

January/February 2003 A Publication of The Foundation for Independent Video and Film www.aivf.org

Spotlight on
DIGITAL VIDEO

the Independent

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On the Cover: Philip Seymour Hoffman after the 2002 Sundance world premiere of Todd Louiso's *Love Liza*. Photo by Joshua Kessler.

Photos, this page: African American resort communities are the subject of Stanley Nelson's ITVS-funded doc *A Place of Our Own* (ITVS); Bryant Falk in the studio (Mark Stephen Kornbluth); Philip Seymour Hoffman as Wilson in *Love Liza* (Tobin Yelland); Apple's eMac (Apple); Mary Sampson checks out Panasonic's AG-DVX100 (Mark Stephen Kornbluth).

Photos, page 4: Iroquois singer/songwriter Joanne Shenandoah is the subject of Tula Goenka's *Dancing on Mother Earth* (NAPT); Cecilia Garza shops in Reynosa, Mexico (Bernardo Ruiz); Amy Hick's *Hatching Beauty* screened at MadCat (MadCat); Johnny Depp as Don Quixote in Keith Fulton and Louis Pepe's *Lost in La Mancha*, documenting the Terry Gilliam production of *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote* (IFC Films); Rell Sunn (top) rides the waves in *Heart of the Sea: Kapolioka'ehukai* (Jan Sunn Careia).



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Editor's Letter



Dear Reader:
Working and playing with others is rarely easy, but it is more rewarding than building sand castles by ourselves. Art is, at its core, collaborative. We are influenced by artists that came before us and the ones emerging next to us. For this issue we have explored different types of collaboration. Andrea Meyer discussed the director-actor relationship with long-term friends, and creators of *Love Liza*, director Todd Louiso and actor Philip Seymour Hoffman (page 37). Kimberly Weiner investigated different approaches to mentoring (page 40). You will find other takes on this topic in our departments; our legal expert Robert Seigel explored the pre-nup of the film world, the joint venture agreement.

You will also find our annual technology spotlight. Three filmmakers road tested two new digital cameras, the Canon GL2 and the Panasonic AG-DVX100, the first 24p digital camera marketed to anybody other than George Lucas (page 46). Sound designer Bryant Falk contributed the basics of recording audio with a digital camera (page 48). And Greg Gilpatrick assembled an affordable editing system (page 50).

Magazines are always collaborations, involving the editorial staff, designer, and writers, but this issue was even more of a group project than usual because we are introducing both a redesign and an expanded number of pages. I hope you enjoy both our new content and our new look.

Thank you for supporting *The Independent*,

Maud Kersnowski
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P.O.V. Partners with ABC for "Two Towns"

By Aaron Krach

Ted Koppel may be struggling to save ABC's *Nightline* from the expanding late-night entertainment complex, but he is doing all he can to support *Two Towns of Jasper*, the documentary about the hate-motivated 1998 murder of James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Texas, scheduled to air on PBS January 22.

Nightline is working with the PBS series *P.O.V.* to expand coverage of the film into a four-day event, the highlight of which will be Ted Koppel hosting a live town hall meeting in Jasper on January 23, the night after the *Two Towns* broadcast.

Two Towns of Jasper, directed by Whiney Dow and Marco Williams, garnered critical attention at Sundance 2002 for its provocative use of two separated crews—one entirely African American, the other all

Caucasian—to document the effect of the murder and subsequent trial of three white men charged with the crime.

"*Two Towns of Jasper* has become the centerpiece of a collaborative effort" between ABC News and *P.O.V.*, explained Cara Mertes, executive director of *P.O.V.* "The film is really a springboard for a wonderful partnership that can capitalize on the integrity attached to both *Nightline* and *P.O.V.*"

The collaboration begins January 21, when (barring a major news event) *Nightline* will feature an episode-long preview of *Two Towns of Jasper*. The following night, January 22, *P.O.V.* will air the film in its entirety. On January 24, *Nightline* will air a forty-five minute version of the town hall meeting.

"The events in Jasper, Texas, offer *Nightline* an opportunity to revisit an issue they have already covered in-

depth," says Mertes. *Nightline* followed closely both the murder of James Byrd Jr. and the trial and conviction of the three white assailants. *Two Towns*, a portrait of the racially divided city, was made during the trial.

The collaboration between *P.O.V.* and *Nightline* is not the first between public television and a commercial broadcasting entity. According to Mertes, *Frontline* "did it during the Clinton years—but this is the first time for *P.O.V.*"

Public television advocates look skeptically at any link between public and commercial television, but Mertes is confident that such feelings are unnecessary. "Anyone wondering about [such issues] only has to look at how closely *Nightline*'s mandate for public affairs programming lines up with *P.O.V.*'s goals. We are after the same things. We have both retained complete editorial control [over our separate productions]; that was never an issue."

Aaron Krach is the arts editor at Gay City News and The Villager newspapers.

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ITVS Takes Helm of PBS Series

A reworking of *Independent Lens*, the anthology series of independent films, will be unveiled by PBS and the Independent Television Service (ITVS) on February 4. "The one theme that defines the series," says Claire Aguilar, cocurator and ITVS director of programming, "is the vision of the independent filmmakers who passionately pursued stories and made programs that reflect an individual perspective."

ITVS received a special grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for the initial season. Lois Vossen, *Independent Lens* senior producer and cocurator, says ITVS is seeking corporate underwriters for future seasons and hopes to reach out to new sources of funding, "rather than going to foundations who typically fund public TV."

Independent Lens premieres with *Maggie Grouls*, a documentary about activist Maggie Kuhn, founder of the Gray Panthers. Other shows this season address such diverse topics as gay parenting and adoption (*Daddy & Papa*), resistance fighters in Nazi-occupied France (*Sisters in Resistance*), and one of the world's most famous female big wave surfers, Rell Sunn (*Heart of the Sea: Kapolioka'ehukai*).

According to Cheryl Jones, senior director of PBS Program Development and Independent film, the series plans to provide the same kind of outreach as *P.O.V.*, including material on the show's website, marketing, and publicity.

The series will air Tuesday nights at 10:00 p.m. through June 3. During the summer PBS's award-winning documentary series *P.O.V.* will run in the same time slot. *Independent Lens*'s fall season, featuring fifteen new episodes, will begin in September 2003. □

For more information on *Independent Lens*, visit www.pbs.org.

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer who interns at The Independent.

Fight for Your Right to Public Domain Art

By GiGi Sohn

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." — Sir Isaac Newton

This famous quote by the renowned scientist and mathematician has a great deal of resonance for all artists, particularly as we move into the age of digital media. Sir Isaac recognized that his creative works—mathematical theorems and scientific inventions—were the product of many of the great works that he had studied. This is

time ensuring the development of a robust public domain of information and ideas that could be shared and built upon, leading to even more creativity and innovation.

For many years, this cultural bargain worked well. Most American music post-1950 has its roots in other forms of music, particularly the blues, and many of our plays, films, and books are derived from earlier works. For example, *West Side Story* is Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* set in a different time and place. Thousands

more costly to engage in their craft. (The first chapter of Lawrence Lessig's *The Future of Ideas* vividly recounts film director Davis Guggenheim's struggles to clear the rights to various works that are merely incidental to his films.) These initiatives include:

Longer copyright terms

Despite the Constitution's direction that copyright protections be "for limited times," copyright terms have been extended eleven times in the past forty years. The latest extension came in 1998 at the behest of the Walt Disney Company, which feared Mickey Mouse becoming part of the public domain in 2003. Whereas the first copyright term (established in 1790) was fourteen years plus a fourteen-

Artistic works do not simply appear out of thin air—they are the result of many prior creative works that an artist sees or hears.



also true of all the arts—visual arts, music, film, video, theater, dance, etc. Artistic works do not simply appear out of thin air—they are the result of many prior creative works that an artist sees or hears. In this way, our culture is like a garden—older plant matter is dug up and tilled, providing nourishment for the new seedlings yet to grow.

The framers of our Constitution recognized this principle when they drafted what is commonly known as the "Copyright Clause." The Copyright Clause gives Congress the power to "promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries . . ."

In using this language, the framers sought to strike a delicate balance. By giving artists and innovators a time-limited monopoly over their works, the framers wanted to encourage artists to create, while at the same

of derivative works have been created from the *Mona Lisa* (see www.pipeline.com/~rabarib/MONALIST.htm for examples). And a large number of Disney movies borrow from the public domain (*Alice in Wonderland*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, etc.).

Unfortunately, for the past decade, this bargain has been under siege, thanks to a variety of political, technological, and marketplace initiatives that seek to make access to scientific and artistic works either impossible or prohibitively expensive. Because we are in the "Information Age," the market value of information and its consequent creative works has increased. This has resulted in a movement by the "copyright industries" (largely the motion picture, recording, and book publishing industries) to keep much of it in private hands for as long as possible. The consequence has been that creative artists in general, and video and filmmakers in particular, have found it harder and

year renewal term, copyrights now extend to seventy years beyond the life of an author, or ninety-five years for corporations.

Longer copyright terms shrink the public domain, making it harder for creative artists to borrow or build upon these works without having to pay licensing fees, assuming that they can even find out who holds the copyright in the first place (copyright protection applies automatically at the time of creation—no registration is needed). The increasing privatization of information and ideas has led to strict (and sometimes silly) enforcement of the laws, resulting in numerous threats to digital media artists and others whose works criticize and borrow from cultural and corporate icons.

Technology laws that limit access to and use of copyrighted works

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2002 winners at Closing Night reception.



L to R: Ralph Macchio, writer/director *Love Thy Brother*, Village Voice critic Michael Atkinson, *Newsday*'s film critic John Anderson, Festival Director Alan Inkles at a filmmaker reception.

tively low cost of digital technologies present greater opportunities for artists to make their works available to a wider audience, they also present greater opportunities for the copyright industries to limit access to and use of copyrighted works beyond what the law would allow. For example, copy protection on certain CD's do not permit them to be played on computers. Similarly, some online music and film services limit one's ability to burn files onto CD's, DVD's, or hard drives, and others simply cause the file to "disappear" after a specified time period. Copyright law does not permit a copyright holder to tell you how many times you can listen to or read content, for what length of time, or on what machine. But "techno-locks" permit those very limits.

As if the technological locks themselves were not enough, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), passed in 1998, ensures that these locks are backed with the force of law. Under the DMCA, it is unlawful to break or "circumvent" these locks, even if an individual's reason for doing so is otherwise lawful. Indeed, the first court case involving the DMCA concerned a Norwegian teenager who broke the technological lock on a DVD that he bought for the sole purpose of playing it on his Linux-operated computer.

Techno-locks, backed by laws like the DMCA, have grave implications for creative activity. Artists often need to study certain works over and over again, modify and transform pieces of works, and play them on different devices. These mechanisms make artists' jobs not only harder, but in some cases illegal.

Replacing copyright law with contract law

Another way that the copyright industries seek to protect their works is through the use of so-called "end-user license agreements." These are the icons that you click on when trying to access software or other digital con-

tent ("click-through licenses"), or the terms you agree to when breaking the shrink-wrap on your newest piece of software ("shrink-wrap licenses"). Without any negotiation, you are asked to waive rights reserved to you under the Copyright Act (such as "fair use") and agree to a list of restrictions, some of which can include a limitation on criticizing the work without the licensee's permission.

In common law, one-sided contracts of this kind are called "contracts of adhesion." But in the digital era, these licenses are used to extend the rights of copyright holders beyond that which is permitted by law. Like techno-locks, these licenses can and do limit modification, excerpting, portability, and repeated access to content. As such, they can chill creative activity.

In premodern England, the landed classes convinced the Parliament to take grazing lands that had been used commonly by everyone and "enclose" them for gentry's private benefit. Today, a second enclosure movement is occurring as the copyright industries seek the help of Congress and new technologies to privatize and shrink the public domain. The impact of this enclosure is already being felt by educators, scientific researchers, librarians, computer programmers, ordinary computer users, and by the full range of creative artists. The good news is that many of these groups, backed by members of the information technology, consumer electronics, and internet service provider industries, are beginning to fight back, and policymakers are beginning to take notice. We at Public Knowledge invite you to join this effort to defend and fortify the public domain. □

For more information, log on to www.publicknowledge.org.

Gigi B. Sohn is president and cofounder of Public Knowledge, a nonprofit that addresses the public's stake in the convergence of communications policy and intellectual property law.



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Your Computer and Civil Liberties

SHARI STEELE: ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION

By Patricia R. Zimmermann

If you think your desktop computer is simply a machine for word processing, e-mail, and digital video editing, you've been duped. It's also a social construct that has the potential to delete your freedom of speech, right to privacy, and civil liberties. "Most people just are not paying attention," argues Shari Steele, the passionate, clear-headed executive director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Often dubbed "the ACLU of electronic civil liberties," the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) was formed in 1990 as an advocacy group for civil liberties in cyberspace. It protects, defends, and educates us about civil liberties issues as they relate to technology. It investigates how law and technology intersect, making the often invisible digital invasions into our lives visible.

EFF has challenged both the US government and major corporations in court, and it is one of the major advocates for peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing. Steele contends that P2P file sharing will be a boon to independent media producers, who can use these technologies to bypass distributors. "The large media companies package, distribute, and market content—P2P technologies make these services inconsequential," Steele notes. "The corporate reaction has been to kill off technologies that don't have scarcity in order to create scarcity; for example, licensing and HDTV."

But the EFF's first suit was filed against the United States Secret Service. In 1990, the Secret Service

conducted raids to track the illegal distribution of emergency 911 information (called E911) from a Bell South computer. They then confiscated the computers of game publisher Steve Jackson, accessing and deleting e-mails. Concerned about incursions into his freedom to publish, the privacy rights of his users, and the destruction of his business, Jackson posted his concerns on the Whole



Earth 'Lectronic Link (www.well.com).

Jackson's posts caught the attention of Mitch Kapor (Lotus Development Corporation), John Perry Barlow (lyricist for the Grateful Dead), and John Gilmore (an early employee of Sun Microsystems). Together, they decided to launch a lawsuit against the Secret Service based on the violations of Jackson's civil liberties. At the same time, they founded the Electronic Frontier Foundation to investigate how new technologies impact First Amendment rights and civil liberties.

In 1991, Steele, who had originally intended to become a law professor and First Amendment specialist, was looking for a job. She spotted an ad for a staff attorney for EFF in the

Georgetown law school. She was hired to work on cases out of Washington, DC. The world wide web and the practice of cyberspace law did not yet exist as they do today. In the early years, from 1991 to 1993, Steele worked on system operator liability (applied to entities like AOL and Compuserve) and encryption issues, particularly the right to control your own technology.

By 1993, according to Steele, electronic civil liberties issues shifted when the world wide web entered a graphic cyberscape and usage skyrocketed. Propelling online shopping and site surfing, the web raised issues about users' privacy rights as their data circulated on networked computers. "Privacy is a huge issue in digital media," Steele explains. "The amount of information corporations are able to collect is immense. And they believe they own it." What you browse on the web may seem innocuous, but it leaves a trail of information allowing corporations to do precision pinpoint marketing.

"New technologies create new issues for civil liberties," Steele points out. The Napster case in 2000 underscores this point. As a P2P network, Napster facilitated file sharing. Copyright holders were up in arms, according to Steele, because users were able to share music, download, and create mixes of copyrighted material.

Over the last few years, because of P2P cases such as Napster and Gnutella, copyright has emerged as a major electronic civil liberties issue. Steele views copyright as a question of balance between copyright holders and users. "How much control do copyright holders need to have?" queries Steele. "How evil is it to make a copy? Do we call all college students criminals?"

Universal vs. Remeirdes is a case in point. In November of 1999, the computer magazine *2600* published a news

Shari Steele, executive director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the ACLU of electronic civil liberties.

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story about the debate around DVD encryption, reporting on the encrypted source code. The entertainment industry had licensed DVD encryption to Microsoft, but not to Linux. The DeCSS code created open source code that would allow users to run their lawfully purchased DVD's on Linux operating systems. In January 2000 Universal Studios, seven other studios, and the Motion Picture Association of America filed suit against 2600, arguing media piracy. EFF filed briefs in support of the defendants. In July 2002, the case concluded in favor of the plaintiffs. EFF decided against going to the Supreme Court, but cautioned that future cases will determine how to solve the problems created by the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Since September 11, and the government's ensuing "war on terror," EFF has tracked an increase in attacks on civil liberties, with high levels of surveillance and disposal of checks and balances on reporting findings from digital surveillance back to the courts. "The USA Patriot Act gave the government huge power," cautions Steele. "If you are on the web researching Al Qaeda, you will be surveilled."

The new Department of Homeland Security plan connects all government databases, even though this consolidation of information and data is expressly prohibited by the Privacy Act of 1973, Steele warns. The Carnivore and Echelon programs—massive digital surveillance systems—will also be authorized. Yet, as a result of government blackouts on how these systems actually operate, no one really understands their capacities for abuse.

Because the average person considers his or her computer a harmless tool rather than a threat, Steele urges the non-techie to be armed with a set of electronic civil liberties advisories to begin dispelling misconceptions.

First, all new technologies raise speech and civil liberties issues. Second, although new technologies often distribute new powers, they may

not keep the balance between users and technology producers equal. "The way things were done previously is not always the right way when dealing with new technologies," Steele says.

Third, be forewarned that the United States government is not necessarily the only threat to electronic civil liberties. Corporations are also pushing for greater control over technology, data, and code.

Steele is a woman with mission: to clearly explain the high stakes of electronic civil liberties and to mobilize the general public to see beyond and through their computer screens. Knowing the mediamaker readership of *The Independent*, Steele pushed an idea for a muckraking independent documentary: an exposé of peer-to-peer technologies from the point of view of the user, rather than the entertainment companies who squelched the technology as a haven for criminal activity. "Why are users doing it? What's going on? What's the attraction?" she queries.

Steele and EFF refuse to take computers, networks, or emerging technologies at face value. Instead, like the media project idea she imagines, she turns the tables in digital space from the power of corporations and governments to the rights of users—a necessary and urgent task. □

Electronic Frontier Foundation (www.eff.org) offers an extensive, detailed archive of electronic civil liberties issues, legal cases, briefs, and news updates on electronic civil liberties issues ranging from copyright, privacy, freedom of speech, encryption, and more.

Chilling Effects Clearinghouse (www.chillingeffects.org) a joint project of EFF, Stanford, Harvard, Berkeley, and the Universities of San Francisco and of Maine Law Schools explains, in clear language, protections to the First Amendment and intellectual property in online activity. It also includes a searchable database of cease-and-desist letters.

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 and States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies.

Honolulu, Hawaii

FESTIVAL SURFING, ALOHA, AND ADVOCACY

By Susan Diane Freel

Hawaii International Film Festival

The twenty-two-year-old Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) is an ambitious statewide event that screens films and demonstrates the spirit of *Aloha*, the spirit of inclusion. The festival features 200 films over ten days at a



wide variety of venues, from a beach to a symphony hall, on a total of five Hawaiian islands, starting with Oahu.

Appropriately enough, the screening for this year's Golden Maile Special Award winner, Charlotte Lagarde and Lisa Denker's documentary, *Heart of the Sea: Kapolioka'ehukai*, about Hawaiian female surfing legend Rell Sunn, was held on the beach at Waikiki while the Pacific slapped the

Hawaiian surfing legend Rell Sunn is the subject of Lisa Denker's *Heart of the Sea: Kapolioka'ehukai*.

shore, and a "blessing," or gentle Hawaiian misting rain, fell on the crowd. But not only was Sunn the surfer known as the Queen of Makaha, she was also a woman who died at the age of forty-seven from recurring breast cancer, contracted when she was thirty-two, possibly linked to DDT spraying on Oahu. At a festival where at almost any time you may find the hula being danced in the pressroom, it's easy to be distracted from the vital Pacific Rim stories by the Pacific Rim itself.

"We need help in Hawaii because we're really marginalized . . . by being mistaken only as sun and fun," says documentarian Tom Coffman, whose film *Arirang: The Korean American Journey*, about the emigration of Korean families to Hawaii, screened as part of HIFF's celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the first Koreans in the state. "We're really struggling to get taken seriously by something as simple as PBS . . . Our basic problem is that the world of television networks, and so on, revolves around an Atlantic-facing East Coast. People just think of this as exotic, but hey, it's real. We're real people out here. We're real people, and we are unique in many ways, in terms of the way the cultures have come together here."

Hawaii International Film Festival
(808) 528-3456; www.hiff.org

Oahu's Film Ohana (Family)— 'Olelo's Children

The more you mingle with Oahu's *ohana* (or "family") of filmmakers, the clearer the influence of 'Olelo, the island's public access station, becomes.

Meaning "to speak" or "to communicate" in Hawaiian, 'Olelo is a home for

local beginning and experienced filmmakers. The facility offers classes, resources, and equipment, from cameras to editing bays, to all Oahu residents. Borrowing equipment is free, and beginning classes range from \$35 to \$55. The only condition for equipment use is that you air whatever you shoot on 'Olelo once. "The only thing you ever pay for is your own tape stock," explains Meredith Nichols, outreach coordinator for 'Olelo. "I tell people to think of it like a public library."

When Oceanic Cablevision bought the Hawaii cable television franchise, the state's department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs negotiated a deal that is the envy of many public access stations across the country. Public access channels, run by nonprofit media centers, are paid for but not controlled by the cable franchises on each of the islands. "We are funded completely through Oceanic Cablevision. One hundred percent. No taxpayer dollars. It's now Time Warner Oceanic Cable, but the franchise agreement is still solid," Nichols says. 'Olelo boasts five twenty-four-hour channels.

Former pro surfer Daniel M. Skaf, currently an MFA candidate in film production at Chapman University in Orange County, California, not only learned to use a camera at 'Olelo, he found a calling. "I discovered my passion," declares Skaf, whose second documentary, *The Birthing of Iosepa*, screened at HIFF this year and is soon to be aired on DirectTV. "It all started at 'Olelo," he says.

Leah Kihara, HIFF Aloha Airlines winner for *I Scream, Floats and Sundays*, is a special-projects manager at 'Olelo. "It's kind of like being in film school again, because we all grew up on each other's projects. We don't mind sweating it out for nothing. It's just refreshing working with each other, generating ideas, and then seeing it made," she says. "It's not just good friends, but it's people I totally respect as workers as well."

"Myself, I made my film on the help



twelve to twenty setups a day. I got everybody who had time to come out to work . . . We had the people doing what they do for *Jurassic Park* and *Pearl Harbor* [but it was] for my project, out of the kindness of their hearts.”

‘Olelo Community Television main facility; there are additional satellite locations. (808) 834-0007; www.olelo.org

‘Ohina Short Film Showcase

While HIFF does present local work under the umbrella of the Hawaii Panorama screenings, in 1999 Jeff Katts and his boss at Pacific Focus, Jason Suapaia, decided they wanted a little more. They wanted a venue where local, independent, short filmmakers could take themselves and their films seriously. The result was a weekend of shorts every October at the Academy of Arts Doris Duke Theatre, called the ‘Ohina Short Film

Showcase.

“*Ohina* is a Hawaiian word that means the coming together or gathering,” Katts explains. What started as friends asking friends if they wanted to show their films has become an international event. “Our slogan when we started was ‘join the gathering.’ Now it’s ‘short films done by Hawaii’s hottest filmmakers,’” says Katts.

It’s their fourth year. They’re non-profit. And they’ve become the first-time showcase for many local projects, several in this year’s HIFF Hawaii Panorama, including *Forgotten Promise*, by Ryan Kawamoto, *The Procastinators*, directed by Shawn Hiatt, and Kahira’s *I Scream, Floats and Sundays*.

“I gave myself five years,” says Katts, “because I wanted to see it grow, then have somebody else try to nurture it. It will still keep going, no matter what.”

Hawaii’s short film fans flock to the ‘Ohina shorts showcase every October.

of a lot of friends, and a lot of people were very generous,” echoes Kamuela Kaneshiro, whose \$700, fifty-four-minute film about Dante’s *Inferno*, *R.E.M.*, also screened at HIFF. “We shot it in fourteen mostly six-hour days,

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When Katts leaves, after next October's 'Ohina Short Film Showcase, it will be to start an entertainment company planned to have a similar scope to Dreamworks, with independent projects in film, television, music, and theater.

'Ohina Short Film Showcase
 Jeff Katts & Jason Suapaia
 (808)593-8848; www.pacfocus.com

The 'O Files—Jackie Burke

"'O. That's a word. That's a Hawaiian word. It means to dig, to pierce, to break through," says Jackie Burke, executive producer of *The 'O Files*, an independent half-hour Hawaiian language series that began airing December 1, 2002, on KIKU, Oahu's Channel 9. "It's a magazine format using the Hawaiian language, with subtitles either in English or Hawaiian. Because we can't come to events and always expect a native speaker . . . we translate into Hawaiian . . . then we have two or three spots in the show where we have native speakers and we subtitle in English. KIKU is a multicultural station. It has Korean, Japanese, Samoan, Filipino, and they're dying to have Hawaiian," explains Burke. "It's a regular station, so we can sell ads. On, 'Olelo, we're restricted to being nonprofit."

The 'O Files is part of Burke's devel-

A modern day Dante's *Inferno*, Kamuela Kaneshiro's *R.E.M.* screened at HIFF.

opment of the Native Hawaiian Multimedia Network, which includes a newspaper, TV show, radio show, and website.

Besides fundraising and writing grants for arts and culture, Burke's other project, *The Sovereignty Bus*, or *Ka'a Ea* in Hawaiian, is a mobile multimedia project devoted to raising awareness of the issue of Hawaiian sovereignty. "What it's doing is educating the choices of independence or dependence for the Hawaiian community, because we have to make those choices," Burke explains. The bus will travel through Hawaii and down the West Coast, collecting opinions from Hawaiians on sovereignty. Eventually the findings will be driven across the US. "[We'll be] stopping at other Indian nations, asking them to join our caravan, as we go to Washington, DC, to deliver our outcomes.

"Is that a film or what?" Burke laughs. "The buses will have the artwork of the creation chants on them. On top of that will be . . . our four main gods, which are male gods. My friend is a director of Hawaiian studies, and she said, 'Now, where are the female gods?' I said, 'In the bus, of course, where they always have been.'"

The 'O Files
 Ka'a Ea—Sovereignty Bus Project
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Pacific Islanders in Communications:
 This nonprofit media organization's purpose is to increase national public broadcast programming by and about indigenous Pacific Islanders.
 Carlyn L. Tani, executive director
 (808) 591-0059
www.piccom.org

Leeward Community College:
 Offers postproduction training.
 (808) 455-0011
www.lcc.hawaii.edu

University of Hawaii at Manoa:
 Launching a Cinematic and Digital Arts Degree Program under Chris Lee, former president of production for Columbia-Tristar.
 (808) 956-8111
www.hawaii.edu

Pacific Focus, Inc.:
 For studio, production, postproduction, and duplication services; Hawaiian stock footage available for licensing.
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Sue Freel is a filmmaker and a special-project coordinator for AIVF, in postproduction on her documentary We All Represent
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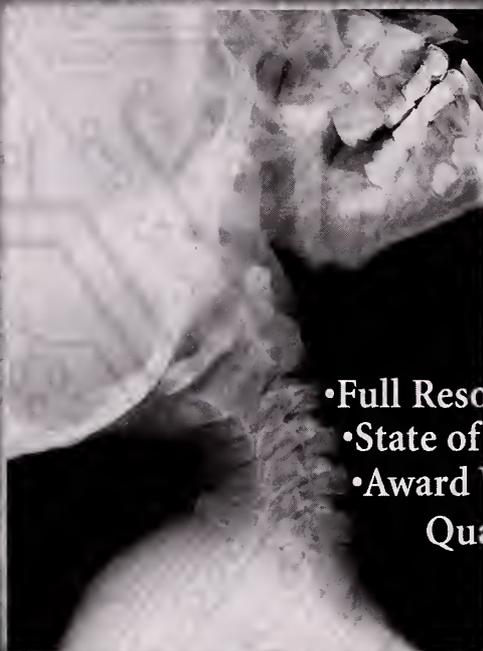
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Ask the Documentary Doctor

WHEN AND HOW DO YOU BRING OTHERS INTO YOUR PROJECT?

By **Fernanda Rossi**



Dear Doc Doctor: After having shot on my own for two years, I'm not only exhausted but also have lost perspective on the best way

to approach the story of my documentary. Will teaming up with a producer help me find some balance?

If you are doing everything yourself, you are probably overworking both sides of the brain, the left-organizational side and the right-creative side. It's not easy to switch back and forth.

Chris Hegedus. But two pairs of eyes don't necessarily see more; sometimes they see double. Input, opinions, and new perspectives should be welcomed for the good health of your project, whether coming from your producer, mentor, editor, or a smart friend, but this should be done in moderation and with a clear understanding of the role of that person.

If you feel lost, though, don't resort to a second or third party's opinion right away. It may be time to stop and take some time off to think. Asking someone for direction often leads to asking everyone. Gathering many

ple you choose to work with should be bringing positive energy and insight to the project. One easy way to tell if the input is productive is if your gut reaction to their suggestions is "ah ha," rather than "oh no."

Being clear about who has the final say is also very important. And making sure that others understand that turning an idea down is not a reflection of your appreciation for their work can save you and them much heartache.

If you keep the communication channels open with regular meetings and honest dialogue, you will not only make a great film because you will get the best out of your team, you will also create life-long, meaningful relationships.

Dear Doc Doctor:

My editor and I have been going in circles for four months now with the same one-hour cut. I'm thinking of firing him. How much do I lose by starting over with someone else?

Stalling in the cutting room is usually a sign of creative blockage, not of editing incompetence. Had you hired someone who is not up to the task, you would have known the first week, not the fourth month. If the problems really have been going on for months, you should have let your editor go a long time ago. But if you replace your editor with someone else, don't be surprised to find yourself in the same situation four months from now.

A creative block will make even the two most talented people hit dead ends time and again until the frustration inevitably turns them against each other. If you are thinking of firing your editor as a result of such frustration, I can assure you he or she has been thinking of quitting for a long time.

Going in circles makes everybody dizzy, so rather than killing the messenger, I would suggest you ponder the following: How do you feel about finishing your film? Sure, we all say we want to be done with it, but take a few minutes to think about it. Are you overly concerned about how it will be

The most important quality to consider when choosing such traveling companions is that they are people skilled at *helping* you.

One minute you have to be efficient, scheduling five interviews in a day, and the next minute you have to be creative, coming up with 100 interesting questions. Can you solve an equation and write poetry at the same time?

Eventually the daily demands of production take over and the creative aspects of filmmaking are set aside or postponed until you have to confront them while editing. Bringing a producer on board is a good way to lighten up your left-brain load and free the right side to do its magic.

That's why partnerships are an inspiring way to approach any creative endeavor. You will find successful examples throughout the history of filmmaking, such as the Maysles brothers or D.A. Pennebaker and

opinions will certainly lead to making a film, some film, most likely not *your* film. Limiting the amount of people you talk to about your film to one or two can relieve some of your creative anxiety while bringing the benefits of a fresh eye.

The most important quality to consider when choosing such traveling companions is that they're people skilled at *helping* you. If you are constantly having miscommunications with the person you have chosen to bring into your project, or if you find yourself constantly at odds, this is not a fruitful collaboration. They may well be trying to make their own film through you. In whatever capacity they are working with you, and whatever their credentials may be, the peo-

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received? Or is it that you don't know (or know too well) what it takes to distribute your documentary and therefore prefer to hide in the darkness of the edit room?

If you don't have any fears about the future of your documentary, the creative block might be alive and well in the present. Are you and your editor making the same film? Sometimes valuable time is wasted in a power struggle to see who gets to tell the story. At times it becomes the editor's version, other times it looks more like the film you dreamed of, and sometimes it is somewhere in between. This in-between compromise doesn't make anybody happy either.

Along the same lines, trying a new approach to assembling the film every week—even when in total agreement with your editor—and not finishing the film is a safe way to avoid dealing with narrative problems. The lure of this trap is that it is dangerously disguised as work.

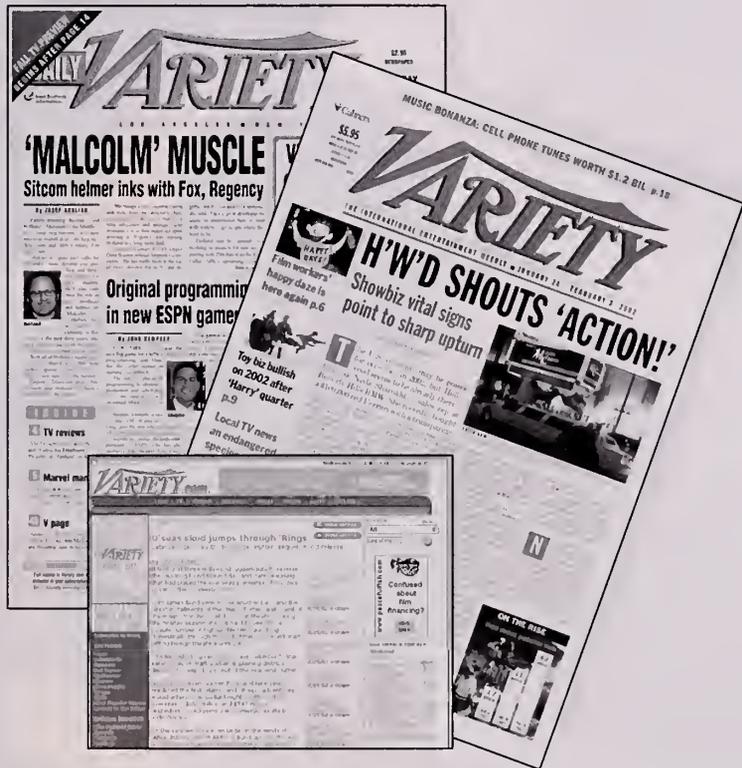
Take some time off from the edit room and discuss with your editor, mentor, or coach—once again, if necessary—the story you have in mind. Commit to follow a plan to bring that story to fruition, even if your editor thinks it is a waste of time. Maybe he or she is right, but once you see it with your own eyes, it will be easier to let go and try a new approach rather than engaging in a power struggle that alienates both of you.

Even if things seem unsalvageable, smoothing over the wrinkles with your editor will be easier and take less time than starting all over. And if, in the end, the process was just too painful, you can work with a different editor on your next project, which you will only get to do if you finish your current one. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She also leads AIVF's Documentary Dialogues discussion group. For more info, visit www.documentarydoctor.com

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Transcending Borders

P.O.V. ONLINE BUILDS COMMUNITY STORYTELLING

By Maya Churi

The first and perhaps most exciting part of making a film is coming up with an inspired idea. This idea or concept is usually quickly translated into a storytelling genre—fiction, documentary, or experimental—for the big screen. The writer or filmmaker then follows a difficult though well-traveled road: writing a script, seeking out funding, hiring actors, shooting the film, editing, and eventually exhibiting it. But when the idea happens to be for a moving-image website, the process is different and not as clearly marked as for a film or video.

PBS's nonfiction film series, *P.O.V.*, has taken the bold step of producing a web-only documentary series. In searching for a theme for the website, Cara Mertes, executive producer of *P.O.V.*, wanted to focus on a subject that was ripe in today's media-driven climate and was also something that has the ability to build community

through storytelling. What she came up with was the concept of borders. "For this series, we have conceived of borders as a transitional state between one thing and the next, whether that is physical, like the borders between countries and states, or experiential, like the border between health and illness or being young and old," Mertes points out. "There are borders everywhere, including online, where there are borders of language, access, activity, and so on. But the web is also particularly good at breaking down borders. Friendships, alliances, and communities now exist as they could nowhere else. It is in this entirely new set of relationships that we want to situate *Borders* as a storytelling model."

Knowing that a project's final destination is the web changes the way you develop the idea from the beginning. If using film or video on the site, one has to go through all the steps that are necessary when making a traditional film, but, in addition, one must figure out how the design and organization of the website will enhance the story that is being told. "[We] sketched out goals, including exploring what a showcase for interactive nonfiction storytelling would look like. We had a group of consultants working with us come up with content ideas, navigational schemes, and design elements," Mertes explains. "All content had to be organized around questions of technological access, interactive storytelling, and generating involvement on the part of site users. We tried to integrate the idea of fluidity and motion

with the website design, as well as find ways to promote interactivity. We wanted the site to suggest that it is alive, and much like life, constantly changing and responding to input."

The first installment of the borders-themed series focuses on physical borders, primarily the one between the US and Mexico. The website is divided into five interactive sections on the subject. The main component is the Stories section, which features an



interactive drama entitled *Leaving Elsa*. The ten-part series follows the lives of three teenage students from the border town of Elsa, Texas, as they cross personal experiential borders. Cecilia is in her second year at Columbia University and struggles to find the finances to get herself through school. Kate is heading off for her first year of college in Boston, and Gilbert, a senior in high school, tries to figure out what his next step in life will be. The students submit weekly video diaries where they discuss the events going on in their lives. Each entry is available to the audience via video, audio, or text. The multiple formats give everyone (those with high-speed or slow internet connections) the ability to participate in the story.

Film and mediamaker Bernardo

Above: *Borders* home page. Left: *Leaving Elsa*'s Gilbert Perales at Edcouch-Elsa High School.





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Ruiz, who was commissioned to produce *Leaving Elsa*, was excited by the idea of creating an interactive drama from the ground up. "Cara's idea was to create an original documentary series—an experiment, really—that would integrate the technology of the 'net beyond simply utilizing streaming video and HTML web pages. I

think that many traditional media-makers and documentarians look at web-based projects as limiting. With *Borders*, I found the exact opposite. I found the limitations of the new media environment tremendously liberating."

