problem there and see how you solved it. You can compare scripts, which may make it easier to see where weaknesses in storylines lie. There are also production script formats that may give you some assistance by reminding you that the goal is to get a movie made, not to produce a flawless script.

Books

It does not matter if the goal is a book or a screenplay, everyone thinks they can write. So it should not surprise anyone to find that a search on screenwriting at Amazon.com yields 834 matches. The best advertised books simply outline observable traits of screenplays of popular movies, arrange them into some kind of order, and then declare them the rules of screenwriting. Brian Flemming, who figures he has read over a thousand scripts in the seven years he spent as a script reader for New Line Cinema, has given screenwriting books a lot of thought. "About ninety percent of the books out there are just preying on your insecurity," he says. "Writing is so goddamn hard that at some point we all want to distract ourselves from it. Sometimes you wash the dishes, sometimes you go out and buy *How to Write a Screenplay in a Weekend*. It might be harmless, but it's probably not helping." Flemming strongly suggests all writers, whether they have ever written a screenplay or not, stay away from any book that claims to have found a way to make writing easier. Ditto for any that claim to have a system for writing a screenplay. "That is the mark of a rip-off," he says.

There are a number of books that Flemming finds valuable. He returns to them often when stuck on a script. All have been in print for many years, and none preach a system for writing. They are listed at the end of this article.

Seminars

Less ubiquitous but more profitable than books, screenwriting seminars are usually held in New York or Los Angeles from Friday through Sunday. The average fee is $400, not including materials. By far the best critique ever produced on this type of screenwriting tool is Flemming's eighteen-minute *Screenwriting: An Exact Science*, a hilarious but very pointed look at David S. Freeman's screenwriting seminar (Freeman presently offers one called "Beyond Structure"). The video appeared in 1997 as a segment on John Peirson's *Split Screen* seen on the Independent Film Channel. In the segment, Flemming and fellow writer Keythe Farley attend one of Freeman's seminars and then attempt to write a screenplay based on what they learn. When they fail to come up with something workable from the advice they gleaned from the course, they make a short movie with allegorical reference to what Freeman is doing to writers. "I hope there is a special place in hell for people who prey on aspiring writers," says Flemming. "These charlatans make it harder for the writer to distinguish the legit from the useless." He believes the only existing way to determine which is which is by word-of-

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF UNSHARP MASK LLC; FACING PAGE, TOP, BRIAN FLEMMING; BOTTOM, HARPERCOLLINS

David S. Freeman's screenwriting seminars are the subject of a critical short, *Screenwriting: An Exact Science*, by Keythe Farley and Brian Flemming (center).

mouth, and even that is iffy. "There is a desperate need for good teaching," he says.

Robert McKee's "Story" seminar fares better in Flemming's opinion. Indeed, he has attended the seminar twice. "There really are important principles that support good writing, and most colleges don't teach them," he comments. "You need to learn the theory behind screenwriting, the principles that have worked in the past, and you study the masters."

Do It Yourself

The best advice I ever received in the craft of screenwriting was to rent the videos of movies I liked and pause at the end of each scene to quickly write down where the scene takes place, who is in it, and what happens. In effect, the viewer is recreating the screenplay by hand. It is somewhat tedious, but by the end of the third movie, a writer will have the basics of plot structure forever committed to memory. This not only increases your chances of completing a script, it makes choosing other tools (books, software, seminars) easier. You will know what will help you, and what will not. Returning to this technique has proven useful for myself when solving script problems time and time again. A modified version of this technique is to purchase the screenplay (from a drama or a writing specialty store) and study it. It will certainly take less time this way, but you may miss the one thread that pulls it all together for you as a writer. By recreating the screenplay in your own hand, you will notice those things that you specifically need to bear in mind when structuring a story.

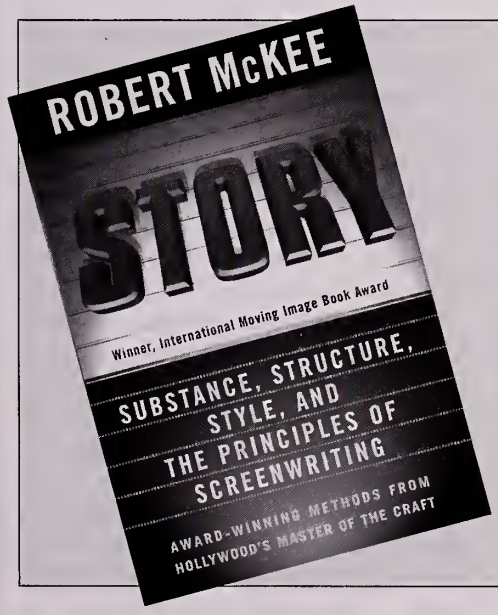
Screenwriting groups are another free way to get help with a script. The best of these work in a manner similar to other creative writing groups. Participants are not allowed to give opinions or advice on a script, only to ask questions regarding plot, character, or theme. Getting a variety of feedback in the form of questions can help a writer see plot holes they may have missed, or find better ways to reveal character or theme. The key for making this technique work is to always prepare more than one set of questions for a script and to rotate the participants on a regular basis (thereby avoiding group-think).

The Challenge Remains

The dearth of good writing is perhaps the main thing indies and commercial films have in common. "The state of screenwriting in both mainstream and indie film is pretty horrible," laments Flemming. It remains a discipline that demands respect from a writer and defies facile answers from an instructor. Clearly, some tools work better than others, but tools will never replace the one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration it takes to create something.

Brian Flemming is a writer and director whose fiction documentary Nothing so Strange *has screened at numerous festivals this year.*

Mary Sampson is a screenwriter in New York City.



Brian Flemming's Suggested Screenwriting Tools

Poetics, by Aristotle (Hill and Wang Publishers, $9)

The Art of Fiction, by John Gardner (Vintage, $12)

Theory and Technique of Playwriting, by John Howard Lawson (out of print)

On Directing Film, *Three Uses of the Knife*, and *True and False*, by David Mamet (Penguin USA $14; Vintage $10; Vintage $11)

Understanding Comics, by Scott McCloud (Kitchen Sink Press, $23)

When the Shooting Stops, the Cutting Begins, by Ralph Rosenblum (De Capo Press, $17)

In the Blink of an Eye, by Walter Murch (Silman-James Press, $14)

Story (also the seminar by the same name), by Robert McKee (HarperCollins, $35)

Copyright Basics

How to protect your work

BY INNES SMOLANSKY

COPYRIGHT IS THE LAW THAT PROTECTS the creations of artists and authors by allowing them to have exclusive rights to their creative work, and to ensure that only they benefit financially from exploiting these rights. As an author of a written work, you are the only one who has the right to exploit that work. In the language of copyright law, you (and/or others you authorize) have the exclusive right to make copies of your work, prepare derivative works based on your work, distribute copies of your work to the public by sale or rental, and perform or display your work publicly. If you learn of anyone, without your permission, copying or selling copies of your work (film, book, short story, play, screenplay, article, or video), or anyone creating a play or screenplay based on your story and performing such play or film publicly, the copyright of your work is being infringed.

Many aspects of copyright law are highly complex and technical, and most authors would benefit from having an experienced entertainment lawyer on their team. To be in control of your artistic destiny, you need to understand the basic concepts of the law to better protect your work and take advantage of the rights given to you by copyright law.

Here are some basic rules and facts of copyright law that will help you better protect your work.

Copyright attaches automatically from the moment the work is fixed in a tangible medium of expression. No publication, registration, or copyright notice is required to secure copyright. But even though registration is not a condition to copyright protection, you will get several important advantages by registering your work with the US Copyright Office and adding a copyright notice to your work. The most important benefits are: Before a copyright infringement suit can be filed in federal court, registration is necessary; timely registration and proper notice will make it easier to prove your case; and if registration is made within three months after publication of the work or prior to the infringement of the work, the court may award you statutory damages and attorney fees. Otherwise you will have to prove actual damages and loss of profits, which may be very hard to do.

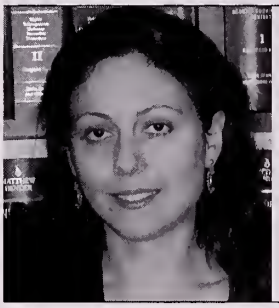
Registering your work with the Writers Guild of America (WGA) does not confer any of the statutory protection offered by the Copyright Office. The WGA acts as a depository for works and only provides a record of when the work was submitted.

In the case of works made for hire, the employer and not the employee is considered the author of the copyrighted work. A work-for-hire arrangement is only appropriate if you are writing as an employee within the scope of your employment (for example, a television series), or your work is specially commissioned for use as a contribution to a collective work or part of a motion picture or other audiovisual work. If you are employed by a company that is a signatory to the WGA, you may receive some rights of copyright (usually in the form of passive payments from subsequent productions based in whole or in part on your work) through "separation of rights," if you qualify as a "professional writer." To qualify, you must have received credit as a writer for any of the following: (i) a television or theatrical motion picture, (ii) three original stories or one teleplay for a television program at least a half-hour in length, (iii) three radio scripts for dramatic radio programs a half-hour in length, (iv) one professionally produced play, or one published novel, or (v) received employment for a total of thirteen weeks as a motion picture or television writer. The rights will differ, depending on whether you are writing for television or film. The WGA can help you figure out whether you are entitled to any such payments.

Copyright protects original works of authorship. If your work is based on someone else's story or book, you will only get copyright protection to the extent that you have added original elements to the preexisting work. This is especially important to know for authors who borrow extensively from public domain works. Public domain works are works of US authors first published in the US before January 1, 1923; or works published before 1964 that did not have their copyright term renewed; or works published before 1978 without the proper copyright notice. For European works, the cut-off date may be different, depending on the country of origin, but it is safe to say that all nineteenth-century and older works are in the public domain.

Under the current copyright law, it pays to live long. The term of copyright now lasts for the life of the author plus seventy years, and in the case of works made for hire, ninety-five years from publication.

Titles, names, short phrases, and slogans are not protected by copyright. If a particular title or character name is well known to the public and has acquired so



The essence of copyright law is to protect original artistic expression and to promote the progress of the arts. That is one of the reasons why ideas are not protected by copyright. Ideas are there to be used by everyone.

called "secondary meaning," it may be protected by trademark law. Producers can try to protect titles prior to release by publicizing the upcoming production with their title or by registering the title with the Title Registration Bureau of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). These rules are quite tricky, and the protection is not absolute. It is very hard for a writer to protect a title, so if you think you have a great one, you may want to not reveal it until you are about to sell it to a producer or studio that is likely to actually produce it. This way, no one will know about it until there is a way to protect it. The catch-22 here is that if the title is an important part of the package, you may be reducing the value of your work by not revealing the title to prospective purchasers.