A good example of the multifaceted look at interactive storytelling that *Borders* experiments with is the *Snapshots* section of the site. In this section, viewers are asked, "What are the borders in your life?" and are encouraged to submit their own snapshot of what their meditations, reflections, and ideas about borders are. One can submit a video, a poem, essay, or anything they feel reflects their perceptions of borders. Currently, Alex Rivera's short videos *Love on the Line* and *Visible Border* are featured in the section. *Love on the Line* tells the story of a man who travels to the US/Mexico border to have lunch with his wife and child. Neither are able to cross without consequences. As we watch them visit through a fence on the beach, one can't help but make the comparison to visiting an inmate in prison. Who is in jail, though, is left to be determined. The video is a profound example of what borders are and how they affect people. "We worked hard to find a specific story with universal elements to it, so people have been interested in the site for many reasons," Mertes states, "Everyone has the experience of

Bernardo Ruiz, film and mediamaker, was commissioned to produce *Leaving Elsa*.

crossing borders of one kind or other, and while people that have had the direct experience of crossing the US/Mexico border as immigrants respond to the story more directly, the story transcends that context and reaches people of all ages and backgrounds."

The idea of borders, though, is an increasingly conceptual one. As we move towards globalization, free trade, faster airplanes, the ability to physically travel around the world in forty-eight hours, and in just a few seconds via cyberspace, one has to wonder how much borders impact our lives today. *P.O.V.* makes it abundantly clear that though many borders may be breaking down, they continue in many forms, including online. Ruiz explains that one of the most significant borders he had to cross in making this project for the web was getting over the idea that a documentary or narrative should be a certain way. "Ironically, creating a web-based project is a lot like having a hybrid identity. There are no rules, and you have both the freedom and the risks to create as you go along." The next border to cross, Mertes points out, is to "create a sustainable model for an ongoing web showcase. We will be launching a second episode in the spring of 2003, and that will contain many of the same features, with different content." □

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on a web narrative about a gated Texas community.

Native American Public Telecommunications

Jason Guerrasio interviews Penny Costello

What is Native American Public Telecommunications?

NAPT is one of five minority consortia funded through the public television system. We foster and cultivate the production of content by and about Native Americans.

When and why did it start?

NAPT has been in business for twenty-five years. We work with Native American producers and writers to help them to produce content for broadcast on public television. Our mission is to give an authentic voice to what people see on television about Native Americans.

How many projects do you fund on average each year?

We narrow it down to five or six projects that we recommend for funding, and eventually we negotiate the funding contract with the producers. There are also times when we fund a series of small short films. This year *Voices from Indian Country* developed out of a grant cycle when we were able to do this in the middle of the year. Occasionally we will do specialized calls for proposals in addition to our annual open round for full-length features.

What's the open call deadline?

The deadline for submissions is July 1.

What is the average size of a grant?

This past year it was around a quarter to a half-million dollars.

How many submissions do you receive annually?

On average about twenty-five proposals.

What types of projects do you seek?

Usually documentary projects. His-

torically we haven't gotten into dramatic or narrative projects, but we consider any proposal submitted for the open call. We've had some proposals [that were on the] verge of the



dramatic genre. While those types of projects haven't been funded yet, I wouldn't say they never would be.

Take me through the review process.

We collect all the proposals. Then we pull together a panel of Native studies scholars, television producers, and writers—people who can look at the proposals from various points of view—so the projects meet a standard of authenticity and representation of the Native American experience.

Can applicants reapply if denied?

With the open call, yes. Typically if someone is rejected at that time, we are happy to provide either the viewers' comments or some kind of constructive critique that will help them develop their proposal so that it's stronger.

Does the NAPT have other calls for projects during the year?

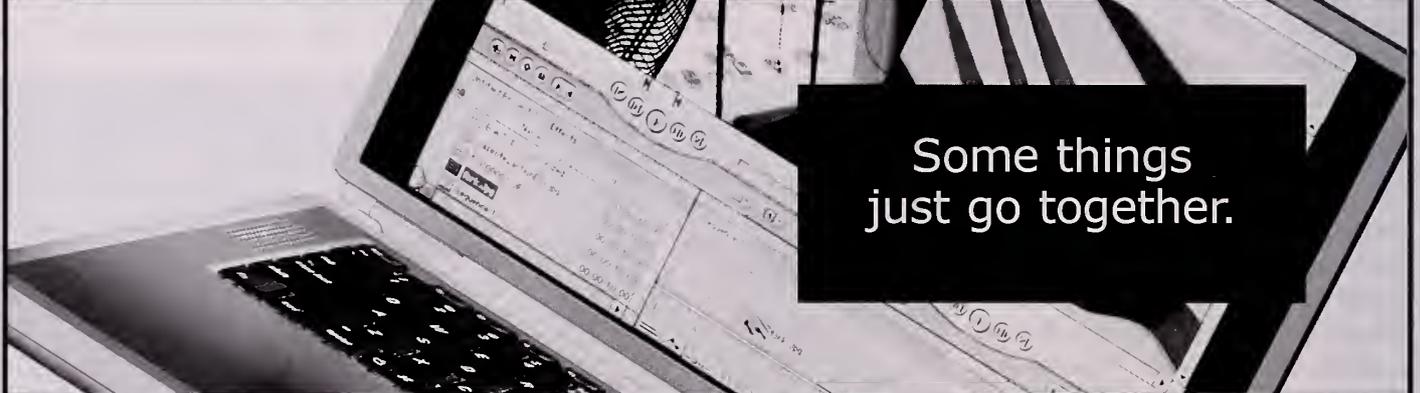
Yes, if there's money left over in our program. For example, if the total amount of the grant wasn't used up by projects that came in through the open call, then we may be able to allocate those funds to a different grant. We also have developed a revolving deadline for a finishing fund grant. This is for projects that are really at the point where they need no more than

\$25,000 to be totally finished. Another way we fund projects outside of the open call process is to fund some that are in the development stage, when they need script development or research and development. Also projects we have previously funded can come back to us with an updated proposal for production funds at any time. They don't have to go in the open call.

How do you prefer a filmmaker to submit a project to you?

We provide a set of guidelines and an application form. It tells them what the proposal needs, such as video tape samples or work samples. For example, the finishing funds projects require

The Native American spirit is captured in Tula Goenka's *Dancing on Mother Earth*.



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documentation of who the other current funders are, to document that the amount of money that is being requested from us is indeed the last money needed to complete the project. Sometimes people give us way too much. When they don't follow what's asked for in the guidelines, we may or may not choose to pass it on to our reviewers. I think the projects that closely follow what's laid out in the guidelines are easier for us to distribute. People should keep in mind that if we get twenty-five projects in and we've got five or six people that



Left: Chief Mountain Hotshots hone their saws in *Fire Warriors*. Right: Cameras are set up to shoot a powwow for the two-part program *Native Americans in the 21st Century*.

need to look at all these proposals, we want applicants to feel that they've done their project justice in their descriptions. But a lot of times they'll go overboard in terms of sending us copies of newspaper articles that have been written, and that kind of stuff. Sometimes letters of support are helpful, but you can go overboard with that too. My best advice is to just follow the guidelines as closely as possible.

What has been the distribution/exhibition path of past projects?

A project may spend a year or so traveling around the country to festivals before it actually gets to television. Sometimes it may go to television first. It all depends on the project and what it's been submitted to and where it's been accepted. One example is a project that we cofunded with Oregon Public Broadcasting called *Rocks With Wings*. It's been cov-

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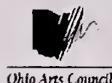
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The Slate:

Fire Warriors, prod. Darren Kipp
(early 2003)

Dancing on Mother Earth, prod.
Tula Goenka (fall 2003)

Seasoned with Spirit, prod. Lily
Shangreaux (winter-spring 2003)

*Trudell: The Lives and Words of
John Trudell*, prod. Heather Rae
(August 2003)

ering the country on the film festival circuit and has created quite a following. At the same time, *The Great American Foot Race* was finished in August and hit the airwaves in November. It's been seen at two film festivals so far.

What distinguishes NAPT from other funders?

I think our longevity. Also, our mission to cultivate and create authentic Native American content and, in the process, help develop the skills of Native producers who are accomplished as well as those who are just emerging. There are different entities within the Public Broadcasting System that offer those services as well, but we've been dedicated to the Native community, to Indian Country

Musician and activist, John Trudell is the subject of a NAPT-funded doc.



throughout the United States, for twenty-five years.

What's the most common mistake a filmmaker makes when they apply to you?

When a producer has received funding from us in the past for R&D or script development and then they come back for a follow-up grant, I think sometimes there's this assumption that we have this entire history of their project in front of us. As much as we would like that to be true, we're not always able to do that. When they send those second proposals to us—as any other funder—they shouldn't assume that we are going to refer back to a previous proposal to fill in holes. They should look at a follow-up proposal as a brand new start, in terms of providing all of the information. It's not unlike writing a cover letter for a job.

What advice do you give filmmakers about putting forth a strong application or proposal?

The internet has a lot of resources out there through our website (www.nativetelecom.org), through the PBS website (www.pbs.org/producers), and through the ITVS website (www.itvs.org). There are a lot of producer development tools and resources available to people who have the access and who are willing to do the legwork. Always be open to improving your skills, and don't ever assume that you've completely arrived. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for *The Independent*.

MadCat Women's International Film Festival

SECOND-WAVE FEMINISM FINDS FESTIVAL HOME

By Kate Haug

The MadCat Women's International Film Festival tests, expands, and evolves the traditional, politically motivated, twentieth-century definition of "the women's film festival." Seventies feminists had bold ambitions for women's films, but festivals were usually linked to the burgeoning field of cinema studies, leftist politics, or consciousness-raising. While these festivals served a crucial need for women directors and film scholars, their mission became less clear as the politicized seventies gave way to the Oprahcized nineties. Today we see women who embrace moving picture technology as cool, sassy, and hip. Yet, MadCat founder and director Ariella Ben-Dov's mission is much more subtle and sly than what usually passes for a contemporary rebel girl's dossier. With her original programming and focus on artistic innovation, Ben-Dov has taken the women's film festival—literally and conceptually—into the twenty-first century.

Currently celebrating its six-year anniversary, MadCat has outgrown any "riot grrl" roots it may have had and taken a step that many seventies second-wave feminists dreamed about; MadCat promotes films made by women based on one criteria: artistic integrity. Films included in MadCat aren't in service to a uniform political mission or message. While films programmed fit a curatorial theme, work is never dismissed for political incor-

rectness. Although many of the films exhibited are experimental, Ben-Dov regularly screens narratives, documentaries, and hybrid works that live between genres. Ben-Dov curates inspired programs that combine both historical (and historically neglected) films and new works by women. Past festivals included Vera Chytilova's 1966 Czech masterpiece *Daisies*, Lizzie Borden's seminal *Born in Flames*, and Leotine Sagan's 1931 classic *Maedchen in Uniform*.

The 2002 festival boasted nine programs of sixty films culled from a combination of Ben-Dov's research submissions and the 700 plus the festival received in 2002. Program themes included "This Crazy Thing Called Love," "Big Cities Short Stories," "Altered Realities," and "To Know is Always Better." MadCat screened at various venues throughout the San Francisco Bay area and will tour its program later this year.

"NYC, Just Like I Pictured It," a program dedicated to New York City's architecture and street life, exemplified Ben-Dov's curatorial bent. The program included Helen Levitt's 1952 silent documentary of the Upper East Side, *In The Street*; Shirley Clarke's masterful *Skyscraper* (1959), a chronicle of 666 5th Avenue from the architect's blueprint to Manhattan's skyline; the wry formalist humor of Joyce Wieland's

1933 (1967); and Johanna Hibbard's 1999 *Vanilla Egg Cream*, which gives a contemporary view of the city. "We wanted to pay our respects to the perseverance of those directly and indirectly affected by these events," Ben-Dov said as she introduced the program. "We chose to look at films that were about New York City that pay homage to the architecture, the cultures, and the pace of the city." Not only is it a pleasure to see these rarely screened films, it is a vibrant tribute to New York City without the nationalism that pervades many post-September 11 programs on the same subject.

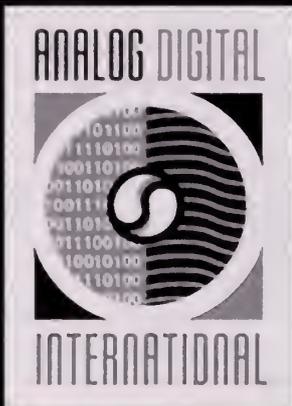
The program "Truth Seekers" subtly addresses our current political situation. As White House rhetoric becomes



increasingly hawkish, this selection of films explores militarism from a variety of viewpoints. *A Conversation with Harris*, Shelia Sofian's experimental documentary, recounts the war experience of a young Bosnian boy. Kerry Hustwit's *The Hunter's Guide* captures the seasonal rituals, male bonding, and banalities of her father's favorite sport. While the film tries to maintain an observational distance, the final scenes of a deer hunt connect the men's friendly conversations and seemingly innocent pastime to a brutal death.

Victoria Gamburg's *Right Road Lost* and Chris Willging's *Standing at Ground Zero* both have war veterans as narra-

Jen Sachs' animated doc *The Velvet Tigress* screened at MadCat.



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tors. *Right Road Lost's* Phil Rios remembers a particularly gruesome mission in the Persian Gulf War. Seeing Rios in his everyday life and then in Gulf War photos underscores the chilling and irresolvable discrepancy between a soldier's life and a civilian's life. Warren Kreml, *Standing at Ground Zero's* subject and a World War II veteran, tells the story of his personal transformation after his 1945 ship-to-shore visit to Ground Zero in Nagasaki, Japan. Intentional or not, the film reminds the audience that the term "Ground Zero" has been used well before September 11, 2001 to mark a site of extreme devastation. Kreml's humble demeanor and powerful ambition to work towards world peace after seeing the complete obliteration of Nagasaki invites viewers to interpret horrifying acts of war on a personal level that transcends the political status quo.

At this year's festival, two long-format documentaries, Sarah George's *Catching Out* and the premiere of Su Friedrich's *The Odds of Recovery*, were featured. *Catching Out* follows modern day trainhoppers on their rail adventures. The film's straightforwardness, lush American landscapes, and interviews create a completely pleasurable viewing experience. The subjects of *Catching Out* offer relief from the work-a-day world in their personal philosophy and active pursuit of a life outside of commerce.

Friedrich, who has been making films since 1978, has influenced a generation of filmmakers with her well-crafted, intellectually charged experimental films. In *The Odds of Recovery*, Friedrich becomes her own documentary subject as she chronicles various illnesses and their effects on her long-term relationship. The surprise comes when these scenes don't culminate into a scathing comment on the medical system. Instead, they construct an intimate portrait of Friedrich's life. Friedrich's "hidden camera" reveals just as much about being a patient in today's medical system as it does her



fears, frustrations, and ambivalence towards her own health. As Friedrich pursues a variety of paths (Chinese herbs, tai chi, gardening) towards an ambiguous, often fleeting state of health, the viewer follows the changing dynamic of her ongoing relationship.

One of MadCat's stated missions is to "push the technical and aesthetic boundaries of filmmaking." As a primary goal for the festival, it's certainly MadCat's most overt political statement. Women filmmakers are rarely acknowledged for their technical innovation and craft. The festival showcases animation, experimental practice, and technical prowess. Cade Bursell tapes found footage to 35mm stock in her film *Test Sites*, which investigates the effects of nuclear testing. Naomi Uman bleaches, rephotographs, and animates paper cutouts in *Hand Eye Coordination*. Amy Hick's *Hatching Beauty* combines stop-motion animation, Barbie dolls, live action, and found footage to discuss the politics of ovum sales. Nancy Andrew's hilarious *The Reach of an Arm* uses puppets, miniature sets, and silhouettes to tell the story of a gender role reversal that takes place on their pioneer journey across the American West: Frank Goodin, with literally half a brain, whimpers in the wagon while Peculiarity, his wife, forges ahead shouting her 1890's punk rock anthem: "Out

Modern day train hoppers are the focus of Sarah George's *Catching Out*.

of my way. Out of my way."

Animation, in all its forms, reigned at this year's festival, ranging from Caroline Leaf's 1976 *The Street*, about a boy waiting for his grandmother to die so he can get his bedroom back, to Shawn Atkin's superb surreal photo-collage tale, *The Traveling Eye of the Blue Cat*, to Lisa Yu's erotic claymation odyssey *Vessel Wrestling*, *Hike Hike Hike*, by Anouck Iyer, and Jen Sachs' *The Velvet Tigress*, use live action as the basis for their animation to vastly different ends. *Hike Hike Hike*, at four minutes, is a concise but vivid portrait of a dogsled team. *The Velvet Tigress* tells the 1931 tabloid story of Winnie Ruth Judd, the "Trunk Murderess." *Thanh*, by Thanh Diep, seems to be inventing a new form of expression altogether. Diep, a woman living with cerebral palsy, narrates through a machine called "the liberator" while abstract images that she created and then animated rhythmically appear with her voice. Many animated pieces employ technology to produce their work, but Diep takes the connection between artist and technology to new levels.

Other works at MadCat imploded, conflated, and exceeded genre altogether. By using a combination of extreme realism (an insightfully delivered discussion between patient and therapist) and complete fiction (animated, puffy humanoids) Pearce Williams' *Sharp Proofing* is simultaneously witty and profound. Diane

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Bonder's *If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now* gives small-town politics new meaning while exploring the fine line between truth and fiction. And Deborah Stratman brilliantly critiques surveillance, corporate space, and security in her film *In Order Not to Be Here*. Stratman plays on the current reality-TV obsession by fabricating a thrilling piece of faux crime footage and subverts the standard *Cops* narrative by giving the audience an unusually triumphant criminal-protagonist.

The MadCat filmgoing experience crosses between a history lesson, a technical showcase, and a panorama of contemporary film. It has the feeling of a much older festival, one with an established direction and a stable mission. The festival devotes its resources to programming instead of panels, workshops, and parties. The cineaste nature of the MadCat, where the most important space is the screen, creates a low-key environment. Shaped by Ben-Dov's commitment to showing the best work she can find, regardless of age, nationality, or genre, MadCat consistently presents historically and culturally relevant programming. Ben-Dov's curating is the culmination of two significant periods of women's film. She's taken an important cue from her second-wave predecessors by keeping the history of women's film in focus with contemporary makers. In an age of coalition politics, Ben-Dov is a committee of one. This power of one harkens back to the golden age of women's cinema, the turn of the twentieth century, when Alice Guy Blache ran one of the most prolific and profitable studios of her time. Like Blache, Ben-Dov uses the singularity of her position to drive women's film to new ground and into the new century. □

MadCat's touring program travels nationwide. Ariella Ben-Dov can be reached by e-mail at alionbear@earthlink.net. For more information on MadCat or submissions to next year's festival, go to www.somaglow.com/madcat.

Kate Haug is a San Francisco-based writer. Her interview with Carolee Schneemann will appear in the forthcoming Routledge anthology, *Experimental Cinema: a Film Reader*.



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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Lost in La Mancha

Dir. Keith Fulton & Louis Pepe

(IFC Films, Jan. 31)

"The fact that [Terry Gilliam's] film failed obviously gives you an even greater avenue into the mechanics of filmmaking that people don't get to



see or hear about," says Keith Fulton, who with his partner Louis Pepe directed *Lost In La Mancha*, the verité look at the unmaking of Gilliam's film about his lifelong obsession, *Don Quixote*, starring Johnny Depp and Jean Rochefort. After numerous dead ends, Gilliam finally begins shooting without any financial backing from Hollywood. The \$32 million budget was raised from within Europe. "We thought, 'This is a big film with big actors and a big name director, this thing is in no way vulnerable to anything,' [but] even Terry said, 'God, you guys were so slow to catch on,'" says Pepe about his realization that the film wouldn't get finished.

As shooting is delayed by a downpour that almost washes away the equipment, a soundstage that isn't sound-proof, and an injury to Rochefort on the sixth day of shooting,

(Left) Terry Gilliam and Jean Rochefort on the set of the ill-fated *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote*. (Right) ITVS's *Counting on Democracy* confronts the Florida recount and "chad"-mare of the 2000 presidential election.

we realize, as the crew does, that *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote* is doomed.

Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary

Dir. Andre Heller & Othmar Schmiderer

(Sony Pictures Classics, Dec. 25)

This ninety-minute documentary relies heavily on the mesmerizing tale of Junge Traudl, Adolf Hitler's private secretary. There are no archival photos or "lost footage," just the eighty-one-year-old Traudl in front of the camera. She chronicles her life from being a naïve girl who admired Hitler, to becoming the loyal employee to whom he dictated his will, to being an old woman unable to forgive herself. Hours after *Blind Spot* premiered at the Berlin Film Festival, Traudl died.

Stone Reader

Dir. Mark Moskowitz
(Film Forum, Feb. 12)

Filmmaker Mark Moskowitz sets out to find the mysterious author of *The Stones of Summer*, Dow Mossman, who disappeared after the book's 1972 publication. During his year-long search for the elusive author, Moskowitz speaks to many of the most influential people in literature, including the editor of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, Robert Gottlieb. This doc not only keeps you on the edge of your seat, it explores the state of reading in the fast-paced information age.

Television

Counting on Democracy

Dir. Danny Schechter

(ITVS, check local listings)

Danny Schechter's *Counting on Democracy* follows a story that 358 news organizations that camped out in Palm Beach, the site of the 2000 Florida vote recount, missed: The fact

that the majority of the 175,000 ballots never counted belonged to African Americans in a year with one of the largest African American voter turnouts in Florida history.

Although it was finished with an ITVS grant, PBS passed on the film



because the network had already shown a program poking fun at the election. Since then, ITVS has distributed the doc on public television, station by station. "There's a lot of interest in these issues and yet it's hard to get out any perspective that doesn't follow the same spin as everything else," Schechter says.

LANCE LOUD! A Death in an American Family

Dir. Alan & Susan Raymond
(PBS, Jan. 6)

In 1973 PBS aired the first reality TV show, a twelve-part documentary called *An American Family*, the real-life drama of the Loud family. This latest documentary is the final chapter of Lance, the openly gay teenage son in his final months before his death due to AIDS. The doc celebrates Lance's life and how he lived it.

Mobile-Eyes on Economic Justice and the World Social Forum (Free Speech TV, Jan. 25)

This half-hour program shot at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, offers an introduction to the issues and activists involved in globalization. The program is directed at encouraging viewers to help their cities enact policies that support human rights and economic justice, along with debunking corporate-led globalization.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for *The Independent*.



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Dynamic Duo

TODD LOUIISO AND PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN

By Andrea Meyer

Philip Seymour Hoffman and Todd Louiso met over ten years ago, when both were acting in *Scent of a Woman*. Since then, they have become friends, lived together for a year and a half, and worked together on a short film, *The Fifteen Minute Hamlet* (1995), Louiso directing, Hoffman acting. Then came the big challenge: For his feature directorial debut, Louiso directed Hoffman in the starring role of *Love Liza*, a film written by Hoffman's brother, Gordy. Dream scenario? Or a nightmare in which two people who used to love and respect each other bicker and fight, with director-friend bossing actor-friend around twenty-four days, at the end of which they're no longer on speaking terms?

"Phil and I were taking a chance working together," Louiso says, sitting next to Hoffman on a cozy couch at the Hamptons Film Festival. "But I didn't have a hard time telling him what I wanted, and he didn't have a hard time telling me what he wanted. There's a comfort level; there's already a language that's been created." Hoffman agrees. "Bad stuff can happen and you know it's going to be okay," he says. "You move on. I mean, we lived together."

The collaboration—between Louiso, Hoffman, and the rest of the cast and crew—was extremely successful. *Love Liza* won critical acclaim at Sundance 2002, as well as the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award.

Even on the most auspicious productions the road from script to screen is scattered with obstacles, especially for a first-time director with a small budget. Having a script, funding, a cast, and a crew in place does not a brilliant movie make. One of the classic mistakes that independent filmmakers make is believing that having an artistic vision or a great script means they'll be crackerjack directors. Unfortunately, being blessed with creative mojo doesn't ensure that a filmmaker will have the knack for directing actors. Communicating with a cast and drawing out strong performances is a specialized and difficult skill.

Louiso, an experienced actor, realized quickly that directing a feature film is very different from acting in one. While an actor can focus primarily on his or her part, the director is responsible for making sure the cast and crew do their jobs, and is ultimately accountable for every frame of the completed film. "It was the hardest thing I ever had to do, just to be responsible in that way," Louiso says. "You're worried about everything and everyone. It shaved a couple

years off my life. I smoked so much and didn't eat. But it's also the most rewarding thing I've done so far."

A director has to balance his or her own needs with those of the cast and crew on one side and the producers on the other, and they often conflict. And in the midst of all this



negotiating, the film is happening, in real time. The camera is rolling, capturing the action that will become the movie. "You're always feeling pressure from the producers to get in there and move on," Louiso says. "But you have to take your time. You're making the film. This is it. People can whisper in your ear, 'Oh, we'll get that shot later.' But usually you're not going to get it later, and you can forget that when you're in the heat of the shoot."

Hoffman and Louiso planning their next shot on the set of *Love Liza*.

Hoffman adds, "In film, if something's not working it's usually not just the actor. It's usually the whole damn thing that's not working. It's a *we* problem, usually. It's a DP/director/actor/script problem. It's like, how do *we* make it work? 'Cause it's not working right now."

For Louiso, the trick to making it work was hiring people—especially actors—that he knew he could rely on to do their jobs well. "Trusting your actors is key. And in order to trust them, you have to cast well," he says. "With this film, I felt the need to allow the actors to explore and feel comfortable doing that. Otherwise you won't get these kinds of gems out of them. You have to coax them out by allowing them to explore."

"Filmmaking is such a collaborative art form. I try to use people I like and open myself up to them," he says. "I'm not a tyrant who says, 'It has to be this way.'" Louiso found a system for working with his actors that basically involved giving them room to play. He would clear the set of everybody except the actors in the particular scene; Lisa Rinzler, the DP (*Pollock*, *Three Seasons*); and himself. Then they'd plan the shot together. "I have a game plan of what I want to happen, but I would let Phil come in and I would tell him my ideas, and he would say, 'Well, I don't feel like doing that. I feel like doing this,'" Louiso says. "The DP would interject what she was thinking. I'd just try to keep things very minimal."

Hoffman says this system was ideal for him. "It was really good that way. Lisa, Todd, and I would go in there and just work it out," he says. "We wouldn't spend too much time. We'd just go in, set it up, and roll."

Before the shoot, Louiso had almost no time to rehearse with his cast. "I wish we'd had more," he says. "But I guess I just try to create an atmosphere where the actors don't feel rushed, especially when you're on a shoot that's so short—twenty-four days in fifty-two locations, working six-day weeks." He says, however, that Hoffman's performance was not at all diminished by the lack of rehearsal. "We'd talked about it so much through the years and we both knew the script so well, so there was something we knew about it already inside of us."

There were, of course, disagreements, but they were not the norm. For example, in a scene in which Wilson, the character Hoffman plays, goes swimming in a lake, Louiso says he wanted to get more coverage of Hoffman swimming, while the actor preferred focussing on his lines. Hoffman

won the battle. "It was hard for me to say, 'Keep swimming,' when it was thirty-degree weather and he was out on the lake," Louiso laughs. Of their occasional differences of opinion, Louiso says, "I'd let him do what he wanted and then I would make the decision in the cutting room."

Being an actor with nearly a dozen films under his belt (*High Fidelity*, *Jerry Maguire*) served Louiso in many ways in his role as director. For one, he is fortunate to have built relationships with a lot of actors that he trusts. Besides a few people in the film (Kathy Bates, for example), the majority of cast members were friends that he had worked

with through the years. "They're all people I knew I could count on to show up and whose work I love," he says. "That's hard to do in an independent film. If you're shooting on location, you're forced to use actors who are local. But because I'm an actor, I asked them to do me this favor, and they were all incredible enough to do that for me."

Counting a talent like Hoffman among those friends certainly helps. According to Louiso, his leading man continually astounded him. *Love Liza* is an intense story about a man struggling to find meaning in his life after his wife commits suicide. Hoffman, playing Wilson, the stunned widower, is on screen for almost the entire length of the film, and he remains completely engaging throughout. "Every day, every take almost, Phil would do something

that would make me incredibly happy and in awe of him," Louiso says. He describes a shot in which Hoffman sniffs a rag soaked in gasoline and hallucinates seeing his wife. "He just does it with his eyes and his face, and I remember being so moved," Louiso says. "I don't know how to put into words how I felt. He just amazed me. We just put on the camera and let him do what he wanted to do."

In that particular scene, the script merely called for Wilson to huff intensely, but Louiso came up with the hallucination idea and Hoffman loved it. "I would have something in my head, the way I heard a line," Louiso recalls. "And he would tweak it and I'd be amazed at how he would interpret it."

Even though Wilson is a character going through hell, Hoffman stresses how important it is to recognize that he



Above: Hoffman after his chilling swimming scene in *Love Liza*. Right: Hoffman's character, Wilson dazed from huffing gas.

is much more than just distraught. "There's, like, a twenty-five-minute section of the movie where he's devastated," Hoffman says. "He's not depressed. You are, because you know his journey. You see where he's going and there's no way of stopping it. His wife committed suicide. He walked in. His wife is dead in the garage. You meet him two days later. That's the movie. What I'm getting at is devastating, yeah, but Wilson is lots of things.

"That's what drew me into the movie," he continues. "When I first read it, I laughed. I was completely bamboozled and shocked. I was moved. It's not just some guy hanging by a noose for an hour."

Hoffman's argument is a bit tough for a filmgoer to grasp, because the film is so unsettling. But just go with it for a minute: Assume that the guy isn't devastated. How do an actor and director create a character going through what he's going through and give him emotional dimensionality? How do they work together to bring that dimensionality from the script to the screen?

"What's actually happening is he's enjoying himself," Hoffman explains. "He's running around and sniffing gas and swimming in places he shouldn't swim. When he goes swimming, the water was, like, thirty-five degrees. It was really cold. So, we're not gonna sit there and talk about *the wife's death*," he says in a melodramatic tone. "You're very upset. You're very sad. No," he says, himself again. "What you're going to talk about is, 'Okay, the water's very cold. So, when you get out there, swim in the water, but then run back. We're going to have this long lens on you.' Todd isn't going to sit here and worry me with all the emotional dol-drums. In acting the part and in talking to Todd about it, it was all about how *not* to feel what *you're* feeling watching the movie. What Wilson is doing is doing everything to not actually sink into a chair and go, 'Oh God, she's dead' for two hours."

"He's a very internal character," says Louiso. "The problem was how do you have a protagonist who's so internal and how do you inform the audience who he is and get them to feel for him? That's a huge credit to Phil. He did all that. I tried to put the camera on him in certain ways and use music to fill the silences. But the silences allowed me to really be a director. That's the beauty of film. It's image-based, and I wanted it to be a really quiet film, especially in Wilson's life right now. This person is gone from his life."

"Acting in it, you have to worry more about what the script says he's *doing*," says Hoffman. "You're going to create the emotion no matter what, because it's an upsetting story, so you worry more about what he's doing—what he's doing so that he doesn't just sit there and cry. That's how I looked at it a lot of the time. How is he distracting himself from the pain he's going through?"

Behind-the-scenes drama can often rival what the audience watches on screen. At one point during the twenty-four-

day shoot, the crew learned that an enormous amount of footage was unusable because of a bad shutter on the camera. They were sending dailies to a lab in LA from location in Alabama and by the time they learned of the mishap they had shot about four days' worth of useless footage.

When disaster strikes a production, it falls on the shoulders of the director to hold everything together. "I thought I'd die at that point, but I'm still here," Louiso says. "It was the worst thing that could have happened, but you have to rally the troops and say, 'All right, this is a chance to improve and rethink the shots.' And we did that."

Hoffman also tried to see the crisis as an opportunity. "If you ever get a chance to go back to things in films, you can



always go, 'Well, what can we do better?'" he says.

At this point, Louiso's ability to empathize with the actors became invaluable. "As an actor you think, 'I did it. It's over. I can live with that.' And then you have to reshoot, and it's incredibly painful," he says.

How did Louiso put his shattered cast back together? "Just to be supportive and not to dismiss their feelings. You have to allow people to be pissed off, allow them to have those feelings and not try to fight them. You have to be the rock. You have to be really strong and allow the others to fall apart."

Overall, Hoffman and Louiso agree that the *Love Liza* shoot was a positive experience, disasters and all. The first-time feature director and the well-known actor carrying an entire film for the first time supported each other with astounding success. And they have an emotional powerhouse of a film to show for it. "Phil's in everything but something like eight scenes, and in editing I never got tired of watching him," says Louiso. "He and I trusted each other and we were on the same page aesthetically. In the end, he allowed me to dictate how the film was going to look. He trusted me to do that." □

Andrea Meyer covers film for Interview, Time Out New York, indieWIRE, and the New York Post. She also reports on relationships and celebrities for Glamour.

Media Mentors

EXPERIENCED MAKERS OFFER EMERGING TALENT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

By Kimberly Weiner

Take a moment to ponder your understanding of the concept of mentoring. Do you envision a tight, one-on-one relationship, something akin to “snatch this pebble from my hand, grasshopper?” Perhaps you feel more confident equating the experience to an apprenticeship, where the novice follows the expert, performing tasks alongside, and learning through doing in the actual environ. Perchance you equate a mentorship with an internship, where the goal is to get into the desired environment, make a solid impression while performing an unending series of typically menial tasks, and, hopefully, create relationships to be called upon in the future.

Yahooligans Reference, a better source for direct data than most “grown-up” reference sites, defines the term this way:

Mentor

NOUN: A wise and trusted counselor or teacher.

INTRANSITIVE VERB: To serve as a trusted counselor or teacher, especially in occupational settings.

But finding mentoring programs in the video/film community, or any field, that hold true to this definition is not a particularly easy task. Often the term is employed as a marketing buzzword to potential applicants who later discover that what is really being offered is an internship. Internships can be powerful experiences, but they are not mentorships, and to use the terms as interchangeable is neither correct nor fair to either experience. Should you still think the two are relatively the same, consider the different forms of “intern” as compared to those previously mentioned for “mentor”:

Intern

NOUN: A student or recent graduate undergoing supervised practical training.

INTRANSITIVE VERB: To train or serve as an intern.

TRANSITIVE VERB: (also n-túrn) To confine, especially in wartime.

With that clarified, let's look at several, nonconfining

film/video mentor programs that deserve a “truth-in-advertising” seal for providing what they promise.

WOMEN IN FILM (www.wif.org)

Women In Film's mission statement declares their purpose to be “to empower, promote, nurture, and mentor women in the industry.” As Jane LeBonte, Women In Film Mentor Program director, explains, “We understand the importance of relationships and try to create matches where the mentor will be able to guide their young woman through the culture of not only their field, but of the industry.”

Women In Film's formal mentoring program lasts six months. The mentor is responsible for meeting with his or her mentee at least two times face-to-face and conducting two telephone conversations each month. “Pairing up people is challenging. You have to consider not only the professional goals of the woman, but how much time the potential mentor has to share. I'm asking very busy people to take on another responsibility,” LeBonte says. She points out that when initial contact comes from the hopeful mentee, in the form of a sincere letter, it can spark an outstanding mentoring relationship. “When a potential mentor sees that a woman so genuinely desires to learn, then the effort and commitment doesn't seem as overwhelming,” she notes.

INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERVICE (ITVS) (www.itvs.org)

ITVS supports and funds independent producers, particularly those focusing on documentaries. The organization is a support and catalyst for growth in the way independent producers participate in and define the cultural dialogue of public television; this focus fuels their mentoring program. With the goal of getting public television producers to participate in and learn from “real hip-to-hip mentoring,” as Claire Aguilar, ITVS's director of programming, describes it, ITVS mentor-mentee relationships are project-based. “This is not a cookie-cutter situation; there is a level of agreement between both

mentor and mentee about what each expects as learning experiences and responsibilities. Both participants must recognize that learning occurs on both ends," explains Aguilar.

ITVS stands out from most mentoring programs by offering stipends, from \$5,000-\$20,000, depending on the kind of work and the time frame. This money serves two purposes: It welcomes mentees into the professional community of documentary filmmaking, and this income ensures a mentee's commitment for a substantial amount of time (six months or more), allowing the mentor-mentee relationship to grow organically. The long-term goal of the program is to get people to the point where they can be competitive as new producers and return to ITVS to get resources and funding for their own projects. "This experience will help ensure that [today's mentees] feel a commitment to work in public media," Aguilar says.

Mentoring, of course, builds not only a relationship between the mentee and the sponsor organization (in this case ITVS), but also a relationship between the mentor and mentee; a more intimate, open one than the typical worker/supervisor relationship. Carol Bash, Stanley Nelson's mentee throughout the production of his ITVS-funded documentary, *A Place of Our Own*, explains, "The project was intense in the sense that during production [in the summer of 2001], I lived with the Nelson family. It was a unique working experience out of which I got to know Stanley more personally than I normally would have, had we worked in the typical office setting . . . the usual social barriers and office etiquette were simply broken down. I also think working in such an unconventional environment benefited the production, because I felt much more at ease to just brainstorm and offer ideas."

The mentor/mentee relationship, like all others, grows over time. "It was a gradual process," she continues, "not something that happened overnight. But in the end, I feel that I found someone who I not only felt comfortable working with but who I could share my personal career goals and interests with as well. Even though the formal ITVS mentorship program has ended, what I've

taken away from it is something special because it is long lasting. I've met someone who I've connected with and who I feel believes in me, and that's great. We should all have mentors."



APPALSHOP (www.appalshop.org)

Nestled in the hills of Kentucky, Appalshop supports the ongoing growth of a film and television production cooperative within the Appalachian community, much as it has since its inception in 1969. Originally brought together to complete a job training program, many program graduates decided to stay. These people then created their own production company, focusing on making films about Appalachian culture and social issues, finding both a niche for their products and a calling as a source of education and inspiration for local communities.

Today, Appalshop offers a multitude of activities and opportunities for the people of the region to gather, communicate, explore creative outlets, and give back to the community through mentoring-styled youth outreach programs such as the Appalachian Media Institute (AMI) program.

Through AMI, young people in eastern Kentucky work with professionals from Appalshop to learn how to use video cameras and audio equipment. The students are guided through the experience of documenting the unique traditions of their lives as Appalachian youth.