Copyright does not protect facts and ideas. Facts and ideas are there to be used by everyone. For example, if you are writing a work which requires extensive research and use of material from existing works, as long as you are only borrowing the facts and not a particular interpretation of these facts, you are not violating the law. It may be difficult to ascertain whether something is a fact or a subjective interpretation of a single author. If the same interpretation is used by several authors writing on the same subject, it is more likely to be a fact, which cannot be copyrighted. In cases where the same interpretation appears in more than one book, it will be practically impossible to prove copyright infringement, since you may have taken the interpretation from any one of the authors. Also, stories and materials contained in the documents of court proceedings are not protected by copyright and may be used by anyone.

The essence of copyright law is to protect original artistic expression and to promote the progress of the arts. That is one of the reasons why ideas are not protected by copyright. Ideas are there to be used by everyone. None of the countless stories based on the Romeo and Juliet storyline infringe on copyright. We live in a world where certain concepts and plots are universal and where several people may come up with the same idea in virtually the same time. For this reason, production companies and studios are reluctant to accept unsolicited scripts, fearing that the script may contain the same ideas that are already in development by the studios' own writers or may be in another unsolicited script sent to them. Studios do not want to find themselves subject to copyright infringement cases with authors claiming that certain things were lifted from their scripts which were sent to the studio. Companies try to protect themselves by accepting material only if it is sent by an agent or a lawyer and by requiring writers to sign submission releases. If you believe that your material contains unique ideas that need protection, it would be better to pitch them in person, then have your lawyer send it to the studio. At the meeting, in addition to pitching your project, leave a detailed copy of your materials, containing proper copyright notices. Always follow up with a letter thanking them for the meeting and expressing your hope they like your project and, should they decide to use any part of it, you will be compensated fairly.

Courts look at both the similarities and the differences when deciding whether work A illegally copied from work B. Before you rush to announce that your work has been ripped off, make a detailed comparison of the two works, listing both the similarities and the differences. This list will prove handy when you go to consult a copyright lawyer. If you find that the similarities do not go beyond the mere concept and ideas, and that there are a lot of differences in the plot, sequence, and pace of the story, it will be difficult to prove infringement. If, on the other hand, you find that the similarities go to the very core of your plot, and the borrowing is so extensive that the overall look and feel of the two works is the same, you may consider bringing a copyright infringement case. And if your work was registered with the copyright office in a timely fashion, and you win your case, you may end up making more money than if you had licensed your work in the first place.

Innes Smolansky is an entertainment attorney with Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard LLP. She specializes in entertainment and copyright matters, and also moderates AIVF's In Brief: Producer's Legal Series. This month's topic is "Buying or Selling a Screenplay" (see page 58). To reach her, write to innes@filmlegal.com.

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The World of Flash

Macromedia's program—past, present, and future

BY GREG GILPATRICK

THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERNET HAS VIRtually nothing in common with that of filmmaking. Originally, it consisted only of text messages. Small ones. Of course, that was back when the internet was seen only as a way to coordinate messages between military installations. A couple decades later, after the invention of the world wide web which most people think of as "The internet," the commercial exploitation of the net began in earnest. Several people in the technology business, taking a cue from Napoleon's phrase, "One must first speak to the eyes," developed a theory that one of the keys to widescale success on the web would be the ability to deliver an experience that mimicked television. Enter Flash, the animation system most widely used for the creation of multimedia content on the web. Applying Flash is not the same as making a film. And filmmakers hoping to effortlessly turn their creative prowess to the internet will probably not be as comfortable with the technology as they would hope. However, with an open Flash standard that allows different companies to make specialized Flash creation programs that appeal more to film and video makers, it is easier than ever for a person with a story to tell to use Flash.

ShockWave Flash-based media, also known as SWF (pronounced "swiff") betrays the plain text underpinnings of the internet by using a technique to deliver animation in relatively small files. One of the major challenges to creating multimedia content for the internet is that the connections between homes and the internet are not fast enough to deliver the large files that video and audio content need. Flash gets around that limitation by using a technique called "vector imaging" that stores images in mathematical terms. To put it simply, a SWF file, in mathematical terms, would say, "Draw a 5 x 5 circle with a red outline and blue fill," and the Flash plug-in in the viewer's web browser would draw the circle. Vector imaging holds several advantages over traditional imaging methods, not the least of which is that Vector images can be infinitely enlarged without a loss in quality, since they are mathematically described.

There is a side effect to Flash's vector imaging roots. Flash images and animation are reminiscent of children's illustrations with its smooth lines, geometric shapes, and perfect patches of color. This look is not simply an aesthetic choice amongst Flash animators, but a consequence of Flash's vector underpinnings. Since the images and animation created with Flash are transmitted in mathematical terms, they are reproduced with flawless lines, colors, and movement. The style is fitting for much of the animation on the internet, but it has trouble showing

Flix: Video's Online Fix

Flash's vector imaging system has a problem with video. It's not Flash's fault; it has to do with the way that vector imaging works. The complexities of the natural world are too much to describe effectively within the mathematical language of vector imaging, but this hasn't stopped at least one company from trying to bring video to the vectorized world. Wildform's Flix video encoder analyzes video clips and then turns them into vectorized SWF files that can be imported into another Flash authoring program or watched over the web.

Flix is relatively easy to use, although there are a significant number of buttons, sliders, and controls in the top-of-the-line version, Flix Pro ($149), that may take a little experimenting with to get used to. Wildform has added several features to generate traditional video that will play within the Flash architecture but, Flix's main strength remains its ability to turn video into Flash vector animations.

Flix works by analyzing the images of the video and finding the shapes and swaths of color in the image that can be described mathematically. The resulting output looks reminiscent of the rotoscoped video of *Waking Life*, but without the stylistic human touches. For a better idea of how it looks, peruse Wildform's website (www.wildform.com) which has examples of what Flix does to video.

With only a modest amount of experience with the program, Flix can be coaxed into creating Flash files that look reasonably close to the original video. That's not to say that a vectorized video can replace traditional video, but it does provide a relatively easy way to deliver video-like content on the internet without the complexities and cost of streaming video. Considering the program's reasonable price, videomakers transitioning to Flash animation should strongly consider adding Flix to their collection of software tools.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR; FACING PAGE, KINYA HANADA.

The smooth lines and basic shapes of Kinya Hanada's animated website, www.mumbleboy.com, is typical of Flash.

anything more lifelike. Realistic images and video are probably better shown with video software like RealPlayer and QuickTime. However, there are products that are trying to bring the video into the vector world.

SWF files are most commonly associated with the first product to author the files, Macromedia's Flash MX ($699). Since Macromedia opened the SWF standard to other groups, a number of products have been introduced that can be used to create SWF files. Flash is still the most popular among professional SWF artists, but its tools and interface are designed for people creating websites and interactive media. There are a wide variety of choices, such as illustration programs like Illustrator and Freehand, 3D animation programs, and a variety of others created just for SWF animation. There are also low-cost programs like Swish ($50) and others like it found at the website openswf.org. And there are specialized SWF applications designed especially for film and videomakers and narrative storytellers, like Flix and ToonBoom Studio. (See sidebars)

Creating Flash animation is not as easy as one would hope. With the possible exception of Flix, all the SWF authoring tools are difficult to use for anything beyond the most basic animation. A first-time Flash animator has a wide variety of programs to choose from. Since Macromedia's Flash MX is the most widely used program virtually the entire market for SWF-media training books focuses on it. But Flash MX's strength is in its ability to create interactive websites. It is not as efficient at creating narrative animation as other programs such as ToonBoom Studio, Flix, and Amorphium Pro (Electric Image, $199). Thankfully, nearly all the SWF authoring tools are available for testing before you have to buy the pro-

Creating Flash animation is not as easy as one would hope . . . all the SWF authoring tools are difficult to use for anything beyond the most basic animation.

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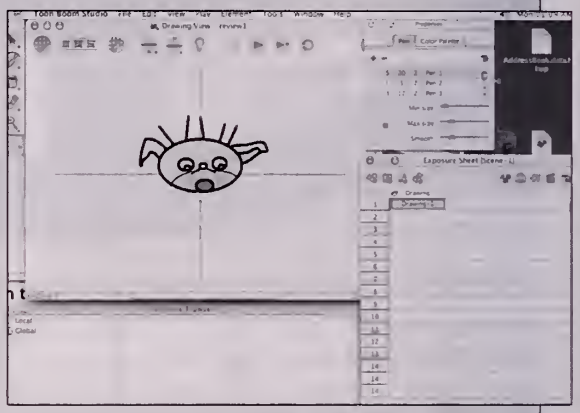
Narrative Animation in Flash

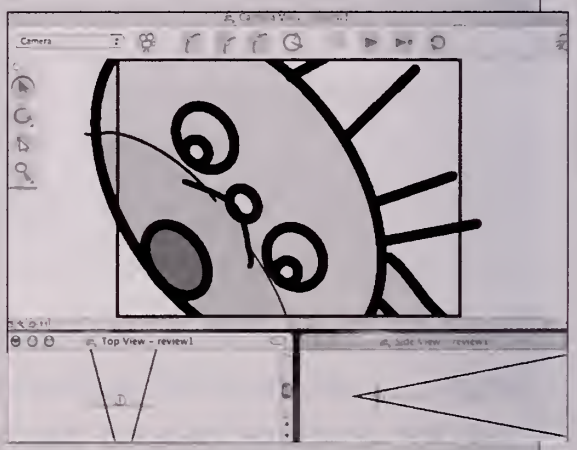
Until recently, Macromedia's Flash program has had to juggle several personalities, since it is used to create everything from banner ads for websites to episodic animations attempting to mimic television. But since Macromedia disclosed the Flash standard to the world, in addition to inexpensive Flash knock-offs, several new programs have been released that solve particular Flash weaknesses. For instance, Flash's interface was never particularly friendly toward narrative animation. To address this problem, ToonBoom Technologies, the creator of US Animation, the leading software for professional cel animation, introduced ToonBoom Studio ($374) a product designed specifically for people creating narrative animation in Flash.

ToonBoom applied its expertise in creating tools for traditional animation to the Flash process, and the result is a powerful system for creating narrative animation for the internet and even video.

ToonBoom Studio breaks the Flash process into a workflow that mimics traditional animation. Characters, background items, and actions are drawn and sequenced in one part of the program and then these elements are imported in another part that simulates a traditional multi-plane animation stand. One impressive ToonBoom Studio tool includes an automatic dialogue synchronizer that analyzes audio and matches it to the mouth movements of characters.



Although ToonBoom is optimized for telling stories with Flash, it will not be an easy tool for many animators to learn to use. Like Flash, ToonBoom Studio will probably seem alien to traditional animators. Unfortunately, there are no books available to provide training in ToonBoom. And while there is in-depth electronic documentation shipped with ToonBoom Studio, it only provides information about the program, without really guiding a new user through the process. If you plan to use ToonBoom Studio for your animation, expect at least a few days of experimentation and frustration while learning to use the program.



ToonBoom Studio's interface is designed especially for creating narrative animation.

Despite its steep learning curve, ToonBoom Studio is a vast improvement over Flash MX for creating narrative animation. If storytelling is your goal with Flash media ToonBoom wins out over Flash MX or its competitors because it eschews the confusing tools and paradigms of interactivity and programming and focuses squarely on delivering tools for telling stories. In addition, animations created in ToonBoom can be easily transferred to regular video. Instructions for transferring animations to iMovie and other video formats can be found on ToonBoom's website.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

gram. Before investing your money and time in a new animation tool, consider what type of content you want to create, and whether the program you are considering is the best solution for you.