Above: Stanley Nelson, ITVS mentor and director of *A Place of Our Own*. Right: Claire Aguilar, director of programming of ITVS.

AMI also offers intensive summer institutes and year-round media literacy and production training within the local schools.

There is no formal one-on-one mentoring in AMI, but just as there are programs that use the label “mentoring” to mean internship, so also there are programs so infused with the spirit of mentoring that they do not separate it from their basic work. Appalshop is one of these. The practice of nurturing and supporting youth is enmeshed into every part of AMI.

Program graduate Amelia Kirby sums up her experience, “I came to Appalshop as a young woman knowing that I wanted to stay in the mountains, but that the employment options were pretty limited. I had a strong sense of our culture and the issues of the region, but almost no media skills. I was taken under the collective wing of the Appalshop filmmakers and taught the skills to create media about my community. I am still here, participating in work I believe in, and I’m still rooted in my home community. To me that’s the beauty of Appalshop—that I can stay here in the mountains and make strong media about home.”

INDEPENDENT FEATURE PROJECT—L.A. **(www.ifp.org)**

A nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering communication and providing resources for its approximately 9,000

independent filmmakers, industry professionals, and independent film enthusiast members, IFP has six US chapters. The Los Angeles chapter is preparing for the tenth anniversary of Project:Involve, a program designed to promote cultural diversity in the film industry through training, job placement, and mentorship.

Pamela Tom, the director of Project:Involve, believes that “mentoring is especially important in the film industry, because access is so important to developing your career and succeeding in film. A component that incorporated access as a fundamental part of its operations is really important, and mentoring seemed to be the ideal way.”

A great deal of time and consideration goes into pairing an IFP mentee with a mentor, because the goal is to create a relationship that will serve both parties long after the formal four-month commitment is over. “People who go through our program have already done internships. They’re not trying to replicate that experience. In fact, I truly believe you should spend a very finite amount of time in your life doing internships. They’re valid, they serve a purpose, but you should get in and get out. A mentorship program is a whole different ball game. It’s being set up with somebody who is consciously choosing to guide you, to provide access, in some cases train, and pass on their knowledge. In our mentor guidelines, we say these are things you [the mentor] can do to share. You can share

MENTORS:

Questions you should ask before making a commitment to be a mentor.

- Is the minimum time commitment realistic for you? Making promises of your time and attention that you know you just can’t meet are a recipe for a disastrous situation.
- Is there a contact person to go to should your mentee fail to follow through on planned meetings or should other issues arise?
- Does the program have a format or tools (handbooks, guidelines, time lines) to prepare you for being a mentor?
- Are you prepared to be open and honest about your job and how you achieved your level of success? The mentee is coming to you for guidance and support, not to be an audience for your favorite anecdotes.
- You need to ask your mentee the kinds of questions that will allow you to fill in their knowledge gaps.
- A successful mentor is a cross between Sherlock Holmes and Socrates—always asking questions to ensure that information given is indeed what’s necessary to paint a complete picture for the learner.

MENTEES:

Questions you should ask before making a commitment to a mentoring program.

- Are there clear minimums as far as how much contact your mentor will give you (i.e., number of phone calls or face-to-face meetings)?
- Is there a contact person you can go to should your mentor not follow through on the committed time?
- Does the program have a clear format or specific tools (handbooks, guidelines) to ensure that both you and your mentor are able to get the most out of your formal mentoring relationship?
- Is the goal of the situation for you to work for the mentor? This is red flag for an internship masquerading as a mentorship.
- Does the program have enough clout to be able to connect you with a mentor who really has the experience and understanding you are seeking?
- Are you prepared to put your ego on the back burner and soak up as much guidance, experience, and wisdom as can be shared within a reasonable amount of time?



books with them, films that you've seen that have influenced you. Share that process, those years of experience that it took you to get where you are, share that with your mentee," Tom explains.

She recounts a letter she just received from one mentee who wrote about an experience on the set of *6 Feet Under*. The mentee was shadowing her mentor and realized that it was the first time she'd been on a film set where she wasn't actually working. This allowed her to sit back and observe. "She thought that was really valuable," Tom says.

Mía C. Villanueva, a Project:Involve graduate who has since returned to IFP to help grow the program as a job coordinator, has gained many benefits from the program. "As far as my mentorship experience and overall experience with Project: Involve, I can honestly say I don't know where I would be or what path I would have taken without the open doors that Project:Involve has provided. I moved to Los Angeles from Seattle, not really knowing how I would get my foot in the door. However, to be mentored by a professional who is willing to give you honest and open feedback to help you improve your craft is a service that is sincerely priceless."

Recently, the Chicago IFP also initiated their own mentoring project to benefit a diverse section of the local youth. IFP-New York has also offered their version of the Project:Involve mentoring program since 2000.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION (www.filmarts.org)

Celebrating their twenty-fifth year, the San Francisco-based Film Arts Foundation has grown from a small, non-profit group to a nationally recognized leader in the

media arts field. The organization provides comprehensive training, equipment, information, consultations, and exhibition opportunities to independent filmmakers. Film Art's 3,400 members can be found around the globe, working and pushing the creative boundaries of film, video, and multimedia. To sustain the continued growth of the independent film community, Film Arts promotes opportunities for interested people to learn about the entire filmmaking process. One of their premier tools for providing such services is the mentoring program STAND.

STAND (Support, Training and Access for New Directors) originated in 1996 as a way to guide first-time filmmakers from underrepresented communities through the filmmaking process. STAND awards each participant \$1,500 in credit toward Film Arts classes and equipment rentals and pairs up each award winner with a professional filmmaker who then mentors them through the process of creating a short film or video. Current program mentor (and AIVF board member) Rahdi Taylor admits that the time commitment can feel overwhelming. "Officially I'm asked to give two hours a month, but I find myself spending a great deal more thinking about contacts or opportunities I could arrange for my mentee," she says. Taylor believes that mentoring is well worth the effort. "Community is important to me, and this experience is about the person, the mentee. It's not like an internship where the focus is on the organization or the production. My energy is specifically focused on the needs of my mentee." ■

An educational media specialist, Dr. Kimberly Weiner leads EdTech21 (www.edtech21.com), the consulting firm she founded in 1998. This unique source for information, support, and assistance with media components specializes in ensuring that the audience's exposure to ideas and information is powerful and meaningful. She has also been an active educational consultant for children's programming developers, evaluating scripts, storylines, and character development.

Left and Center: Film Arts mentor Rhadi Taylor and teens at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, and at work on the street. Right: Project:Involve Director Pamela Tom and IFP Mentor Elizabeth Peña.

Collaborating Mediums

FINDING STRUCTURE IN MUSIC

By Katie Cokinos

Collaborations come in many different forms. Some artists even collaborate without ever communicating with each other during the creation of the project. Recently, for an unusual music/film project, four filmmakers and three composers in two cities did just that, creating collaborative works without physically or virtually working together. The mediums, more than the artists, formed the collaboration. The results were four inspiring short music films.

Commissioned through a visual arts grant administered by the Austin Film Society, these films were created for and premiered at The Festival Dancing in Your Head, an annual Minneapolis

music event. Four Texas filmmakers—Mireille Fornengo, Aaron Valdez, Justin Hennard, and Gary Price—created films based on the music of Minnesota composers Jeffrey Brooks, David Echelard, and Anthony Gatto.

Each filmmaker was given a compilation CD prepared by the festival's artistic director, Anthony Gatto, and asked to compose a one- to five-minute film or video from whichever piece of music inspired them the most. No restrictions were placed on either form or content; however, as with any music-oriented film, the images were in a sense subservient to the pre-existing music because the music did not change or bend to the vision of the filmmaker. This arguably one-sided filmmaking relationship shifts once the work is completed, because the success or failure of any film ultimately hangs on its images.

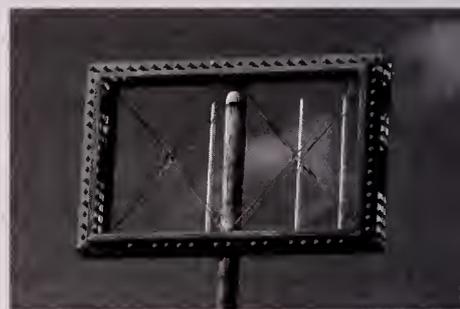
Aaron Valdez chose *Inte, domine,*

speravi, by Josquin des Pres, a religious medieval vocal sung in Latin by David Echelard. "I listened to the song with my eyes closed with a pen in one hand and a stopwatch in the other," explains Valdez. "I would open [my eyes] and note the time whenever I felt a natural break in the music. As it worked out each segment lasted nineteen to twenty-three seconds, then the music tapered off to begin a new phase. I literally translated the phrasing into single shots that faded to black and then faded in to the next shot/phrase."

Echelard performed the music during the screening of Valdez's film, a deliberate melancholy meditation on

empty suburban spaces—abandoned buildings, vacant and broken billboards, clouds—with the striking contrast and continuity of a heavenly blue sky in the background. Valdez continues, "It was important to me to not bastardize the music and create something contrary to what the composer and performer felt the music was about. I worked off the basic feeling I got from listening to the piece, a kind of beautiful lonesomeness."

Although the filmmakers started with an existing piece of music they all agreed that their processes were collaborative. The music they selected provided compositional structures through which they navigated their visual stories or themes. As Fornengo puts it, "[The music] gave me a form that guided me through the filmmaking



ing process, a language I had to stay faithful to.”

At the screening of Fornengo’s haunting film of three ghostly figures dancing in a dark forest with their mouths open wide, David Echelard sang Jeffrey Brooks’ composition *Early Music*. While watching this film, the audience saw something beyond the strictly technological event of Echelard singing in front of a digital video—the more powerful, third work created by the collaboration.

For Echelard, sharing the spotlight with moving images was a new but welcome experience. “[It’s] wonderful—it takes the pressure off [me] to share the stage, although I didn’t see the film. It happened behind me,” he comments. Composer Brooks enjoyed the film, which he saw for the first time during the performance at the festival, but he felt a bit torn between the two elements. “David has such a strong presence as he sings, and Mireille’s [Fornengo] film was so powerful that I didn’t know where to look. I wished we could have created a space for David to incorporate him somehow into the film.”

Upon hearing of the idea to make a music film, Gary Price was suddenly struck with the image of a friend of his taking a bath. He forgot about this image until he was listening to Anthony Gatto’s *Dance You Monster to My Soft Song*, whereupon he was hit again with the mental image of someone meditating in water. Price’s concept, which he executed in a static, three-minute take of a man bathing after a brief but heated phone argument (the only filmmaker to include dialogue in his or her work), was set against the frenetic pace and high volume of the avant jazz-inspired musical selection.

“I like the jazz elements of the composition,” Price explains. “I found my first real inroad to jazz about the same time I spontaneously felt I found some relationship to the concept/idea/practice of meditation.” He likens the different rhythms and disharmonies of free jazz to being “akin to a place in the mind amongst all the impulses and thoughts constantly flowing, [which meditation allows one to] observe or, at least, find a separation from the flow.”

Facing: Left and center, two scenes from Hennard’s piece; right, a still from Valdez’s project. Above: Fernengo’s ghostly images accompany Brooks’ *Early Music*.



Price’s film was a significant contrast to Justin Hennard’s interpretation of the same music. The two selected the same pieces independently. Hennard created a dense and dark experimental narrative involving a lone male figure who seems to be tormented, or physically attacked, by a quasi-alien element after a wild ride with a plastic bag on his head. Hennard’s work is both visually stunning and tightly orchestrated with the musical structure.

“I tried to set out to make more than just a music video,” Hennard explains. “I’m mostly interested in narrative filmmaking. I knew I didn’t want to just use ambient images of pretty things or images of people performing on instruments. They had to tie into the structure of the narrative. The piece I chose had several layers and many subtle changes that traveled in several directions. I thought this would be a good palate to work with. I tried to take the instrumentation of the piece and turn it into a narrative idea—sort of

scoring to the music with the images. I took the few themes in the piece and used them as markers to changes in the visual narrative.”

The composer nodded his head while he watched Hennard’s interpretation of his music. “I was really happy with the work Justin did,” Gatto says. “It brought out all the compositional architecture.”

Since the very beginning, music has been utilized to enhance the visual narratives of films and great scores are often as memorable to the viewer as the characters or stories. However, when a film is “composed” to accompany a piece of music, the filmmaker must transform the emotional dynamics of the composition into a visual “story.” And when the two emotionally charged mediums unite they both move up in the artistic food chain. The experience of the filmmakers and composers involved in this particular project tells us that if a picture is worth a thousand words, then a piece of music is worth a thousand pictures. □

Katie Cokinos is a filmmaker and former director of the Austin Film Society. She developed the music film commissioning project with Anthony Gatto and served as a liaison between Headwaters Music and the Austin-based filmmakers.

ROAD TEST:

New Mini-DV Cameras

By Maud Kersnowski

Every year when the new consumer camcorders hit the market, a few of them are designed not only for home movies, but also for the independent filmmaker. This year we tried out two of these cameras by putting them in the hands of three filmmakers, each of whom represents a different type of filmmaker the cameras were designed to attract. Mary Sampson is currently working on her first feature, *Wave*, after shooting with video cameras for public access television in Los Angeles. Laura Bennet is an NYU film school graduate working in commercial production while exploring her own independent projects. And Bryant Falk is an experienced videographer who owns Abacus Sound, a recording studio in New York City. The filmmakers rated each camera in a wide range of categories as well as offered their comments on camera performance.



The Canon GL2 is the company's further refining of their GL1 mini-DV 3-CCD camcorder. It offers a fluoride lens that lives up to Canon's reputation for high quality optics plus a batch of other features. The camera is light on price and weight. It tips the scales at about two and half pounds and it lists for \$2,999 but has been spotted online for \$1,899.

Comments on the Canon GL2

Falk: I would buy this camera for its image quality, light weight, and portability. A serious indie filmmaker may find it a bit frustrating when trying to dig up manual settings or use the viewfinder for an extended period of time.

Bennett: I felt this camera was too light. It had a flimsy, unsteady image when hand-held.

Sampson: All of the controls seem small and misplaced, but the manual controls are no worse than any of the other ones.

Falk: The auto feature on many of these cameras is steadily improving. This one is no exception. I found the auto functions at this level very acceptable.

Bennett: The zoom on this camera was smooth, but very slow, and its pace could not be varied. When zooming, the image dissolved back and forth between a grainy mush and a perfectly acceptable image.

Sampson: The shutter speed option works well. Except for the buttons being small, it's easy to set and to adjust.

Bennett: In the dark cavern of my apartment, it seemed very capable of catching every dust bunny in the place!

Canon GL2

Price: \$2,999 **Weight:** 2 lbs. 7 1/2 oz.

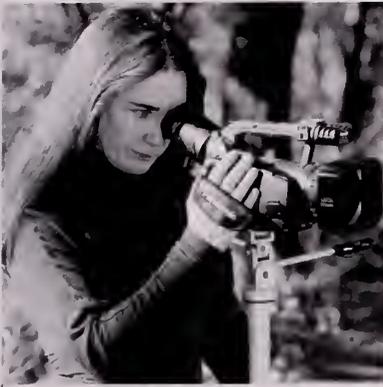
Features: ■ Manual audio level control ■ 20x zoom lens with digital zoom, F/1.6-2.9, 20x power zoom, 4.2-84 mm ■ L-series fluorite lens ■ 1.7 megapixel still images (1488 x 1128) ■ 3 CCD 1/4" Pixel Shift, 410,000 pixels (380,000 effective pixels) ■ USB terminal ■ IEEE 1394 in/out terminal ■ Multimedia card/SD memory card compatibility ■ 2.5 in. measured diagonally (6.4 cm), 200,000 pixel LCD screen ■ Dimensions: 4-5/8 x 5-3/8 x 12 in. (118 x 136 x 306 mm)

Accessories included: ■ Lens adapters and filters ■ Audio accessories ■ Power source ■ Video light and flash ■ Carrying case ■ Digital videocassette ■ Cables

CANON GL2

| | Sampson | Bennett | Falk |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------|
| Balance | o | o | + |
| Weight | + | - | + |
| Button control | - | - | + |
| Manual controls | o | - | - |
| Auto settings | + | o | + |
| Zoom | o | - | + |
| Monitor panel | - | o | - |
| Lens | o | - | + |
| Shutter speed | o | o | + |
| Low light performance | + | - | + |
| Overall camera | o | - | + |

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF CANON; FACING PAGE/W/ AUTHORS, MARK STEPHEN KORNBLUTH, BOTTOM, PANASONIC



MS: If the Canon GL2 were sturdier, and had better button control, it would be a great buy. The price is good, and if you are looking for good quality footage that still looks like video, this may be the best value out there.

LB: I believe the Panasonic AG-DVX100 can create images of subtlety and beauty. Its image has a painterly quality. Its controls are intuitive and simple to use. I think that if you had the Canon GL2 and got to know it well, you could do creative work with it, but you would have to accept its limitations and hopefully find a creative use for them.



Panasonic's AG-DVX100, commonly known as the Panasonic 24p, is the first mini-DV 3-CCD camcorder to introduce a feature that mimics the look and feel of film's twenty-four frames per second. The company's CineSwitch technology allows makers to choose between 480i/60 (NTSC), cinema-style 480p/24fps, and 480p/30fps image capture. While the list price is around \$3,800, this camera was so eagerly anticipated that when it hit the American market it could be found on the web for close to \$4,800.



Comments on the Panasonic AG-DVX100

Falk: This camera is like a Ferrari inside the body of a Ford Fairmont. Get a new cabinetmaker to build you a housing worthy of the design that went into this baby. That, and an interchangeable lens, and you'll own this market. The feature set is amazing, from the XLR input to the extra large viewfinder. Also, the camera is designed for filmmakers. The slow zoom feature and memory recall system all focus on accommodating that guy, or girl, shooting the next indie success story. The 24p feature is pretty nice too.

Sampson: The manual controls are pretty small and located close together. It's hard to use more than one of them at a time. But they do respond well and are intelligently placed on the camera.

Falk: I gave the zoom a negative rating because of the flimsy nature of the zoom ring. When reaching for it you actually can jiggle the zoom. This can be very frustrating when you want to push in ever so slightly.

Bennett: The auto iris worked well, but the best feature was that I could switch it off any time I wanted to. I was not happy with the auto focus even on objects in the dead center of the lens. Things looked sharper when I focused manually.

Falk: The more I used the 24p feature, the more I fell in love with it. When first looking at it through the viewfinder it leaves a digital taste. But once I loaded the material onto my Final Cut Pro system, I was pleasantly surprised.

Panasonic AG-DVX100

Price: \$3,795 **Weight:** 4.2 lbs.

- Features:**
- 1/3" progressive-scan 410,000 pixel 3-CCD imager
 - More than 500 lines of horizontal resolution
 - Low light performance of 3 lux (at 18dB)
 - High sensitivity of f 11 at 2000 lux
 - Wide-angle zoom lens (4.5mm to 45mm with a 56-degree viewing angle)
 - Servo/manual zoom
 - Auto/manual focus with 72mm filter size
 - Auto/Manual iris
 - 16-bit/48kHz digital audio with two-channel
 - Built-in XLR inputs
 - Phantom power supply (48V)
 - Manual audio volume controls
 - Flip-out, 270-degree, 3.5" LCD panel

- Accessories included:**
- 1.6Ah battery
 - AC adapter/charger
 - Microphone holder
 - Remote control
 - Shoulder strap
 - Lens cap
 - Cleaning tape

PANASONIC

| | Sampson | Bennett | Falk |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------|
| Balance | + | + | + |
| Weight | + | + | + |
| Button control | o | + | - |
| Manual controls | + | + | + |
| Auto settings | + | o | + |
| Zoom | o | o | - |
| Monitor Panel | + | + | + |
| Lens | + | + | + |
| Shutter speed | + | o | o |
| Low light performance | + | + | + |
| 24p feature | + | o | + |
| Overall camera | + | + | + |

The Basics: Recording Sound for Digital Video

By Bryant Falk

Sound is one of those things that when it's done well, nobody notices, but when it's flawed, nobody ever really forgives. When an audience is sitting in the theater watching your finished project, poor audio is your worst enemy. Unlike a fuzzy, image that the eye will accept as a stylized effect, unintelligible dialogue or a constant buzz will turn your audience off faster than a light switch.

The fact is nothing can replace a well-trained sound crew with a truck full of all the expensive equipment needed to properly record sound. But there are some practical techniques that help get reasonably good sound quality for an independent filmmaker trying to get his or her movie to a theater near you on a budget of . . . well, at no budget.

With mini-DV formatted cameras, or any other digital recorders, your best low-budget bet will be to record sound directly onto your camera's tape in sync with your image. One reason for this is that most digital video decks record near DAT (digital audio tape) quality recording. Another is that if you are already synced to picture you save yourself a lot of time in the editing suite trying to figure out what goes where. By recording both the image and the sound on digital, you can get a pretty tight lock between sound and picture without having to actually sync it, as long as your edits aren't more than twenty seconds each. The average edit in most films is four to six seconds.

Since you're recording onto your camera, let's start by taking a look at how to get the sound in there. Some cameras have just an eighth-inch jack that is labeled mic/line. It looks like a headphone jack for a Sony Walkman. These



jacks are an audio engineer's worst enemy. They are flimsy and tend to lose contact if the camera person is very active. If you're stuck in this scenario it's not the end of the world, but you'll save yourself a lot of heartache if you secure the connector to the camera using a little gaffer's tape.

Another input connector you'll find on many digital cameras is the RCA connector. These come in batches of three: yellow, white, and red. This isn't a great setup, but it's not bad either. The last (and strongest) is the XLR connector. It looks like a flat bowling ball and comes in pairs, one for left and one for right. Each has three holes in it. If you have a choice, use a camera with an XLR input. It will give you the strongest, clearest, most reliable sound quality. You can convert both an eighth-inch and an RCA to XLR by using the DXA-4S converter by BeachTek (\$199)

On most digital cameras, you have a choice of two audio input settings, 32K or 48K. On some cameras these may be labeled 12bit and 16bit, but they're basically the same thing. Since you'll be storing final sound on your camera, choose the higher number, either the 48K or the 16bit option. The smaller rate (32K) is there to allow additional audio channels to be recorded, but we are about quality not quantity.

I also strongly recommend running a backup audio device. This can be any digital device that you can interface with your audio input. A minidisc recorder, such as Sony's MD Walkman, although it is a compressed format, has portability and random access capabilities that really make it a winner in the field. The sound quality is much better than you might think, plus it has a long battery life. Other options are a DAT machine, a second digital camera, or even some laptops. Whatever backup unit you pick, make sure it's digital. Since there is no time code sync, a digital device will maintain a more accurate time clock than an analog backup, like a cassette recorder.

The next important issue that you'll need to deal with is the pre-amp. All microphones need a baby amplifier to get the signal up to something usable. This is what's called the pre-amp or mic-pre. Once the pre-amp has boosted the signal, your mic

Bryant Falk at work in the studio.

signal is now at what is called "line level," which basically means it's recordable. Cameras with XLR connectors have built-in pre-amps, as do some other cameras. This information should be included in the camera's manual. The BeachTek adapter also solves this problem. If you're in doubt about your camera's mic-pre, you're better off with an external one that you know has low noise and good clarity. My personal favorite is the Shure FP33 mixer. It's a portable multi-input mixer with excellent low noise characteristics. It's rather expensive to purchase (\$1,795), but you can rent one for about \$35 a day. Another solution is to use wireless lavalier mics that have pre-amps built in.

This brings us to the question of which microphones to use. "Why can't I just use the mic from my camera," you ask? Well, there are a number of reasons. First, and most obvious, is the quality of the microphone. These mics are designed for a myriad of uses, which puts them in the "Jack

if they are, the lav can be hidden somewhere nearby.

When you're placing a lav, the goal is to get as close to the speaker as possible without being directly in front of the speaker. This ideal placement is commonly known as "off-access." Lapels are good as are collars and turtlenecks. If the person is stationary, as in the case of our diner, you can put it close to them by wiring the mic onto a coffee cup or a flower pot that doesn't move.

Choosing a lav mic is as much a matter of personal taste as anything. A number of companies make them. The best thing to do is start out renting one so that you can experiment. Don't be afraid to spend a lot of time at the rental house trying them out to see what's going to work for you. You'll probably spend around \$20 to \$30 a day for a wired lav and \$50 to \$70 for a wireless.

Lavs are generally the best mic for independent film-

(((The only real use for the mics sold with cameras is if you're literally running after people, like for combat journalism or a show like *Jackass*.)))

of all trades, master of none" category. The second problem is the placement. For the best sound you want to get the microphone as close to your subject as possible. When doing a medium or long shot, your microphone goes with the camera. Third, when mixing, it is much easier to make a close-miced voice sound far away than vice versa. Fourth, if you are adding effects to your sound (delays, reverb, room tone), quality results will be much easier to obtain with a full upfront dialogue track at the ready rather than the muddy recording you'll get from the mic attached to your camera. The only real use for the mics sold with cameras is if you're literally running after people, like for combat journalism or a show like *Jackass*. If you have the choice between buying an upgraded mic designed to go on a camera and spending an extra \$100 on a lavalier, buy the lav.

Today's lavalier microphones, the small ones you can hide under an actor's lapel, have come a long way. Their size has shrunk considerably and their frequency response has improved. While most of the lav mics you see on studio sets or on behind-the-scenes TV shows are wireless, lav mics do not have to be wireless. In fact a wired lav mic often gives you a better signal than a wireless and it's a lot cheaper to rent or buy. Example: You have two characters in a diner booth talking. If you're like many of my clients, you don't have the budget to rent the entire diner, fill it with extras who will mouth their words, and direct the waiters not to clang dishes while the camera's rolling. Instead, you're shooting in a real diner, with real people eating, and all the clanging, ringing, talking, and general loud ambience that comes with it. This is where the wired lav mic can shine. It can be on the actors as long as they're not getting up and walking out of the room in the same take, and even

makers with limited budgets and limited crews. They're relatively easy to use and don't require the extra person boom microphones do. If your project has a lot of motion and a lot of activity, and if you're shooting in a quiet setting, you might opt for a boom microphone.

The boom microphone has a very directional quality to its sound pickup and allows the operator to focus in on specific audio. This means it will pick up the actor that the boom is focused on, and that you can go back and forth between two or more actors, something the lav really can't do. The thing to remember about boom mics is they're a lot more difficult to operate than they look, because the boom operator not only has to stay out of the frame but also needs to balance the recording of each actor.

One recording technique I like to use is recording the boom mic on one channel and the lavalier mic on the other. The reason for this is the boom mic will have a much different sonic character than the lav mics, so keeping it separate will allow for greater control in the mix down.

While I have only scratched the surface of audio recording for film and video in this limited space, hopefully I was able to offer a few bits of insight you'll be able to use during your next shoot. In the end, always try to get as full and upfront a voice as you can. And do the engineer mixing your project a huge favor: Record some room tone in every single location. This is simply the sound of the space without your actors' dialogue. It will be of immeasurable help to a mixer trying to get you a quick and effective mix.

Byrant Falk runs Abacus Sound in New York City. His clients have included the NY Knicks, SEFX Entertainment, Coca Cola, Foot Locker, and a number of independent films. His e-mail is Bry3cpo@aol.com

How To: Build an Affordable Editing System

By Greg Gilpatrick

Last year in *The Independent* I put together a list of all the items I would purchase for my desktop video system if I had an unlimited budget. This year we're coming back to Earth and we're going to keep it real. Real, as in real cheap. Well, sort of cheap. You still can't put together an effective editing system with the change you find under your sofa cushions, but you can get a surprisingly useful system for not much more than you would pay for a regular home computer. Of course, there will be certain features missing from these low-cost products that appear in more expensive products. And since, as good consumers, you will want to know what you are missing out on, under each item there is a listing of what you get, and what you won't get, for the money. Of course, these are only suggestions; if you find better bargains or have suggestions of your own, let other readers know on our website's message board at www.aivf.org/discussion.



Apple eMac 800MHz G4 with DVD-R Superdrive (\$1,499)

This computer looks expensive in contrast to some of the computers advertised on TV but as you'll see, it offers a considerable deal for independent mediamakers. Performance-wise the eMac stands up reasonably

well against Apple's pro-oriented PowerMac G4 systems. The built-in display is large enough to use for editing, and the whole thing is powerful enough to run professional software like Final Cut Pro, Avid Xpress DV, After Effects, and, when you have the opportunity to upgrade, DVD Studio Pro.

Of course, there are some drawbacks to the eMac when compared to the more expensive systems. The eMac doesn't allow you to significantly upgrade the hardware beside adding more RAM or an Airport-wireless card. This means that you can't add extra internal hard drives, a video digitizing card, or a second computer monitor.

What you miss: PCI slots for adding video digitizing, SCSI, video display, and other cards; space for extra internal hard drives; ability to add another display.

What you get: solid performance; good display; firewire ports for capturing DV video and connecting external hard drives; ability to run higher-end software; free software for editing and making DVD's.

Step down: Apple iMac G3/CD-RW with iMovie—slower; smaller monitor; no DVD burner; \$799

Step up: Apple PowerMac G4 (monitor extra)—DVD burner; faster; more expandability and upgrade options; \$1,699-\$4,599

Firewire Hard Drive (\$200-300)

The eMac model above includes a 60GB internal hard drive which should be enough for many projects. But adding an external hard drive makes your media and project portable. You can then take it to other editing systems. And the additional hard drive provides an extra defense against equipment failure by allowing you to back up your media and project. Since you cannot add an extra hard drive *inside* the eMac, an external hard drive using the firewire connection is the best (and pretty much only) type of backup to use for this video editing.

There many different manufacturers of firewire hard drives, and for the most part, they are the same. The important thing is to select a hard drive that uses the Oxford Semiconductor 911 chip for its firewire bridge (the thing that communicates between the firewire connection and the hard drive itself). Most firewire hard drive makers use the Oxford 911 chip, but make sure. Also, you want a hard drive that spins at 7,200 RPM.

What you miss: speed and reliability of an internal drive.

What you get: portability, ease of use, backup solution.

Apple iMovie and iDVD (free with eMac)

Part of Apple's sales recovery over the past couple years is based on a strategy of developing software that will run solely on Macs. Some of that software is expensive and professionally-oriented, such as Final Cut Pro, but a great deal of this Apple-only software is given away for free as an enticement to buy a Mac. The two most significant products for our system are iMovie and iDVD. Both of these were designed for amateur filmmakers that want to edit simple home movies and share them with their friends on DVD. While these programs offer only the basic features

found in post production software, they also include two valuable features rarely found in high-end software: They're easy to use and mostly trouble-free.

iMovie

Apple markets iMovie as a way to easily edit videos of your friends and family. And most people use iMovie just for that, but it also works well as editing software for more serious projects. For example, Blaine Thurier used iMovie to edit *Low Self Esteem Girl*, a DV feature that won the Best Narrative Feature prize at SXSW in 2001. iMovie is no competition for advanced editing programs such as Avid Xpress DV, but many independent editors don't need all the extra features in more expensive programs. For many makers that are new to the process, the extra features in higher-end software can be confusing. And one thing I know for sure about iMovie is that it is not confusing.

iMovie succeeds quite well at making video editing intuitive to those without an education in filmmaking. How iMovie makes it easy,



though, is by stripping away a huge number of the features that are commonly found in video editing programs. iMovie does away with tape logging, time code management, media management, split edits, three- and four-point editing, and EDL exporting. If the idea of working without such features is unimaginable to you, look below for other low-cost ideas.

The vast majority of independent productions are finished on the same computer as they were edited on, which is what iMovie is designed for. Additionally, DV footage captured with iMovie can be easily transferred between computers without loss of quality. One great strength to iMovie is that it stores its captured media as QuickTime files that can be opened by nearly every editing program. For this reason, iMovie is also a good complement to programs like After Effects and Cleaner.

What you miss: data and media management features; EDL import and export.

PRE-PURCHASE QUESTIONS:

A responsible consumer would naturally have some questions before plunking down fifteen hundred big ones for a computer. Three of the most common questions are:

Isn't it much cheaper to buy a used computer than a new one?

Yes, used computers cost less up front, but typically they are not such a great deal in the long run. For one thing you miss out on an important feature of a new computer, the manufacturer's original warranty. "Whatever," I can hear you saying, "I'm an independent—I live dangerously. I don't need a warranty." Well, that's one way to look at it. Another is that you need a warranty *because* you are an independent. Independent makers do not have access to the tech support staff, repair budgets, and replacement equipment of big-budget productions. Regardless of how much you pay for it or what kind of reputation it has, some part of your editing system will probably require service at some point. With a warranty from the manufacturer, repairs are much less painful.

Also, a new computer is shipped with its software in a pristine state. With a used computer, you have no idea what state software is in and getting it back in shape may take the skills of a consultant or technician whose fee will probably be more than the difference between a used and new computer.

Aren't Macs more expensive than Windows-based PCs?

You probably would spend less up front by purchasing a Windows-based PC, but Apple includes a significant amount of free software for making movies and DVDs with the eMac. Microsoft and PC manufacturers now also include video editing software for free with Windows XP, but it doesn't do nearly as good a job as Apple's offerings. Apple more than makes up the price difference with the included software.

In addition, Apple makes it much easier for nontechnical people to set up their system for editing. With iMovie and iDVD, it literally is a matter of unpacking the box, plugging the power cord in, and plugging your DV camera into the computer. It is unlikely that you would have such an easy time editing on a PC. It may seem reasonable to spend more time setting up the cheaper PC, but I generally find that frustration with filmmaking tools takes a toll on creativity, which is a greater loss than a couple hundred dollars.

If I do get the eMac, why not buy the model that only costs \$1,099?

True, there is a significantly cheaper model of the eMac, but the model with the DVD-R offers the best and most reliable method of creating DVD's in this price range. Even if you don't plan on making DVD's the DVD burner can come in handy as an easy way to back up your video files for safekeeping. But if you are absolutely sure you won't be burning DVD's, and won't need to back up your files to DVD, the lesser model offers most of the functionality at a cheaper price.

■ **Where the deals are:** Those in the market for a new computer, whether it's for video editing or not, should check out dealpc.com or dealmac.com. These related websites scour the internet for the best deals on computer products ranging from entire systems to blank DVD media. Many retailers put together special bundles of computers with upgrades thrown in that these sites seem to know about before anyone else.

■ **Pre-owned, not used:** Buying a used computer isn't such a great idea, but buying a refurbished one is. Factory refurbished computers often offer the same warranty and features of a new computer for less than full price. Apple sells refurbished computers through their website in the "special deals" section of the online store (store.apple.com). Most PC manufacturers do the same at their websites.

■ **Educational deals:** If you are a college student or faculty member, you have probably noticed that most educational discounts on computers aren't that significant. You can probably find a better deal through mail order or the internet. But software companies often drastically reduce their prices for students and educators. If you can't find the media software you want at your campus bookstore, look at web and mail-order retailers that cater to education customers. For example, at press time, education-market retailer journeyed.com had Avid Xpress DV for \$399 in comparison to the list price of \$1,699.

■ **Burning to burn:** Can't wait to burn a bunch of DVD's of your latest movie for your friends and colleagues? Be careful because the cost of those blank DVD disks can add up. Instead of buying a few disks at a time buy a bunch of blank DVD's on a spindle. Though the cost is much higher upfront, you will end up saving as much as half the purchasing cost.

■ **Alternative to DVD's:** For more significant savings, make a VideoCD instead. VideoCDs are compatible with most DVD players but use the cheaper CD-R media and the nearly ubiquitous CD-R drive. There is one drawback, though. The image quality is lower than DVD's, closer to the quality of VHS. On the Mac, Roxio's Toast Titanium (\$100) can be used to make VideoCDs.

■ **Warranty roulette:** If the retailer you're buying your computer from is offering you a special warranty upgrade, it's probably not worth it unless it's a product of the computer's manufacturer, such as Apple's AppleCare. While extended warranties from the manufacturer are recommended, warranties offered by a third party will probably give you a lower level of service for a similar price.

■ **Indie movies with indie software:** Free or low-cost freeware and shareware programs are the software equivalent of independent film. They are usually produced by individuals or small groups of people working in their spare time. There are a few shareware programs that would be of help to makers, such as tape logging and cataloging software, story outlining, and rudimentary editing programs. Shareware and freeware software can be found on websites such as tucows.com and shareware.com.

What you get: simple and easy-to-learn editing program; near ubiquity of the software due to its cost; QuickTime-compliant storage.

iDVD

Just as iMovie offers an easy way to edit, so iDVD provides an easy way for nonprofessionals to make DVD videos. And considering how many professional editing features are left out of iMovie, iDVD surprises by offering many of the same features found in its big sister, DVD Studio Pro. With iDVD, you can easily create custom menus based on your own images or video. But with iDVD, you don't *have* to create your own menu images. iDVD includes a wide variety of predesigned templates that look much better than expected. DVD's made with iDVD can even be mass produced by facilities that accept DVD-R as a master.



The only real drawback to iDVD is that it can't be used to create DVD's with content protection. This means that mass produced DVD's will not be protected from copying by viewers.

What you miss: content protection; subtitles; alternate audio tracks; alternate angles; DVD scripting.

What you get: simple and easy to learn; commonly used due to cost; common DVD features; integrated DVD burning.

Higher-end editing: CineStream (PC/Mac \$399)

Editors looking for more advanced editing features like tape logging and EDL export will face a substantial jump in price over the free iMovie. But there are options that cost less than Final Cut Pro (\$999) and Xpress DV (\$1,699). You can find the major professional features for a fraction of the cost in Discreet's CineStream. CineStream is the reincarnation of one of the first DV editing programs, EditDV. The program boasts advanced features like tape logging, automated batch capture, EDL export, and timecode burn-in. CineStream also offers several advanced interactive elements for internet video that Final Cut Pro and Xpress DV don't have. The only major drawback to CineStream is that there is no version compatible with Mac OS X. It will only run in Mac OS 9 or on a Windows PC. □

Total Price \$2,198

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact him, send e-mail to greg@randomroom.com

In Review

By Brian L. Frye

Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde 1943-2000

3rd Edition

by P. Adams Sitney

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When P. Adams Sitney finished *Visionary Film* in 1974, it was the first book to offer a comprehensive history of American avant-garde cinema. Andy Warhol's *Chelsea Girls* had only recently introduced "underground" film to popular audiences. Sitney wrote about films like Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* that, not many years earlier, exhibitors had faced obscenity charges for showing.

Today, you can see those same films—or their progeny at least—on TV. The Library of Congress includes several of them in the National Film Registry. And yet, twenty-five years and three editions later, *Visionary Film* remains the definitive account of the American avant-garde. This ought to be surprising, but somehow isn't at all.

Sitney was already an important figure in avant-garde cinema when he wrote *Visionary Film*. A member of the committee that selected the films for the Anthology Film Archives' Essential Cinema Collection and an editor of the journal *Film Culture*, he was not just an observer, but a participant in the movement he was chronicling. Not only did he know all of the artists he wrote about, he knew their films intimately because he was traveling with those films, showing and watching them over and over.

Those repeated viewings, and the close attention they engendered, show in Sitney's writing. And they show in his ability to speak to the films them-

selves, rather than to grand theories purporting to explain them. Sitney insists on the kind of close textual analysis few film scholars bother to attempt today. When he compares Brakhage's films to romantic poetry, or discusses Markopoulos in the context of symbolism, it is not because the films are a convenient way of illustrating some inane theoretical point nicked from Lacan or Derrida. It is because those analogies actually make it easier to understand what Brakhage and Markopoulos were doing.

Still, over the years, *Visionary Film* has come in for plenty of criticism. Some seems almost quaint now. For instance, many filmmakers once strenuously objected to Sitney's use of the term "structural" to describe certain films that explore the formal qualities of the medium, on the ground that it mistakenly implied a connection to Structuralism. Luckily, those sorts of worries are now basically moot. Even academics don't much bother with Structuralism anymore.

More significantly, in the ideologically-obsessed eighties, Sitney was mau-mau'ed by radicalized critics for his apolitical approach to the avant-garde in *Visionary Film*. At a time when the big critical question was whether a given film was likely to spark proletarian revolution, or KO the patriarchy, politically disinterested art criticism was simply unacceptable.

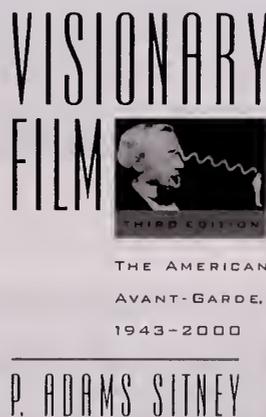
In the introduction to *Visionary Film*, Sitney acknowledges his debt to Harold Bloom, whose influence is

amply evident. An understated reverence replaces the ideological posturing and fashionable disdain for actual artwork that still stains so much contemporary academic writing on avant-garde film.

But *Visionary Film* is never precious; in fact, Sitney is a noted wit. His wry evisceration of the Marxist theorist/filmmaker Peter Gidal, in a debate printed in *Millennium Film Journal*, never fails to induce snickers. And the postmodernists (and post-postmodernists) who were his most vocal critics in the eighties become more irrelevant every year. The ironist in Sitney must appreciate the peculiar appositeness of the fact that the key critic of the avant-garde cinema—which by all rights ought to be a bastion of post-modernism—is a Romantic.

In this new edition, Sitney is remarkably generous to his past detractors, especially considering the vitriol that, as the biggest and most convenient target, he had to endure for years. The genial humility with which he acknowledges the shortcomings of his own work, while refraining from subjecting his accusers to the same treatment, is admirable. And he calls their bluff by discussing several artists favored by his detractors, notably Yvonne Rainer, Abigail Child, and Leslie Thornton. What's more, his thoughtful commentary on their films is actually helpful (especially in the case of Rainer), and aesthetically engaged, as opposed to cribbed from Derrida.

Thankfully, most of Sitney's ideologically motivated critics (and especially the films they championed) have faded into well-deserved obscurity. But still, the academy rarely sees critics like Sitney anymore. He is a holdover from a time when academics wanted and expected their writing to



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reach a popular audience. Anyone familiar with recent academic writing on film will marvel at the lucid clarity of Sitney's prose. Most contemporary film scholarship reads as if it were excerpted from a German textbook and translated with a bad dictionary. In contrast, when Sitney describes a film, it's almost possible to imagine what it looks like.

The new edition of *Visionary Film* differs from previous editions in two significant respects. First, it includes a chapter on Gregory Markopoulos, omitted from the second edition for copyright reasons. Markopoulos enthusiasts have long regretted the relative difficulty of locating a copy of the first edition and, given the recent revival of interest in Markopoulos's films, this reissue is especially welcome.

Second, as the second edition included a chapter covering the seventies, the new edition includes a chapter covering the period from the eighties to the present. Obviously the most anticipated addition, it is also the most frustrating. Sitney's observations are predictably insightful. His ability to casually distill the essential character of historical trends is evident in his discussion of postmodernism's influence on the avant-garde in relation to Menippean drama. Sitney often says more about a film in one paragraph than many critics can in an entire article. And yet, it's immediately apparent that this new chapter didn't receive the same sort of attention as the rest of the book. The analysis is more cursory, the observations are more general, and the writing itself is less precise. Even the editing is rough, with some misspelled names and typos. There's no question that Sitney is capable of better. So here's hoping that his first new offering in far too long is but an indication of more to come. □

Brian Frye is a filmmaker, curator, and writer currently living in Washington, DC, and attending Georgetown University Law Center.

Joint Venture Agreement

PREPARING THE PREPRODUCTION PRENUP

By Robert L. Seigel

It is a part of human nature to avoid dealing with difficult issues regarding any relationship, whether personal or professional, particularly in the early stages of the relationship. When I meet with two (or more) clients who are in this initial stage and wish to work together to produce a film, a video, or some other audio-visual, I usually suggest that this is the time for them to enter into a "joint venture agreement."

Sometimes one person will be designated as a project's producer while the other person may serve as the director. One of the parties often has written, or controls the rights in and to, the project's script. Occasionally both clients

ship agreement. It is usually formed for a single project. This agreement specifies the parties' rights and obligations pertaining to the project. It is a sort of business-relationship prenuptial agreement in which the parties lay out what is expected of them and what happens if a problem occurs between or amongst the parties. A joint venture agreement can involve two, three, or more parties. If the joint venture agreement addresses key issues comprehensively, the parties often can sign it, place it in a drawer, and only look at it when a problem arises.

The joint venture is often a preliminary step taken before forming a

deemed to have lapsed and the script's rights would remain with the party that wrote or controls the script's rights without any encumbrances. But if the joint venture or one of the parties has spent any money on the script's development, or made a financial contribution to the script in some other way, the verifiable out-of-pocket expenses must be repaid before the owner of the rights to the script can be free to work with other persons or entities to produce the project once the venture's term has ended. The joint venture parties sometimes will permit such expenses to be excused without any right to repayment to a party. This point should be negotiated.

There should also be a provision in the agreement that states what is expected of each of the parties. A party's contribution to a venture can include the project's script (or any underlying rights to a script), funding, development, production, mar-



If the joint venture agreement addresses key issues comprehensively, the parties often can sign it, place it in a drawer, and only look at it when a problem arises.

are designated as producers and they either have a director in mind or are seeking one. At this early stage the stakes are relatively low. A small sum of money may have been spent, but the bulk of the project's financing still needs to be raised. The purpose of entering into a joint venture agreement is to clarify many possible misunderstandings in the future. Such an agreement also decreases the chances of animosity growing among the parties later in the heat of developing, producing, or distributing a project, because the guidelines for resolving problems have already been agreed upon.

A joint venture agreement is just another way of referring to a partner-

production entity such as a limited liability company or a corporation, once a project's funding begins to fall into place. A joint venture can last anywhere from a few months to years. The norm is six months to two years. If one of the parties wrote or otherwise controls the rights to the project's script, that party's contribution to the joint venture would include the option of the script, with the venture having the right to acquire the script's rights before the end of the agreement's term. If the venture's term should end and the venture (or a subsequently formed production entity) has not acquired the rights, the option would be

keting or distribution resources, or skills, or the promise to use best efforts by each party to secure financing, to locate resources, or to render services.

One of the most important provisions in a joint venture agreement addresses how the parties make decisions. Often the parties will divide the types of decisions made on behalf of a venture into creative and business (i.e., economic) decisions, each party taking responsibility for a specified area. Although creative and business decisions often overlap, creative decisions can be separated into two categories: those creative decisions that require the additional allocation and



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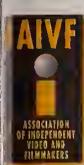
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expenditure of funds, and those creative decisions that do not affect a project's budget.

If none of the parties is to be a project's director, the selection of a director may require the parties' unanimous approval. This decision and other decisions may also be subject to the approval of a project's financier. Whether one of the parties shall be designated as the project's director or a third party is to be engaged as the director should be a decision all the parties attempt to reach a consensus on. But there should be some mechanism in the contract to address those times when a consensus cannot be reached. Regardless of the nature of the decision, there are several options that can be put in place to resolve disagreements. First, there can be an agreement that a decision must be unanimous or the decision is not made. This method of decision-making works well for issues such as the selection of cast, crew, and director, but it can result in a deadlock if the parties are unable to agree. Second, a third party, approved by the partners, may be brought in whose decision will be final. This option can be avoided if there are an odd number of parties in a joint venture and issues may arise if there is difficulty deciding who should be designated as the third-party tiebreaker. Third, the final decision may be deferred to a party because of expertise in a certain area or because that party has secured financing or distribution for a project. This type of decision-making may be a condition to forming the venture and to producing the project.

The agreement can also state that expenditures above a certain monetary level require the (usually written) approval of all the venture's parties. This provision can be problematic if one of the parties may be unavailable or inaccessible during the venture's term or the production of the project.



THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

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If this is an issue, a third party can be selected as an alternative signatory for expenditures above the agreed upon amount, or the agreement can provide a grace period during which the unavailable party must contact the venture's other party/parties or the right to approve the expense is waived. If a party accesses monies to pay for an unauthorized expenditure, the agreement should acknowledge that the party would be personally responsible for repaying the money spent. In the area of compensation, the joint venture agreement may state the specific figures reflecting how much money will be paid to each party for certain services, or the parties may agree to equal compensation, whether it is upfront, deferred, or contingent on future earning (i.e., on the back end).

One of the troublesome issues regarding compensation that should be addressed in a joint venture agreement is what happens if one of the parties leaves the project before the term is over, whether voluntarily or otherwise. There should be a prorating of a departing party's compensation that is tied to when the party leaves the project. If the departure is in the early stage, less compensation should be granted than if the party departs at a later stage of the project. This point is a highly contested issue that should be defined in the joint venture agreement.

A similar issue is that concerning the allocation of the screen credits. A party's credit should be subject to that party's substantial or full compliance to the venture's terms and the rendering of services as designated in the joint venture agreement. This credit provision should state how the credits should read and appear on all positive copies of the project and in its promotional and advertising materials. This issue can also be dealt with by stating in the joint venture agreement that one party's credit shall appear whenever another party's or parties'

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credit(s) appear. Again, this can be a highly negotiated provision.

A joint venture generally terminates when its term expires. It can be extended by the parties' unanimous consent. But a joint venture may be dissolved early if certain laws have not been complied with or if the venture may be compelled to seek bankruptcy protection.

If a joint venture's parties reside in different locations, there should be a provision that acknowledges which country's or state's laws should govern disputes by the parties.

There are other common provisions in a joint venture agreement. Issues such as how monies should be allocated in terms of repaying any loans, repaying any investments made by the parties in the venture, or to third parties should be addressed. The question of whether or not each party is free to pursue other business opportunities unrelated to the venture without having to ask if the other parties in the venture wish to participate should be answered. And assurances should be offered by the party who has the script's rights (or, the right to acquire these rights which may include its underlying rights) that the party does in fact have the rights.

These issues are certainly uncomfortable to discuss in the early stage of a partnership. But people who undergo this process will ultimately realize that if they can weather the storm of negotiating a joint venture agreement, they will have a better chance of dealing effectively with the difficult issues that will arise in the production and distribution trenches. □

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a partner in the law firm of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard LLP. He specializes in the representation of clients in the entertainment and media areas. To reach him, write to Rlsentlaw@aol.com or rseigel@cdas.com.

Festivals

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 (e.g., March 1st for May issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.**

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DOMESTIC

ABSOLUTE TIME FILM FESTIVAL, March 14-16, CA. Deadline: Jan. 15. Fest seeks feature length narrative films written, produced and/or directed by women or people

\$15 (films); \$10 (scripts). Contact: Terra Renee, 545 8th Ave, Ste. 401, New York, NY 10018; (212) 769-7949; fax: 871-2074; aawic@hotmail.com; www.aawic.org.

ANTELOPE VALLEY INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, May 9-11, CA. Deadline: Feb. 1 (early); March 1 (final). Antelope Valley Independent Film Festival eagerly seeks short & feature films of all genres & formats for its annual fest. Experimental Films are encouraged. All films will be screened in their original formats. Cats: short, doc, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Entry Fee: \$20 (early); \$40 (final). Contact: AVIFF, 3041 West Avenue K, Lancaster, CA 93536; (661) 722-6478; fax: 943-5573; info@aviff.com; www.aviff.com.

ATHENS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 26-May 4, OH. Deadline: Feb. 14. Annual fest acknowledging current technical possibilities in film/video production. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS (NTSC), 16mm. Entry Fee: \$35, plus S.A.S.E./insurance. Contact: 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.

Contact: Paul Marchant, IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Ste. N1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225; fax: 352-0173; aff@imagefv.org; www.atlantafilmfest.com.

AVIGNON/NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL April 6-13, NY. Deadline: Feb. 21. NYC spring fest is the American version of the 20-year-old Avignon Film Fest. Founded: 1994. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL or SECAM). Entry Fee: \$25. Contact: Jerome Rudes, 44 Hudson Street, 2nd Flr, New York, NY 10013; (212) 343-2675; fax: 587-1950; jhr2001@aol.com; www.avignonfilmfest.com.

BLACK POINT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 23-27, WI. Deadline: Jan. 3; Feb. 7 (final). A film, video, music, arts fest celebrating "an independent vision." Any genre, any format, any length. Founded: 2002. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: 3 shorts awards, 6 feature awards incl. audience & doc. Cash prizes. Formats: 35mm, 1/2", DVD, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (short); \$40 (feature); \$25 (late-short); \$50 (late-feature). Contact: Richard Paro, 3235 Chicago Club Drive, Delavan, WI 53115; (262) 740-BPFF; richardparo@yahoo.com; www.blackpointfilmfest.com.

BROOKLYN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 28-May 4, NY. Deadline: Oct. 15; Jan. 15 (late); Feb. 15 (final). Annual fest (formerly the Williamsburg Brooklyn Film Festival), held at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, Super 8, 8mm, Hi 8, DV, DVD, Beta, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS (nonreturnable). Entry Fee: \$20; \$40 (late); \$50 (final). 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.

CAROLINA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 19-22, NC. Deadline: Jan. 15. Founded: 1989. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, Beta SP, VHS, 1/2", S-VHS, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$30 (student); \$40; \$50 (screenplay). Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170; (336) 334-4197; fax: 334-5039; cfvf@uncg.edu; www.carolinafilmandvideofest.org.

DANCES WITH FILMS, April 25-May 5, CA. Deadline: Feb. 7; March 7 (final). Dances With



Great New Works by Women of Color

This New York-based festival was conceived by the group African American Women in Cinema, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to "support minority women filmmakers through enlightenment, empowerment, entertainment, education, and enterprise." To date, AAWIC has hosted five festivals, with the 2002 fest held at New York's DGA Theater. The event featured noteworthy filmmakers such as Kasi Lemmons (*Caveman Valentine*), Julie Dash (*Daughters of the Dust*), and a lineup including Natalia Almada's *All Water Has Perfect Memory* (above). See listing.

of color or subjects that reflect cross-cultural understanding. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: San Francisco Stage & Film, 2215-R Market St., PMB #273, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 401-9768; sfstagefilm@aol.com.

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN CINEMA FILM FESTIVAL, March 7-8, NY. Deadline: Jan. 8. Fest seeks Films & Scripts by women who are of the African, Latino or Asian Diaspora. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, animation. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee:

ATLANTA FILM FESTIVAL, June 6-14, GA. Deadline: Feb. 3. Award-winning short narrative/animation/experimental works are eligible for Academy Award nomination. Founded: 1977. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student, youth media. Awards: Over \$100,000 in cash & in-kind prizes. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$40 (individual/nonprofit); \$30 (IMAGE members/students); \$50 (distrib./for-profit).

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Offices; Surpin, Mayersohn & Edelstone; Jeffer, Mangels,
Butler & Marmaro; Marshall Firm, Aberdeen Finance, and
many more around the world. Our first funded client was Scott
McGehee and David Siegel's Suture, (Deep End) and the
most recently funded client was Sal Stabile's Spam on Rye
through Franchise Pictures.

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Festival is a competitive event featuring a line-
up of a dozen feature-length narrative films &
a dozen narrative shorts. Founded: 1998.
Cats: family, youth media, feature, doc, short,
animation, experimental. Formats: Beta SP,
16mm, 35mm, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee:
\$60 (feature); \$40 (short); all late entries are
\$75. Contact: Michael Trent, 1041 North
Formosa Ave., Formosa Bldg., 2nd Fl., West
Hollywood, CA 90046; (323) 850-2929;
fax: 850-2928; info@dancesw/films.com;
www.DancesWithFilms.com.

DANCING FOR THE CAMERA: INT'L FES- TIVAL OF FILM AND VIDEO DANCE, Jun.

5-Jul. 19, NC. Deadline: March 1. Fest sol-
icits dance-related work for juried public
screenings at the American Dance Festival in
Durham, NC. Founded: 1996. Cats: doc,
short, experimental, student. Preview on VHS.
Entry Fee: None. Contact: American Dance
Festival, 1697 Broadway, Rm. 900, New
York, NY 10019; (212) 586-1925; fax:
397-1196; adfny@americandancefest.org;
www.americandancefest.org.

FAIRFAX DOC FILM FESTIVAL, April 4-5, CA.
Deadline: Feb. 15. 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, 138 Ridgeway
Ave., Fairfax, CA 94930; (415) 460-9760; fax:
460-9762; Weinsoff@ix.netcom.com.

HI MOM! FILM FESTIVAL, April 3-5, NC.
Deadline: Jan. 1 (early); Jan. 31 (final).
Festival is accepting short shorts & not-so-
short shorts w/ deep thoughts & shallow
pockets. Cats: short, any style or genre.
Formats: DVD, Beta SP, Hi 8, CD-ROM,
Super 8, 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Mini-DV.
Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee:
None (early); \$15 (final). Contact: Matt Hedt,
PO Box 550, Carrboro, NC 27510;
(919) 967-4338; himomfilmfest@yahoo.com;
www.himomfilmfest.org.

**HUMBOLDT INT'L SHORT FILM FES-
TIVAL**, March 29-April 5, CA. Deadline: Jan. 31,
Feb. 14 (late). Founded: 1967. Cats: narrative,
experimental, animation, doc, & the "you call
it" category, short, any style or genre.
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

**INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL OF
BOSTON**, May 1-4, MA. Deadline: Jan. 30;
March 1 (late). Fest was created to discover
unknown filmmakers, incl. students, first-timers
& int'l directors. Cats: any style or genre, fea-
ture, doc, short. Entry Fee: \$15/\$20 (student);
\$25/\$35 (under 30 min.); \$35/\$45 (over 30
min.). Contact: Festival, 44 School Street, PMB
385, Boston, MA 02108; (857) 891-8693;
info@iffboston.org; www.iffboston.org.

INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL, April 17-26, CA.
Deadline: Feb. 1. The Indian Film Festival of Los
Angeles is a nonprofit organization devoted to
providing the public w/ the opportunity to view
a selection of films about India by Indian & int'l
filmmakers, paving the way for a greater appre-
ciation of India's cinema & diverse cul-
ture. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards:
Audience Award in all cats. Entry Fee: \$30
(up to 60 min.); \$40 (over 60 min.).
Contact: Christina Marouda, 311 N. Robertson
Blvd. Ste. 382, Beverly Hills, CA 90211;
(310) 278-8270; fax: 278-3499; cmarouda@
indianfilmfest.org; www.indianfilmfest.org.

INT'L WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 19-26,
MT. Deadline: Jan. 17. Created & based in
Missoula, Montana, the fest is the world's
longest-running juried wildlife film competi-
tion & fest. Formats: NTSC Beta, NTSC Beta
SP, NTSC DigiBeta, VHS, S-VHS, PAL. Entry
Fee: \$25-\$200 (depending on cat, see
above). Contact: Alison Garrity, IWFF, 718 S
Higgins, Missoula, MT 59801; (406) 728-
9380; fax: 728-2881; iwff@wildlifefilms.org;
www.wildlifefilms.org.

IOWA CITY INT'L DOC FESTIVAL, March 28-
30, IA. Deadline: Jan. 15; Jan. 31 (late). A com-
petitive fest showcasing short documentaries.
Length of entries is limited to 30 min. Founded:
2002. Cats: doc. Awards: Cash prizes. Formats:
1/2", 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry
Fee: \$20; \$25 (late). Contact: V. Sipes, P.O. Box
10008, Iowa City, IA 52240; (319) 335-3258;
info@ICDocs.org; www.icdocs.org.

LOS ANGELES ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL,
April 22-26, CA. Deadline: Jan 31. Founded:
1998. Cats: feature, short. Awards: The fes-
tival 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, P.O. Box 93914, Hollywood, CA 90093; (323) 850-7245; fax: 436-2928; info@italfilmfest.com; www.italfilmfest.com.

MOONDANCE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 15-18, CO. Deadline: Jan. 31. Moondance encourages & promotes screenwriters & filmmakers. Held in Boulder, Colorado, the competition 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 theater, lyrics & libretti, TV MOW's, TV Episodes, Stage plays. Formats: Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 animation; \$50 (shorts); \$75 (features). Contact: Festival, 6472 Robin Drive, Niwot, CO 80503; (303) 545-0202; moondanceff@aol.com; www.moondancefilmfest.com.

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, March 26-April 6, NY. Deadline: January 8. Highly regarded noncompetitive series presented by Film Society of Lincoln Center & Museum of Modern Art. Fest presents average of 23 features & 15 shorts each yr. at MOMA. Founded: 1972. Cats: TV, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Awards: None. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Sara Bensman, c/o Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; fax: 875-5636; sbensman@filmlinc.com; www.filmlinc.com.

NEW YORK ASIAN AMERICAN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 20-28, NY. Deadline: Feb. 1. Founded by Asian CineVision in 1978, the fest is the oldest fest in the US showcasing works by film & video makers of Asian decent. Founded: 1978. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, script. Awards: Emerging Director Award (1st/2nd time feature directors); Screenplay Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10-\$35 member/non-member. Contact: Asian CineVision, 133 W. 19th Street, 3rd Fl., New York, NY 10011; (212) 989-1422; fax: 727-3584; info@asiancinevision.org; www.asiancinevision.org.

NEWPORT INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 10-15, RI. Deadline: Feb. 1. Founded: 1998. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Entry fee: \$30 (shorts); \$40 (features & docs). Contact: Nancy Donahoe, PO Box 1229, Old Chelsea Satation, New York, NY

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OUTFEST: THE LOS ANGELES GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, July 10-21, CA. Deadline: Jan. 31 (early); March 14 (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. Founded: 1982. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Gay/Lesbian, Animation, Experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Features (over 60 min.): \$25, \$35 (late); Shorts: \$15, \$25 (late); Screenwriting Lab \$25 (1/31 only). Contact: Festival, 3470 Wilshire Blvd, Ste. 1022, Los Angeles, CA 90010; (213) 480-7088; fax: 480-7099; programming@outfest.org; www.outfest.org.

ROCHESTER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 1-3, NY. Deadline: Nov. 29, 2002 (early); Feb. 14 (final). Annual fest is the longest-running film event dedicated to the art of short film & video. Founded: 1959. Cats: any style or genre, short. No music videos or installations. 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 INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 14-24, CA. Deadline: Jan. 10, Feb. 3 (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". Fest produced by Frameline, nonprofit arts organization dedicated to gay & lesbian media arts. Founded: 1976. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm (w/ Optical Track ONLY), 1/2", Beta, VHS, NTSC/PAL. Entry Fee: \$15-25. Contact: Cindy Emch, 146 9th St., Ste. 300, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 703-8650; fax: 861-1404; info@frameline.org; www.frameline.org.

SAN FRANCISCO SEX WORKERS' FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, CA. Deadline: Feb. 15. Fest "provides a forum for the accomplishments of sex worker film & videomakers in a contemporary cinema."

Works must be directed/produced by someone who has worked in the sex industries or be about any aspect of sex work or sex industries. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation, music video, student, youth media, installation, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", U-matic, DV (mini-DV preferred for screening). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25. Contact: Carol Leigh, Box 210256, San Francisco, CA 94121; (415) 751-1659; swfest@bayswan.org; www.bayswan.org/swfest.html.

SEATTLE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 22-June 15, WA. Deadline: March 1. Fest is one of five North American film fests in which presentation will qualify a film w/out distribution for submission to the Independent Spirit awards. Founded: 1974. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (20 min. or less); \$35 (21 min. to 49 min.); \$50 (50 min. or more). Contact: Cinema Seattle, 911 Pine St., Ste. 607, Seattle, WA 98101; (206) 264-7919; fax: 264-7919; info@seattlefilm.com; www.seattlefilm.com.

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, short. Awards: Honorarium & prizes awarded. Formats: 16mm, Super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: Polyester Prince Road Show, 1200 N. Alvarado St., Los Angeles, CA 90026; (213) 484-8846; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.polyesterprince.com.

TAOS TALKING PICTURES FESTIVAL April 10-13, NM. Deadline: Jan. 10. 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. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation, music video, any style or genre, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25-\$50 (no fee for int'l entries). Contact: Kelly Clement, 1337 Gusdorf Rd. Ste. B, Taos, NM 87571; (505) 751-0637; fax: 751-7385; ttpix@ttpix.org; www.ttpix.org.

UNA FILM FESTIVAL, April 24-25, AL. Deadline: Jan. 31. Cats: feature, short,

short doc, music video, student. Awards: Cash prizes awarded in each category. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20; \$10 (Student); \$5 (Lion Club). For info, contact: George Lindsey, UNA TV & Film Festival, UNA Box 5151, Florence, AL 35632; (256) 765-4592; lindseyfilmfest@una.edu; www2.una.edu/univ.relations/filmfest/festindex.htm.

UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM & DIGITAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, February 21-23, NJ. Deadline: Jan. 24. Annual fest encourages any genre, but work must have predominantly originated on Super 8 film or Hi 8 or digital video. Formats: Hi 8, 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, 72 Lipman Dr., Loree Bldg-Douglass Campus, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (732) 932-8482; fax: 932-1935; njmac@aol.com; www.njfilmfest.com.

US INT'L FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 5-6, IL. Deadline: March 1. Founded in 1968; open to business, TV, doc, industrial, info productions. Founded: 1968. Cats: Children, Doc, Short, Feature, Any style or genre; Formats: 1/2", U-matic, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$145-\$285. Contact: Lee W. Gluckman, Jr., 713 S. Pacific Coast Highway, Suite A, Redondo Beach, CA 90277-4233; (310) 540-0959; fax: (310) 316-8905; filmfestinfo@filmfestawards.com; www.filmfestawards.com.

WASHINGTON DC INT'L FILM FESTIVAL Apr. 23-May 4, DC. Deadline: Jan. 15. Cats: feature, doc, animation, children, short. Awards: Fest is noncompetitive except for an Audience Award, given to the most popular film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (under 30 min.), \$25 (30 min. & up). Contact: Tony Gittens, Box 21396, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 724-5613; fax: 724-6578; filmfestdc@filmfestdc.org; www.filmfestdc.org.

XICANINDIE FILM FESTIVAL, April 3-6, CO. Deadline: Feb. 15 (postmark). Cats: animation, doc, experimental, narrative (feature or short). Awards: prizes awarded. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$5, incl. S.A.S.E. for tape return. Contact: Daniel Salazar,

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INTERNATIONAL

ALGARVE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 4-18, Portugal. Deadline: Feb. 15. Cats: doc, animation, fiction, short. Awards: prizes totaling \$20,000. Formats: 35mm only. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: none. Contact: Carlos Manuel, Box 8091, Lisbon Codex, Portugal 1800; 011 351 21 851 36 15; fax: 351 21 852 11 50; algarvefilmfest@mail.telepac.pt; www.algarvefilmfest.com.

BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL, June 8-13, Canada. Deadline: Feb. 14. Festival blends two components: a conference for industry pros w/ important resource people, an informal environment in which to develop business relationships & an int'l program competition which awards the coveted Banff Rockie awards in 14 cats. Formats: Beta, Beta SP, VHS (PAL). Entry Fee: \$250 (payable in U.S. or Canadian dollars); \$100 (original content created for web-casting, w/ no prior or simultaneous appearance in another medium). Contact: Festival, Banff Television Foundation, 1350 Railway Ave., Canmore, Alberta, CANADA T1W 3E3; (403) 678-9260; fax: 678-9269; info@banfftvfest.com; www.banff2003.com.

BRUSSELS EUROPEAN FILM FESTIVAL, April 23-May 3, Belgium. Deadline: Jan. 20. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Contact: Paul Sterck, Chausse de Louvain 30, 1210 Brussels, Belgium; 011 32 2 227 39 80; fax: 011 32 2 218 18 60; infoffb@netcity.be; www.brusselsfest.be.

INSIDE OUT: TORONTO LESBIAN AND GAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 15-25, Canada. Deadline: Jan. 13. Fest hosts the largest lesbian & gay fest in Canada & one of the largest in the world. Founded: 1991. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media, family, children, TV. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Kathleen Mullen, 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 OF URUGUAY, Apr. 12-27, Uruguay. Deadline: Feb. 15. Annual fest devoted to short & feature-length, doc,



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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 Show; Int'l Doc & Experimental Film Show; Info Show; Espacio Uruguay. Films should be subtitled, have Spanish version, or have a list of texts or dialogues translated into Spanish or in English, French or Portuguese for us to translate. Films wishing to compete must be completed after Jan. 1 of prior year. Founded: 1982. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation, student. Awards: Best Film; Jury Prize; Opera Prima Prize. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Manuel Martinez Carril, Lorenzo Carnelli 1311, Montevideo, Uruguay 11200; 011 5982 418 2460; 409 5795; fax: 5982 419 4572; cinemuy@chasque.net; www.cinematca.org.uy.

INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL; HAMBURG, June 4-9, Germany. Deadline: Feb. 15 (shorts & no-budget); April 1 (3 minute "Quickie"). Annual festival is a forum for presenting diversity of int'l short films & providing a meeting place for filmmakers from home & abroad. Consecutively run w/ the Hamburg Children's Film Festival. Shorts must be under 20 min., except for Three-Minute Quickie entries (must be under 3 min.). Founded: 1985. Cats: short, children, any style or genre. Awards: Hamburg Short Film Award, No Budget Award, Audience Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, U-matic, S-VHS, Beta SP, DVD, 1/2". Preview on VHS. If previews are not in German or English, enclose text list. No Entry Fee. Contact: Festival, KurzFilmAgentur Hamburg e.V.; Friedensallee 7, Hamburg, Germany D 22765; 00 49 40 39 10 63 23; fax: 00 49 40 39 10 63 20; fest@shortfilm.com; www.shortfilm.com.

IT'S ALL TRUE INT'L DOC FILM FESTIVAL, April 3-13, Brazil. Deadline: Jan. 15. A leading forum for nonfiction 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: 35 mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Amir Labaki, Rua Simao Andrade, 55, Sao Paulo - SP, Brasil 05030-030; 011 55 11 3873-7296; fax: 55 11 3873-7296; info@itsalltrue.com; www.itsalltrue.com.br.

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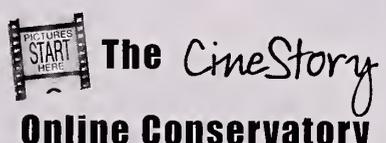
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OBERHAUSEN INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, May 1-6, Germany. Deadline: Jan. 15. The world's oldest short film fest offers a forum for aesthetic & technological innovation & reflection. Founded: 1954. Cats: Short, Any style or genre, Children, Music Video. Awards: incl. Grand Prize, Jury of Int'l Film Critics award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP/PAL, U-matic (PAL, SECAM, NTSC), Super 8, DV, S-VHS, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Melanie Piguel, Grillostr. 34, Oberhausen, Germany 46045; 011 49 208 825 3073; fax: 49 208 825 5413; info@kurzfilmtage.de; www.kurzfilmtage.de.

SINGAPORE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 18-May 3, 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. Cats: Short, Feature, Doc, Animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry fee. Contact: Philip Cheah, 45A Keong Saik Rd., Singapore, Singapore 089149; 011 65 738 7567; fax: 011 65 738 7578; filmfest@pacific.net.sg; www.filmfest.org.sg.

YORKTOWN SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 22-25, Canada. Deadline: Feb. 15. Longest-running fest of its kind in Canada. Awards avail. in 18 genre cats, 9 craft cats. Festival incl. public screenings, mini cinema, workshops & activities. Cats: Doc, Children, Short. Awards: The Golden Sheaf Award. Formats: 1/2", 16mm, Beta SP, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: CAN \$75. Contact: Festival, 49 Smith St. E., Yorktown, SK, Canada S3N 0H4; (306) 782-7077; fax: 782-1550; info@yorktonshortfilm.org; www.yorktonshortfilm.org.

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Films/Tapes Wanted

By Charlie Sweitzer

Screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Distribution ads are sold as classifieds (see p. 72). *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about repetitions of a given notice. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Send to: notices@aivf.org.

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MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING SERIES

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, the Alternative Screen: a Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films without wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS viewing tape, press kit (any written background materials), cover letter with contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, L.A., CA 90028. Tel. (323)



Tiny Picture Club

Tiny Picture Club, a Portland, Oregon, collective of Super 8 filmmakers, employs a refreshing and enthusiastic D.I.Y. aesthetic: They share equipment, develop their own film (with their own chemicals—check out the "Recipes" section of www.tinypictureclub.com), and even compose and perform live musical accompaniments for their quarterly screening series. See listing.

466-3456 x115; fax (323) 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society that features monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee is \$20. Entry form & guidelines available at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, P.O. Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience. Dialogue must be subtitled. Send 1/2" video copy (non-returnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental for ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, 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 min. or

fewer, any genre, to be screened at our (unpaid) Open Reel Hour at the beginning of each monthly program. Send VHS copy, summary, & short bio to: Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

FLICKER encompasses a Super 8 and 16mm film showcase held in cities across the country. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you; see the website for a list of local Flickers: www.flickeraustin.com.

FREEDOM FILM SOCIETY, presenter of the Red Bank International Film Festival, seeks short (45 min. or fewer) and feature narrative, documentary, experimental, & animated works for monthly New Jersey screenings. Send preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: shorts, \$25; features, \$45. Ph/Fax: (732) 741-8089; contact@rbff.org; www.rbff.org/entry_form/submit.html.

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MAKOR continues its Reel Jews Film Festival & ongoing screening series showcasing the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. We are now accepting shorts, features, docs and/or works-in-progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration. Program sponsored by Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation. Contact Ken Sherman: (212) 413-8821; ksberman@92ndsty.org.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE seeks short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive 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 w/ name, title, length, phone #, & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film and video, as well as personal non-fiction, of any length for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (non-returnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video, & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a much-needed venue to show work & talent in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-minute film/videos. Show & Tell, co Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473. Tel. (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area.

Send VHS preview tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., Portland, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.com.

THINK TANK FILM SCREENING is a film, video, motion graphics, & animation event showcasing the very best in creative socio-cultural commentary. Past events have treated issues as diverse as immigration, architecture, & warfare. Submissions are chosen for their uniqueness in message & vision. Event scheduled for Feb. 28th. Submission requirements: VHS preview tape, NTSC, fewer than 11 min. Deadline: January 15, 2003. No fee. Submissions cannot be returned. Send to: Think Tank Film Screening, 162 Carlton Ave #1, Brooklyn, NY 11205. Check for updates at www.terraswarm.com/thinktank.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects, & window installations. Video work must be on VHS NTSC. Send application (available at www.artingeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013. Phone: (212) 219-0473.

SPARK CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE is a collectively run gallery in Syracuse, NY. Currently accepting submissions of short (fewer than 15 min.) art videos for the next programming year (Sept. 2002 to April 2003). All types of independent noncommercial work is accepted. International & domestic submissions are encouraged. All programs will be posted on the web & all participating artists will be contacted. Accepted formats: VHS & DV. Processing fee: \$5, payable to Jeremy Drummond. Include synopsis, bio, CV & 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; Tel. (315) 422-2654; info@jeremydrummond.org.

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & SASE to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

SHOWCASES

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA combines the excitement of an annual film festival with a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest & movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films, & features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin with a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations & provide a strong social networking atmosphere before the screenings. Submission form available at website. Entry Fee is \$25. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (773) 289-4261; www.ChicagoCommunityCinema.com. Deadline: ongoing.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features discussion & reception after the screening. Any length or genre.

Connection to New England through subject matter, locations, or hometown of filmmakers helpful but not required. Send VHS preview tape to: Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks 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. More info & application form at www.shortfilmgroup.org.

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PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE accepts proposals for programs & completed programs by independent producers. Consult PBS web page for content priorities & submission guidelines. Contact Cheryl Jones, Program Development & Independent Film, PBS Headquarters, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314; Ph. (703) 739-5150; fax 739-5295; cjones@pbs.org; www.pbs.org/producers.

SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films that 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 5 Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Application form available at www.theshortlist.cc; fax (619) 462-8266; ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

SUB ROSA STUDIOS seeks video & film productions for ongoing Syracuse-area TV programming & VHS/DVD/TV worldwide release. Seek short & feature nonfiction productions in all areas of the special-interest or instructional fields, cutting-edge documentaries, & children & family programming. Also seeks feature-length fiction, all genres, esp. horror & sci-fi. Supernatural-themed products wanted, both fiction & nonfiction, esp. supernatural/horror fiction shot documentary style. Contact: Ron Bonk, Sub Rosa Studios; Ph: (315) 454-5608; webmaster@b-movie.com; www.b-movie.com.

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By Charlie Sweitzer

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COMPETITIONS

HARRY CHAPIN MEDIA AWARDS, sponsored by World Hunger Year, go to work that provides outstanding coverage that positively impacts hunger, poverty & self-reliance. Categories: books, newspaper/periodicals, broadcast & photojournalism. Work must have appeared between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31, 2002. Cash prizes up to \$2,500 in each category. Entries must be postmarked no later than Jan. 17, 2003. For more info & application form, visit www.worldhungeryear.org.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES offers 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: March 1.** Contact: (202) 606-8463; sem-nst@neh.gov; www.neh.gov.

TAOS WOMEN FILMMAKERS RETREAT 2003 seeks entries for 10-day retreat (Aug. 24-Sep. 3) at Georgia O'Keefe's Ghost Ranch, NM that will focus on digging deeply into the stories women filmmakers "really" want to tell. Only 20 applicants will be selected, so apply early. **Deadline: Mar. 15.** Submit your script, synopsis, outline, & completed entry form

(available at www.tanomediainstitute.com) w/ a non-refundable application check of \$50.00 payable to S.E.E./Tano Media Institute & mail to: Tano Women Filmmakers Retreat/Submissions, 1115 N. Flores St., Suite #10, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

TWN FILM & PRODUCTION 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 application 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 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.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

AGAPE FOUNDATIONS DAVID R. STERN MEMORIAL FUND offers loans to film projects committed to nonviolent social change. \$3,000 will be loaned for up to three months to filmmakers who promotes the use of non-violence 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 nat'lly on 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 & 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.

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FUND is proud to announce its 5th year awarding \$500-\$2,000 postproduction completion grants 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 c/o Bryan Wendorf 2545 West Altgeld #1 Chicago, IL 60647; info@cuff.org; www.cuff.org.

CINEMAX REEL LIFE & HBO AMERICA UNDER-COVER offer completion & production funds, respectively, 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.

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 two major programs (human & community development; global security & sustainability). Send preliminary two to three 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.

KQED-TV IN SAN FRANCISCO provides in-kind postproduction assistance to a number of independent projects each year. Subject must be compelling & 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.

LOCAL INDEPENDENTS COLLABORATING WITH STATIONS (LinCS) FUND is a funding initiative from Independent Television Service (ITVS) which provides matching funds (\$10,000-\$75,000) for collaborations between public TV stations & indie producers. Single shows & interstitial pkgs will be considered, as will projects in any genre or stage of development. Programs should stimulate civic discourse & break traditional molds of exploring complex regional, cultural, political, social, or economic issues. Indie film & videomakers encouraged to seek collaborations w/ their local public TV stations. **Deadline: April 30, 2003.** Guidelines & applications available at www.itvs.org, or contact Elizabeth Meyer, tel: (415) 365-8383 x270; elizabeth_meyer@itvs.org.

NATHAN CUMMINGS FOUNDATION is rooted in the Jewish tradition & committed to democratic values and social justice, includ-

ing fairness, diversity, & community. Supporting artistic projects, including exhibitions & education outreach, that provide a deeper understanding of issues pertaining to health, the environment, & Jewish life. Grants range from \$10,000 to \$80,000. For more info, visit www.ncf.org.

OPEN CALL FOR PRODUCTION/OPEN DOOR COMPLETION FUNDS are available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants with public TV projects in production & post-production phases. Awards average from \$20,000 - \$50,000 per project. OPEN CALL deadlines: Feb. 28. & Aug. 29 2003. Review process for the OPEN CALL takes approximately 3-6 months. For OPEN DOOR a full-length rough cut must be submitted. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 145 Ninth St., Suite 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814 x122; fax: (415) 863-7428; mediafund@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.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 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

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.

PLAYBOY FOUNDATION MEDIA GRANTS seek social change documentary film & video projects. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 & are limited to projects in postproduction. For more information visit: www.playboyenterprises.com.

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separately). Flatiron Productions, Mr. Mack (212) 685-3099, cutman48@aol.com.

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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.

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FILMMAKER: Temple University's Department of Film and Media Arts is seeking an active independent director/producer for a tenure-track position at the Associate or Full Professor level. The ideal candidate will have a national/international track record in fiction filmmaking. The successful candidate will teach from among the following courses in producing, directing, screen performance, and/or advanced filmmaking, and/or film marketing. Rank and salary commensurate with experience. Film and Media Arts has 13 full-time faculty, a nationally ranked Graduate Program, and 600 undergraduates in a dynamic program dedicated to independent media including documentary, new media and alternative voices in narrative film and video. An MFA, PHD, or equivalent professional experience is required, along with an impressive portfolio of creative work in film, video or digital media, or a combination of scholarly and creative work. The search will remain open until the position is filled. Please submit a

cover letter, vita and contact information for three references to: David Parry, Chair, Film Search, Film & Media Arts, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122. Find out more about Film and Media Arts at www.temple.edu/fma.

ONE DAY FULL IMMERSION DIGITAL filmmaking course in NY for \$79. Learn everything you need to know to make a film for under \$10,000. The ten hour course covers script writing, casting, lighting, camera techniques using the Canon XL-1, shooting coverage, editing, budgeting, etc. The course is taught by independent filmmakers who have made films at this budget. Call PC Productions, Inc. at (201) 251-9722 for details on the course.

POSTPRODUCTION: Temple's Department of Film and Media Arts is seeking an independent media producer who possesses exceptional technical, conceptual and theoretical skills in postproduction, sound and documentary filmmaking, and an outstanding portfolio of work for a tenure track appointment. The successful candidate will also have a strong background in digital filmmaking, documentary film theory and production, community outreach and/or media literacy. Rank and salary commensurate with experience. Film and Media Arts has 13 full-time faculty, a nationally ranked Graduate Program, and 600 undergraduates in a dynamic program dedicated to independent media including documentary, new media and alternative voices in narrative film and video. An MFA, PhD, or equivalent professional experience, is required along with an impressive portfolio of creative work in film, video or digital media, or a combination of scholarly and creative work. The search will remain open until the position is filled. Please submit a cover letter, vita and contact information for three references to: Allan Barber, Chair, Postproduction Search, Film & Media Arts, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122. Find out more about Film and Media Arts at www.temple.edu/fma.

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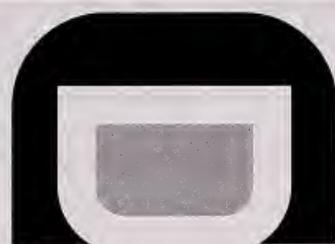
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January

AIVF COSPONSORS

REEL ROUNDTABLE

Distribution Night w/ IFC Films

when: January 13, 7:30 p.m.

where: The Gene Frankel Theater
24 Bond Street, New York, NY
www.reelroundtable.com

See a sneak preview of *Lost in La Mancha* (see page 35), followed by a Q&A with IFC Films' Greg Forston and Kelly DeVine.

2003 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

JANUARY 16-26 PARK CITY, UTAH

AIVF AT SUNDANCE 2003 FILMMAKER LODGE

when: January 22
www.sundance.org

Building on the success of the House of Docs, this year Sundance introduces the Filmmaker Lodge, which provides an informal meeting point for documentary and dramatic filmmakers to network, share resources and gain new insights. The Lodge will host a series of panels, a resource library, and receptions and gatherings designed to cultivate dialogue between established and emerging filmmakers, industry leaders, and the press. Stop by on the 22nd to visit with representatives of AIVF!

DOCUMENTARY DIALOGUES 300 Hours of Footage and Counting. Now What?

when: January 28, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Wine reception until 9:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$5 members/\$20 general

After you've shot everything that moves and then some, what do you do? Share and learn with your peers how to organize postproduction in an effective, economical way. Learn when it's best to hire the editor, and different ways to organize the footage, fast and easy. Turn the hell of postproduction into the paradise! Hosted by filmmaker and script/documentary doctor Fernanda Rossi.

MEET AND GREET

WGA EAST

when: January 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$10 members/\$20 general

Join representatives of the Writers Guild of America to learn the ins and

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AIVF COSPONSORS

The 22nd Annual Black Maria Film Festival

Premiere: Friday, January 31, 8 p.m.

Margaret Williams Theatre,
New Jersey City University

Contact: (201) 200-2043

www.blackmariafilmfestival.com

The Black Maria Film Festival tour, dedicated to exhibiting compelling new independent media that expands the expressive terrain of film and video, kicks off on January 11 in Jersey City. At press time, over 30 cities have been booked for the national tour!

February

MEET AND GREET

TAXES FOR INDEPENDENTS

when: February 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$10 members/\$20 general

Join CPAs Steve Cooperberg (Todres & Rubin) and Martin Bell (Bell & Co.) to learn the skinny on filing taxes as an independent contractor or small business. The workshop will be followed by short meetings with participants (bring your questions!)

AIVF COSPONSORS SF INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

when: February 6-16
www.sfindie.com



The fifth annual SF Indie Fest offers a showcase for alternative and independent film. Screenings at the Castro, Roxie, and Expression Center for New Media theaters.

**STAY TUNED:
FCC PUBLIC HEARING
regional meetings
with Commissioner Copps**

In February, the FCC will hold at least one public hearing to solicit input for the Ownership Rules for Broadcasters review. In addition, Commissioner Copps has pledged to travel to communities to hear from Americans on what he is calling "the single most important decision the FCC will make next year." AIVF is working with a coalition of groups to help facilitate these meetings. Watch www.aivf.org/advocacy for up-to-date information!

**DOCUMENTARY DIALOGUES at
THE DIRECTOR'S VIEW FILM FESTIVAL
Are Documentaries Really
about the Truth?**

when: February 16, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
where: Stamford, CT
www.thedirectorsview.com

AIVF joins the 4th Annual Director's View Film Festival (Feb. 13-17) in presenting a special meeting of Documentary Dialogues. How true are documentaries? Can the film medium capture what is really happening? How does the editing process affect this? Join us for a lively and entertaining discussion with your peer filmmakers and film buffs. Hosted by Doc Doctor Fernanda Rossi.

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PRIVATE RESOURCES**

when: Feb. 20, 6:30-8:30pm
where: AIVF
cost: \$20 members/\$30 general



The AIVF Producers' Legal Series helps answer common legal questions and introduces independents to future legal resources. This session deals with issues around individual contributors

and private investors. Series moderator Innes Smolansky is an entertainment attorney with Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard. She specializes in representing independent producers, writers and directors.

**AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT
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where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 West 65 St., NYC, NY
www.filmlinc.com

AIVF members may attend select series (listed below) at a discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office!



- 1/10-1/18 Dance on Camera 2003
- 1/11-1/23 Jewish Film Festival
- 1/24-1/30 Soviet Sounds
- 1/31-2/13 Film Comment Selects
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member benefits

AIVF offers many benefits to our members.

For complete details, including contact information and discount codes, visit www.aivf.org (Note: you must provide your membership number to log on) or call (212) 807-1400 x506 to have a Member Benefits List mailed to you. This information was last updated November 2002.

[WWW.AIVF.ORG/
RESOURCES/BENEFITS](http://WWW.AIVF.ORG/RESOURCES/BENEFITS)

AIVF Offers

- Discounts on FIVF Publications
- Discounted admission to dozens of programs offered or co-presented by AIVF across the US
- AIVF Mailing List Discounts reach a core group of folks who appreciate indie media!
- Discounts on Classified ads in *The Independent*

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- Bader Associates
- RBA Insurance Strategies (NY only)
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Stock & Expendibles

- Eastman Kodak (New York, NY)

Production Resources

- Bee Harris Productions (Mt. Vernon, NY)
- Downtown Community TV Center (New York, NY)
- Edgewood Motion Picture Studios (Rutland, VT)
- Film Friends (FL & NY)
- Five Points Media (New York, NY)
- Glidecam Industries (Plymouth, MA)
- Hello World Communications (New York, NY)
- Production Central (New York, NY)

- Tandem Studios (New York, NY)
- Victory Studios (WA and CA)
- Yellow Cat Productions (Washington, DC)

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- Cinepost (Atlanta, GA)

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- Diva Edit (New York, NY)
- Downtown Community TV Center (New York, NY)
- Five Points Media (New York, NY)
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- Mint Leaf Productions (New York, NY)
- Northeast Negative Matchers, Inc. (Springfield, MA)
- Outpost Digital (New York, NY)
- The Picture Room (New York, NY)
- Public Interest Video Network (Washington, DC)
- RandomRoom (Brooklyn, NY)
- Ren Music, Inc. (Rahway, NJ)
- Solar Films (New York, NY)
- Sound Dimensions Editorial (New York, NY)
- Splash Studios (New York, NY)
- Tandem Studios, LLC (New York, NY)
- Tiny Lights, Inc. (New York, NY)
- Video Active Productions (New York, NY)
- Virgin Moon Post (Ventura, CA)

Other Production Services

- Airborne Express/Meridian One Corp
- Affinity Lab (Washington, DC)
- Final Draft, Inc.
- Image Design Studio (New York, NY)
- Media Services (Omaha, NE)
- ProductionClassifieds.com

Publications

- Drama Book Shop (New York, NY)
- The Hollywood Reporter
- Variety

MovieTickets

- Working Advantage (national)
- Cinema Village (New York, NY)
- Film Society of Lincoln Center (New York, NY)

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- Alamo
- Avis
- Budget
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- Choice Hotels International chain, including
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 - Comfort Inn
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 - Clarion Hotels
 - EconLodge
 - Rodeway Inn
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- Echo Communications Group, Inc.
- FreeSpeechTV.org
- IMDbPro.com

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- Hollywood Script Research (Hollywood, CA)
- Daniel, Seigel and Bimble, LLC (New York, NY)
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- Law Offices of Mark Litwak (Beverly Hills, CA)
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- Bell & Co., LLP (New York, NY)
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Classes

- Video Symphony (Burbank, CA)
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FIVE 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:



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

Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival; **CA:** Berkeley Documentary Center; Film Arts Foundation; Filmmakers Alliance; Fireside Foundation; International Buddhist Film Festival; Media Fund; 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; Valencia Community College; **GA:** Atlanta Black Film Festival, Inc.; Imgae Film and Video Center; Savannah College of Art and Design; **HI:** Pacific Islanders in Communications; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago/Video Data Bank; Community Television Network; Light Bound; Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Communication; Rock Valley College; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; LEF Foundation; Long Bow Group, Inc.; Lowell Telecommunications Group; Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College; WGBH Education Foundation; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **ME:** Maine Photographic Workshops; **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; Duke University, Film and Video; Empowerment Project; UNC Greensboro, Broadcasting and Cinema; **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; **NM:** Taos Talking Pictures; **NY:** After Dark Productions; 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 Film Seminars; John Jay High School; Listen Up!; Mimetic Media; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Foundation for Jewish Culture; National Video Resources; New School University Film Department; Nina Winthrop and Dancers; New York Film Academy; New York Women in Film and Television; Paper Tiger Television; POV/The American Documentary; Pratt Institute; Ross Media Center; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stanton Crenshaw Communication; Stony Brook Film Festival; Syracuse University; Upstate Films, Ltd.; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Athens Center for Film and Video; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio Independent Film Festival; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; Northwest Film Center; **PA:** American Poetry Center; Desales University, Department of the Performing Arts; PA Council on the Arts; Department of Film and Video, Carnegie Museum of Art; Great Lakes Film Association; Greenworks; Philadelphia Independent Film and Video 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; **TX:** Austin Film Society; Southwest Alternate Media Project; Worldfest; **UT:** Sundance Institute; **VA:** PBS; PBS Midwest; VA Department of Drama; **VT:** The Noodlehead Network; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Shorts Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Peru:** Guarango Cine y Video; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

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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 www.aivf.org/regional 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
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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

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.

**Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival**

Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

**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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White
huntsville@aivf.org



**Fort Wayne Independents
Kick Off Indiana Salon!**

This past April, Fort Wayne hosted the first AIVF Salon to an enthusiastic audience. Our theme ("We Know You're Out There") came about because we knew of many local independents that produced works but rarely got the chance to get themselves promoted in the community. We were pleased and surprised at the quality that was submitted for this first salon. We had everything from the scripted drama *Apartment 2C* to a documentary on the race riots in Muncie, Indiana.

The following months saw a buzz of activity within the local filmmaker community. We are excited about our future AIVF Salons and have several plans for the upcoming year.

— Erik Mollberg

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Independent 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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
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@yahoo.com
washingtondc@aivf.org

Learning from Others

By Jason Guerrasio

Artists are not created in a vacuum. Filmmakers, like all artists, are inspired, nurtured, and shaped by the people who have traveled the road before them. Whether it is taken from a book, a peer, or a mentor, the knowledge they receive prepares them for the potholes in their career. This month, seven filmmakers reveal what they learned from someone about making films.

The person I have learned the most from about filmmaking is my mother, Florence Helfand, former assistant librarian and president of her synagogue (she is a featured subject, “star,” of *A Healthy Baby Girl* and *Blue Vinyl*). She has taught me that there has to be a relationship at the core of a film, whether it is about repair and resolution or revenge and revolution. There has to be something real and personal at stake, and the stakes need to be felt and understood by the audience. For me this rule holds, whether it’s documentary or fiction, whether the relationship is as personal as with a mother-and-daughter or as large and global as a company and its responsibility to its consumers. There has to be a heart that is at risk of being broken—and it never hurts to be funny.

— Judith Helfand
(*A Healthy Baby Girl*, *Blue Vinyl*)

While making *Koko, a Talking Gorilla*, when asked what to expose for, cinematographer Néstor Almendros replied, “Always expose for the gorilla.”

— Errol Morris
(*The Thin Blue Line*, *Stairway to Heaven*)

Geri Ashur was a real mentor, teacher, and friend to me when I started out. She had a KEM flatbed in her apartment on the Upper West Side in the early seventies, and I thought it was the height of cool. We edited a short film, *Make Out*, for the Newsreel Collective together. She taught me by letting me sit down at the editing table at night to try re-cutting what she had done during the day. It was a crazy way to make a film, but a great way to learn. But more importantly, Geri passed on to me her incredible love of film, of process, of French food, of good cooking, and of joy in life.

— Deborah Shaffer
(*Fire From the Mountain*, *Dance of Hope*)

The most significant thing I ever learned was from writer/editor David Peoples, who taught me to never confuse a good time with a good film.

— Jon Else
(*Arthur and Lillie*, *Yosemite: The Fate of Heaven*)

In the book, *Cassavetes on Cassavetes*, John Cassavetes says a couple hundred things that have taught and inspired me. He talks about making mistakes, following your instincts, not putting off what your heart is telling you to do in order to make some money, and in general, believing in what you’re doing. I also learned early on that it’s crucial to develop a group of peers and mentors with whom to consult, confide in, and just stay in touch with. It’s nice to be able to confirm that you’re not alone in the struggles, creative challenges, and hype that constantly threatens your optimism and stamina.

— Jim McKay
(*Girls Town*, *Our Song*)

While making my film, *The Collector of Bedford Street*, two women, Cynthia Wade and Melissa Hacker, helped mentor me. Cynthia pushed me very hard to find the story. Sometimes I would be very angry with her, but she really made me find a storyline in the footage. Melissa made constructive comments about the shooting, but most of all she could merge my very subjective feelings and vision with a sense that could make the film accessible to everyone.

— Alice Elliott
(*The Collector of Bedford Street*)

Lou Rawls would say, “Keep it funky, keep it real.”

— Tom Schiller
(*Nothing Lasts Forever*)

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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Last Updated 12:05 pm PST, 08/12/02

Film Four down with Sullivan's 'Notorious' tale

London-based Film Four (Sexy Beast) has optioned writer Randall Sullivan's Rolling Stone magazine article "The Murder of the Notonous B.I.G." for Killer Films ("Boys Don't Cry") to produce. The article, published June 7, is now being expanded to a book by Sullivan titled "LABynnth," which also was optioned by Film Four. The article and book follow detective Russell Poole's investigation into the murders of Tupac Shakur and Notonous B.I.G., aka Biggie Smalls... More >

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| | |
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| 2 | Signs |
| 3 | Sing |
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| 6 | Austin |
| 7 | Re |
| 8 | The Good Girl |
| 9 | One Hour Ph |
| 10 | The Adventures of Pluto |

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BOX OFFICE 23 August 2002

| Title | Weekend Gross |
|--|----------------|
| Signs | \$14.3M \$173M |
| XXX | \$13.3M \$106M |
| Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams | \$7.5M \$68.6M |
| My Big Fat Greek Wedding | \$7.2M \$3.7M |
| Blue Crush | \$6.5M \$1.5M |
| Serving Sara | \$5.5M \$1.1M |
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See more

CALENDAR

For more of what's happening when, visit our calendar section

This Week: FeaDotCom, Slap Her, She's French, Mad Love, The Reckoning, The...
Theatrical: Montreal World Film Festival, Norwegian International Film Festival, Venice Film Festival, 50th Mostra Internazionale...
Events: Montreal World Film Festival, Norwegian International Film Festival, Venice Film Festival, 50th Mostra Internazionale...

ADVANCED SEARCH

You can answer very complex questions using IMDb pro Advanced Search. Check out this query of the week:

Query: US release between May 2002 and December 2005 and Only Movies and English language, sorted by MOVIEmeter

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On the Cover: Cinematographer Maryse Alberti, whose films include *Crumb*, *Happiness*, and *Velvet Goldmine*, setting up a shot on the set of *The Guys* (Mark Stephen Kornbluth).

Photos, this page: Women Make Movies Executive Director Debra Zimmerman (Mark Stephen Kornbluth); Nancy Schreiber (center) on location with director Richard Pearce and 1st AD Cas Donovan on *Stand Up Tragedy* (Myles Aronowitz); Schreiber matched her black-and-white moving images to stills such as *The Falling Soldier* in Robert Capa: *In Love and War* (Robert Capa).

Photos, page 5: Marina Zurkow's animated *Braingirl* (Marina Zurkow); Stephen Fielding is the subject of a new Steve James documentary (Magic Lantern); filmmaker Yvonne Welbon (Alison Duke); performer and filmmaker Annie Sprinkle (Annie Sprinkle); Larry Selman and dog Happy are subjects of Alice Elliot's documentary *The Collector of Bedford Street* (Amanda Treyz).

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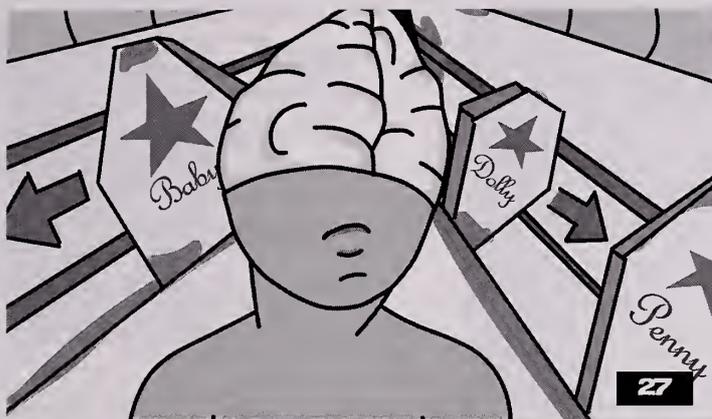
Actresses Jena Malone (L) and Mary Stuart Masterson (R) at a filmmaker panel.



2002 winners at Closing Night reception.



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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader:

I've been reporting on women in independent film for five years now and I've got to admit

it's a bit depressing. Not all that much has changed. The only significant gain is that there are more women directors at Sundance than there were when I started looking at this topic. Without any major shifts, the question becomes why write about it? For me the answer is that the radical underrepresentation of women in the film industry both in Hollywood and independent film continues to be as shocking as the Augusta National Golf Club not admitting female members. It continues to shock me when I read articles in publications like *The New York Times* that shift the blame to women because they choose to have children (as if no mother ever chooses to work). And I become outraged when journalist haul out the argument that women are different than men and therefore are not capable of doing the same job. It's insulting, but sometimes it's easier to accept these rationales than the other explanation: that sexism is alive and well and now showing in a theater near you.

We still live in a world where women make \$.76 for every dollar men earn, and we cannot turn a blind eye to this. The only way that I know to fight this quiet sexism is to shine a light on it. To that end Ann Lewinson interviewed one of the smallest groups in film, female cinematographers (pg. 45). Five years ago, women behind the camera on film sets were not even a statistical blip, under one percent. Today they make up two percent of the working DP's, and while that's nowhere near 51.1 percent it is growth (see p. 49).

More than any other film organization, Women Make Movies has witnessed the progress of women media, and I'm delighted to join them this issue in celebrating their thirtieth anniversary with Executive Director Debra Zimmerman's contribution of her travel reflections from her world travels over the past year representing the organization (pg. 40).

Feminism and academia have a long intertwined history. The story of women's rights has often also been a story of women's education. In this issue Patricia Zimmermann investigates the current state of feminist film studies in universities (pg. 50). She spoke to some of the leading scholars in the US to explore what is being studied and how. As a supplement to this article Sharon Lin Tay submitted a list of required reading for anybody wishing to round out their education in this area (pg. 34).

I know that some filmmakers, who happen to be women, chaff under the label "woman filmmaker." They fear it will push their work into that pink ghetto "women's films." But as long as women continue to be only a sliver of the field, the people who dismiss films by women as chick flicks will continue to do so whether I write about these women or not. And if one woman reads an article and finds inspiration in it, then the risk of being painted with a pink brush is worth it.

Alison Anders once said, "There is no such thing as the myth of the girl genius." It is our job as the tellers of tales in whatever media to create this myth. Unlike a story, a myth must be told time and again by many people from many perspectives before it solidifies itself into a cultural belief.

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Screening No More

CARNEGIE MUSEUM CUTS FILM/VIDEO PROGRAM

By Charlie Sweitzer

Earlier this year the Carnegie Museum announced it would close one of Pittsburgh's oldest and most renowned screening series and shut down the museum's film and video department, the result of a \$4 million budget cut for 2003. In addition to dropping the film and video program, Carnegie Museum is eliminating seventeen full-time and four part-time employees.

The CMA Cinema series was a major outlet for independent and, particularly, international film. Last year, 120 films were screened at the museum, attracting more than 11,000 viewers. Because of the focus on international film, CMA Cinema attracted

large audiences and a great deal of support from the city's ethnic communities. "It was the only thing in town [where] afterwards you could walk out and hear extensive discourse in Farsi," former Carnegie curator Bill Judson says. He also notes that the Polish community raised money to bring Polish films and filmmakers to the museum.

In a press release, Carnegie Museum of Art Director Richard Armstrong cites "greatly reduced endowment income" and the existence of several other venues for independent film in Pittsburgh, such as Pittsburgh Filmmakers, as reasons for the cutbacks. But Judson is quick to point out that CMA Cinema's focus on fea-

ture films from abroad, rather than American independent and popular foreign films, made the museum's series unique to the area.

Kilolo Luckett, director of marketing and public relations at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, lists Almodóvar's *Talk To Her* and François Ozon's *8 Women* as examples of the type of international films that screen at that venue. "The wonderful thing about the Carnegie's film and video program," she says, "was its ability to dedicate a solid run of foreign cultural films from places like Japan, Africa, [and] Kazakhstan. This unique programming really embodied the many different ethnic and cultural communities that shape Pittsburgh."

Even Armstrong admits that CMA Cinema's shoes won't be easy to fill. "To say that [a series like CMA

Left: The Grand Staircase, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; Top: Martin Sulik's *The Garden*, and Bottom: Carlos Diegues's *Orfeo*—films from the would-be line-up for 2003.

Cinema] could happen elsewhere is very naive and disingenuous," he says. "I only said it in the press release to soften the blow."

Armstrong, who describes cutting the program as "an extremely painful decision," expresses hope that "someday, we can reconstitute the film program." But the Carnegie Museums do not foresee any change in their income stream for the next thirty-five months. "We are struggling daily to find out how something could be salvaged," he says.

The Carnegie Art Museum will continue to exhibit film and video artworks. Christian Jankowski's video work *Puppet Conference* opened in the museum's Forum Gallery in January. "[Film and video] should be a crucial part of any art museum's program," Armstrong says. "Film is the most attractive way to increase visual literacy."

Recent CMA Cinema programs featured films from Central Asia, such as Ardak Amirkulov's *The Fall of Otrar*. This year's screenings, now canceled, included programs of new Brazilian and Slovakian films, including Carlos Diegues's *Orfeu* and Martin Sulík's Slovakian hit *The Garden*.

"[M]usems have a responsibility to the immediate communities they serve and to the larger [culture] of the country to understand film and video as artistic, creative, expressive endeavors, beyond the kind of thing which gets funded and consumed within [the] art world," Judson says. "A museum needs to understand that because it doesn't live in the economy and consumption of the art world, it doesn't mean that it's not equally valid as part of a larger cultural fabric."

Supreme Court backs Copyright Extensions

By Charlie Sweitzer

The Supreme Court recently ruled seven to two to uphold the 1998 Copyright Term Extension Act, which many in the media arts world

opposed because it delays work from passing into the public domain for so long. The act extended the maximum term of copyright from fifty to seventy-five years for individuals, and seventy-five to ninety-five years for corporations. Its constitutionality was questioned in a suit filed by internet publisher Eric Eldred, Stanford Law School professor Lawrence Lessig, and others, on grounds that Congress had overstepped the Constitution's grant of "limited times" to artists and inventors for exclusive rights to their own works.

In the decision, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg stated, "The wisdom of Congress's action . . . is not within our province to second guess," noting, "It is Congress that has been assigned the task of defining the scope of the limited monopoly that should be granted to authors."

The two dissenting votes were cast by Stephen G. Breyer and John Paul Stevens. Said Stevens, "[T]he Court has stated that Congress' actions . . . are, for all intents and purposes, judicially unreviewable. It is not hyperbole to recall the trenchant words of Chief Justice John Marshall: 'It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.'"

Of special concern to the plaintiffs is that the act affects anything that is currently held under copyright, not only works created after the law was passed. In his opening statements Lessig said, "When [Congress] legislates retrospectively, it is, in effect, looking at particular authors and estates of authors who are before Congress asking for this extension, and it's choosing between these particular authors and the public at large."

Since the court's ruling, Lessig has suggested a \$50 yearly tax on copyrights. He argues that this would prevent works with little or no commercial potential from needlessly staying out of print.

One of the strongest proponents of the 1998 act was the Walt Disney

Company. Under the old laws, Disney's copyright on Mickey Mouse would have begun to slip this year, when 1928's *Steamboat Willie* would have passed into public domain. In 1998 Disney spent \$475,602 on campaign contributions and \$560,000 on lobbying, more than any other studio, network, or record label that year.

The court's ruling has stirred up more public debate than might be anticipated from a bill that passed virtually unchallenged through Congress half a decade ago. Until now no one has questioned the constitutionality of any of the numerous extensions to copyright law which have been passed since 1831. *The New York Times* ran an entire page of coverage of the January 15 ruling, and Bill Moyers recently dedicated an episode of his PBS show *NOW* to copyright issues.

The publicity brought on by even an unsuccessful Supreme Court challenge may eventually affect the laws that Congress chooses to make. "Losing a Supreme Court case has often been the road to a successful political movement," comments James Boyle, a Duke University law professor and member of the academic Advisory Board of the Electronic Privacy and Information Center. "Without [such a case], neither the public interest nor the public domain will get a hearing at the tables of power. . . . It used to be that intellectual property rights existed at a great distance from the public. Now most of us deal with intellectual property every day and realize that we are doing so . . . [I]t is hard to go through a day without copying, transforming, redistributing a mass of digital objects."

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer who interns at The Independent.

New Copyright Contract

By Jason Guerrasio

Creative Commons, a nonprofit organization funded by the Center for the

Public Domain and based at Stanford University, has developed a partial copyright license that allows creators to reserve some rights for themselves while granting others limited free use of their work. "Right now the choices are total copyright protection or just losing your stuff," says Creative Commons Executive Director Glenn Otis Brown. "What we're proposing is essentially recognizing what's in the public domain and what's fully owned."

The Licensing Project offers free web-based contracts with four levels of copyright protection:

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The copyright also has machine readability, which means search engines can sort results by how material can be used. "You essentially label what is free to use and what's not," says Brown.

The idea of a copyright license with different levels of protection was originally examined in 1999, when faculty and students at Harvard Law School and MIT explored the possibilities of a copyright which allowed creators to mix and match consent. Heading the program was law professor Lawrence Lessig (now chairman of Creative Commons) who argued the recent Supreme Court case against the copyright extension act. Lessig took the project with him when he left the Berkman Center for Internet &

Society at Harvard to join the faculty of Stanford University's law school, where Creative Commons currently is housed. Creative Commons hopes the end result of Licensing Project will be a document that's sturdy enough to hold up in court and simple enough to be understood by nonlawyers.

To start the process, log on to the Creative Commons' website (www.creativecommons.org) and answer some basic questions designed to decipher what type of copyright you want. Once that procedure is complete, the copyright license is transferred to your website. A small Creative Commons logo will be located at the bottom of your web page, which, if clicked on, will display the specifics of the copyright. "Essentially we're recognizing that copyright is about these fine-grain steps," Brown says. "Copyright is made up of a bundle of distinct rights like the right to distribute, to copy, to make derivative works. We're basically helping people fine-tune all these little rights."

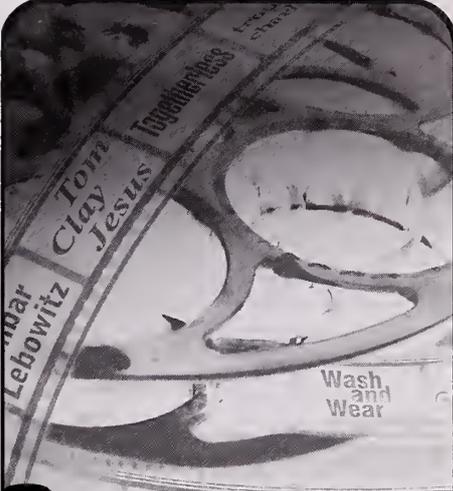
Along with the Licensing Project, Creative Commons also launched the Founders Copyright, that allows the licensor to put their material into the public domain fourteen years after they sign the contract.

Creative Commons does not archive or sort the material. "We're offering these legal documents," Brown says. "Archiving on top of being the tool provider . . . is just beyond what we can do."

This spring, Creative Commons will launch the Conservancy Project, where they'll take donated materials and make them available under the terms of the donation. This would be designed for content developers who do not want to retain full control of their work, but who want to limit its exploitation while it is in the public domain. □

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Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



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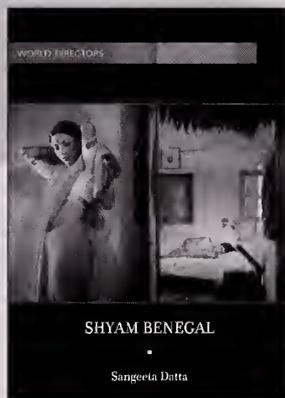
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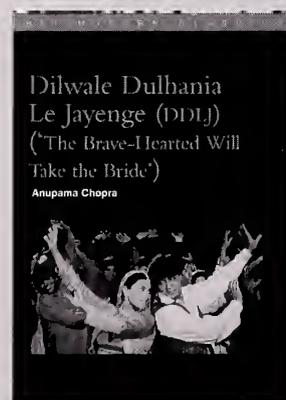
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Woman's Place in Photoplay Production

By Alice Guy-Blaché

Before Hollywood executives crowned the young urban male the king moviegoer, film critics declared directing a macho sport, and women won the right to vote, Alice Guy-Blaché directed the first narrative film. In the course of her now largely forgotten career, she directed nearly three hundred more films and headed her own highly successful studio.

This essay, originally published in 1914, presents arguments that may be rooted in a time when the women's suffrage movement often presented the purity and the natural morality of women as reasons for passing the Nineteenth Amendment, but it is certainly a more enlightened view of Mars and Venus than we generally find today in many leading publications.

It has long been a source of wonder to me that many women have not seized upon the wonderful opportunities offered to them by the motion-picture art to make their way to fame and fortune as producers of photodramas. Of all the arts, there is probably none in which they can make such splendid use of talents so much more natural to a woman than to a man and so necessary to its perfection.

There is no doubt in my mind that a woman's success in many lines of endeavor is still made very difficult by a strong prejudice against one of her sex doing work that has been done only by men for hundreds of years. Of course this prejudice is fast disappearing, and there are many vocations in which it has not been present for a long time. In the arts of acting, music, painting, and literature, woman has long held her place among the most successful workers, and when it is considered how vitally all of these arts enter into the production of motion pictures, one wonders why the names of scores of women are not found among the successful creators of photodrama offerings.

Not only is a woman as well fitted to stage a photodrama as a man, but in many ways she has a distinct advan-

tage over him because of her very nature and because much of the knowledge called for in the telling of the story and the creation of the stage setting is absolutely within her province as a member of the gentler



sex. She is an authority on the emotions. For centuries she has given them full play while man has carefully trained himself to control them. She has developed her finer feelings for generations, while being protected from the world by her male companions, and she is naturally religious. In matters of the heart, her superiority is

acknowledged, and her deep insight and sensitiveness in the affairs of Cupid give her a wonderful advantage in developing the thread of love that plays such an all-important part in almost every story that is prepared for the screen. All of the distinctive qualities that she possesses come into direct play during the guiding of the actors in making their character drawings and interpreting the different emotions called for by the story. For to think and to feel the situation demanded by the play is the secret of successful acting, and sensitiveness to those thoughts and feelings is absolutely essential to the success of a stage director.