One of the great advantages of Flash media is that it is relatively easy to distribute over the internet. SWF files can be served by just about every type of web server, so you don't need to pay for a special service from your web hosting company as you would with streaming video. But you may want to pick a web host that provides a relatively large amount of bandwidth every month, since your SWF files may add up if they become very popular.

As far as viewing goes, SWF files can be embedded into a web page and viewed by anyone that has the Shockwave Flash plug-in installed. Macromedia distributes the plug-in for free from their website, and it is a good idea to link to that site from yours so that people without the plug-in know where to get it. Be wary of posting any content that requires downloading without an introduction, though. Instead create an introductory page with information about your SWF media project—what it is, how long it is, how big the file is, and how long it will take to download for certain connection speeds. This way viewers can choose whether they have the time and inclination to download your Flash film. It's the courteous thing to do.

Create an introductory page with information about your SWF media project—what it is, how long it is, how big the file is, and how long it will take to download for certain connection speeds . . . It's the courteous thing to do.

The internet is not television. Many companies have gone bankrupt finding that out. However, the internet has become a haven for small Flash animations and games. Posting a Flash movie on the web will probably not make you famous or bring in any money, but it is an efficient and realistic way to publish film-like media with a potential audience of millions. In that way, Flash animations may be some of the most independent media in the world.

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To reach him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

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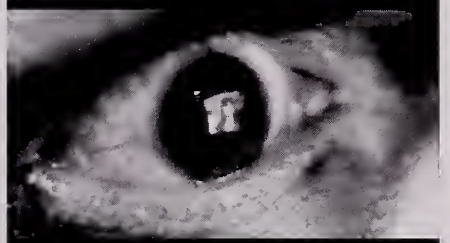
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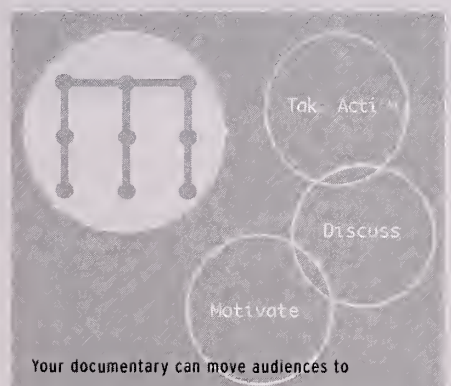

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DOMESTIC

BARE BONES INT'L INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 21-27, OK. Deadline: Dec. 15; Jan. 15 (late). Projects budgeted for less than a million dollars are eligible to enter the fest. Seven days of screenings, workshops, screenplay readings, location tour, youth film projects. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, script, music video, student, youth media. Awards: Auteur of the Year, Audience Choice Award, Grand Jury Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, Super 8, 8mm, Hi8, DV, No PAL. Entry Fee: $30 (shorts); $40 (features). Contact: Shiron Butterfly Ray, 401 West Broadway, Ste. 308, Muskogee, OK 74401; (918) 391-1313; fax: (775) 307-1545; bare bonesfilmfest@yahoo.com; www.barebonesfilmfest.com.

CHICAGO LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, April 4-16, IL. Deadline: Dec. 13. Some of the best productions from Latin America, Spain, Portugal, the US & other countries. Over 100 feature films, shorts & videos.The fest is produced in cooperation w/ Columbia College. Founded: 1987. Cats: Feature, Short, children, family, student, youth media, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: Audience Choice $5,000 cash. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25. Contact: Int'l Latino Cultural Center of Chicago, Columbia College, 600 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 431-1330; fax: 344-8030; clc@colum.edu; www.latinoculturalcenter.org.

CUCALORUS FILM FESTIVAL, March 19-23, NC. Deadline: Dec. 10 (early); Jan 10 (final). The annual Cucalorus Film Festival is held in historic downtown Wilmington, NC. It is a non competitive showcase; all formats genres & lengths are accepted. Cucalorus is known as a "summer camp" for filmmakers, w/ tours of Screen Gems Studios, Joe Dunton's Camera House & numerous panel discussions throughout the week. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, any style or genre. Awards: Non competitive. Formats: all. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: $20(early); $30 (final). Contact: Dan Brawley, 420 Orange Street, Wilmington, NC 28401; (910) 343-5995; fax: 343-5227; info@cucalorus.org; www.cucalorus.org.

DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 15-19, TX. Deadline: Jan 8; Jan. 22 (late) Annual fest is one of the largest and most diversified video fests in the US, providing a showcase for new works by national, international, and regional independent video artists. Over 200 screenings, plus installations, computer-based applications, exhibits, panel discussions, and workshops for adults and children are presented simultaneously in multiple areas. No thematic or content restrictions. Fest also accepts multimedia entries for the interActive Zone (CD-ROM, CD-I, 3DO, hypertext, etc.) and short digital videos to run on its website. Founded: 1987. Cats: Any style or genre, experimental, doc, animation, music video, feature, multimedia. Awards: Non-cash Audience Award. Formats: Beta SP preferred; will accept 3/4", 1/2", CD-ROM, digital video, S-VHS, Hi-8, Web, for extra $5, 3/4", Beta SP (preferred, all other formats add $5), Hi8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30 (members of the Video Assoc. of Dallas); $40 (nonmembers). Contact: Bart Weiss, director, 1405 Woodlawn Ave., Dallas, TX 75208; (214) 428-8700; fax: 428-8702; info@videofest.org; www.videofest.org.

Nashville Nightingale

What began in 1969 as the humble Sinking Creek Film Festival has evolved into the Nashville Independent Film Festival, one of the oldest festivals in the US. Boasting a panel of judges that has included the likes of John Waters, Lily Tomlin, Matthew McConaughey, Barbara Kopple, Bill Plympton, Michael Moore, and D.A. Pennebaker, the Nashville Independent Film Festival supports works that are "personal and artistic statements." The festival's top prize, the Dreammaker Award, entitles the winning 35mm feature film to a week's run in a Los Angeles County Regal Cinema theater (2002 winner *Paradox Lake*, pictured). The LA screening also qualifies the film for Academy Award consideration. See listing.

EAST LANSING FILM FESTIVAL, March 19-23, MI. Deadline: Dec. 1; Dec. 15 (late). The largest, most diverse film fest in Michigan screens all genres of independent & foreign films. Cats: feature, doc, short, student, children. Awards: "Michigan's Own film Competition" awarding all cats w/ cash/prizes. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $15-25; $25-35 (late). Contact: Susan Woods, P.O. Box 4880, East Lansing, MI 48826; (517) 336-5802; fax: 336-2750; susanwoods@elff.com; www.elff.com.

FULL FRAME DOC FILM FESTIVAL, April 10-13, NC. Deadline: Dec. 2; Dec. 9 (late). Formerly the Double Take Film Festival, the fest "celebrates the power & artistry of doc film." The four-day event takes place at the historic Carolina Theatre in downtown Durham, North Carolina, w/ morning to midnight screenings, panel discussions, seminars, Q&A sessions. Works must have been completed in the past yr. & cannot be longer than 180 min. Cats: doc. preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35; $50 (late). Contact: Connie Di Cicco, 212 West Main St.; Ste. 104, Durham, NC 27701; (919) 687-4100; connie@fullframefest.org; www.fullframefest.org.

GEN ART FILM FESTIVAL, April 2-8, NY. Deadline: Dec. 20 (early); Jan. 17 (final). Gen Art is New York City's foremost curated, non competitive fest championing American independent film & its audiences. Fest offers gala New York premieres attended by enthusiastic filmgoers, critics & industry professionals followed each night by a spectacular party at one of Manhattan's trendiest nightspots. No works in progress will be shown. Founded: 1996. Cats: animation, feature, experimental, short, doc. Awards: Audience Favorite Award incls. $25,000 worth of goods & services. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: $15 shorts, $20 (late); $25 features, $30 (late)—$5 discount for w/outabox.com members. Contact: Jeffrey Abramson, 133 W. 25th Street, 6th Fl., New York, NY 10001; (212) 255-7300, ext. 505; fax: (212) 255-7400; film@genart.org; www.genart.org.

KANSAS CITY FILMMAKERS JUBILEE, April 1-6, KS. Deadline: Dec. 1 (early); Jan. 15 (final). Annual event open to domestic & int'l short films 30 min. or less. With screenings, seminars, receptions, jazz & BBQ, the fest promises "a laid-back environment where filmmakers can mix, share & celebrate their hard work & creativity." Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, 8mm, underground. Awards: Top film in each genre will win at least $1,000 of cash or prizes. Fest awarded over $66,000 in cash & prizes in the last four years. Formats: all formats accepted. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $25 (final). Contact: KCFJ, 4826 W. 77th Terrace, Prairie Village, KS 66208; (913) 649-0244; kcJub@kcjubilee.org; www.kcjubilee.org.

LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 16-23, CA. Deadline: Dec. 14 (early); Jan. 11 (final). Fest was established in 1983 to promote & present best in Asian Pacific cinema & has grown from a two-weekend event consisting of a dozen films to a major showcase presenting nearly 100 productions by Asian Pacific American & Asian Int'l media makers. World & local premieres of major new works, media panels & a wide variety of special events have become important elements of this world-class event which attracts audiences from throughout Southern California & the world. Works in all genres by Asian & Pacific Americans w/ themes involving, but not limited to, Asian Pacific American culture, history & experiences are welcome & encouraged. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Golden Reel Award for Best Short Film; New Visions Award for Innovation in Filmmaking; Adience Awards for Best Short & Feature-Length film. Formats: Super 8, 16mm, 35mm, 3/4", Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: U.S. $20 (early), $30 (final); Int'l $30 (early); $40 (final). Contact: Fest Dir., c/o Visual Communications, 120 Judge John Aiso St., Basement Level, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462 x68; fax: 687-4848; viscom@apanet.org; www.vconline.org/filmfest.

METHOD FEST INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 11-18, CA. Deadline: Dec. 15 (early); Feb. 1 (late).

Named for the 'Stanislavski Method,' fest highlights the great performances of independent film. Seeking story-driven films w/ outstanding acting performances. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, student, children. Awards: Sculpted statuettes in various cats, film services & 5,000 feet of Fuji Motion Picture Film to winning film. Awards to Best Actor, Actress, Screenplay. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DV, DigiBeta, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Student: $25; Shorts: $30 (early), $40 (late); Features: $40 (early), $50 (late). Contact: c/o Franken Enterprises, 880 Apollo St., Ste. 337, El Segundo, CA 90245; (310) 535-9230; fax: 535-9128; Don@methodfest.com; www.methodfest.com.

MIAMI GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, April 25-May 5, FL. Deadline: Dec. 14; Jan. 11 (late). Annual fest is seeks work of all genres, lengths & formats incl. dramatic, doc & experimental works, by, about and/or of interest to lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered communities. Previous fests have drawn audiences of over 7,000 w/ films screened from around the world. Works must be Miami premieres; awards given in numerous cats. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25; $35 (late). Contact: Philip Matthews, Festival Director, 1521 Alton Rd. #147, Miami Beach, FL 33139; (305) 534-9924; fax: 535-2377; festinfo@the-beach.net; www.miamigaylesbianfilm.com.

NASHVILLE INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 28-May 4, TN. Deadline: Dec. 6 (early); Jan. 6 (final). Formerly the Sinking Creek Film & Video Festival, fest is the longest-running film fest in the South w/ an int'l reputation for its support & encouragement of independent media. Festival programs over 150 films & provides high-end industry level workshops. Fest incl. workshops, panels, screenings, parties & closing awards ceremony. Founded: 1969. Cats: incl. short narrative, animation, doc, feature, student, experimental, young filmmakers, TV (episodic & pilots only), family/children, short, youth media, children. Awards: Cash prizes awarded for all cats plus a special award, The Regal Cinema/Nashville Independent Film Festival Dreammaker Award which grants the award-winning film a week's run in a Regal Cinema in Los Angeles county, also qualifies the winner for Academy Award consideration. 1st prize in the short narrative & animation cats also qualifies winner for Academy Award consideration. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $10 (young filmmaker—high school or younger); $30/$35 (under 60 min.); $40/$50 (over 60 min.). Contact: Mandy McBroom, Admin Asst., Box 24330, Nashville, TN 37202; (615) 742-2500; fax: 742-1004; niffilm@bellsouth.net; www.nashvillefilmfest.org.

NEW ARTS PROGRAM BIENNIAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 2001-Aug. 2003, PA. Deadline: December 16. The New Arts Program is a non profit art resource organization committed to providing the general public w/ educational opportunities w/ artists from the performing, literary & visual arts. The winning videos will be shown to the public in New York City, Philadelphia, Reading, Lehigh Valley & other venues upon request. Founded: 1995. Cats: Doc, Experimental. Awards: up to $2,100. Formats: S-VHS, DVD. Preview on VHS. Contact: James Carroll, P.O. Box 82, 173 Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530; (610) 683-6440; fax: 683-6440.

NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 5-15, NY. Deadline: Dec. 20 (early); Feb. 17 (final). Committed to presenting diverse & culturally inclusive programs, fest showcases all genres of film, video & new digital media (incl. dramatic features & shorts, docs & experimental works) by, for, or of interest to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, or transgendered persons. Jury awards incl. proposals for lecture & film-clip presentations, curated film/video programs & interactive media installations also accepted. Founded: 1989. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short. Awards: Jury awards for Best Narrative Feature, Best Feature Doc & Best Short, Audience Award. Formats: Digital, CD-ROM, 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $20 (early); $25 (final). Contact: Basil Tsiokos, 32 Broadway, 14 Fl., New York, NY 10004; (212) 558-6855; fax: 558-6851; info@newfest.org; www.newfest.org.

NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-11, NY. Deadline: Dec. 1 (early); Dec. 15 (final). NYC's premiere showcase for films that go beyond mainstream expectations & commercial concerns. VARIETY calls the fest "the outer fringes of independent cinema." Fest seeks "innovation, experimentation, documentation, animation, revelation & reverberation" & "movies that go beyond all expectations, incl. ours." Founded: 1994. Cats: narrative feature, narrative short, doc, experimental, animation. Awards: Juried prizes for Best Feature, Best Short, Best doc, Best Animation, Best Experimental, plus the Festival Choice Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Super 8, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $30; $35. Contact: Ed Halter, 195 Chrystie Street, #503, New York, NY 10002; (212) 614-2775; fax: 614-2776; fest@nyuff.com; www.nyuff.com.

NOISE POP FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 27-March 3, CA. Deadline: Dec. 20. Annual Fest, part of the Noise Pop music Festival, will consider at any kind of film or video, but it must have a connection to music, either in its subject matter, the talent behind or in front of the camera, or a really prominent soundtrack. Founded: 1999. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video. Preview on VHS or DVD. No entry fee. Contact: Festival, 375 Alabama St., Ste 490, San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 821-7204; www.noisepop.com.

NOT STILL ART FESTIVAL, April, NY. Deadline: Dec. 15. Annual fest invites media artists working in abstract & non-narrative electronic motion imaging, in conjunction w/ music/sound design, to submit programs. Fest is interested in work made w/ all technologies, the primary criterion being the aesthetic of the electronic screen. There is no restriction as to the date of production. Founded: 1996. Cats: Non-narrative, Electronic Imaging, Abstract. Awards: non competitive. Preview on mini-DV. Contact: NSAF, Box 496, 33 Lancaster St., Cherry Valley, NY 13320; (607) 264-3476; fax: 264-3476; nsa@improvart.com; www.improvart.com/nsa.

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 17-May 1, CA. Deadline: Nov. 15 (early); Dec. 13 (final). Founded in 1957 & the oldest film fest in America, SFIFF is presented each spring by the San Francisco Film Society showcasing approx. 200 features, docs & shorts; fest is dedicated to highlighting current trends in int'l film & video, w/an emphasis on work w/out US distrib. Fest has two sections: the invitational, noncompetitive section for

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recent features, archival presentations, retros & special awards & tributes recognizing individual acheivement; & the competitive section for doc, shorts, animation, experimental & TV. Founded: 1957. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media, TV, any style or genre. Awards: incl. Golden Gate Award w/ $500 cash & certificates of merit. All Golden Gate winners in the film & video, New Visions & Bay Area Divisions will compete during the fest for Grand Prize awards for Best Doc, Best Bay Area Doc, Best Short & Best Bay Area Short. Grand Prize awards incl. $1,000 in cash. Narrative features by emerging filmmakers eligible for the SKYY Prize, a juried cash award of $10,000 for outstanding filmmaking. Audience awards incl. Best Narrative Feature, Best Doc Feature. Noncompetitive awards incl. Akira Kurosawa Award; Peter J. Owens Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP, 70mm. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: $15-$200 (depending on category of film or video). Contact: Programming Dept., 39 Mesa St., Ste. 110, The Presidio, San Francisco, CA 94129-1025; (415) 561-5000; fax: 561-5099; programming@sffs.org; www.sffs.org.

SEDONA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 28-March 2, AZ. Deadline: Dec. 6. Annual fest features the finest in current American & int'l independent cinema, tributes, panel discussons & an in-depth workshop. The fest mission is to present & support the best in contemporary int'l & domestic independent cinema, tributes, panel discussions & an in-depth workshop. Cats: dramatic & doc (features & shorts), animation, feature, short, doc, script. Awards: Audience choice—Best of Festival for full-length & short films. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (shorts, 30 min. & under); $50 (features); Contact: Festival, 50 Cultural Park Place, Sedona, AZ 86336; (800) 780-2787 or (520) 282-0747; fax: 282-5358; filmfest@sedonaculturalpark.org; www.sedonafilmfest.com.

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST FILM FESTIVAL, March 7-15, TX. Deadline: Nov. 15 (early); Dec. 19 (final). US & int'l independent film & video fest & conference showcases over 200 shorts & features for audiences estimated at 30,000 over 9 days. Entries must be completed in 2000 or early 2001 & must not have previosuly screened in Austin, TX, to be eligible for consideration. Film Conference kicks off the event, featuring four days of panel discussions geared toward working film & videomakers as well as screenwriters, aspiring professionals & aficionados. 3-day trade show incl. equipment & service providers, digital editing suite, & the latest in film & video technology. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Animation, Music Video, short. Awards: Narr. Feature, Narr. Short, Doc. Feature, Doc. Short, Anim. Short, Exp. Short, Music Video, Audience Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $25/$30 (shorts); $30/$40 (features). Contact: Angela Lee, 1000 E. 40th St., Austin, TX 78751; (512) 467-7979; fax: 467-0737; film@sxsw.com; www.sxsw.com/film.

SPINDLETOP/LAMAR UNIVERSITY FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 1-2, TX. Deadline: Dec. 16. Annual fest is dedicated to bringing to light the work of new & emerging filmmakers. Enjoy workshops & master classes w/ writers, directors & industry professionals. The fest is known for the networking & contact opportunities it provides for participants. Cats: experimental, feature, narrative, "1st time/novice" filmmaker, music video, animation, "old timers." Formats: 16mm, Super 8, DigiBeta, Beta SP, Beta, 1/2", S-VHS, 3/4", Hi8, DV, U-matic. Entry Fee: $20; $15 (student). Contact: O'Brien Stanley, Dept. of Communication/Lamar University, P.O. Box 10050 , Beaumont, TX 77710; (409) 880-7222; stanleyoo@hal.lamar.edu; www.spinfest.org.

TAMBAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 10-13, FL. Deadline: Dec. 16. Festival strives to present work to the public, potential distributor & other filmmakers, as well as creating a film forum for Florida filmmaking. Founded: 1999. Awards: cash & non-cash prizes in Best New Director, Reel Humanitarian Award, Best of Show & Jury Award cats. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, S-VHS, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $35 (35mm); $30 (16mm/all video formats); $25 (student). Contact: TFVF, P.O. Box 340367, Tampa, FL 33694; (813) 964-9781; Tambayfilm@yahoo.com; www.tambayfilmfest.com.

U.S. COMEDY ARTS FESTIVAL, Feb. 26-March 2, CO. Deadline: Dec. 6. Festival is the annual HBO-sponsored event held in Aspen, Colorado, that features the best comedic film, theater, stand-up, & sketch to an industry-heavy audience. Approximately 25 features & 25 shorts are selected from over 800 submissions. Cats: Feature, Short (under 60 min.). Formats: 35mm, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Film Program, 2049 Century Park East, Ste. 4200, L.A., CA 90067; (310) 201-9595; fax: 201-9445; kevin.haasarud@hbo.com; www.hbocomedyfest.com.

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 17-24, CA. Deadline: Nov. 22 (early); Dec. 18 (late). Visual Communications, the nation's premier Asian Pacific American media arts center, established fest as a vehicle to promote Asian & Asian Pacific American cinema. The fest has grown from its beginnings as a weekend series into an annual showcase presenting the best of Asian Pacific American & Asian int'l media in the United States. Founded: 1983. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 8mm, Beta SP, 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Early: $20 US, $30 Intl; Late: $30 US; $40 Intl. Contact: Festival Director, 120 Judge John Aiso St., Los Angeles, CA 90012-3805; (213) 680-4462; fax: 687-4848; info@vconline.org; www.vconline.org.

WISCONSIN FILM FESTIVAL, March 27-30, WI. Deadline: Dec 2 (early); Dec 20 (final); Student: Jan 24. Presented by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute. The fest features talks, panels, filmmaker discussions & showcases the work of Wisconsin filmmakers. Cats: feature, doc, short, student. Awards: Jury prizes in each category (Student/Wisconsin's Own/General). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: short: $15, $20 (late); feature: $25, $30 (late). Contact: University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute, 6038 Villas Hall, 821 University Ave., Madison, WI 53706; (877) 963-FILM; info@wifilmfest.org; www.wifilmfest.org.