The qualities of patience and gentleness possessed to such a high degree by womankind are also of inestimable value in the staging of a photodrama. Artistic temperament is a thing to be reckoned with while directing an actor, in spite of the treatment of the subject in the comic papers, and a gentle, soft-voiced director is much more conducive to good work on the part of the performer than the over stern, noisy tyrant of the studio.

Not a small part of the motion-picture director's work, in addition to the preparation of the story for picture-telling and the casting and directing of the actors, is the choice of suitable locations for the staging of the exterior scenes and the supervising of the studio settings, props, costumes, etc. In these matters, it seems to me that a woman is especially well qualified to obtain the very best results, for she is dealing with subjects that are almost a second nature to her. She takes the measure of every person, every costume, every house, and every piece of furniture that her eye comes into contact with, and the beauty of a stretch of landscape or a single flower impresses her immediately. All of these things are of the greatest value to the creator of a photodrama, and the knowledge of them

Film pioneer Alice Guy-Blaché, 1873–1968.

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must be extensive and exact. A woman's magic touch is immediately recognized in a real home. Is it not just as recognizable in the home of the characters of a photoplay?

That women make the theatre possible from the box-office standpoint is an acknowledged fact. Theatre managers know that their appeal must be to the woman if they would succeed, and all of their efforts are naturally in that direction. This being the case, what a rare opportunity is offered to women to use that inborn knowledge of just what does appeal to them to produce photodramas that will contain that inexplicable something which is necessary to the success of every stage or screen production.

There is nothing connected with the staging of a motion picture that a woman cannot do as easily as a man, and there is no reason why she cannot completely master every technicality of the art. The technique of the drama has been mastered by so many women that it is considered as much her field as man's, and its adaptation to picture work in no way removes it from her sphere. The technique of motion-picture photography, like the technique of the drama, is fitted to a woman's activities.

It is hard for me to imagine how I could have obtained my knowledge of photography, for instance, without the months of study spent in the laboratory of the Gaumont Company in Paris at a time when motion-picture photography was in the experimental stage, and carefully continued since [in] my own laboratory in the Solax Studios in this country. It is also necessary to study stage direction by actual participation in the work, in addition to burning the midnight oil in your library, but both are as suitable, as fascinating, and as remunerative to a woman as to a man. □

(This article originally appeared in The Moving Picture World, vol. XXI, no. 3, July 11, 1914, p. 195.)

Yvonne Welbon

THE INDIES' OWN SELF-HELP GURU

By Cara Mertes

T rue story: Los Angeles, the summer of 2001—filmmaker Yvonne Welbon is in LA attending the AFI directing workshop. She has just returned from ten days as part of the CPB Producers Academy, and she's heading off to the Sundance Documentary Lab. But right now, she is driving around LA listening to real estate tapes she ordered from a TV ad that claimed "you, too, could learn the art of being a successful realtor." Yvonne was thinking about her future.

"I didn't have time to do anything about it then, but I bought three apartments this year. In Chicago, you can do that without a lot of money," says Welbon. With her producing and directing schedule, you might think Welbon has no time for anything but the indie life of scraping by and working towards the next grant. Not true. Welbon is a walking library of resources, a self-made indie guru dedicated to finding out as much as she can about how things "indie" tick, and

then, like a modern-day Johnny Appleseed, spreading her knowledge to any who want to hear.

This calling includes speaking on college campuses—she's asked to do thirty to forty lectures a year. The talk she gives on campuses most frequently these days is called "Your Film Is a Business." Welbon's experience is hard-won. In 2001 she was practically everywhere—making a short narrative at AFI, learning the ropes at PBS, and networking at Sundance. And she was fundraising and showing rough cuts for her documentary *Sisters in Cinema*, the first film about African American women directors in American film. Plus, she was self-distributing *Living with Pride*:

Ruth Ellis at 100, a project that became the basis for a case study in supporting yourself through your own filmmaking. In production roles, she has collaborated with many of her peers, including Cheryl Dunye, Thomas Allen Harris, and Cauleen Smith, as well as produced one of the few lengthy interviews with filmmaker Julie Dash. But documentary is her first love.

"I didn't choose to be a feature film director," she says when asked about why she hasn't been interested in going the Hollywood route. "I love the documenting of people's lives. I was a history major at Vassar, and that's where my heart is." For Welbon, the search for role models is ever present,

and the motivation behind her work is clear—she is a businesswoman, in the business of making stories about the experience of black women in America, and she is learning everything she can about it.

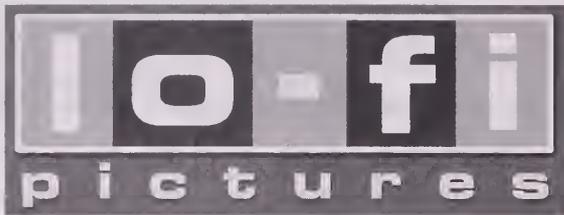
"I was so inspired by what I could learn from women that had gone before me," she says, about why she makes her films. The list is long, including recent Sundance Channel broadcast of *Living with Pride*, and a P.O.V. broadcast of *Remembering Wei Yi-Fang*, *Remembering Myself*, about her



six years living in Taiwan. This essay, about "forgetting" her formative experience of American racism, is in line with the autobiographical style of her more personal works, including *Missing Relations* and *The Taste of Dirt*. These films, whether narrative or documentary essay, always experiment formally, showing her predilection for recognizing and exploring boundaries—between lives, experiences, and styles of work.

But back to the summer of 2001—the work was hard and the expectations steep, but all gave her enormous

Left: *Living with Pride* subject Ruth Ellis; Above: DaShawn Barnes and Yolonda Ross in Welbon's *The Taste of Dirt*.



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amounts of knowledge. About the Producers Academy, Welbon says, “By the end, I finally understood what PBS wanted and realized that most of my ideas for projects weren’t that. But, the way I work changed—for instance, bringing on a senior researcher, Tracye Matthews, at the beginning of a project.” A year later, she says, an idea finally came out of the experience that she hopes will be on PBS.

In LA, she says, “I learned that one of the keys to success for women in the film industry is being somehow affiliated with AFI. It’s an extremely supportive network. Julie Dash and Neema Barnette will tell you that AFI continues to support you throughout your career.” Sundance, too, is known for providing ongoing support, which Welbon experienced in her intensive four-day workshop visit to Utah.

Through this whirlwind workshop tour, Welbon may have learned the most important lesson in today’s indie world: flexibility. You can work for PBS, Discovery, HBO, and more, if you create projects suited to their different needs. “Broadcast is still a major goal,” she says, “that’s where you are going to reach the most people. I went to film school to learn about film. What I’ve come to realize is that I need to learn about television.”

This will to learn and master her terrain makes her an invaluable resource. She has a hopping website, www.sistersincinema.com, and 2003 looks to be a banner year as well, with *Sisters in Cinema* premiering at the Pan-African Festival on March 2, and *Taste of Dirt* on WTTW, Chicago’s PBS station. Welbon is also hoping she’ll break into another media realm—publishing—with a book based on the dissertation research she did for *Sisters in Cinema*. In the meantime, though, if you need an apartment in Chicago, Welbon just may be the right woman for you. □

Cara Mertes is the executive director of P.O.V., PBS’s premiere independent documentary showcase.

A Historical Timeline of Feature Films Directed by African American Women 1922–2003 – Compiled by Yvonne Welbon

1922: *A Woman's Error*—Written, produced, and directed by Tressie Souders. First film directed by an African American woman in the United States.

1923: *Flames of Wrath*—Dir./prod. Maria P. Williams

1967: *Othello*—Dir./prod. Liz Smith

1981: *Will*—Dir. Jessie Maple

1982: *Losing Ground*—Dir. Kathleen Collins Prettyman

1989: *Twice as Nice*—Dir. Jessie Maple

A Dry White Season—Dir. Euzhan Palcy
The first film by a black woman (Palcy's from Martinique) to be produced by a major Hollywood studio.

From Rags to Reality (aka Uptown Angel)—Dir. Joy Shannon and Joy S'hani Ache
First feature by an African American woman to receive a major home video release.

Leola: Love Your Mama—Dir. Ruby Oliver

1990: *Trouble I've Seen*—Dir. Heather Foxworth, M.D.

The Three Mustakels—Dir. Romell Foster-Owens

1991: *Daughters of the Dust*—Dir. Julie Dash
First feature directed by an African American woman to receive national theatrical distribution.

1992: *Alma's Rainbow*—Dir. Ayoka Chenzira

Kiss Grandmama Goodbye—Dir. Debra Robinson

1993: *The Gifted*—Dir. Audrey Lewis
First sci-fi feature by an African American woman.

1993: *Just Another Girl on the IRT*—Dir. Leslie Harris
First feature by an African American woman to be distributed by a major theatrical distributor (Miramax).

1994: *I Like It Like That*—Dir. Darnell Martin
First African American woman to direct a film produced by a major Hollywood studio (Columbia Pictures).

1995: *Medipaid Queens*—Dir. Karen Stone, M.D.

Naked Acts—Dir. Bridgett Davis

Out of Sync—Dir. Debbie Allen

The Promised Land—Dir. Monika Harris

1996: *Girlfriends*—Dir. Marlies Carruth

The Watermelon Woman—Dir. Cheryl Dunye
First African American lesbian feature.

1997: *Eve's Bayou*—Dir. Kasi Lemmons
Taking in over \$14 million at the box office, *Eve's Bayou* was one of the top grossing independent films of 1997.

Black & White & Red All Over—Dir. DeMane Davis (and Khari Streeter)

1998: *Down in the Delta*—Dir. Maya Angelou

Drylongso (Ordinary)—Dir. Cauleen Smith

Ride—Dir. Millicent Shelton

Nandi—Dir. Peggy Hayes

State of Mind—Dir. Yvette Plummer

Let's Talk About Sex—Dir. Troy Beyer

1999: *Compensation*—Dir. Zeinabu Irene Davis

Del Otro Lado (The Other Side)—Dir. C.A. Griffith

2000: *Gotta Git My Hair Did*—Dir. Coquie Hughes
First digital feature by an African American woman. First African American woman to direct three independent features.

Love and Basketball—Dir. Gina Prince Blythewood
Top grossing film directed by an African American woman, taking in over \$25 million at the box office.

2001: *The Caveman's Valentine*—Dir. Kasi Lemmons

Stranger Inside—Dir. Cheryl Dunye

Prison Song—Dir. Darnell Martin

30 Years to Life—Dir. Vanessa Middleton

Lift—Dir. DeMane Davis (and Khari Streeter)

2001: *Hell's Most Wanted*—Dir. Coquie Hughes

All that Jazzin'—Dir. Joy Shannon and Joy S'hani Ache

Kali's Vibe—Dir. Shari Carpenter

All About You—Dir. Christine Swanson

The Right Girl—Dir. Theresa Brown

If I Wuz Yo Gyr!—Dir. Coquie Hughes

Civil Brand—Dir. Nemma Barnette

2003: *My Baby's Mama*—Dir. Cheryl Dunye

To learn more, visit: www.sistersincinema.com, or write to ywelbon@sistersincinema.com

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Annie Sprinkle

FROM PORN TO NYC'S MOMA AND EVERYWHERE IN BETWEEN

By Michaela Grey

My main interest has never been film. It was never about doing a great drama, or great action, or anything like that. It's always been: How can we really show sex in the best way? —Annie Sprinkle

The inimitable Sprinkle—porn star, performance artist, filmmaker, photographer, author, erotic guru, and all-around *metamorphosexual* (her own term)—has been doing just that for thirty years, using every possible opportunity to create and distribute positive representations of sexuality. How on Earth did Ellen Steinberg, the shy, chunky daughter of staid, suburban Jewish intellectuals, transform herself into exhibitionistic, glamorous alter-ego Annie Sprinkle, whose art/sex films have screened at the museums and galleries around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art?

After a stint at a massage parlor, eighteen-year-old Steinberg became the mistress of *Deep Throat* director Gerard Damiano, who, she says, “was probably my biggest influence, porn film-wise. He was definitely an artist. He encouraged me to make things personal and intimate . . . to tell stories that were real.” Her subsequent apprenticeship on a low-budget porn set made her wonder if she wouldn't have more fun on the other side of the camera; Sprinkle went on to appear in literally hundreds of porn films in the seventies and eighties. While her life's work may not have been clearly defined at that early stage, she was definitely doing

what she loved and felt a real sense of purpose in it all. “Actually,” she explains, “when I started doing porn in 1973—it seems like another millennium ago—just to do porn at all back then was so stigmatized, no one knew if it was even legal! It's hard to imag-



ine now, but doing those films really felt like it meant something. Just saying ‘yeah, pussies are beautiful’ was really shocking.” Sprinkle pushed the envelope even as a porn star—of her groundbreaking 1981 film *Deep Inside Annie Sprinkle*, in which she talked directly to the camera, she says, “That just wasn't done, but I really wanted to involve the viewer—although it was still formula porn.”

Her 1985 appearance in the Franklin Furnace performance *Deep*

Inside Porn Stars opened a new realm of possibility for Sprinkle's work. Thus began her revolutionary “crossing of that bridge between art and porn” as Sprinkle's films were shown at the Museum of Modern Art and the New Museum of Contemporary Art (1990). She also memorialized her outrageously popular postfeminist workshop in the classic 1992 video *Sluts and Goddesses*. Birthing such concepts as *edu-porn* (through a female genital massage video co-directed by Joe Kramer) and *docu-porn* (in the 1990 transsexual-themed *Linda, Les, & Annie*), Sprinkle's profound influence on mainstream and alternative porn alike—to say nothing of America's sex-positivity quotient overall—is well documented.

Recently, Sprinkle co-created *Art of the Loop* (2001), an eighteen-minute documentary of porn films from the 1950's through the 1980's, with the fabulous Scarlot Harlot and Jeff Fletcher. She believes that this work, now making the film festival rounds, is especially important: “The history of porn is so interesting. I really hope that someone will start a refrigerated archive to protect the old porn loop history. All the films are disintegrating, and nobody has protected them. A lot of people who had collections die, and the wife throws the films in the garbage or burns them.” Although there has been some academic interest in this project, it remains in the realm of the stigmatized, championed only by Sprinkle and a handful of other sexual visionaries. Sprinkle also hopes that an especially anal individual will take on the responsibility of starting a distribution business for all the creative alternative porn that's currently being produced.

Sprinkle's most recent personal film, 1998's *Herstory of Porn*, is a *Mystery Science Theater*-style commentary on her many years in the industry. She wrote, directed, and edited this one (with a little help from

Annie Sprinkle: performer, filmmaker, academic, author.

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Carol Leigh, a.k.a. Scarlot Harlot). "Whenever I have had a chance to direct, there's always been a great vibe on the set. I always try to make everybody happy and comfortable. I pay people a million compliments and thank them for every little thing and try to create a good atmosphere, so everybody's usually very happy. It's very important to have good food on the set. On any porn movie set, it's the food that people remember, and if it was good, they feel like they were taken care of. I also think it's important to pay people well when you can. I mean, if it's something experimental, that's maybe different. When I made *Herstory of Porn*, which is my porn diary, I had to go into the studio and film on Chromakey. I had about fifteen people, and boy, did I spend a fortune on food. But it was worth it—people really appreciated it! Some of them were working for very little money." Of that experience, she learned "never to star in films you direct, produce, and pay for. My acting really suffered. I was so stressed out, and it got really expensive. It was just too much!"

Sprinkle has also moved from posing for porn photography to making her own; her work has appeared in virtually every mainstream and alternative sexually-themed publication imaginable, and in spite of a devastating 1999 houseboat fire in which her beloved cats died and most of her archives were destroyed, she still has "articles and piles of photos" from this phase of her work. But her oeuvre is not confined to the visual; Sprinkle is a published author with several titles under her belt, who is often asked to speak to academic audiences, and quoted in "ivory-tower" texts. All of this is part of the larger plan for Sprinkle. "I went out to colleges and met people. People got to meet me and see what a real prostitute/porn

Performer/artist Annie Sprinkle on the streets of New York.



star was like, in places they didn't necessarily expect. . . . My books reach students. . . . That book *Angry Women* went to many colleges as a textbook." The academic environment surely had its own influence on Sprinkle: "I did just get my Ph.D. at the Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, which makes me the first porn star to get a Ph.D.!"

She's currently working on a documentary about orgasms, and asserts: "The best is definitely yet to come, that's all I can say! I've just gotten started. I figure I've got thirty years left before I stop making porn." She also notes, "The sex I'm having now is so far beyond anything I've ever done on film yet. It's so ironic—as people get older they become so much more vibrant and erotic and skilled as lovers, but society values only youth and inexperience."

Should you wish to follow in the footsteps of this sexual guru, Sprinkle wholeheartedly encourages you, with one caveat: "If you don't like the porn that's out there, make porn that you do like—but you should know that it's harder than it looks!" ■

Sprinkle's website is www.anniesprinkle.org. Visitors can purchase her videos and books, and sign up for her workshops there.

Michaela Grey has been a preschool teacher, peepshow dancer, body piercing instructor, and assoc. editor of the piercing-themed mag PFIQ. She is currently an NYU graduate student.

IOWA

FIELDS OF OPPORTUNITIES

By Kay Frances Scott

Iowa is best known for early political caucuses, Old Settlers Picnics, the fictional River City of Meredith Wilson's musical *Music Man*, Kevin Costner's *Field of Dreams*, and although not quite as famous, the corncam website. Yes, corncam. At www.IowaFarmer.com/corncam/corn.html you can literally sit back and watch the corn grow, with updates every fifteen minutes.

But Iowa's fields of opportunities are both vast and varied for media-makers of all types.

Oscar Micheaux

In 1917, celebrated African American pioneer, novelist, and filmmaker Oscar Micheaux wrote, published, and filmed his novel, *The Homesteader*, in Sioux City, having moved there after losing his land in South Dakota, due to a drought. Lincoln, Nebraska, filmmakers George and Noble Johnson wanted to film Micheaux's novel but refused to let him direct it. So, like many present-day writers with dreams of directing, Micheaux rejected their offer and instead expanded his Western Book and Supply Company to the Micheaux Film and Book Company, with offices in Sioux City and Chicago. He directed the film, financing the venture by selling stock in the company to white farmers and small businesses around Sioux City. Eight reels long, it is probably the first full-length feature film written, produced, and directed by an African American. Over his thirty-year career as a writer/director/producer, Micheaux became one of the leading creators of films about, by, and mar-

keted to African Americans. These films, made outside of the Hollywood system, were known as "race films," but today, scholars and film enthusiasts refer to them as "separate cinema." Although not held in Iowa, the annual Oscar Micheaux Festival in Gregory, South Dakota, celebrates the



work of this important filmmaker, whose career began in Iowa.

The eighth annual Micheaux Festival will be held August 6-10, 2003, in Gregory, South Dakota. For more, call (605) 835-2002; www.micheauxfoundation.com.

Iowa Scriptwriters Alliance (ISA)

This six-year-old organization draws members from across the state—writers who meet eight to ten times a year for support, workshops, and readings of work-in-progress. Last autumn, they teamed up with the Iowa Motion Picture Association to produce three five-minute film scripts by ISA members which were then shot in one day, then edited and viewed in one day—January 8, 2003. In a recent

interview Dave DeBord, current president and founding members described the organization, its members and founding.

DD: There were probably five or six of us writers who knew each other from various other writing organizations. An awful lot of writing groups come and go. We saw a need for one that would fit scriptwriters two ways: one for theater writers, the other for writers of screenplays. Which is why we named it Scriptwriters Alliance. We have a wide range of people involved, Max Collins [*Road to Perdition*] for example. We have people just starting and everybody in between.

We [offer] workshops and seminars. We've had a Hollywood agent in to speak to us. We also put together six original one-act plays at Living History Farm [spring 2002]. We said [to the membership] write something that can be done in a barn—PG, low number of characters. We got it down to six [one-acts] and put up a performance. You don't have to be in Hollywood to write scripts.

Membership is \$50 a year. For more info, e-mail David DeBord at downtowndave@att.net.

The People in the Pictures

Based on the work of Iowa agricultural photographer Pete Wettach, *The People in the Pictures* is a one-hour documentary about farm life in Iowa from the 1920's through the 1960's—a way of life vanishing with the family farm, much like the mom-and-pop stores of large cities that vanished with gentrification and the introduction of chain stores. The documentary is an evocative blend of conversation, commentary, and music, still photos and interviews which springboard from a collection of Wettach's work, compiled by Leslie Loveless, called *A Bountiful Harvest*.

An editor at the University of Iowa Institute for Rural and Environmental Health, Loveless was cleaning out

Oscar Micheaux, considered the first African American filmmaker.

her new office in 1998 when she came across a box of photos with the name "A.M. ('Pete') Wettach, Agricultural Photographer, Mount Pleasant, Iowa," on the back. "[She] absolutely fell in love with them," says Laurel Bower, who produced *The People in the Pictures*.

KS: How did *The People in the Pictures* evolve?

LB: Leslie Loveless got things rolling. Because of her, really, the pictures are seen by people. When she saw the name on the back [of the box], she called Mount Pleasant and found

perfect way to do something on agriculture in the state. I worked on this for six months.

Sometimes I drove by myself to the communities because I figured I'd run into someone who knew them [the people in the photos] . . . and a lot of times I went to where, you know, older men kind of met for coffee. My grandpa used to do that. So I knew it would be a good place to find them when they're comfortable and they'd start telling stories.

The People in the Pictures was produced by Iowa Public Television

Hardacre Film Festival began with true Iowa pioneer spirit, "mainly because nobody else was doing it," says Stuart Werling, one of the festival's founders and an attorney in Tipton.

The Hardacre Theater, an art deco theater in the small town northeast of Iowa City, has been in continuous operation since 1917. The owner, a high school classmate of Werling's donates the theater to festival for one the weekend each year.

SW: [A few years ago] when California was having its energy crisis . . . and President Bush was pushing [corn-based] ethanol, Governor Grey Davis of California, the Democrat, said "We're not buying Midwest ethanol because we don't like it," there was this big to-do [here]. And a couple of the [local] radio stations picked up on the affront from the governor of California and said, "Let's boycott Hollywood. Don't go to Hollywood movies! Go to the Hardacre Film Festival and watch the independents instead." We got front-page coverage all over the place.

KS: Does the Hardacre Festival have a theme?

SW: We tend to get a theme through serendipity. Last year it was international [films from Israel, France, Poland] . . . we had ninety submissions. The year before, it was animation. But we'll accept all films. We really want to emphasize the work of Iowa artists, as actors, but better yet as writers and directors. We really try to recruit them and are not doing as well as we want. We're disappointed in our ability to get Iowa product.

[Story] is the one thing that draws us to independent film, 'cause it ain't about the money honey, cause there isn't any money. It's just about the story. 'Cause they got a story they want to tell. We see some wonderful stories . . . and

This farmer with his team of horses circa late 1930's is one of many prints featured in Laurel Bower's *The People in the Pictures*.



his son, Bob. He said, "If you like the pictures, I have thousands more." [Actually, somewhere between fifty and one hundred thousand.] She went to Mount Pleasant with Mary Bennett, an archivist from the Iowa Historical Society, and they went into Bob Wettach's basement, where there were boxes and boxes of pictures. Bob Wettach pretty much donated all the pictures to the Historical Society in Iowa City so people can see them and get prints.

When I saw them, I knew this was a

Network (IPTV) and first aired during their autumn 2002 pledge drive. The station, which originated in 1967, is open to partnerships and seeks strong locally based projects that they can take statewide.

For more info: Iowa Public Television, online at www.iptv.org.

Hardacre Film Festival

The brain-child of union set dresser Troy Peters (*Twister*, *Bridges of Madison County*, and *8 Mile*), who lives in Tipton, Iowa, and some friends, the

that's what we like.

KS: Are you getting in your licks as an intellectual property attorney?

SW: No. Intellectual property rights are not something that is discussed in small town Iowa.

2003 Hardacre Film Festival:
August 1 and 2, 2003. For more info:
www.hardacrefilmfestival.com or
Director@hardacrefilmfestival.com;
tel: (563) 886-2175; fax: 886-2213

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K. Busbee at 221-2517 for more info.

Iowa Motion Picture Association

This organization sponsors an Annual Film Award Program and workshop. The awards feature forty-four categories, including two for student projects. The next one event will be on April 19, 2003, at the Hotel Savory, Des Moines.

Iowa Motion Picture Association, Max Allen
Collins, 8345 University Blvd., Suite F-1, Des
Moines, IA 50325; tel: (515) 440-1040
www.showcaseiowa.com (soon: www.impa.tv).



Iowa Film Office

This state-run office began in 1984 as part of the Iowa Department of Economic Development. According to Steve Schott, a film consultant currently working there, "There are probably over a hundred companies that make their living in the film, television, and audio business here." Its website has a downloadable production guide that lists appropriate facili-

ties in the state. It's a great place to go for information and resources.

For more info: www.state.ia.us/film.

Thaw Film Festival

An experimental film and video festival that takes place April 10-12 and exhibits new work by emerging media artists.

For more info: Thaw '03, Institute of Cinema and Culture, University of Iowa, Iowa City; tel: (319) 335-1348; visit www.uiowa.edu/~thaw □

Kay Frances Scott is a writer and actress currently living in Iowa.

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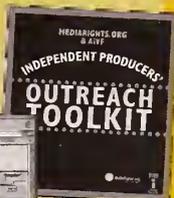
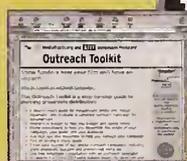
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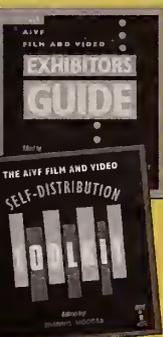
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Ask the Documentary Doctor

ASSERTING A FEMININE VOICE IN FILM

By **Fernanda Rossi**



Dear Doc Doctor:
My film deals with a female issue and I would like the structure to be consistent with the topic. Is there such a thing as a “feminine storytelling structure”?

Structure in storytelling is, among other things, a manifestation of our thinking pattern and language. And there is much discussion of which came first, the egg-thinking-pattern or the chicken-language. Or is it that language creates the thinking pattern? Regardless of the order, with so many languages, landscapes, and life experiences to shape our points of view, we can expect many types of structure across cultures and time. When it comes to gender, the same theory could be applied. Different point of view, different structure.

The “three-act structure” explained by Aristotle in *The Poetics* as well as the principles of the “Hero’s Journey” developed by Joseph Campbell—and adapted to the film business by Christopher Vogler—have been accused of being masculine theories that reinforce their dominance. In his book *The Writer’s Journey*, Vogler posits, “Men’s journeys may be in some sense more linear, proceeding from one outward goal to the next, while women’s journeys may spin or spiral inward and outward. . . . Another possible model might be a series of concentric rings, with the woman making a journey inward towards the center and then expanding out again.”

But I would warn you to be careful of over-thinking; too much intellectual speculation early in the creative process can be counterproductive. Your instincts are good, though; you want the structure to be consistent with the topic, and you know it’s not the traditional three-act structure. A spiral or concentric rings structure

The biggest challenge is to find the right structure and your own voice in a culture where the three-act structure has prevailed for over two thousand years.

might not be appropriate for your film either, no matter how feminine the topic. The biggest challenge then is to find the right structure and your own voice in a culture where the three-act structure has prevailed for over two thousand years.

Most likely the first cut will look very much like what you are trying to avoid. Let it be that. There is value in that first “corny” and “obvious” rough cut. Most writers know that if they repress the “commonplace” and “overused” phrases in a first draft, this will come back to haunt them in later versions. Just as good writing is rewriting, good editing is re-editing. Allow your first cut to be just that: the first.

Having too many expectations or restrictions at this stage can create an insurmountable creative block. If you let a traditional structure materialize, keeping in mind that it will evolve, you will be on your way to finding the

voice that is right for you and your film. Going against a formulaic approach will take you longer, but it will be well worth the journey, the *Heroine’s Journey*.

Dear Doc Doctor:

I’m making a documentary on a woman’s issue, and many people say that I, being a woman, should be part of the film. How do I insert myself without making the film all about me?

Pointing the camera at the mirror can bring more reflections than we can handle. When the maker is the topic of the film or at least one of its storylines, balance and detachment can

become a real challenge. Before we dwell on the how to add you, let’s see if it’s truly needed.

Choosing to make a personal film is different than making a film personal. If your documentary really called for your involvement in front of the camera, then you would have noticed it early on. Unless, of course, you knew this all along and resisted the idea because of your own issues with being part of the film, such as revealing personal things for the world to see. I would honor whatever time you need to come to terms with your resistance and take the necessary steps to include yourself when you are ready.

Another reason you might want to put yourself in front of the camera is because documentaries about topics or things rather than a person can stagger or seem to not really grab the audience, leaving them a bit cold and uninterested. There are obvious

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exceptions when objects or topics have such monumental proportions that they are infused with emotion, such as September 11 or the Holocaust. But for the most part, a portrait holds our attention longer than a landscape; naturally we care more about people than about objects or topics. In these cases the viewers' reaction is, "We want you!" And filmmakers comply because what could be easier than adding themselves, a person who needs to show up to the shoot anyway and doesn't need a depiction release. But the "We want you" is really saying, "We want a person we can relate to."

If your film is in need of a more personal touch to counterbalance the statistics and interviews with experts, you have many options to choose from besides adding yourself. You might want to add or extend the interviews with regular people, making sure they are different in style than the interviews with the experts, should you have those. You can also try to focus on fewer interviewees and give them enough time on screen so we can get to know them.

If after all these considerations you still believe you must be in the film, then enlist the aid of an editor, even if you feel you can't afford it. That extra pair of eyes will make sure you are not there too much. In my private consultations, when I discuss the storyline I talk about the filmmaker/character in the third person. It's a modest attempt to help the filmmaker detach and understand that the person in the film is a part and not all of the person in real life. And remember, your film will be "you," even if you are not in it. ■

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

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

The Hybrid Art of Marina Zurkow

By Maya Churi

In 1999 Marina Zurkow unveiled her highly successful animated web series *Braingirl*. The series garnered Zurkow a lot of attention for her eerily scientific yet humorous look at girlhood. It has screened at numerous festivals around the world, including Sundance and Rotterdam, and has put Zurkow on the map as one of the most creative Flash animators around. But *Braingirl*, with all its web-driven and inspired lyricism, is the result of a high-velocity collision among the myriad of art forms that has shaped Zurkow's work, past and present.

In the world of Marina Zurkow, reality is a place where the subconscious lives on the outside of the body and where the candy-coated world of film and television has been licked down to its naked core. And in that world, things don't always add up neatly.

She has taken this reality and created work in multiple art forms (film, animation, interactive, wearable) in an effort, she points out, "to make things manifest, shake them, like Alice did the cat, out of latent, implicit slumber." This shaking allows her audience to peer inside their own unconscious and makes them think. "The world's full of schisms and off-colored humor and ambiguities. . . . Many of my characters seem cute and inviting but simultaneously crack holes in that happy veneer. My characters are the spawn of Prozac-infused petri dishes, and they exist as a psychic/neurotic form of Tex Avery's 'squash and stretch' universe."

Though she started out as a sculpture major at the School of Visual Arts

The eponymous *Braingirl*, star of Zurkow's Flash animation series.

in New York City, she always felt an attraction towards the magical realism of the horror film genre. "I had been making eerie, *mise en scène* installations out of used set pieces from things I found in the dumpsters at Kaufman Astoria Studios, like the Jolly Green Giant vines and huge lamé curtains used in *The Cotton Club*." But when she graduated in 1985, "the art scene had

of web animation, but the introduction of Flash changed everything." A few years later she conceived, developed, and created *Braingirl*. "I don't think I really found my voice until I began the animated series *Braingirl* in 1999. I felt I'd found a home in the characters I developed, in a way that nothing else I'd produced provided."

The character of *Braingirl* combines Zurkow's experience working with realities where "things don't add up neatly" and her exploration of Flash animation. "*Braingirl*'s a mutant-cute girl with 'normal' urban teen problems. Difference is, she wears her insides on the outside, quite literally:



become too polarized (theory or expression, nothing in between)." So instead of setting her sites on making a living in fine arts she set out to start a career in film.

While working in the art department on low-budget horror films, she began making her own short films. But after the completion of her ITVS funded short *Body of Correspondence*, about an archivist and two dead women, she was beginning to get discouraged. "I was really frustrated with the compartmentalization of genre and the lack of opportunity and distribution. In 1994, I started working on the web. I got into primitive forms

She lives in a world of externalized emotion. She's incredibly independent, and also rather childlike; utterly up-front, and in total denial."

It was this fusion of personal experience and present-day technology that put Zurkow on the map. "The project was an experiment: I scripted as I went, and threw many drafts of near-completed episodes out. I worked quickly and subconsciously, risking nonsense for frisson. I worked with my characters until they had stuff to say."

But Zurkow stresses that though *Braingirl* had its moments of "microglory" and affirmed her love of

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the adult cartoon and underground comics, it was bittersweet. “I make animations for the web because I’ve experienced the distribution magnitude, and it’s very gratifying. But so is getting into Sundance. Online can’t hold a matchstick to Sundance’s bonfire.” In 1999, when *Braingirl* premiered, the web was taking the country, and much of the world, by storm. “That was the heyday of grand delusions about the internet’s potential, as if we could make uncensored, unrated projects and they’d have a life in the legitimate world! I just got a call from the Sundance Channel, interested in airing *Braingirl*, only to get a follow-up e-mail the next day that ratings wouldn’t permit the airing of content like that. I was completely unsurprised.”

When asked if she feels like she has one foot in the film world and one in the web world Zurkow points out that she doesn’t consider herself part of the film world. “I don’t make films anymore, and both web narrative and all animation is ghettoized. I consider myself an artist first, an animator second. I want to traffic in delightful, provocative ideas in a myriad of forms. I would be honored to be a part of the film community, but the reception’s been—with a few exceptions—a bit ‘I don’t get it’ about my work. And I take issue with that position, because I don’t compartmentalize art according to media.”

But Zurkow is moving ahead full force. The Creative Capital founda-

tion has awarded her a grant for her Flash-animated story *Little NO*. “*Little NO* is a multilinear animated narrative that takes place in the psychedelic Vietnam War era in New York. *Little NO* is preadolescent and lives with her parents, and is far more human-looking than *Braingirl*. At its root, I’m exploring how *Little NO* and her family navigate—or don’t—interpersonal and spiritual boundaries.” Zurkow continues, “*Little NO* will carry forward some of the aesthetic concerns of *Braingirl* (the use of interface design and schematics as part of the narrative language), but I’m also taking many visual cues from 1960’s graphic works.” In addition to *Little NO*, she is also collaborating on an interactive project called *PDPal*, a “personal mapping project designed for mobile platforms. It is framed as public art, and will be distributed through streetside kiosks in New York City.”

No matter what category of art form she is exploring, it is the hybrid identity of Marina Zurkow that makes her work so unique. “My body’s floating in several worlds that are still rather discrete: I consider what I do to be pop-cultural art making. I am trying to develop an art practice that can exist in museums and galleries. And I make stuff to sell in stores, a digital analog crafty hybrid, because I want my things to exist off the screens as well as on them; I want people to live with and wear my odd version of reality.” □

www.thebraingirl.com
www.o-matic.com

Zurkow’s forthcoming *Little NO* was funded by a grant from Creative Capital.

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on a web narrative about a gated Texas community.

IMAGE: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF MARINA ZURKOW; PHOTO: FACING PAGE, JUDY BRANFMAN

Women In Film Finishing Fund

Jason Guerrasio interviews Stephanie Austin

What is the Woman In Film Finishing Fund?

We are the philanthropic outreach arm of the Women in Film organization. We do a lot of outreach programs that are open to the general public, but specifically to the Women in Film general membership. The fund supports filmmakers who make thoughtful and provocative films by or about women. It's the only fund of its kind in the United States.

When and why did it start?

The very first grant was given out in 1985. The project ended up on PBS's *Nightline* and got an Emmy, so it was a really powerful beginning. It was a documentary called *Men Who Molest: Children Who Survive*, produced by Rachel Lyons. Every year the fund has grown. It's very rewarding to see that many filmmakers, with this support, be able to go on and not only finish their projects, but as in the case of Rachel Lyons, get an Emmy. The following year, Lourdes Portillo and Susan Munoz did *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*, a documentary on the war in Argentina. That got an Academy Award nomination. It's really gratifying to see that these grants, although they're not a huge amount of money in some cases, have helped.

What is the mission of WIF?

Our goal is to find people who are having trouble or need money to actually finish their films. We focus on people who've finished shooting but need some help in postproduction.

Judy Branfman (right) producer and director of the work-in-progress film *The Land of Orange Groves and Jails*, with her great-aunt Yetta Stromberg.

How many projects do you fund on average each year?

It varies. The first year it was one. Last year there were eight winners in Los Angeles, four in New York, and one more in Washington, D.C. Our goal this year is to award ten grants.

What's the fund's application deadline?

This year it was February 28. We actually pushed the date back by

in which case we would focus on that when we do our judging.

How many submissions do you receive annually?

Last year we got 190 submissions that were valid. Student films do not qualify. We've given 120 cash and in-kind grants since the beginning of the program. I expect somewhere in the neighborhood of two hundred applicants this year.

Does WIF have other calls for projects during the year?

Yes. There's a PSA program that has produced many public service announcements.



a month this year. The deadline is usually in January.

What is the average size of a finishing fund grant?

We do two different kinds of grants. One type is an in-kind grant, where we work with people in the labs and editing facilities. The other is cash awards, which range from \$1,500 to \$5,000. Sometimes an organization will give more money and want it to be earmarked for a particular kind of film,

What types of projects do you seek?

We have criteria, but it's not limited: The project can be on film, video, shot on hi-def; it can be a documentary; a feature-length project; it can be fictional, animated, educational, or experimental. I had some projects that were two-and-a-half hours long and some that were ten minutes. So, there's no restriction in that regard. We do want films that increase the employment of women and promote equal opportunities for women, ones



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that encourage individual creative projects by women, enhance the media image of women, further the professional development of women, and influence the prevailing attitudes and practices regarding and on behalf of women in film. We've had men win awards because their project is about women, so there's no gender restrictions either.