WORLDFEST HOUSTON INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 4-14, TX. Deadline: Early: Nov 15; Regular: Dec 15; Late: Jan 15. WorldFest has reduced the number of films screened to a maximum of 60 feature & 100 short premieres, w/ a total & absolute emphasis on American & Int'l Independent feature films. Fest honors films from Mexico, Canada, France & Germany. Associated market for features, shorts, documetaries, video, independent/experimental & TV. Fest also offers 3-day seminars

on writing, producing & directing, plus distribution & finance. Founded: 1961. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, experimental, animation, music video, student, youth media, TV, children, family. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS, DigiBeta, U-matic, DVD, CD-ROM, Web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: $40-$90. Contact: Team Worldfest, Entry Director, Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256; (713) 965-9955; fax: (713) 965-9960; mail@worldfest.org; www.worldfest.org.

International

CRETEIL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, March 21-30, France. Deadline: Dec. 20. One of world's oldest fests of films by women & one of most important showcases. In Paris suburb of Créteil, fest annually attracts audiences of over 40,000, incl. filmmakers, journalists, distributors & buyers. Controversial & critical discussions traditionally part of proceedings. Sections: competition, retro of modern woman director, young cinema, int'l program. Special event for 2002: Latina Filmmakers. Competitive section selects 10 narrative features, 10 feature docs & 30 shorts. All films shown 3 times. U.S. preselection made by fest's US reps B. Reynaud & E. Hesik. Films must be directed or co-directed by women; completed since March 1, 2000; not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV or shown at other French fests. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Fest pays for filmmaker's accomodation (3 days) & round-trip shipping for films selected. Founded: 1977. Cats: doc. Awards: Total of 10 prizes, incl. cash, equipment & facilities access & a script development fund. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC only). No entry fees. Contact: Jackie Buet / Saioa Riba, AFIFF- Maison des Arts de Créteil, Place Salvador Allende, Creteil, France 94000; 33-49-80-3898; fax: 43-99-0410; filmfemmes@wanadoo.fr; www.filmsdefemmes.com.

HOT DOCS CANADIAN INT'L DOC FILM FESTIVAL, April 25-May 4, Ontario. Deadline: Dec. 14. Competitive fest which celebrates Canadian & int'l doc filmmaking, encourages an appreciation & awareness of the doc genre. Over 80 docs are screened in four programs incl. Canadian Spectrum, Int'l Showcase, Lifetime Achievement Award Retrospective & in 2001 Spotlight on the Nordic Countries. Entry & registration forms avail. on website. Cats: Doc. Awards: Various awards given. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Int'l entry fee: U.S. $35. Contact: Hot Docs, 517 College St., Ste. 420, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 4A2; (416) 203-2155; fax: 203-0446; info@hotdocs.ca; www.hotdocs.ca.

OPORTO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL/FANTASPORTO, Feb. 24-Mar. 1, Portugal. Deadline: Dec. 15. Fest debuted in 1981; now competitive fest for features that focus on mystery, fantasy & sci-fi. Official Section competition for fantasy films; Directors' Week, competition for 1st & 2nd films (no thematic strings); Out of Competition for Films of the World, info & retro sections. Festival runs in 4 theaters w/ 2,000 seats altogether & screens nearly 250 features & shorts. Entries must have been completed in previous 2 years. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). No entry fee. Contact: Mario Dorminsky, Director, c/o Cinema Novo, Rua Anibal Cunha, 84 - sala 1.6, Porto, Portugal 4050-048; 011 351 222 076 050; fax: 351 222 076 059; info@fantasporto.online.pt; www.fantasporto.online.pt.

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Competitions

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS: Bridging the gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: 1st place $1,500; 2nd place $1,000; 3rd place $500. Plus script analysis, film courses & conferences. Entry fee: $55. Deadline: monthly. Contact: Hollywood Columbus Screenplay Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., Ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1882; fax 475-0193; www.Hollywoodawards.com.

SCREENWRITING SHOWCASE AWARDS: The 8th Annual $10,000 Screenwriting Contest will be held Feb. 15, 2003. The winning scripts will get professional coverage, established industry contracts, and also possibly see their script optioned by an independent production company. Fee $40. Log on to www.screenwritingawards.com to enter. Deadline is Dec. 15.

SHORT FILM SLAM: NYC's only weekly short film competition is looking for submissions. Competition on Sundays at 2 p.m., at the end of each show the audience votes for a winning film, which receives further screenings at the Pioneer Theater. To enter, must have a film, 30 minutes or less, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater during operating hours and sign up, or get in touch with Jim at (212) 254-7107 or jim@twoboots.com.

WASHINGTON STATE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION: Competition will accept feature-length scripts from writers throughout North America. All submited scripts must be formatted according to industry standards set by the Writers Guild of America-West and copyrighted. Scripts will be evaluated through a multi-tiered judging system that includes judges from the highest level of the motion picture industry. Winner will receive $1,500; two runners up will each receive $500 cash prizes. All top finalists will also receive Final Draft software as well as goods and services from the sponsors valued at over $500. Winners are announced in both *Variety* and *Hollywood Reporter*. Deadline: Dec. 9. Entry forms can be requested by calling (206) 260-1687. Entry fee is $35 per script. Writers may submit an unlimited number of scripts. For more info, log on to www.filmwashington.com.

Conferences • Workshops

DV EXPO WEST 2002: Taking place on December 9-12 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, the conference coveres all you need to know to create great digital video. Highlights include a dedicated Motion Graphics mini-conference; full- and half- day sessions on making DVDs, lighting for DV, and audio tips. For more info contact Colin Zink, Marketing Manager, DV Media Group, (415) 947-6286, czink@cmp.com.

GV EXPO 2002: Taking place on December 4-5 at the Washington DC Convention Center, the expo will show off the best in video technology. Sessions include a hands-on forensic video lab, field production workshop, and ends with the keynote speaker General Hugh Shelton discussing the use of video technology in the military. Floor show free, to sign up for seminars, visit www.gvexpo.com.

TWN FILM & PRODUCTION WORKSHOP: Commencing its 26th year, a unique "hands-on" program. Workshop emphasizes training & support of people of color who have limited resources & access to mainstream educational institutions & traditional training programs. Intensive 6-month, 8-participant program focuses on preproduction, production & postproduction skills necessary to take a project from conception to completion. Prior film, video or related experience recommended but not required; self-initiative, time & collaborative spirit is. Initial written applic. required & second round of applicants selected for interviews. Cost: $500. Deadline: Jan. 24th. Workshop begins early April 2003. For applic. visit www.twn.org or send a S.A.S.E. to: Third World Newsreel, Production Workshop, 545 8th Ave., 10th fl., New York, NY 10018. For more info call (212) 947-9277 x301.

What's New in Noncommercial Video

Featuring top-of-the-line video technology, the Government Video Technology Expo, to be held Dec. 4–5 at the Washington, DC, Convention Center, is an ideal event for professionals in search of the best equipment for production studios, multimedia classrooms, videoconferencing, and security systems. There will be exhibits from all the industry leaders (Sony, Panasonic, Canon, Hitachi, JVC) as well as seminars dedicated to helping attendees advance their video knowledge. To sign up for the expo, log on to www.gvexpo.com. See listing.

Publications

SANCTUARY QUARTERLY: A literary magazine that aims to bring the art of screenwriting to a wider audience. *Sanctuary* is devoted exclusively to creative work—thoughtful, entertaining, meaningful screenplay writing by both established screenwriters and undiscovered talent. Writers are encouraged to submit excerpts of quality screenplays for publication. For more information, visit www.sanctuaryquarterly.com.

Films • Tapes Wanted

BIJOU MATINEE: A showcase for independent shorts. Program appears weekly on Channel 35, leased access Manhattan Cable South (below 86th St.) every Sat. at 2:30 p.m. Submissions should be 25 min. or less, VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com.

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA: The excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest and movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, and features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations and provide a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee: $25. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (773) 289-4261; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com.

CINEMARENO: A year-round festival of films. Nonprofit film society features monthly screenings showcasing independent films and videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: $20. Contact: CINEMARENO, P.O. Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513, e-mail: cinemareno@excite.com. Entry form and guidelines at www.cinemareno.org.

DREAM SERIES: Seeks challenging social-issue documentaries that promote frank community discussions about issues of racial prejudice and social injustice that fall under the Martin Luther King, Jr., legacy. Selected works are screened for this ongoing monthly series at the MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta, GA, and promoted, listed, and reviewed in local print. Formats: VHS, Beta. Send non returnable VHS screeners to Mark A. Smith, IMAGE Film & Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Suite N-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; mark@imagefv.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA: Located in Madison, WI, Electric Eye is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30- to 90-minute works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 minutes or less, any genre, to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; for more information go to www.prolefeedstudios.com.

ITVS OPEN CALL 2003: Seeks provocative, compelling stories from diverse points of view and communities.

Projects in any genre or on any stage of production—except finished works. Download applications and guidelines at www.itvs.org; deadline Feb. 14, 2003.

MAN VS. MACHINE: Film/Video-short competition. Concept is designed to contrast the best man made traditional short films against machine aided digital shorts. Open to any genre. Winners will be awarded prizes and will enter a juried show held at a New York City venue the second weekend of Febuary 2003. Entries close: January 31, 2003. Send $20 submission fee by check or money order to: Take 3 Films, Ste. 306, 7 East 8th St., New York, NY 10003; www.take3films.com.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE: Accepting short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or less on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a non exclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Works selected may continue on to nat'l and int'l venues for additional screenings. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled with name, title, length, phone #, and any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

MIND IGNITE: Imaginites, distributor of features and TV series in the US, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and South America, is looking for short films for a TV series. The show centers around short story concepts, and at the end of the season audiences will vote for their top ten short films. All shorts must be no longer than 28 minutes in length. Format, 35mm, 16mm, DV, mini-DV, SP, Super 8mm, 8mm. All genres welcome. Along with film, the filmmaker must also submit a press kit, clearance for all music and sound, artistic release, and signed non exclusive licensing agreement, which can be found on www.mindignite.com. See website. Deadline: December 6.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE: Accepts proposals for programs and completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS web page, producing for PBS, for content priorities and submission guidelines before submitting. Contact Cheryl Jones, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5150; fax 739-5295; cjones@pbs.org; www.pbs.org/producers.

SHORT FILM GROUP: Accepts shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screenings in Los Angeles. The group is a nonprofit organization created to promote short film as a means to itself. For more information, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHORT LIST: The showcase of int'l short films airs nat'lly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards five Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266 or send e-mail to ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc.

SHOW & TELL: Monthly film, video, music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music, and poetry, this event provides a much-needed venue to show the works and talents in a non-conventional loca-

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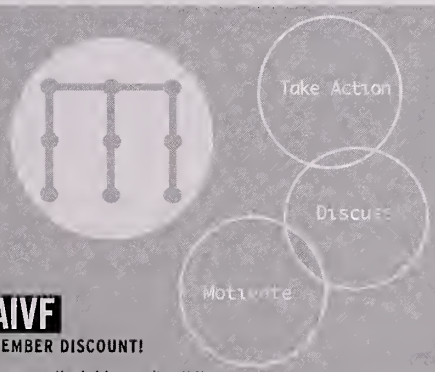

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SPARK VIDEO INTERNATIONAL: Spark Contemporary Art Space is a collectively run gallery in Syracuse, NY. Currently accepting submissions of short (under 15 min.) art videos for the next programming year (Sept. 2002 to April 2003). All types of independent non commercial work is accepted. International and domestic submissions are encouraged. All programs will be posted on the web, and all participating artists will be contacted. Accepted formats: VHS and DV. Processing Fee: $5, payable to Jeremy Drummond. Include synopsis, bio, CV and contact information. S.A.S.E. required for tape return. Send to: Video Programmer, Spark Contemporary Art Space, 535 Westcott St., Apt. #2, Syracuse, NY 13210. For more info e-mail jeremydrummond@hotmail.com or call (315) 422-2654.

SUB ROSA STUDIOS: Looking for a variety of different video and film productions for ongoing Syracuse-area TV programming and VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seeking shorts or feature-length nonfiction productions in all areas of the special-interest or instructional fields, cutting-edge documentaries, and children and family programming. Also seeking feature-length fiction, all genres, especially horror and sci-fi. Supernatural themed products wanted, both fiction and nonfiction, especially supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style (realistic). Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; webmaster@b-movie.com; (315) 454-5608; www.b-movie.com.

THEXPATCAFE TELEVISION SHOW: A screening venue for short independent film/video/new media produced artists, accepting submissions for the 2003 season. Work must be less than 20 min. in length. Mini DV and SVHS format only. Submission form is available for download at www.thexpatcafe.com.

TOTAL MOVIE MAGAZINE: Wants to see your shorts (under 20 minutes) and feature-length films for possible inclusion on the DVD that goes out with the magazine. Non exclusive rights; filmmakers get paid; wide distribution. Send (NTSC) VHS copy of the work to: Total Movie & Entertainment, Attn: Scott Epstein, 2400 N. Lincoln Ave., Altadena, CA 91001; (626) 296-6360; scott@digitalideations.com.

VIDEO/FILM SHORTS: Wanted for cutting-edge television station from Nantucket Island, Mass. Must be suitable for TV broadcast. Directors interviewed, tape returned w/ audience feedback. Accepting VHS/S-VHS, 15 min. max. S.A.S.E. to Box 1042, Nantucket, MA 02554; (508) 325-7935.

WIGGED.NET: A digital magazine that is a showcase, distributor, and promotion center for media artists via the World Wide Web. Seeking works created in Flash and Director as well as traditional animations and videos under 10 minutes to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

WORKSCREENING/WORKS PRODUCTIONS: Accepting submissions of feature/short documentaries and fiction films for upcoming inaugural season of weekly showcases of independent work streamed online as well as on our microcinema screen in New York City. Looking for alternative, dramatic, animation, etc. Submit VHS/S-VHS (NTSC please) labeled with name, title, length, phone number, e-mail, address & support materials, including screening list and festival history. Tapes and material will be returned only if you are not selected for showcase & you include an S.A.S.E. Contact Julian Rad, Works Productions/WorkScreening, 1586 York Ave, #1, New York, NY 10028; WORKSinfo@aol.com.

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO: Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands. Only NoodleHead Network distributes videos made with kids. Educational videos in all subjects. Check out our distributor FAQ at www.aivf.org/independent and get your students' voices heard. Contact: (800) 639-5680; www.noodlehead.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

AGAPE FOUNDATIONS DAVID R. STERN MEMORIAL FUND: Offers loans to film projects commited to nonviolent social change. $3,000 will be loaned for up to three months to filmmakers who promotes the use of nonviolence in their work. Applications are due by the last business day of each month. (415) 701-8707; agapefn@sirius.com.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION: Provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nationally by PBS. Childrens series are of particular interest. Consideration will also be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance educational outreach in schools and communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants have ranged from $100,000 to $500,000. Proposal guidelines available on website. Contact Dr. Jonathan T. Howe, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, 111 Riverside Ave., Ste. 130, Jacksonville, FL 32202-4921; www.jvm.com/davis; arthurvining@bellsouth.net.

CINEMAX REEL LIFE/HBO AMERICA UNDER-COVER: Reel life offers completion funds, and Under-Cover provides production funds for American independent documentaries. No entry form for either series. Contact: Greg Rhem at Cinemax or Nancy Abraham at HBO, (212) 512-1673; fax 512-8051.

FLICKER FILM GRANT: Flicker is a bimonthly short film festival held in 6 cities across the country. The Austin outlet offers film grants in the amount of $100 to local filmmakers working in Super 8 or 16mm. Send a short proposal to the Flicker near you (see the website below for contact info). Write to Flicker Austin, 7907 Doncaster Drive, Austin, TX 78745, or see www.flickeraustin.com.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION: Provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or int'l broadcast & focusing on an issue in one of the foundation's 2 major programs (human & community development; global security & sustainability). Send prelim. 2- to 3-pg letter. Contact John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org.

KQED-TV, SAN FRANCISCO: Provides in-kind post production assistance to a number of independent projects each year. Requirements: Subject must be compelling

and of interest to KQED's viewers, or attract new audiences. Material must pass technical evaluation for broadcast quality. Producer must supply rough cut for review. KQED also takes on a number of co productions each year. For more info, call (415) 553-2269.

NATHAN CUMMINGS FOUNDATION: Rooted in the Jewish tradition and committed to democratic values and social justice, including fairness, diversity, and community. Supporting artistic projects, including exhibitions and education outreach, that provide a deeper understanding of issues pertaining to health, the environment, and Jewish life. Grants range from $10,000 to $80,000. For more info, visit www.ncf.org.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Summer seminars & institutes for college & univ. teachers. Seminars incl. 15 participants working in collaboration w/ 1 or 2 leading scholars. Institutes provide intensive collaborative study of texts, historical periods & ideas for teachers of undergrad humanities. Info & appl. materials are avail. from project directors. Deadline is March 1st every year. Contact: (202) 606-8463; sem-inst@neh.gov; www.neh.gov.

NPTAP 2002: Accepting two-page proposals from any NAMAC member organization interested in receiving assistance from a peer consultant. Grants up to $2,000 each will be given. Each organization chosen will be required to provide matching equivalent (in-kind, cash, or combination of both) contribution to the award. NPTAP consultancy must be completed and reported by Dec. 15th. Proposals should be sent with cover letter to: National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, 346 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103. For more info, call (415) 431-1391; namac@namac.org.

PANAVISION'S NEW FILMMAKER PROGRAM: Donates 16mm camera packages to film projects, including graduate student thesis films, of any genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals five to six months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment and liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

PLAYBOY FOUNDATION MEDIA GRANTS: Interested in social change documentary film and video projects. The grants are from $1,000 to $5,000 and are limited to projects in post production. For more info visit www.playboyenterprises.com.

AIVF members can search all benefits, classifieds, and notices listings with the AIVF interactive resource directory at ww.aivf.org/listings

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THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational & animation programs for distribution. Send videocassettes or discs for evaluation to: The Cinema Guild, 130 Madison Ave., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 685-6242; gcrowdus@cinemaguild.com; Ask for our Distribution Services brochure.

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THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

To succeed as an independent you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. Whether through our service and education programs, the pages of our magazine, our web resource, or through the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while reminding you you're not alone.

About AIVF and FIVF

Offering support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) is a national membership organization that partners with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers a broad slate of education and information programs.

Information Resources

AIVF workshops and events cover the whole spectrum of issues affecting the field. Practical guides on festivals, distribution, exhibition and outreach help you get your film to audiences (see other part of insert).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a monthly magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus the field's best source of festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and services.

AIVF Online

Stay connected through www.aivf.org, featuring resource listings and links, web-original articles, media advocacy information, discussion areas, and the lowdown on AIVF services. Members-only features include interactive notices and festival listings, distributor and funder profiles, and archives of *The Independent*. SPLICE! is a monthly electronic newsletter that features late breaking news and highlights special programs and opportunities.

Insurance & Discounts

Members are eligible for discounted rates on health and production insurance offered by providers who design plans tailored to the needs of low-budget mediamakers. Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports over 20 member-organized, member-run regional salons across the country, to strengthen local media arts communities.

Advocacy

AIVF has been consistently outspoken about preserving the resources and rights of independent mediamakers. Members receive information on current issues and public policy, and the opportunity to add their voice to collective actions.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

INDIVIDUAL/STUDENT

Includes: one year's subscription to *The Independent* • access to group insurance plans • discounts on goods & services from national Trade Partners • online & over-the-phone information services • discounted admission to seminars, screenings, & events • book discounts • classifieds discounts • advocacy action alerts • eligibility to vote & run for board of directors • members-only web services.

DUAL MEMBERSHIP

All of the above benefits extended to two members of the same household, except the year's subscription to *The Independent* which is shared by both.

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All above benefits for up to three contacts, plus • discounts on display advertising • special mention in each issue of *The Independent*.

FRIEND OF FIVF

Individual membership plus $45 tax-deductible donation. Special recognition in *The Independent*.

JOINT MEMBERSHIPS

Special AIVF memberships are also available through AIVF Regional Salons as well as many local media arts organizations — for details call (212) 807-1400 x236.

LIBRARY SUBSCRIPTION

Year's subscription to *The Independent* for multiple readers, mailed first class. Contact your subscription service to order or call AIVF at (212) 807-1400 x501.

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Mail to AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl, New York, NY 10013; or charge by phone (212) 807-1400 x 503, by fax (212) 463-8519, or via www.aivf.org. Your first issue of *The Independent* will arrive in 4-6 weeks.

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* Your additional, tax-deductible contribution will help support the educational programs of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, a public 501(c)(3) organization.

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ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: Frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" in The Independent & other mags, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq, (212) 333-7000.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition, & educational projects of media). Successful proposals to NYSCA, NEA, NEH, ITVS, Soros, Rockefeller, Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation. Fast writers, reasonable rates. Wanda Bershen, (212) 598-0224; www.reddiaper.com; or Geri Thomas (212) 625-2011; www.artstaffing.com.

INDEPENDENT PICTURES: EXPERIENCED LINE PRODUCER available to help with your Detailed Budget, Script Breakdown, Shooting Schedule, and/or Day-out-of-Days. Specialty is low budget but high quality. Email AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates and references.

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FILM & VIDEO TEACHING POSITION starting September 2003. Funding pending. Cinema Department. Binghamton University. Tenure track. Rank Open. Salary Competitive. Seeking applicants who exhibit capacity for critical discourse and whose works demonstrate unique artistic approaches to teach production and film analysis courses. MFA or strong record of artistic achievement and teaching experience preferred. Send letter, names and numbers of three references, sample of work, resume, artist statement, philosophy of teaching and teaching evidence (syllabi, evaluations) to: Vincent Grenier, Chair, Cinema Department, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY 13902-6000 by December 17, 2002. vgrenier@binghamton.edu. Binghamton University is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Employer.