Take me through the review process.

We select ten judges from among the trustees on the board, and we get ten women volunteers. The application requires the filmmaker to deliver a package that includes a synopsis and who's involved in the project. Then we randomly mix them up and give them out. That's the prescreening process. Each person looks at ten to twenty films over a period of a month. Then we take the highest scores from all of those and the whole board views them on a weekend and we do the final judging. We inform everyone by May 5 if they are an award winner.

Can applicants re-apply if denied?

Absolutely. What's happened in the past is sometimes people, especially first-time filmmakers, may not really know how long it's going to take them to get to post production, so they've applied, thinking they're going to be in post by the date and it turns out

that they're not. We encourage them to re-apply.

What types of projects would WIF definitely not fund?

We're a pretty open-minded group and we vary in our politics, so everybody brings a different sensibility, which is great. The only projects we can't consider are student projects.

How do you prefer a filmmaker to submit a project to you?

We have an application that has a complete overview of what to do. Log onto www.wif.org and click "foundation" for the application.

Are there any restrictions for applying?

We always give points for creativity, so any way the filmmaker feels is the most effective way to present their project, we're all for it. We only ask that they be on videotape, because not everyone has the capabilities to make a DVD. It just makes it easier for us. Other than that, anything they want to supply in addition to these requirements is fine.

Above: The Rev. Michael Cobbler and Anita C. Hill celebrate her ordination, which broke anti-gay church rules, in *THIS obedience*. Facing Page: Larry Selman, subject of the documentary *The Collector of Bedford Street*, shares a lighthearted moment with director Alice Elliot.

What has been the distribution/exhibition path of past projects?

Some aired on PBS, some on cable, some were theatrical releases, and many have gone on the festival circuit.

What's the most common mistake a filmmaker makes when they apply to you?

They don't read the application. We have gotten a lot of projects through



the years that are not far enough down the road [to need finishing funds]. Last year, I got some films that were just presentations, not films, so that's something to clarify; we do not want to be involved in the development of projects. That's not our focus. We've chosen to support filmmakers in the final stages. There are many of us here who are skilled in that area and are able to assist the filmmakers. Sometimes we've sat with them and explained what the process is. We take a pretty active part in our grants in-kind, working with the filmmakers and the grantors, because the one tricky thing with grants in-kind is they have to be done when the facilities themselves can supply the services. It can't be in the height of pilot season, when it's a mad house. That's what some filmmakers don't understand, how rewarding the services they get in-kind really are. If you compare it to what you'd have to pay to do it on your own, it's unachievable. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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Showbiz is My Life, dir. Ayr Robinson

The Internet Whore, dir. Inga Stanlun

The Land of Orange Groves and Jails, dir. Judy Branfman

Inside Out: Stories of Bulimia, dir. Michelle Blair

Girl Trouble, dir. Lexi Leban

New York

The Collector of Bedford Street, dir. Alice Elliott

Untitled, dir. Sarah Hanssen and Denise Kasell

Casualties of Freedom, dir. Jamila Paksima

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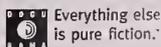


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Sundance Sleepers

LESSER-KNOWN GEMS AT SUNDANCE 2003

By Jacque Lynn Schiller

Now (and swag) was hard to find this year in Park City, and the same could be said for many of the films screening in noncompetition programs. Granted, most of the buzz always centers around high-dollar acquisitions and star sightings, with “must see” recommendations quickly falling in (safe) competition fiction and doc categories, but where were the sleepers?

For many at Sundance, there seems to be an unspoken consensus that if a work isn't up for accolades, it probably isn't worth the two hours sitting in an uncomfortable chair. This is an unfortunate misinterpretation, particularly since the qualities that determine which section of the catalog a particular work is assigned to is anybody's guess. *Raising Victor Vargas* and *Irreversible* are just two titles unquestionably deserving of more consideration than being relegated to “sidebar” status.

Not one to follow the crowd, I embarked on my own butt-numbing quest to see as many of the films as possible that wouldn't pass before the judges' eyes. The Frontier, American Spectrum (actually eligible for the Audience Award this year), American Showcase, and Native Forum lineups offered an impressive glimpse at new directors to watch, a taste of what the vets have been up to, and some of the most innovative storytelling seen at the festival this year.

Frontier

As the name implies, the films in this section break new cinematic ground,

Victor Rasuk as Victor Vargas and Judy Marte as Judy Ramirez in Peter Sollett's film *Raising Victor Vargas*.

whether by eschewing linear structure, or employing remarkably creative camera work or inventive projection schemes. More than any other section, it's clear why these films are listed under the Frontier label, although World Cinema also played



host to some unusual films, including the triple split-screen *AKA*, by Duncan Roy.

This is the section of the festival where Sundance throws its weight and glamour behind riskier work. Caroline Libresco, a festival programmer, explains: “Necessity is the mother of invention; in other words, there are aesthetic discoveries to be made when budgets and time are tight. Certainly digital filmmaking is one area where we see myriad possibility for new ways of storytelling. Independent film has

always been the locus of aesthetic innovation, and it will certainly continue to be.”

This year, *Field Studies #3*, by silt (Keith Evans, Christian Farrell, and Jeff Warrin), brought a whole new dimension to the filmgoing experience. The performance featured a tent full of portable screens and multiple projections that were constantly manipulated and moved around to create a spatial, organic environment perfect for enhancing the natural subject matter of the work.

Set in a slightly warmer local, the visually dazzling 35mm *At Breath of First Wind*, by Franco Piavoli, takes place during a quiet summer day in the Italian countryside. Piavoli brings a lyrical beauty to the most simple of events: workers in a field, a wife going about her chores in silent contemplation. As the “story” unfolds, a thought-provoking question is roused: Can leisure be excruciating while the end of the workday exhilarating? It's all a matter of perspective which Piavoli provides with breath-



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taking clarity.

Popular literature these days abounds with eccentric characters brimming with obscure knowledge and Matthew Barney's *Cremaster* saga (a five-part epic) has been tying together random trivia since 1994. *Cremaster 3*, the last of the out-of-order releases, elevates what could easily have become high camp in less capable hands to high art. We can thank the programmers for recognizing the integrity here, and not imme-

diately banishing it to the nether regions of the Midnight Showings, where wonderful, plucky work often gets preempted by exhaustion and party invitations. Included in this group is a doc that would have held its own in several categories. *An Injury to One*, by Travis Wilkerson, is a stringent account of the capitalist highs and class struggle lows experienced in the copper mining town of Butte, Montana. Unlike Michael Moore's invasive camera-mugging tirades against worker exploitation, Wilkerson delivers an end result that actually helps its subject's historical relevance and sense of pride. And the controversy of Cannes finally arrived in the US. I have to say this one is still with me. *Irreversible*, Gaspar Noé's devastating meditation on love, loss, and the philosophical nature of time, was every bit as uncomfortable as I expected and then



some when it came to visceral experience. From the opening credits, which were written backward and spill off the screen's edges with pounding, intense sound design, to the first disorienting frame of the actual feature, the audience feels literally pulled into chaos. The whole construction of the film plays out in reverse, so the crushing opening scenes only serve to make the picture's ending (the actual beginning to the tale) all the more heartbreaking.

American Spectrum

Miguel Arteta's *Star Maps*, Lisa Krueger's *Manny and Lo*, and Bill Condon's *Gods and Monsters* are just a few of the spectacular films spooled in past Spectrum lineups. This year's fare offered knockouts of its own. "This diverse group of films showcases the thriving creative spirit and the range of images and ideas in American independent cinema," proclaims the catalog.

Since Sundance requires competition films to be American premieres, American Spectrum allows Sundance to accentuate dramatic and documentary works by some of the country's most promising new independent filmmakers that have already screened at another festival. This year's winner of the documentary Excellence in Cinematography Award, Steve James's *Stevie*, squeaked into competition because it had only screened at

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Toronto and not in the US. *Civil Brand* director Neema Barnette explains: "I was told that because my film had won the ABFF Blockbuster Award and the Urbanworld Audience Award, it was not a US premiere and didn't qualify for competition. But because it dealt with an American issue, it would fit into the Spectrum division."

"The program seemed to have a cross section of films about common people and their struggle to survive within modern society," continues Barnette, whose surprising story sheds light on the "new plantation" workplace found inside the privately owned prison system. A group of female inmates rise up and protest their mistreatment and gain empowerment in the process. Lion's Gate wisely picked up the film for (not so wisely) limited theatrical distribution.

One of the unique qualities of the American Spectrum program is that documentaries and works of fiction are under the same heading, which allows programmers to place *Civil Brand* next to another compelling piece examining just how badly the American social system is failing, Jennifer Dworkin's documentary *Love and Diane*. The doc follows a former crack addict mother reunited with her aggrieved daughter, who has spent too many years floundering in foster care homes and is now on the verge of repeating her mother's past mistakes. At 154 minutes, the screaming matches leave you exhausted and there's a quicksand feeling that the family will never struggle free of the sad cycle of unemployment, welfare, and unplanned pregnancies. But there is a poignant, honest balance achieved between tenuous human relations and the tenacity of human spirit.

Into this rather grueling mix of American cultural examination, Mark Illsley of *Happy, Texas* fame, brought some welcome comic relief with his



light drama, *Bookies*. Nick Stahl, Johnny Galecki, and Lukas Haas portray three college buddies whose small-time dalliance with crime leads to big-time trouble when their business encroaches on Mafia territory. A tight script and believable cast sweep you up in its frivolity. And *The Boys of 2nd Street Park*, a documentary reuniting Brighton Beach boys of the 1950's, is a solid, straightforward effort by directors Dan Klores and Ron Berger.

American Showcase

According to the official Sundance catalog, "As the American independent film landscape matures, filmmakers have the opportunity to collaborate creatively at new levels. A non-competitive program, American Showcase presents projects that bring together established talents and spotlights films from the country's most talented independent veterans."

Sounds good on paper, yet here is where first-time feature director Peter Sollett shows up with a remarkable cast of unknowns in *Raising Victor Vargas*. *Normal*, by Jane Anderson (Emmy winner for *The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-Murdering Mom* and writer of *How to Make an American Quilt*), adapted from her stunning play

Looking for Normal and starring Jessica Lange, was consigned to this program as well. Notice any incongruity?

One "seasoned" filmmaker making a convincing appearance in the Showcase slate was Lisa Cholodenko, winner of the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award for *High Art* at Sundance 1998. Her sophomore effort, *Laurel Canyon*, delivers another intimate drama, this time with dark comedic undertones and standout performances by Frances McDormand, Christian Bale, and Kate Beckinsale. All the sex, betrayal, and deplorable behavior one expects of Hollywood plays out sans the typical Hollywood ending. As in *High Art*, Cholodenko skillfully and unapologetically explores the repulsion and temptations created when disparate lifestyles meet. (See page 38.)

Matt Dillon and Salma Hayek made their director's bows with *City of Ghosts* and *The Maldonado Miracle*, respectively. While they were not the strongest showings in the field, you've got to wonder if they got thrown into the American Showcase based on acting experience rather than filmmaking skills, since they're in a category purportedly recognizing vets.

To some filmgoers, these star projects raised suspicion as to viability and "indie cred" of the work. This argument falls flat, however, when

Facing Page: An image from silt's *Field Studies* #3. Above: Joaquin Phoenix in Gregor Jordan's satire, *Buffalo Soldiers*.

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you look at the Dramatic Competition field, littered with stars such as William H. Macy (*The Cooler*), Katie Holmes (*Pieces of April*, UA's \$3.5 million dollar baby), and Seth Green (*Party Monster*). Exactly because of the star names attached, you can expect to see all of these films soon in a theater near you. Keep your fingers crossed that *Raising Victor Vargas*, which is opening in New York in March, will be rewarded the same nation-wide fate. "We had no stars to be considered a premiere and had screened at too many festivals to be in competition," comments the film's representative RJ Millard. "Regardless of what people say about the stars attending the festival, it's still a great showcase for cinema. We had a completely unknown cast walking up and down Main Street and being stopped every 10 feet to have their photo taken."

In Sollett's follow-up to his 2000 Sundance and Cannes winning short *Five Feet High and Rising*, he deftly captures the innocence of first love and subsequently the pains of growing up. Victor, played with sweet naturalness by newcomer Victor Rasuk, is the young man of the house, grappling with his emerging sexuality, responsibilities to his dear but off-center grandmother, and his evolving relationship with his younger siblings. Sollett shows a masterful ear for dialogue, and the understated, unaffected performances of the young cast draw you in to the somewhat simple tale set in New York City's Lower East Side. Victor is endearing with his pubescent posturing, and you can't help rooting for him despite the machismo. The film never descends into some sober coming-of-age story; there are always a couple of laughs, not at the expense of the teens, but with the tender knowledge that we've all traversed the same territory.

And finally, the black sheep of the family: *Buffalo Soldiers*. Why is this film still making the festival circuit? Miramax picked up Gregor Jordan's

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wicked satire about the Cold War black market of consumer goods way back in September 2001. The film was promptly shelved. While it was a treat to finally see it on the big screen, I don't understand why it's not released for distribution already. Hopefully this second round of warm reception will finally give it the momentum that will land it at the box office. As a side note, one of the more exciting moments of Sundance took place during a Q&A session for *Soldiers*. A woman chunked a bottle of water at the stage, protesting the film as anti-American. Now that gets the press to pay attention. Harvey, was she a plant?

Native Forum

The criterion for this category is forthright and it is exciting to hear so many unique voices sharing their stories and expressing cultural spirit. That said, while I am thankful Sundance has the sincere vision to bring the works of indigenous people to the public, I can't help but long for the day all art is considered on artistic merit alone rather than singled out due its creator's gender, race, or religion.

Alanisa Obomsawim focuses on Native Canadians in *Is the Crown at War with Us?*

gion. Some sterling examples of filmmaking, in whatever context, found their way into this category this year.

Alanisa Obomsawim, a member of Canada's Abenaki Nation, continues her prolific documentary career with her exemplary 16mm *Is the Crown at War with Us?* Capturing the Mi'gmaq people (the Burnt Church) of New Brunswick, Obomsawim presents a fascinating look at the Nation's relationship with their surroundings and the current battle to continue working the land and fishing the sea as they were promised by Canada's political leaders.

Shirley Cheechoo's *Pikutiskwaau* (*Mother Earth*) preserves the stories and wisdom of Cree elders so that descendants can remain close to and continue the oral tradition of passing along knowledge from one generation to another. Cheechoo recognizes that words can paint pictures and strengthen our collective identities, and in doing so celebrates the unique language of a people to a degree that puts last year's Nicolas Cage vehicle, *Windtalkers*, to even greater shame.

Sundance's highlighting of world cinema and documentaries over the years has been a key element in the increased interest among both distributors and audiences in these areas of film. It would be a marked sign of progress if the same esteem were afforded to other pieces the festival presents. Regardless of delineation, an appearance at Sundance is testament to true vision and perseverance; hopefully this will someday be enough to alert distributors to the talent and value these films display. Like the skiers who didn't bother to check Deer Valley for that precious powder, those proclaiming this year was a "soft" festival probably didn't take the time to look in less obvious places. ■

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.

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Work to Watch For

by Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Stevie

Dir. Steve James

(Lions Gate Films, March 28)

While in college, filmmaker Steve James (*Hoop Dreams*) became an Advocate Big Brother for troubled teenager Stevie Fielding, but after moving out of the area in 1985 to pursue his movie career, their connection began to wane. The relationship eventually devolved into a yearly Christmas card from a guilt-racked James, until Fielding reemerged in James' life as a subject for his latest documentary, *Stevie*. Originally the film was to be a modest portrait of Fielding's life and the two Steves' reunion, but it evolved into a four-year odyssey that brought James closer to the project than he ever

claims he was tricked into writing), Fielding pleads his innocence right up to the hearing. James tries his hardest to bridge the gap of lost time between them with little success.

Finding himself caught between being his role of the objective filmmaker and that of the subject of his own documentary, James admits he needed a lot of help from the rest of the crew to make the film as impartial as he could. "The other people filming with me played a crucial role in both keeping me honest about my involvement and also helping to provide some clarity about what should stay in the film," says James.

But seeing the troubled kid become the troubled man was a "sobering realization" for James who is determined

to get his father's approval, and hopes that with his own career coming into focus, he and dad will be closer than ever. But with the sudden death of his alcoholic mother, Charlie finally sees his dad's true colors and is left not knowing whom to trust.

Spun

Dir. Jonas Akerlund

(Newmarket Films, March 14)

Torn between his overpowering need for drugs and the little bit of sanity he has left, college dropout Ross (Jason Schwartzman) chauffeurs the neighborhood drug manufacturer, The Cook (Mickey Rourke), in exchange for all the free drugs he can stomach. Though he calls his girlfriend every second of the day to convince her he's clean, Ross can't seem to shake his addiction and rides out his high through three days of bizarre and hilarious situations.

Laurel Canyon

Dir. Lisa Cholodenko

(Sony Pictures Classics, March 7)

When Sam (Christian Bale) and fiancée Alex (Kate Beckinsale) move to the Hollywood Hills to pursue their careers, the conservative couple is bombarded by the carefree lifestyle of Sam's mom (Frances McDormand) and her much younger lover, Ian (Alessandro Nivola), the lead singer of a British band. Sam ignores his mom's rock-n-roll ways that have burdened him since childhood, while Alex is intrigued by a lifestyle she's never seen before.



wanted. "I think there's no question that the film forced me to grapple with some things that I would have avoided if I hadn't made it," says James. "Making the film was therapeutic."

The documentary chronicles the time leading up to Fielding's court date for sexually abusing his eight-year-old cousin. Though all the evidence points to his guilt (including a written confession that Fielding

not to abandon him again. "I just try to be there," says James about his relationship with Fielding today. "If I can do that, I have my peace with that."

The Young Unknowns

Dir. Catherine Jelski

(Indican Pictures, March 28)

A pawn in his father's highly successful advertising career, Charlie (Devon Gummersall) has tried his whole life

Television

Mama Africa

Dirs. Bridget Pickering,

Ngozi Onwurah, Zulfah Otto-Sallies
(PBS, March; check local listings)

"I like the idea of women being portrayed the way they really are, in their

Above: A young Stephen Fielding, subject of Steve James's *Stevie*. Facing Page: Rehane Abrahams and Aysha Meer Krige in *Raya*, by Zulfah Otto-Sallies.



tions of Africa as a violent country. "They'd be completely surprised, in a way delighted, by what they'd see," says Bright of people who know only of Africa from the press. "The reality is so different from what is represented on international news. We've brought three tales directly from Africa to the rest of the world to show how we do live."

badness, their weakness, their goodness, and their passion. It's about time." That's how director Bridget Pickering describes her contribution to the film *Mama Africa*, a collection of three coming-of-age shorts from three talented African women filmmakers.

Pickering's film, *Uno's World*, follows Uno (Sophie David), a teenage mother coping with the responsibilities of raising a child without a man by her side. Director Ngozi Onwhura's contribution tells the story of Kwame (Brian Biragi), a poor but talented West African basketball player who must decide which path he should choose for his life in *Hang Time*. And Zulfah Otto-Sallies rounds out the trio with her film *Raya*, about a young woman (Rehane Abrahams) who, after being released from jail, tries to reunite with her mother while breaking ties with her criminal past. "The opportunities presented by making *Mama Africa* are ones that I hope to piggyback on," says Otto-Sallies, who plans to make a feature film next.

Mama Africa was created two years ago to give female directors in Africa a larger platform to present their work. Simon Bright, the film's executive producer, adds that bringing *Mama Africa* to the States is helping extinguish the misconcep-

Domestic Violence & Domestic Violence 2

Dir: Fredrick Wiseman (PBS, March 18 & 19)

Veteran documentary filmmaker Frederick Wiseman highlights spousal abuse in two gripping documentaries. In *Domestic Violence* we follow police to abuse calls where, in some instances, victims are taken to the hospital soaked in blood. Wiseman also takes us to a domestic abuse shelter where women and children go to start their lives over again. In *Domestic Violence 2*, we witness the court system's handling of these crimes, as victims recount the horrific events to judges who show no pity on the accused.

DOCday (Sundance Channel, March 3)

Beginning Monday, March 3, and continuing every Monday thereafter, the Sundance Channel will feature non-fiction films, both shorts and features, in a new program called DOCday. Featured docs kicking off the program include Marc Singer's *Dark Days*, and the US premieres of Stig Bjorkman's *Tranceformer* and Axel Engstfeld and Herbert Habersack's *Automat Kalashnikov*. ■

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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If it's August, this must be South Africa

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY WORLD TOUR

By Debra Zimmerman

As the executive director of Women Make Movies, it seemed like a great idea to launch a worldwide tour in celebration of our thirtieth anniversary. When WMM was founded in 1972 by Ariel Dougherty and Sheila Paige as a means to train women filmmakers, they never dreamed it would become the world's largest distributor of films and videotapes by and about women. But here we were, thirty years old.

For our twentieth anniversary, we organized a twenty-city theatrical tour in the US, and for our twenty-fifth we were honored with a six-week retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. An international tour would give us the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of women filmmakers with an even wider audience by collaborating with thirty different film festivals, museums, contemporary art centers, and universities. From Arkansas

to Singapore, from Brazil to Warsaw, we planned a solid year of screenings on every continent except Antarctica.

When I announced our plans at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2002, I was excited to think of all the places I and other WMM staff members would be going. In practice, though, globetrotting through more than one hundred screenings around the world, meeting hundreds of filmmakers, and being interviewed by countless journalists was an exhausting experience. Battling jet lag, airport security, and a seemingly endless winter tested the limits of my endurance. But almost 100,000 frequent flyer miles later, here are just a few of the highlights of my trip.

Souvenirs from Zimmerman's travels across the globe celebrating Women Make Movies' 30th anniversary.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DEBRA ZIMMERMAN

April: South Korea

My tour starts with a bang as a jury member at the fourth International Women's Film Festival (WIFFS), in Seoul, South Korea. Seoul is full of energy, excitement, and an exploding independent film scene. There are four or five different film festivals in Seoul each year, and the Pusan International Film Festival has quickly become the most important Asian film festival. What's more, there are four—count them, four—weekly magazines devoted to independent film, plus a local edition of *Premiere*.

In 1997, when I attended the first WIFFS festival, there was only one independent woman filmmaker making films in South Korea, Byun Young-Joo, who made a trilogy of films about Korean “comfort women,” the first of which is called *The Murmuring*. Now, just five years later, this has all changed. During the fourteen years since democracy has been restored in South Korea, the blossoming of the film industry has combined with a burgeoning feminist movement to create an explosion in independent and feminist filmmaking. There are numerous women working in all aspects of the industry, directing and producing documentaries, features, and shorts. All of the South Korean documentaries selected for the 2001 Yamagata Film Festival, widely considered the most important documentary festival in Asia, were by women directors. This year, *The Way Home* by Lee Jeong-hyang was the second highest grossing film in South Korea, beating out *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *Spider-Man*.

Here at WIFFS, there are almost twenty films by South Korean women and even a documentary on the history of women in Korean cinema, *Keeping the Vision Alive*. Another festival favorite, *Take Care of My Cat* by Jeong Jae-eun, a simple and touching coming-of-age story, was critically acclaimed when I saw it at the Rotterdam Film Festival. WIFFS is an incredible success by any standards. Most of the seventy screenings are sold out. Teenage boys and girls vie to be accepted as volunteers for the festival and wear their red-and-purple WIFFS T-shirts proudly. After dancing the night away at the closing-night party with some of Seoul's hippest young filmmakers, I feel lucky that I have the opportunity to feel the excitement of a new women's film scene being born.

And the success of South Korean women filmmakers is mirrored in neighboring Asian countries. In Taiwan, Women Make Waves, a women's film festival named after Women Make Movies, is entering its sixth year. Women Make Waves has, in turn, spawned Women Make Sister Waves, a women's film and video festival which debuted in Osaka, Japan, in November 2002. In neighboring Indonesia, there is no women's film festival yet, but Nan Ache, the producer of Shanty Harmayn's feature *Whispering Sands* (one of the only Indonesian features produced last year) runs the Jakarta International Film Festival. And women filmmakers in the Philippines have achieved unparalleled

success—the top four box office directors in that country are women. I wish Hollywood executives who claim there's no audience in Asia for women's film were aware of what's actually going on.

June: Manchester, Vermont

When I finally arrive in Manchester, Vermont, after a five-hour drive, my first thought is, “What a strange place for a film festival.” Manchester is probably best known for its outlet stores. It's too bad I hate to shop. But the next morning, over a plate of homemade pancakes at a country inn, I realize that Manchester, like the Hamptons, is a summer vacation community with local residents who are supportive of their new festival, the Manchester Film Festival. The festival is a four-day affair, full of panels, workshops, and screenings with filmmakers in attendance. More than seventy-five films from two dozen countries will be shown over the four days. I am attending this festival with four documentaries from WMM, including *Mai's America* and *Senorita Extraviada*, which shared the IDA's Best Achievement in Documentary Award, and *Filming Desire: A Journey Through Women's Cinema*.

I am, of course, pleased that the organizers have decided to devote a day of the festival to women, including a panel discussion on women and the film industry, but when I first look at the schedule I am a bit worried to find that we've been programmed against a full day of panel discussions devoted to digital technology. It's a bit like television execs scheduling *Crossing Jordan* against *Monday Night Football*.

But by the time I take my seat next to filmmaker Heather Rae, actress Ally Sheedy, and Eleanor Bergstrom, the writer/producer of *Dirty Dancing*, there are only a few seats left in the audience. Sheedy speaks passionately about the difficult choices she has made as an actress committed to presenting realistic portrayals of women. Bergstrom has the audience in stitches as she describes having to get up and “dirty dance” at pitch sessions in Hollywood in order to get her film made.

Later that afternoon I meet Gerald Levin, the former CEO of Time Warner, at an elegant reception on the lawn of his Manchester home. You can hear a pin drop when he tells me and the heavy hitters from Digital Day that he attended the women's panel instead of the high tech one. As we share a lively conversation about the challenges facing women in the industry, I am heartened by Levin's genuine interest (as well as the industry geeks' sudden curiosity) in the topic. In the bucolic hills of Vermont I realize that we all have something to learn about stereotypes. After all, I watch *Monday Night Football*. Maybe more men are watching *Crossing Jordan* than we think.

August: Johannesburg, South Africa

It's winter in Johannesburg when I arrive at the Jozi

Summit Film Festival, which is being held in conjunction with the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development. “Jo’burg” is a fascinating, if difficult, city. White flight emptied the downtown a number of years ago, and the city is now made up of suburbs. There’s almost no public transportation to speak of. The official conference is being held in Sandton City, a rich, white suburb in the north of the city, and the “people’s forum” is at Nasrac, a dusty fair-ground in the south.

The festival is organized by the Film Resource Unit, South Africa’s only independent media distributor, which began as an underground group during Apartheid. Mike Dearham and his staff have put tremendous resources



into this huge event: eleven screens, more than a hundred films, and numerous panels and workshops. It’s a great concept, but it just doesn’t work. Unfortunately, there’s so much going on with the official and unofficial events that it is hard for anyone to focus on the film festival, especially since each event is taking place in a different part of the city.

But this sprawling event is an excellent opportunity to see African films and participate in panel discussions with African filmmakers. Carolyn Carew-Maseko, a South

African producer, describes the groundbreaking work she is doing with *Lovelife*, a high-powered media campaign which has the goal of reducing AIDS in South Africa. Ethiopian filmmaker Haile Gerima wakes up the audience with an eloquent speech about the potential of media in South Africa. As the only county on the continent that broadcasts outside its borders, South African television could be a major force in disseminating African-produced media.

For me, one of the most productive aspects of the trip is the opportunity to meet and network with Women of the Sun. Organized in 1998 at the Sithengi International Film and Television Market by filmmakers and film professionals from Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Trinidad, Women of the Sun is a media network and resource organization of African women filmmakers. Over the last four years they’ve organized a number of festivals and events, including a monthly screening series. During the Jozi Summit Film Festival, they presented an alternative film festival of films by African and non-African filmmakers, complementing the Women Make Movies screenings. Xoliswa Sithole’s new film, *Shouting Silent*, a beautiful movie about the experiences of young South African women who have lost their mothers to AIDS, opens the day-long event. Charlayne Hunter Gault, the CNN correspondent in South Africa and an advisor on the film, introduces it to the sold-out audience at the Museum of Africa in downtown Johannesburg.

Before leaving Jo’burg for Durban, I accomplish two things: I learn to “click” when I pronounce Xoliswa, and pick up *Shouting Silent* for distribution in the US.

Durban:

Located on the west coast of South Africa, Durban reminds me of Miami Beach before art deco restoration, Madonna, and gay boutiques. I’m here for the Durban International Film Festival, one of the oldest festivals in South Africa. My host, Peter Rorvik, the executive director of the Center for Creative Arts at the University of Durban, is the guiding force behind this twenty-three-year-old festival.

The opening-night event is the African premiere of Philip Noyce’s *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, a real-life drama based on the writing of Australian Aboriginal Doris Pinkerton. Although I am terribly ill with the flu, I am completely drawn into the simple story and the stunning photography of Chris Doyle, Wong Kar Wai’s cinematographer. Pinkerton, a grandmother of twenty-nine children who is in attendance to give a writing workshop, brings the audience to tears with her introduction to the film.

Besides attending the screenings of WMM films, I participate in a panel discussion on the ethics of filmmaking, entitled “Who Owns Our Stories.” When I looked at the program, my first thought was, “Oh, no, not another panel

on that subject.” But in fact it was incredibly powerful to discuss the issue in South Africa, where the vast majority of the film industry is still white, yet so many of the stories being told are black ones. The audience is challenging and confrontational, asking hard questions about the continuing inequities in the industry. It makes me realize that the film industry is a microcosm of the country. In South Africa there is more equipment, labs, and trained professionals than in any other African nation, yet the process of training black media professionals and turning the power of the media over to the racial majority still lags far behind where it should be. It reminds me of the situation women faced in the US thirty years ago; which, of course, is part of the reason Women Make Movies was founded. But groups like Women of the Sun, and events like these festivals, are good signs for the future.

November: Warsaw, Poland

When I arrive in Poland, I realize that many of the countries I’ve visited have gone through major upheavals in the last ten to fifteen years. South Africa experienced the end of Apartheid; Korea, the rebirth of democracy; and in Poland, of course, there was the fall the Berlin Wall and the end of Communism.

Ula Sniegowaksa, the curator of the Center for Contemporary Arts, was interested in bringing WMM to Warsaw because almost no one in Poland has had the chance to see feminist independent films. Ula’s enthusiasm is infectious. She has managed to get support from the US embassy for a week-long exhibition, a lecture on feminist filmmaking, and workshops on film distribution and marketing. There’s even going to be a reception celebrating our thirtieth anniversary, hosted by the American cultural attaché. I can’t help but think of the irony of a Polish Jewish American being invited back to the country my relatives fled.

But Warsaw in 2002 is a far cry from the Warsaw my grandparents left. The city is a study in contradictions. Everything feels old, yet ninety-five percent of the city was rebuilt after World War II. My hotel reminds me of the ex-KGB hotel where I stayed in St. Petersburg in 1991. It’s a huge place with incredibly tiny, narrow rooms and single beds. The only other guests seem to be businessmen in gray suits. On the streets, capitalism abounds: There are ads for consumer goods everywhere, yet on Sunday I am taken to a huge flea market where thousands of people are selling old shoes, batteries, and other household goods.

The Center for Contemporary Arts is a new art space housed in an old castle. Although the architecture is distinctively Eastern European, the art scene is definitely

Facing Page: Globe-trotter Debra Zimmerman back home in New York. Above: Zimmerman with the volunteers and staff of Kansas City’s Halfway to Hollywood Film Festival.

Western. French designer Phillippe Starck has an exhibition opening, and a Shirin Neshat exhibition recently closed. The program of recent shows is impressive by any standards, but here it is extraordinary, given that there are no Polish foundations and the government provides no support except the space.

Ula has done an amazing job of developing and promoting a retrospective of predominately experimental films which includes the films of Maya Deren, Sally Potter, Mona Hatoum, Midi Onodera, and Ngozi Onwurah. There’s lots of mainstream press interest—there’s even an article in *Vogue*—and I’m interviewed on



the country’s most popular TV magazine program devoted to film. When I’m asked to compare the status of women’s filmmaking in America to the local scene, I’m glad I did my homework.

The history of women’s filmmaking in Poland is similar to the rest of Eastern Europe. Women filmmakers have always fared better under Communism than under capitalism. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, there were a significant number of women filmmakers in Poland. Though the second wave of feminism had little impact on Poland (or on other communist countries), filmmakers like Barbara Sass and Agnieszka Holland had the opportunity to make feature films in the 1970’s and 1980’s. In fact, Holland is one of the few women directors ever to be nominated for an Academy Award, for her 1985 film *Angry Harvest*.

But when Communism collapsed, so did the old government-funded studio system. Since then, it has become increasingly difficult for filmmakers to make films at all. There’s a whole generation of young filmmakers who know next to nothing about marketing their films, in or outside of Poland. These are the young people who come to the workshops I give on marketing and distribution. I feel a little bit like a shill for American-style capitalism, but they are

so eager for information and networking that I am grateful to have the opportunity to share my expertise. I am completely drawn into their enthusiasm. The workshop is so successful that we continue it long into the night first at a restaurant and then at a bar.

The day before I leave, one of the students offers to drive me to Lomza, my grandparents' old village. I go with the irrational and naïve thought that I might be able to find a trace of my past. It turns out to be a hopeless and devastating experience. There's not a sign that Jewish people ever lived there, except a forlorn and vandalized cemetery and the suspicion of the local people that I've come to claim the property my grandparents left behind. But I leave Poland having found something else: a country in transformation and a group of young filmmakers, particularly women, with a vision of a different Poland.

I come home in December to face a pile of correspon-

dence, my still unfinished apartment renovation, and the beginning of winter in New York. As I relax at home for the first time in months, I reflect on all of my experiences over the last year. It was inspiring to see how women's films are being received, and how women's film festivals are thriving. I've met so many wonderful people and have learned so much about the global independent film community. Thirty years after the start of Women Make Movies, I can't believe how far we've come. I can't wait to see what happens in next thirty years—which is probably how long it will take before I attempt another world anniversary tour. But then again, I still have trips to Turkey, France, and the Czech Republic in 2003 to get through before this tour is over.

Debra Zimmerman is the executive director of Women Make Movies. For more information, visit www.wmm.com.

Debra Zimmerman's Women Make Movies 30th Anniversary World Tour Itinerary



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| <p>March 2003</p> <p>1-31: (Boston, MA), Boston Museum of Fine Arts.</p> | <p>Oct 2003</p> <p>9-10: (Washington, DC), Center for Social Media, American University</p> |
| <p>April 2003</p> <p>1-31: (Bryn Mawr, PA), Bryn Mawr College. 4-12: (Seoul, South Korea), Seoul Women's Film Festival</p> | <p>1-3: (Colorado Springs, CO), Rocky Mountain Women's Film Festival 1-10: (Honolulu, Hawaii), Hawaii International Film Festival 16-21: (Warsaw, Poland), Center for Contemporary Art 25-30: (Bilbao, Spain, Bilbao) International Festival of Documentary & Short Films</p> |
| <p>May 2003</p> <p>3-12: (Kansas City, MO), Halfway to Hollywood Film Festival</p> | <p>Jan 2004</p> <p>16-26: (Park City, UT), Sundance Film Festival</p> |
| <p>June 2003</p> <p>4-16: (Belo Horizonte, Brazil), Belo Horizonte International Short Film Festival. 27-30: (Manchester, VT), Manchester International Film Festival</p> | <p>Feb 2004</p> <p>17-20: (Byron Bay, Australia), Australian International Documentary Conference</p> |
| <p>Aug 2003</p> <p>Aug 16 - Sept 4: (Johannesburg, South Africa), Jozi Summit Film Festival</p> | <p>March 2004</p> <p>21-30: Paris, France, Creteil Women's Film Festival</p> |
| <p>Sept 2003</p> <p>5-8: (Durban, South Africa), Durban International Film Festival</p> | <p>April 2004</p> <p>8-16: Prague, Czech Republic, One World International Film Festival</p> |



The Women Behind the Camera

By Ann Lewinson

This was going to be the last article ever on woman cinematographers. It shouldn't be news in 2003 that women are making movies—gorgeous, stunning, provocative movies—and with Ellen Kuras shooting big-budget Hollywood films like *Analyze That*, can anyone still argue that the gaze is male?

But consider this: According to the annual "Celluloid Ceiling" study conducted by Martha Lauzen at San Diego State University, only two percent of the cinematographers working on the 250 highest-grossing films of 2001 were women, down from four percent in 1998 and 1999. In the top grossing 100 of 2001, only one percent were shot by women, down from two percent in 2000 and three percent in 1999. Compare this to the percentages of women in some of the most "macho" professions: The Department of Labor reports that in 2001, 5.3 percent of truck drivers, 6.7 percent of stevedores, and a whopping twenty-one percent of metal-plating machine operators were women.

Maryse Alberti on the set of *The Guys*.

Clearly, the film business still has a long way to go to catch up with such "unenlightened" industries. Although independent film has been hospitable to women for many years, Hollywood is still reluctant to put a woman in charge of photography. "I think when you get to a certain level of budget, people have a tendency to trust men more than women," says Maryse Alberti, who's shot on a diverse group of indie hits including *Crumb*, *Happiness*, and *Velvet Goldmine*. And many cinematographers would gladly trade the freedom of independent filmmaking for a bigger box of toys. "I want to shoot big Hollywood movies," says Tami Reiker, the director of photography on *High Art* and *The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love*. "Ellen's busting open that ceiling for all of us."