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CONSULTATION SERVICES FOR INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS. Shannon Kelley offers dynamic and constructive feedback about your screenplay or film (fiction or documentary). Extensive experience in festival programming (including Outfest and Sundance) and motion picture development ensure knowledgeable and relevant advice on your creative process or festival strategy. (323) 951-0242, or skelleyla@aol.com.

SU-CITY PICTURES clients win awards & get deals! Susan Kouguell, Tufts instructor, author The Savvy Screenwriter analyzes: scripts/films/treatments/queries/synopses/pitches. Over 1,000 clients worldwide inc: Miramax, Warner Bros, FineLine. Rewrites available. (212) 219-9224; www.su-city-pictures.com.

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AIVF ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

when: **December 2, 8–10 PM**
where: **AIVF**

Come by to eat, drink, and be merry, celebrating with acquaintances old and new at AIVF's celebrated Holiday Party. Light refreshments and warm holiday cheer will be served.

In Brief:
Producer's Legal Series

BUYING OR SELLING THE SCREENPLAY

when: **December 10, 6:30–8:30 pm**
cost: **$20 members/$30 general**
where: **AIVF**

Unscramble the legal issues involved in selling or buying a script. How do you retain rights, and when do you give them up? Learn the legal language and process of screenplay exchange that protects both the writer and the producer.

This month's In Brief: Producer's Legal Series is conducted by attorney Innes Smolansky of the law firm Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard.

Upcoming topics include financing for public television, and international financing for independent producers.

WINTER WORKSHOPS
AT MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

where: **537 West 59th St., btw 10th & 11th Aves.**
cost: **Free**
RSVP to (212) 757-2670 x308, or events@MNN.org

EDITING WORKSHOP WITH MASTER EDITOR SAM POLLARD

when: **Wednesday, December 11, 6:30–9:00 PM**

A screening of Spike Lee's documentary film *Four Little Girls* will be followed by a discussion with the film's editor, Sam Pollard, about the art and craft of editing.

DOCUMENTING THE DIFFICULT: Making Effective Social Issue Documentaries with Lasting Impact

when: **Thursday, January 9 6:30–9:00 PM**

A screening of the documentary film *Losing It* will be followed by a discussion with filmmaker Sharon Greytak. Greytak will discuss how to make powerful social issue films that target broad audiences, aren't self-righteous, and don't preach to the converted.

reach AIVF

FILMMAKERS' RESOURCE LIBRARY HOURS: WED. 11-9; by apt. to AIVF members Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11–6. The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City. Subways: 1 or 9 to Houston, C or E to Spring. Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

BY PHONE: (212) 807-1400
Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.–Fri. 2–5 p.m. EST

BY INTERNET:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES FALL MEDIA WORKSHOP SERIES

where: **462 Broadway, Suite 500**

Women Make Movies media workshops and clinics continue with discounts for AIVF members. To register, call (212) 925-0606 x302, or visit www.wmm.com

DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING CLINIC

cost: **$100/$80 discount rate (both evenings)**

Distributor's Perspective

when: **December 10, 6:30-8:30**

Marketing Strategies

when: **December 11, 6:30-8:30**

Most filmmakers make the mistake of not developing a clear distribution and outreach plan until the film is completed, and then, it's often too late. Start thinking about the promotion and marketing of your film now. You will receive valuable advice from instructors while listening to the feedback other participants receive. You will need to forward three copies of your current marketing materials to the WMM office by Monday, December 2.

FILMMAKING CLINIC WITH LYDIA DEAN PILCHER

when: **December 17, 6:30-8:30**
cost: **$75/$60 discount rate**

Get a realistic perspective on independent filmmaking from Lydia Dean Pilcher, president of the New York-based production company Chicka Boom Films (*Hysterical Blindness*). This clinic provides a practical guide to the financing, production, and distribution of feature films.

*Discount Rate applies to AIVF members, WMM Makers, and "Friends of WMM" who have donated $40 or more in the last year. Students with a valid student ID are eligible for a 15% discount off the general public rate.

CHECK OUT. . .
AIVF'S Interactive Resources
www.aivf.org

AIVF members can draw from a wealth of resources now available at www.aivf.org.

ABOUT—FAQ's, history, programs, staff, board, and jobs at AIVF.

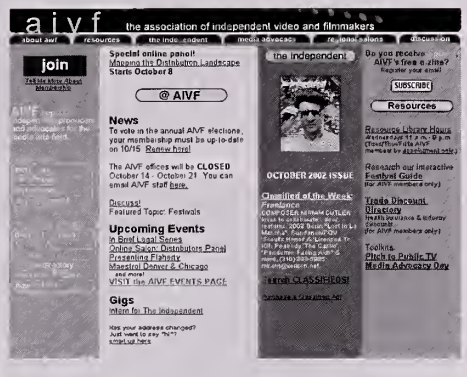
RESOURCES—Tools you can use for funding, festivals, distribution, and more, including books and links.

THE INDEPENDENT—Search the archive for back issues of the magazine.

REGIONAL SALONS— Pages for our twenty-two salons and local resources.

DISCUSSION—Your opportunity to chime in!

A good many of the resources available at aivf.org are available to the member and nonmember alike. Browse the classifieds to find crew members, gigs, equipment and pre- and post-production resources.



Sign yourself, and yours, up to receive *SPLICE!* AIVF's monthly electronic newsletter of the most up-to-date information on everything from national festival deadlines to media advocacy to screenings.

Seeking distribution? Our distribution "Tip Sheet" offers access to FAQ's, work wanted, a hot-link to the AIVF exhibition and distribution discussion board, and links to purchase the *AIVF Distributor's Guide* and other exhibition resource books.

Need information on pitching your project? Check out the toolkit developed for our public television mentoring sessions. Or, look up any of the various workshops that are in the works.

With your AIVF membership, you have access to custom interactive directories for festivals, member benefits, *Independent* archives, and a resource directory. You can even post your own comments and ideas or queries in the discussion pages and find out who is offering AIVF member discounts for national screenings and events.

Coming Soon: We are adding an e-commerce store to our website to make it easier than ever to renew your membership, order books, make donations, and register for workshops.

Members must supply AIVF number and password to access advanced resources

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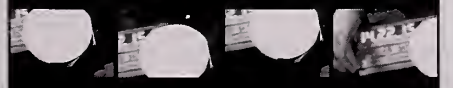

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The AIVF Regional Salons provide an opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country.

Detailed salon information is posted on the web! Visit www.aivf.org for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon programs as well as up-to-date information on programs.

Be sure to contact your local Salon leader to confirm date, time, and location of the next meeting!

Albany/Troy, NY: Upstate Independents
When: First Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY
Contact: Jeff Burns, (518) 366-1538
albany@aivf.org, www.upstateindependents.org

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE
When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225, x12
www.imagefv.org, atlanta@aivf.org

Austin, TX: Austin Film Society
When: Last Mondays, 7 p.m.
Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
austin@aivf.org, www.austinfilm.org

Boston, MA:
Center for Independent Documentary
Contact: Fred Simon, (781) 784-3627
boston@aivf.org

Boulder, CO:
"Films for Change" Screenings
When: First Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Boulder Public Library, 1000 Arapahoe
Contact: Linda Mamoun, (303) 442-8445
boulder@aivf.org

Charleston, SC:
When: Last Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun Street
Contact: Peter Paolini, (843) 805-6841, or Peter Wentworth, charleston@aivf.org

Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org, www.ohiofilms.com

Dallas, TX: Video Association of Dallas
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700
dallas@aivf.org

Edison, NJ:
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
edison@aivf.org, www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:
Contact: Erik Mollberg, (260) 421-1248
fortwayne@aivf.org

Houston, TX: SWAMP
When: Last Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.
Where: 1519 West Main
Contact: Mary Lampe, (713) 522-8592
houston@aivf.org

New Jersey Salon is Making Movies!

In August, New Jersey Salon members were invited to a creative breakfast to discuss ways to stop talking about movies . . . and start making them. Choosing the name Exit 131 Productions, the group agreed to join forces and begin producing short films immediately.

The decision to produce shorts was motivated primarily from the fact that the digital revolution has made it both inexpensive and possible for an experienced crew, armed with a good script, to go out and shoot and edit a film in a rather short period of time. For rookie filmmakers, there is the opportunity to get real experience working on a set. For veteran crewmembers, there is the prospect of writing, directing, producing, editing, or taking on other, more challenging roles.

In just seven short weeks, Exit 131 has already successfully produced its first short film. *By Crook*, written by newcomer Chung Tsang (above), was chosen by the team because of the simplicity of the story—of a man down on his luck.

Keeping the ten-minute short to a "no-budget" shoot was made possible by generous donations in time, equipment, and labor by each of the production's crew and cast members. Exit 131 Productions hopes that by removing budgetary blockades and providing production and technical assistance from a talented pool of filmmakers, the group will be able to create short films with great artistic integrity and professionalism.

— Lizabeth Finn-Arnold

You can contact the Edison Salon by sending e-mail to edison@aivf.org.

Huntsville, AL:
Contact: CharlesWhite, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:
Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Ind. Film Project
When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org
www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/nifp

Los Angeles, CA: EZTV
When: Third Mondays, 7:30 p.m.
Where: EZTV, 1653 18th St., Santa Monica
Contact: Michael Masucci, (310) 829-3389
losangeles@aivf.org

Milwaukee, WI:
Milwaukee Independent Film Society
When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 North 4th, Room 140
Contact: Laura Gembolis, (414) 688-2375
www.mifs.org/salon, milwaukee@aivf.org

Portland, OR:
Contact: Beth Harrington, (503) 223-0407
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:
When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm schedule)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: W. Keith McManus, (716) 256-3871
rochester@aivf.org

San Diego, CA:
Contact: Ethan van Thillo, (619) 230-1938
sandiego@aivf.org

San Francisco, CA:
Contact: Tami Saunders, (650) 271-0097
sanfrancisco@aivf.org

Seattle, WA:
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 297-0933
Jane Selle Morgan, (206) 915-6263
seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:
When: First Mondays, 6 p.m.
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Rosarie Salerno, tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:
Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline (202) 554-3263, x4
aivfdcsalonsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
washingtondc@aivf.org

Salons are run by AIVF members, often in association with local partners. AIVF has resources to assist enthusiastic and committed members who wish to start a salon in their own community! Please call (212) 807-1400, x236, or e-mail members@aivf.org for information.

essential resources for independent video and filmmakers

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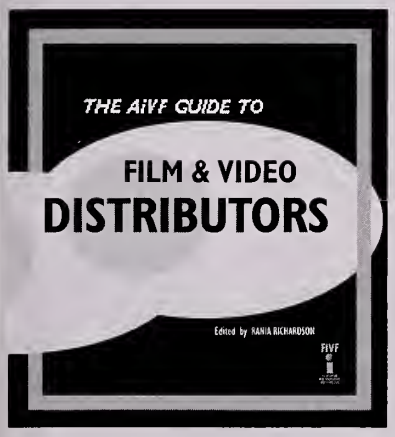
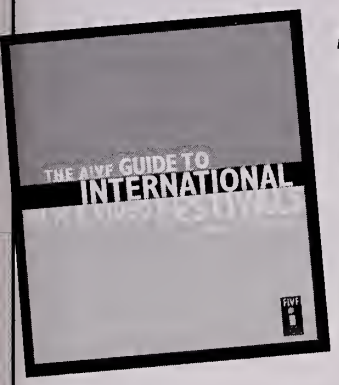


Now completely updated!

The AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors

edited by Rania Richardson $35 / $25 AIVF members *plus shipping and handling.*

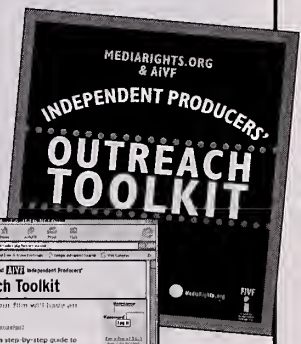
Up-to-date profiles of close to 200 Film & Video Distributors. Contact and catalog information is supplemented by company background and advice for indies. First published in 1984, AIVF's Distributors Guide is an established source of information and inside views of film and video distributors of North America. Supplemented by "how to" articles, plus selected reprints from *The Independent's* Distributor FAQ column, offering in-depth interviews with over twenty distributors. The Guide is published to order, ensuring the most current information available! For AIVF members, the Distributor Guide will be enhanced by an online interactive directory of distributors coming next spring.

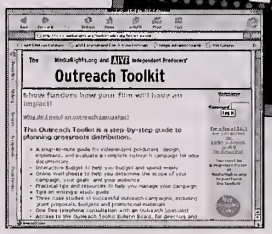


An interactive guide to grassroots distribution!

The AIVF & MediaRights.org Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit

edited by MediaRights.org $125 / $115 AIVF members ©2001

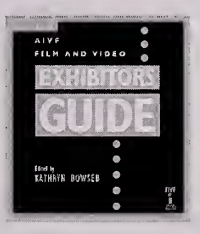


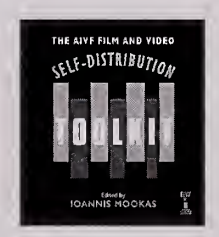


AIVF's top selling reference!

The AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals

edited by Michelle Coe $35 / $25 AIVF members ©2001





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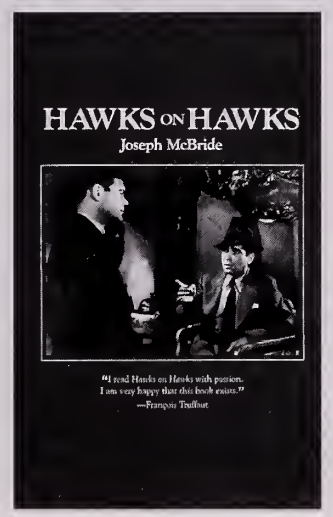
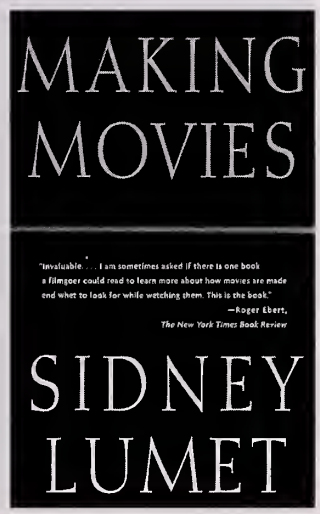
The Holiday Book List

BY JASON GUERRASIO

It's that time of year again, full of last-second shopping for friends and family who already seem to have everything. But hopefully the recommendations below will send you off to the bookstore or the internet armed with a couple of new gift ideas. We've asked some of our friends to choose a book that they would like to give or receive this holiday season. For instance, Kevin Smith fans might like John Kenneth Muir's *An Askew View: The Films of Kevin Smith* (Applause Theatre Book Publishers, $18.95). Dissecting all of Smith's films—including a sneak peak at *Jersey Girl*—Muir gives an entertaining account of the career of the Jersey guy. Here are few more.





Hawks on Hawks, by Joseph McBride
(University of California Press, $16.95)
An entertaining and educational read on one of the greatest American filmmakers—Howard Hawks, who I think is so brilliant in human behavior, relaxed humor, snappy dialogue, and sexual tension.

— **Bertha Bay-Sa Pan**, filmmaker (*Face*)

Shakey: Neil Young's Biography, by Jimmy McDonough
(Random House, $29.95)
Neil Young's music and lyrics represent the essence of independent. He never played the game and always spoke his mind. He's been an inspiration to me for more than twenty-five years.

— **Steven Beer**, Esq.,
founding partner Rudolph & Beer, LLP

The works of Susan Griffin
She writes personalized essays as weavings about a wide range of popular topics, like women, nature, and war. Women readers will feel satiated, and men will be compassionately acclimated to those worlds known from different angles.

— **Anne Bray**, *LA Freewaves*

Making Movies, by Sidney Lumet (Vintage Books, $12)
It's a blow-by-blow dissection of making films, from the point of view of one of this country's most respected directors. It uses some of Lumet's own films as case studies. It's a must-have for anyone serious about narrative filmmaking.

— **Robert Byrd**, program officer and director
of Media Arts Program, Jerome Foundation

Pandaemonium: The Coming of the Machine as Seen by Contemporary Observers, by Humphrey Jennings
(MacMillan Pub Ltd, $28.50)
It's an astonishing mosaic of texts that relate to the Industrial Revolution. Because of its odd combination of journal entries, news accounts, poems, etc., it represents just the kind of genre-busting that I like to see applied to films, especially documentaries.

— **Jem Cohen**, filmmaker (*Benjamin Smoke*)

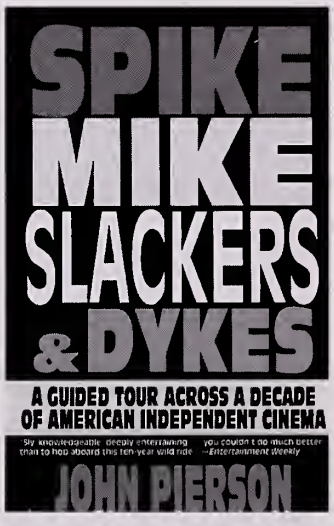
Nothing Happens: Chantal Akerman's Hyperrealist Everyday, by Ivone Margulies (Duke University Press, $19.95)
Reading it was mind-expanding. I gained not only a whole new understanding of what Ackerman is up to, especially in her masterpiece *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quail du Commerce, 1080 Brussels*, but indeed of the possibilities of cinema itself. See the film and then read the book. It's a wonderful one-two punch.

— **Immy Humes**, producer
(*A Life Apart: Hasidism in America*)

The Holiday Book List (continued from page 63)

Spike, Mike, Slackers & Dykes: A Guided Tour Across a Decade of American Independent Cinema, by John Pierson (Miramax, $12.95)
Pierson's definitive history of independent film from the mid-eighties to the mid-nineties is a great way to catch up—for those of us who were too young to see *Stranger than Paradise*. Pierson dissects some of the strategy and deal-making that brought films like *She's Gotta Have It*, *Slacker*, *Go Fish*, and *Clerks* to the art house. But more importantly, he offers an insider's guide to low-budget filmmaking and navigating the festival circuit.

— **Eugene Hernandez**, cofounder/editor-in-chief of *indieWIRE*



The Films of Akira Kurosawa, by Donald Richie (University of California Press, $29.95)
There are tons of stills and interviews with Kurosawa about each of his films. I was drawn to the sections where Kurosawa discussed the origins of each of his projects and his directorial methods.

— **Tamara Jenkins**, filmmaker (*Slums of Beverly Hills*)

Escape from Childhood: The Needs and Rights of Children, by John Holt (Penguin, $26)
While it is not, strictly speaking, a film book, it would be dangerous to undertake any project without reading this book first.

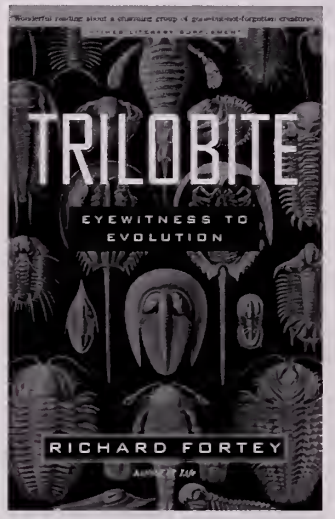
— **Miranda July**, filmmaker (*Nest of Tens*)

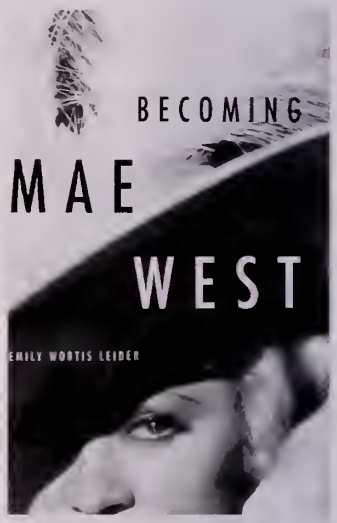
The Total Filmmaker, by Jerry Lewis (out of print)
The book consists mainly of lectures that Jerry Lewis gave to the cinema school at USC in 1970, a must read for any student of film. It's insightful, witty, and passionate. If you could never figure out why the French adore the loveable auteur, you'll know by the book's end.

— **Brett Morgen**, filmmaker (*The Kid Stays in the Picture*)

Celluloid Skyline: New York and the Movies, by James Sanders (Knopf, $45)
[The book] does a masterful job of looking at how the depiction of New York as a mythical place in American films has informed both the movies and the city itself. His understanding of both urbanism and film is deep, complex, and highly entertaining. For anyone with a dual interest in film and cities, this is the definitive book.

— **Martin Pedersen**, executive editor of *Metropolis Magazine*





Notes of the Cinematographer, by Robert Bresson (Sun & Moon Press, $8.95)
This could be called the Zen of filmmaking. It is a book filled with pearls of wisdom by one of the greatest filmmakers ever to grace the earth. It is a book to savor. One should read a page or two a day and contemplate—it's even greater if you happen to love his work.

— **Jay Rosenblatt**, filmmaker (*King of the Jews*, *Worm*)

Trilobite: Eyewitness to Evolution, by Richard Fortey (Knopf $26)
As a filmmaker who thinks a little too much about death and what I will leave behind as my own cultural fossils, it's liberating to get wrapped up in the stories of these ancient hundred-plus-year-old characters who left their fanciful signatures all over the planet.

— **Ellen Spiro**, filmmaker (*Roam Sweet Home*)

Left in the Dark: Film Reviews and Essays, 1988-2001, by Stuart Klawans, Ben Sonnenberg (Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, $15.95)
Becoming Mae West, by Emily Wortis Leider (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $30)
Stuart is one of the smartest film critics I know, and Mae, well, Mae was just the best—an icon for us all.

— **Debra Zimmerman**, executive director of Women Make Movies

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