But will an ambush of female cinematographers come rushing in after her? "Even to this day, there's a real bias about women shooting studio features," says Nancy Schreiber, whose résumé includes *Your Friends and Neighbors*, *Visions of Light*, and *The Celluloid Closet*. "We run three departments: grip, electric, and camera. It must be

scary for guys to relinquish that kind of control. I think on some very subliminal level it's cultural."

The economy hasn't helped matters. "Since the tech market crashed and the threatened strikes of last year, there are fewer independent movies," says Schreiber. "When times are tough, people hold in the reins and they get really conservative. There's a lot of fear, so the first ones to go are women and minorities."

Schreiber lives in Los Angeles but keeps her apartment in New York because she prefers shooting smaller, independent films. "I think it's more difficult in Los Angeles. I am glad that I came up in the business in New York, because anything goes there. It's not a company town—the stakes are not so high."

"I was in LA for ten years," says Joey Forsyte, whose first film as a DP was Henry Jaglom's *New Year's Day*. Since then she's shot seventeen features. "Three of them were in a movie theater for three weeks. I think they're good movies. Because the distribution world fell apart, and there are so many movies competing for those few slots, my work just didn't get that exposure. And without that kind of exposure, it's really hard to move ahead."

When Forsyte enrolled at NYU, she was the first female student who wanted to shoot features. "Every single teacher told me, 'Women don't shoot movies.' I got thrown out of the only cinematography class worth anything at that school because I was female. But I came of age at a time when women were facing obstacles of all kinds, and we just didn't listen to any of it."

Neither Alberti nor Schreiber went to film school. Alberti, who started off photographing the Plasmatics and Iggy Pop for the *New York Rocker*, got her first movie-set job shooting stills on a pornographic film. "At that time, a lot of the crews were young students out of NYU or people like me, and the producers and directors were all Jewish or Italian men with wigs." Schreiber got her first production assistant job by answering an ad in *The Village Voice*. By the end of the shoot, she was an electrician. Forsyte also started in electric, but it took her two years to get a job. "I did mostly construction during those two years; the male-chauvinistic construction industry was much more open to women." The films she finally got hired on weren't bad—she worked as a gaffer on *Blood Simple* and as best boy on three Robert Altman films.

Women who chose the camera assistant route found obstacles as well. "Very early on," recalls Alberti, "this first AC was such an asshole with me, and it was obviously because I was the girl. I went to the bathroom and cried a few times, but I kept on doing my job. And now he's still a first AC and I'm a DP." Propositions and sexist remarks came with the territory. "There were definitely moments where I would just walk away and under my breath be like, 'Remember my name,'" says Reiker. "You just maneuver around it and keep going."

Nancy Schiesari, whose work includes the documentaries *Warrior Marks* and the Oscar-nominated *Regret to Inform*, studied filmmaking at the Royal College of Art in London. Her first job was on the all-woman crew of Sally Potter's film *The Gold Diggers*, as first AC to Babette Mangolte. She endured a "grueling" meeting to get a union card: "All these cameramen were around this huge oak table. One asked, 'Could you carry a 35mm camera up a mountain?'" With her union card, Schiesari worked steadily for three years as one of the only two female camera assistants at the BBC at the time. "One day one of the gaffers said, 'You'll be an assistant for your whole life if you stay here,' so I took his word and got out of the BBC." Schiesari, who now teaches at the University of Texas in Austin, got an Emmy nomination last fall for John Cleese's *The Human Face*—produced for the BBC.

Schreiber found that making the leap from electric to camera meant directing her own documentary short, *Possum Living*. "I saw that the other DP's that were women were getting work mostly in documentaries. I had come up in features and commercials, but I had to really hone my handheld skills. It was sort of ironic because later, people thought I came out of documentaries."

How documentaries became "women's work" is hardly a mystery. "You don't do a lot of talking," says Schiesari, "you do a lot of sitting on the outside, watching." At the same time, she notes, "You've got to be assertive to get a film made. You've got to have all those so-called 'male traits' to get things done. If you've experienced oppression or marginalization, and you develop the qualities that our capitalist society has fostered, then you can use that sense of oppression to work for you, and have that sensitive eye."

But being perceived as "sensitive" can limit your career. "Kathryn Bigelow and Mimi Leder direct action," says Schreiber, whose latest documentary, *Robert Capa: In Love and War*, premiered at Sundance in January 2003. "They broke that stereotype. Why do people think we can only do certain kinds of stories?" Many female DP's are not particularly drawn to scripts about three generations of women making a quilt. "You have all the clichés that women are more nurturing," says Alberti. "I am more interested in the strange, the dark, the sexual, the edge of society."

Younger cinematographers can't afford to be so picky. "I've always worked; that hasn't been a problem," says Therese Sherman, whose films includes the 2001 Oscar-nominated documentary *Legacy* and a documentary on the photographer Hansel Mieth, directed by Nancy Schiesari, which premieres on PBS May 27. Still, thirteen years after graduating from Columbia College in Chicago, she's shooting *Fear Factor*. "I gauge my career by the people I went to film school with, and the women are still shooting independent features and reality TV for money, and some of the men are shooting Oscar-winning movies. No one

ever calls you up and says, 'You didn't get that job because you're female,' but that happens enough and you get older and then you don't get the next job because you're competing against people that have had more experience because they've gotten those opportunities." Sherman's started a TV commercial production company and finds she's getting more into producing. "The women I talk to, we really don't understand it. We try so hard, we're all so very good, but it just doesn't matter."

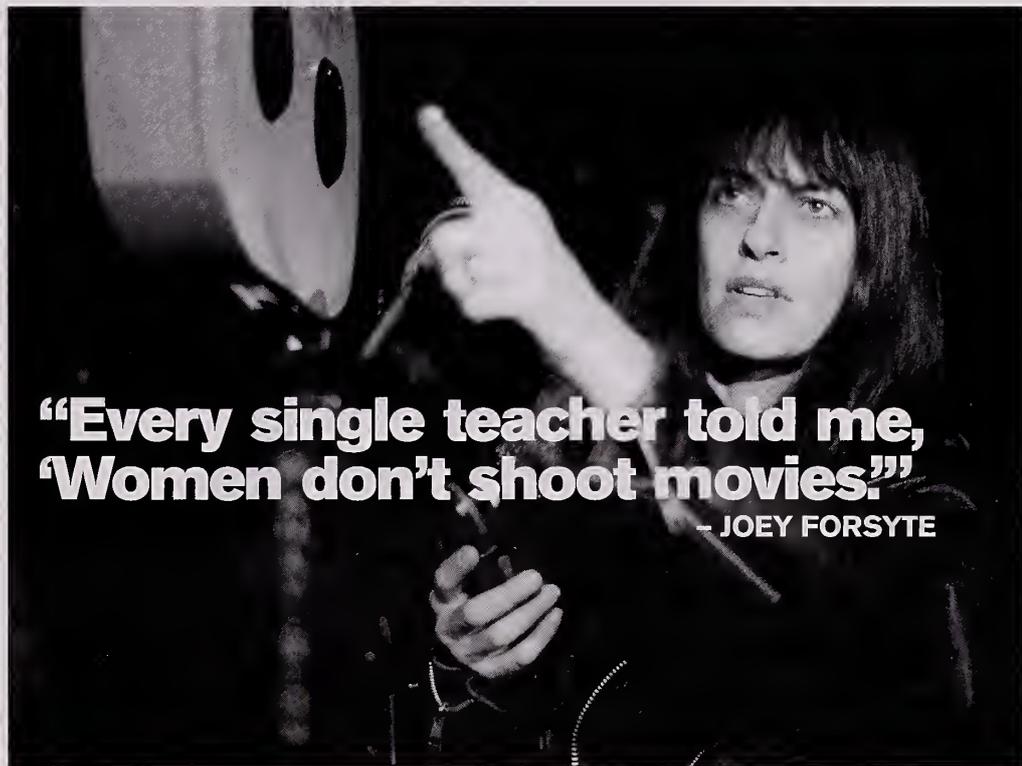
None of the features Sherman has shot have been theatrically released. "Young women who are shooting now," says Forsyte, "we probably don't even know who half of them are because we're not seeing their work. You're never going to get to shoot a \$100 million feature if you don't shoot a million dollar feature."

Of course, getting that million dollar feature has never been easy. "One of my agents once did a little test and fast-forwarded my reel a few minutes ahead and got it back from a potential employer in the same position," recalls Schreiber. "Then there was an agent that wanted me to just put my initials on the reel." Joey Forsyte found that her first name got her interviews—only interviews. "I went for one interview, and the producer called me after it was over. He said, 'I hate to tell you that until you walked in the door, this director was going to hire you.' There have probably been a half-dozen times where somebody has called me to tell me that, which is a courageous thing to do because it's not legal."

Schreiber notes that it can be another obstacle to maneuver around. "I cannot focus on thinking that I didn't get work because I was a woman," she says. "It's tough for everybody. The chemistry was just better with somebody else. It's just like finding a mate in a relationship. That's the healthiest attitude I can have."

Once they're on the set, women are expected to be on their best behavior. "It's really hard for us to be big swinging dicks," says Sherman, "and we can't afford to have that really common male cinematographer's ego—not to say they all have it—because our jobs are so fragile." Schreiber agrees: "There's a fine line between assertive and aggressive. Guys can be assholes as DP's and get places, but women have to watch their step. We have to be better than the guys; we have to work faster, be more creative, not step out of line, not get moody."

With a generation raised by working mothers, and a growing number of female producers and studio heads, you'd think opportunities would be increasing. But experience has shown otherwise. "When there's already a production designer in place and it's a woman, we often don't get hired," says Schreiber. Forsyte has seen equally skewed hiring practices. "Men who are younger than me and men who are gay have been the most likely to hire me," says



"Every single teacher told me, 'Women don't shoot movies.'"

— JOEY FORSYTE

Forsyte. "Either women are the most likely to hire me, or the least likely. In the major feature world, they are so nervous about their own positions that they're terrified of taking a risk. They will take a guy who's shot a small movie and put him on a big movie, but they're unlikely to do that with a woman."

In the indie world, it's a different story. "There've been female producers and directors that have helped me a lot," says Reiker, who, she says, found her NYU connections invaluable. "I shot Maria Maggenti's film *The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love*, and my friend Dolly Hall was the producer. Dolly then produced *High Art*, which I shot, and then Maria wrote a movie called *The Love Letter*, so now she was hanging out with the Spielbergs and writing this script with Kate Capshaw. She screened *High Art* for the Spielbergs and Peter Chan, the director, and they loved it and that's how I got my first studio movie."

Reiker suddenly found herself in Hollywood. "I had an amazing experience on *The Love Letter*. Everyone at Dreamworks was very excited to have a woman shooting

this movie. You're up there and you have every last makeup woman, every script supervisor, saying, 'You go girl, I'm so proud of you.' I shoot a lot of commercials all over the world, and that's where you really get, when you're in Cambodia or Africa or Mexico and everyone's like, 'I've never seen a woman behind the camera before!'

The next generation of cinematographers may find that it's more difficult to get started. "It's much harder now,"

or have a partner that shares child-rearing so you're able to do the three-month shoots."

Alberti turned down *Boys Don't Cry* to spend more time with her son, now nine years old. "This business is really not conducive to having a family first. We've made a lot of progress, but I think that women are not only expected to hunt and gather, but also take care of the food and the kids in the cave. So I try to balance both. I'm really going to try very hard to make the right choices to keep on having an interesting career. In order to be a good mother, I need to be a cinematographer—that's part of me; that gives me life and passion. But my son will always come first."

A desire for a family is one reason these DP's suspect that many young women are not pursuing cinematography careers, but another may be that women are too tough on themselves, a liability in such a technically intimidating field. "When we were kids, we never played baseball," explains Forsyte, "and if we had played baseball, we would have realized that striking out two out of three times makes you the best baseball player on the planet. You can make some mistakes and it's okay."

Or perhaps it's just that today's young women are unaccustomed to the kind of struggle that previous generations took for granted. "There are a lot of good woman DP's coming out of schools, but on the whole their numbers are dropping," says Schiesari. "When I first started teaching about nine years ago here at Austin, it was about fifty-fifty. My last sync sound class had twelve men and one woman."

These things go in waves, and nine years from now Schiesari's classes may be filled with women who grew up watching Claire Danes in *The Mod Squad* and saw Kuras' name on the screen. And they'll walk through doors opened by two generations of women who just kept shooting, no matter what. "I think the most destructive thing about the lack of opportunities for myself and other women is that it hasn't made a lot of successful women visible to women that are younger than us," says Forsyte. "They don't see a lot of women up there winning Academy Awards. I'm discouraged that they're so discouraged, because I feel like I'm a success. My name's not on a lot of big movies, but I'm really loving what I do. I think shooting is one of the best jobs in the world."

Ann Lewinson is a New York-based writer on arts and culture. Her work has appeared in Stagebill, Citysearch, and P.S.1's Special Project Writers Series.



"Why do people think [women] can only do certain kinds of stories?"

— NANCY SCHIESARI

says Reiker. "In the eighties and the beginning of the nineties, MTV was exploding. I shot a lot of MTV promos—they were like little commercials, all 35mm. I don't know if there are as many outlets now for little things. All of that stuff is getting shot on tape. It just makes it harder to make that film reel." Indeed, Reiker's most recent film, *Pieces of April*, which played at Sundance this year, was shot digitally at a cost of \$150,000.

However, one thing has changed for the better: Female AC's are becoming as common on the set as female script supervisors. Forsyte's current camera assistant is a man, but previously she only hired women (including Tami Reiker). "A woman is more likely to tell me what she can and can't do. In fact, women usually underrate themselves, whereas a lot of guys will inflate what they can do."

Schreiber notes that many men are hiring female AC's. "Male DP's seem to love having women AC's because they're being supported, just like with their wives." But how many of those AC's are becoming DP's? "It's been very sad for me," says Schreiber. "I have worked with many wonderful woman camera assistants, and many of them have not gone on to shoot. It's a very rough life because we have to travel on the spur of the moment. What do you do if you have kids? You have to stay in town, work on commercials,

Women in Film Stats

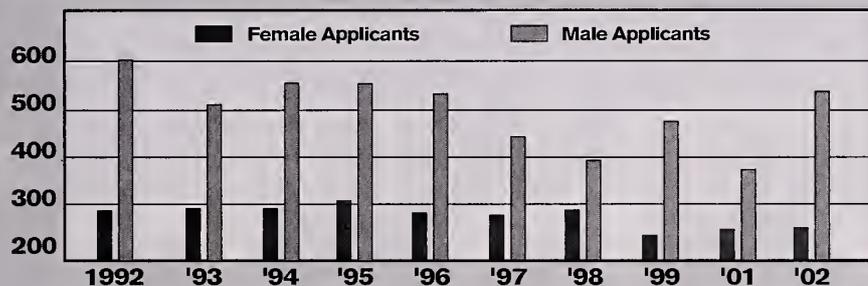
We usually think of the film world as being liberal and progressive, but the fact is, you are more likely to meet a female police officer than a female director. Nineteen percent of the LAPD is made up of women, while in 2001 only six percent of the 250 top-grossing films in the US were directed by women, and only two percent were shot by one. By looking at both the top 100 films and the top 250 films, *The Celluloid Ceiling*, a study by Martha Aluzen of San Diego State University, is able to determine that there is only a slight increase in the number of women working in independent films with distribution as opposed to Hollywood blockbusters.

While these numbers are depressing, there are also some positive signs. Aluzen's study shows women are twice as likely to be hired in key roles on films with women directors. And in 2003, women directed twenty-eight percent of the films screened at the Sundance Film Festival, an increase of three percent from the previous year. A record-breaking twenty-one percent of the feature films were directed by women. In 1999 only eight percent of the features at Sundance were credited with a female director.

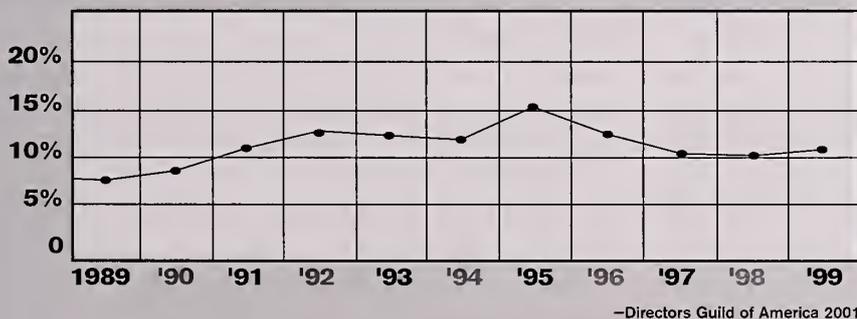
Here are a few more numbers to think about.

—Compiled by The Independent staff

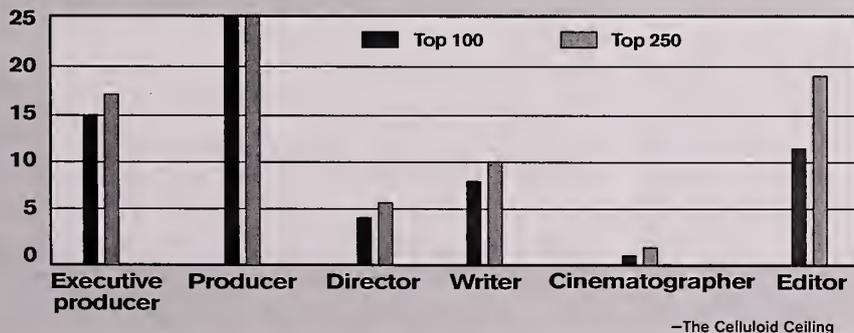
MFA Applicants to the New York University Kanbar Institute of Film and Television at the Tisch School of Arts.



Percentage of total days worked by female DGA members.



Percentage of women employed in top grossing 100 and top grossing 250 films of 2001.



Women make 76¢ to every dollar men earn.

—US Dept of Labor, 2001



14% of the US Senate are women.

—US Senate 2003



Women make up 51.1% of the US population.

—US Census 2000



19% of the LA County police dept are women.

—The Los Angeles Police Department 2002



Feminist Film and the Ivory Tower

MOVING BEYOND THE MALE GAZE AND HOLLYWOOD

By Patricia R. Zimmermann



In 1975, Laura Mulvey altered the way many people, especially academics, see men and women in film with the publication of her essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” in the influential British film journal *Screen*. Mulvey demonstrated how the classic Hollywood film narrative was constructed so that the spectator identified with the gaze of the leading, *male* character. She deployed psychoanalysis like a scalpel to Hitchcock and Von Sternberg. Men looked, women were looked at; men were active plot-makers, women passive fetishes. Men were subjects, women objects.

Today the article is footnoted in virtually every scholarly essay on feminist cinema and taught to every film school undergraduate as a sacred text. But nearly thirty years after Mulvey’s groundbreaking essay, feminist film practice has moved way beyond only a difference of gender. It now spans a new, wider landscape of queer, multicultural, international, and political work. This new filmmaking has emerged in the last ten years parallel with new academic trends mining the same ideas. The shift

towards cultural studies, history, critical race theory, and postcolonial theory has provoked more interest in independent cinema in classrooms and in research than twenty years ago. Feminist film theory as Mulvey and her contemporaries approached it is now one historical strand in a complex array of interdisciplinary ideas. “The most interesting issues in feminist film revolve around questions of race, ethnicity, class and sexuality in relation to gender,” claims Gina Marchetti, associate professor of cinema and photography at Ithaca College and author of *Romance and the Yellow Peril: Race, Sex and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction*.

But the new feminist film ecosystem is so vast and hosts so many diverse forms that many overworked media scholars in the academy find it a gargantuan task to keep up with new films, new debates, and new developments—and more often than not, retreat to a more familiar, clear-cut Hollywood product which can be more easily taught because of the availability of a larger body of published essays and books. “Feminist film is a huge field now. You

need to be a polyglot,” observes Christine Holmlund, professor of French at the University of Tennessee and author of *Impossible Bodies: Femininity and Masculinity at the Movies*. “The sheer volume of independent work from all over the US and the globe is hard to keep up with—you need someone to search it out for you, a field guide.”

Other scholars and curators argue feminist film is no longer a viable category in the twenty-first century. “Feminist film has fallen into the quagmire of other alternative work,” notes Scott Mac Donald, film professor and author of *The Garden in the Machine: A Field Guide to Independent Films about Place*. “It’s ignored. It’s curricularized. Feminist film courses at the college level ghettoize feminist film—the original energy in the 1970’s was cross-disciplinary.”

Many current film and media students find the intensity of seventies feminist film theorists puzzling and wonder what the fuss was all about. Diane Waldman, co-editor of the influential volume *Feminism and Documentary*, who has taught for over twenty years at the University of Denver, reflects that the 1970’s feminist film theory debates seem arcane twenty-five years later. “It’s difficult to convey to students why people were passionate about those debates between documentary realism and political modernism. We are now in a less prescriptive place about how to make a feminist film.”

In the heady seventies, feminist academics helped propel the feminist movement and feminist independent filmmaking by using academic theory to analyze culture from a gender and classed perspective. “Scholars were drawing from a canon of melodrama, westerns, Hitchcock, Hollywood, and some European cinema. Lots of scholars in the 1970’s and 1980’s were using psychoanalysis and structuralism because they came out of literary tradition. They were employing very rigorous theoretical models to legitimate feminist inquiry around a shared archive,” says Amy Villarejo, Coeditor of *Key Frames: Popular Culture and Cultural Studies*. Many in the field note the demise of the once exciting, often volatile coalition between feminist film, feminist theoretical work, and the women’s movement which invigorated other disciplines and causes. Across a range of disciplines—not just in film schools—feminist questions have in many ways become neutralized as merely academic issues to advance professorial careers and not an art form propelling ideas and

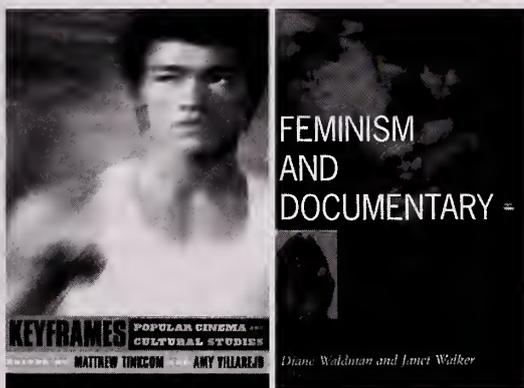
politics. “Feminist film got left behind. The energy now is in queer, multicultural, post-colonial work,” contends B. Ruby Rich, author of *Chick Flicks* and most recently a 2002 Toronto Film Festival programmer. “Feminist film in the academy has taken its place as a genre—not as a politic, not as something you organize around. Feminist film study as a discipline is not political anymore.”

Two recent academic film conferences featuring special workshops on feminist film theory and pedagogy support Rich’s view of how academia has disconnected and isolated itself from contemporary independent feminist filmmaking—and politics. At the Society for Cinema Studies (SCS) May 2002 conference at a special workshop on feminist film many scholars lamented feminist film was moribund, citing the conference’s lack of stand-alone feminist panels. But many attendees, who cut their political teeth in the Marxist feminist film politics

of the 1970’s rather than the more textually-based psychoanalytic feminist paradigm, openly disagreed. They observed that feminist thinking has infused work in documentary, experimental film, digital culture, and early cinema—work that operates below the radar of Hollywood as intervention and opposition. Others criticized the panelists for only discussing American commercial cinema and ignoring independent feminist cinema and its connection to global politics. Nearly all the younger scholars, women of color, and queers walked out of the packed auditorium, silently protesting the exclusively white panel of senior women.

Another panel on feminist pedagogy at the University Film and Video Conference (UFVC) in August 2002 echoed the SCS event. When panelists shared syllabi with mostly Hollywood fare as models of how to teach women and film, conferees, both scholars and university-based filmmakers, launched into a debate about the necessity—and ethical urgency—for academics to function more like curators showing and discussing independently produced queer, multicultural, and international feminist work. “Although there are notable exceptions, feminist film scholars, in general, do not give feminist filmmaking the attention it rightly deserves,” says Marchetti.

Many graduate students, new professors, and emerging feminist filmmakers complain that the major academic professional organizations sanitize film culture: They separate the study of film and media from social, cultural, and political concerns. These younger scholars and filmmakers, who requested anonymity, have found it nearly impossible



Amy Villarejo’s *Key Frames: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies*, and Diane Waldman’s *Feminism and Documentary*. See reading list on page 54.

to get their research and films on race, sexuality, and nation into what they criticize as elite clubs of insulated, lethargic senior academics more concerned about career perks than changing the world. They contend that this over-professionalization of feminist film theory in the academy sandbags any hope of developing sustained institutional relationships between feminist academics and practicing mediamakers. Most of these younger academics have found themselves migrating to more interdisciplinary enclaves where intellectual risk taking, border crossing, and coalition building between communities and the academy is valued.

Scholars and festival programmers representing a range of experiences worry that academic feminist film theory and feminist film practice are detached and disconnected from each other. To many, the field of feminist film has morphed beyond critiques of patriarchy, reactionary feminism, and ivy-covered walls. "Feminist film has to interact with the world," explains Kara Keeling, a Carolina post-doctoral fellow at the University of North Carolina who wrote part of her dissertation on *Set It Off* and *Eve's Bayou*. "Critical theory, ethnic studies, and black studies have really challenged us to see film in terms of cultural production," Keeling explains. "We are no longer talking about film as discrete texts but as part of larger contexts of social, political, and economic relations."

A new generation of feminist filmmakers is emerging who reaped the benefits of the battles fought and won by the seventies women's movement through greater access to professional training and education. They now come to filmmaking with an expanded, different set of skills and ideas. Catherine Portuges, professor at the University of Massachusetts and curator of its Multicultural Film Festival, maintains that "the younger generation of makers have been educated in film schools—they are self-conscious about representation in often exciting ways."

In her role as a festival director, Portuges observes a much different, and in some ways much more academic, feminist filmmaking environment from the 1970's, 1980's, and 1990's. Filmmakers in the US are struggling to get their work out as arts funding has been catastrophically reduced for both nonprofit media production and media infrastructures. As a result, it is now almost impossible for independent filmmakers in any genre to earn their living as filmmakers. Portuges sees more and more filmmakers turning to MFA programs to secure credentials to teach at universities for job security and health insurance. And universities, looking to boost enrollments in highly attractive areas, have aggressively expanded film production offerings and filmmaking positions. Many more women teach film production at the university level than could ever have been imagined in 1975. With many more women filmmakers on the tenure track, academic careerism and advancement have put

a damper on more open, militant political engagement.

Perhaps as a consequence, most of these women do not seem to be producing films that are clearly labeled as feminist expressions. Ruth Bradley, director of the Athens International Film Festival at Ohio University, sees much less explicitly feminist work, and many more films making connections and links to other struggles by filmmakers such as Elisabeth Subrin, Leah Gilliam, and Ximena Cuevas (Mexico). "The most urgent and compelling feminist work right now looks at issues of justice, such as terrorism, globalization, the rise of religious fundamentalism around the world, civil liberties, and reproductive rights," according to Waldman.

More and more of that work is coming from outside of the US. Provocative, gusty female filmmakers are emerging across the globe—feminist film has internationalized. Paula Rabinowitz, professor of English at the University of Minnesota, contends that US-based feminism and feminist film lacks vitality compared to debates and works from post-communist Europe and Russia. Rich notes that at this year's Toronto Film Festival, coming-of-age films with an international flair from New Zealand (*Whale Rider*, by Nicki Caro), England (*Bend it Like Beckham*, by Gurinder Chada), and the US (*Real Women Have Curves*, by Patricia Cardozo) attracted large, enthusiastic audiences. "There are fabulous films being made by women. And the work has a public, unlike what we are told."

New, path-breaking feminist voices nurtured by cultures with different ideas and values are taking their place on the international stage. Margarita de la Vega-Hurtado, executive director of the Robert Flaherty Seminars and a former university professor of cinema, argues that Latin American women filmmakers such as Marta Rodriguez (Colombia) and Lucrecia Martel (Argentina) are more politically engaged than US-based filmmakers. "Latin American women's cinema has less focus on the individual and more on the collective."

Audacious, bold directors like Claire Denis (*Beau Travail*), Agnes Varda (*The Gleaners and I*), and Catherine Breillat (*Fat Girl*) evidence how feminist film can flourish—and innovate—in a climate of healthy public arts funding that values more than the box office numbers. France, for example, with some of the highest levels of funding for the arts in the world, has spawned a large group of women directors who take on hard questions of sexuality, race, class, and national identity for a larger audience. But in the United States, not only are filmmakers struggling with shrinking budgets, so are academics. Almost every university has downsized or restructured, leaving many professors with only \$500 a semester for film and video rentals, barely enough to rent two features on 16mm. Some universities don't even bother to screen film anymore, quietly pressuring faculty into renting from the video stores in order to deal with new austerity measures as endowments constrict

from the tanked stock market. As a result, many professors are forced to turn more and more to the examination of Hollywood product, not because these are better films or more contentious works of art, but because they can be rented for \$4 at Blockbuster. "With current budgetary restraints, it is easier to find financial support for commercial DVD's than highly experimental work, documentaries, or shorts," explains Christina Lane, author of *Feminist*

circumcision), *Shinjuku Boys* by Kim Longinotto and Jano Williams (transvestism), *Body Beautiful* by Ngozi Onwurah (interracial families and breast cancer), *Four Women of Egypt* by Tahani Rached (Middle East), *Performing the Border* by Ursula Biemann (global manufacturing), and *Senorita Extraviada*, *Missing Young Women* by Lourdes Petillo (unsolved murders in Mexico) top the list of WMM best sellers in academia, suggesting that feminist political con-

"It's hard to get undergraduates to adopt an open attitude toward work by women and more experimental forms," comments Christina Lane. "Most of the students ask, 'How is this course going to help me in my career?'"

Hollywood and assistant professor at the University of Miami. She also points out that the problems confronting university film programs cannot be blamed solely on budgetary myopia that limits financing the necessary infrastructures to support engagement with independent and international cinema. Many students come to film school ignited not by the love of exploring cinema, but by a lust for individual job advancement in the entertainment industry. "It's hard to get undergraduates to adopt an open attitude toward work by women and more experimental forms," comments Lane. "Most of the students ask, 'How is this course going to help me in my career?'"

Faculty from university film programs across the country point out that upper administration mandates to fill classes to capacity by appealing to student expectations often means teaching classes that analyze the contradictions operating in *The Matrix* and *Toy Story* rather than organizing a class to dive into unexplored, unsettling territory often mapped in independent feminist cinema. Only six percent of business for feminist-based independent distributor Women Make Movies (WMM) comes from academic rentals, a dramatic drop over the last five years, according to Director of Marketing Vanessa Domico. The company's largest customer base is university librarians. WMM offers special package pricing promotions (five for \$495) to address the declining budget issue.

Women Make Movies rental statistics belie the myth that most film academics are sitting at their computer terminals footnoting Jean Baudrillard for essays on *Lord of the Rings*. The most popular WMM rentals by academics suggest that ivory tower taste is not as white and apolitical as its professional organizations. *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter* by Deborah Hoffmann (which addresses Alzheimer's Disease), *Dialogues with Madwomen* by Allie Light (mental illness), *La Boda* by Hannah Weyer (border migrant life), *La Noubas des Femmes du Mont-Chenoua* by Assia Djebar (Algeria), *Warrior Marks* by Pratibha Parmar (female

cerns about the body, the nation, race, labor, and sexuality are entering classrooms, if not conferences.

But there are even conferences where academics and practitioners are finding common ground once again. Confronted by an ever-expanding, fragmented, and diverse field, many academics fantasize a weekend retreat where feminist media scholars and makers could commune to watch new work and talk—without formal papers. Important summits between scholars and filmmakers have materialized over the last two years: The 2002 Encuentro de Mujeres y Cine en América Latina meeting in Guadalajara, Mexico; the 2002 Germaine Dulac Film Retrospective and International Symposium in Frankfurt, Germany; and the 2000 Miramar Women Filmmakers Summit in California, organized by Alison Anders. The Digitalis meeting in Brussels in December 2002 convened women from varied national, race, and ethnic backgrounds, bringing together intellectual technicians and artists for highly galvanizing exchanges. And even more firmly rooted in academia, the prestigious feminist journal *Signs* is planning a special issue on the future of feminist film theory, featuring an exchange between B. Ruby Rich and Rosa Linda Fregoso.

Feminist film in the academy has not only surged beyond the male gaze, it's entered into the next generation of younger scholars who not only were schooled in feminist theory as undergraduates, but grew up during an era of independent film expansion around the globe. And they are importing this culture and experience into universities and films. "We're seeing a new, fresh, but well-seasoned academic: very smart, very savvy, and very much in sync with both the current political climate but also how that translates to film," Domico says. "It truly is very inspiring to work in this industry and have the type of environment that this collaboration fosters surrounding you." □

Patricia Zimmermann is a professor of cinema and photography at Ithaca College. Her most recent book is States of Emergency.

Essential Reading List in Feminist Media

By Sharon Lin Tay

Feminist media criticism and theory is a large, growing, and polymorphous field of study. These books explore its historical, political, and critical developments. They look at feminist works within the Hollywood system, in independent media sectors, international cinemas, and cyberspace. Most significantly, this list registers the expansion of the field through its embrace of internationalism, multiculturalism, and diverse sexualities.

Without Lying Down: Frances Marion and the Powerful Women of Early Hollywood, by Cari Beauchamp (University of California Press, 1997) <http://ucpress.edu>; \$19.95. Study of Frances Marion, Hollywood's highest paid scriptwriter from 1910's to 1940's.

Black Women Film and Video Artists, by Jacqueline Bobo (Routledge, 1998) www.routledge-ny.com; \$24.95. Collection of essays on African American women directors that traces a distinct historical and critical trajectory.

Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism, edited by Diane Carson, Linda Dittmar, and Janice R. Welsch (University of Minnesota Press, 1994) www.upress.umn.edu; \$22.95. Anthology of feminist discourses of the cinema, including a section for teachers of feminist film criticism and theory.

Femme Fatales: Feminism, Film Studies, and Psychoanalysis, by Mary Ann Doane (Routledge, 1991) www.routledge-ny.com; \$28. Noted feminist film theorist's essays on psychoanalysis, feminism, and theories of spectatorship and sexual difference in cinema.

The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture, by Rosa Linda Fregoso (University of Minnesota Press, 1993) www.upress.umn.edu; \$15.95. Study on contemporary Chicano cinema emphasizing gender and ethnicity.

Between the Sheets, In the Streets: Queer, Lesbian, Gay Documentary, edited by Chris Holmlund and Cynthia Fuchs (University of Minnesota Press, 1997) www.upress.umn.edu; \$21.95. Anthology of essays on queer cinema, social activism, and the documentary film.

The Women's Companion to International Film, by Annette Kuhn and Susannah Radstone (University of California Press, 1990) out of print. Invaluable reference book to women and film.

Feminist Hollywood: From Born in Flames to Point Break, by Christina Lane. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000) <http://wsupress.wayne.edu>; \$19.95. Study of women directors who work in Hollywood and independent film.

Romance and the Yellow Peril: Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction, by Gina Marchetti (University of California Press, 1993) <http://ucpress.edu>; \$19.95. Study of racial discourses in Hollywood cinema with an emphasis on the construction of the Orient.

Fetishism and Curiosity, by Laura Mulvey (British Film Institute and Indiana University Press, 1996) www.indiana.edu/~iupress; \$19.95. A pioneering feminist film theorist's work anthology.

Feminism and Film Theory, by Constance Penley (Routledge, 1988) www.routledge-ny.com; \$24.95. One of the few definitive anthologies on feminist film theory to emerge in the 1980's.

The New Latin American Cinema: A Continental Project, by Zuzana M. Pick (University of Texas Press, 1993) out of print. Study of the New Latin American Cinema movement, from its emergence in the 1960's to its acquisition of artistic and political prominence.

technics of cyberfeminism, Ed. Claudia Reiche and Andrea Sick (Thealit, 2002) www.thealit.dsn.de; 15 euros (approx. \$16.24). Reader of the major texts and polemics of cyberfeminism and new technologies.

Chick Flicks: Theories and Memories of the Feminist Film Movement, by B. Ruby Rich (Duke University Press, 1998) www.dukeupress.edu; \$19.95. Collection of Rich's film criticisms, contextualised with reflections on the feminist film movement of the 1970's and 1980's.

St. James Women Filmmakers Encyclopaedia: The Women on the Other Side of the Camera, (Visible Ink, 1999) <http://visibleink.com>; \$24.94. Reference book of women filmmakers with short critical essays, filmography, and biographical details.

Keyframes: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies, by Matthew Tinkcom and Amy Villarejo (Routledge, 2001) www.routledge-ny.com; \$24.95. Anthology of essays on cinema cultural studies approach.

Woman, Native, Other: Writing Post-coloniality and Feminism, by Trinh T. Minh-Ha (Indiana University Press, 1989) www.indiana.edu/~iupress; \$16.95. Interdisciplinary work of noted theorist, activist, and filmmaker that marks the confluence of ethnicity, femininity, and post colonial construction of these identities for the ethnic woman artist.

Shooting to Kill: How an Independent Producer Blasts Through the Barriers to Make a Movie that Matters, by Christine Vachon and David Edelstein (Quill, 1998) \$12.95. Independent producer of numerous successful queer films shares her experiences.

Feminism and Documentary, edited by Diane Waldman and Janet Walker (University of Minnesota Press, 1999) www.upress.umn.edu; \$19.95. Anthology on the implications of feminist perspectives on the documentary mode.

The Fruit Machine: Twenty Years of Writing on Queer Cinema, by Thomas Waugh (Duke University Press, 2000) www.dukeupress.edu; \$18.95. Collection of key writings on queer cinema from the late 1970's onwards.

States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies, Patricia R. Zimmermann (University of Minnesota Press, 2000) www.upress.umn.edu; \$19.95. A study on the political economy that seeks the privatization of film and media culture, and the implications for experimentation and independent filmmaking.

— Sharon Lin Tay is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of East Anglia.

Strange Bedfellows

WHAT A PRODUCER'S LAWYER SAYS ABOUT HER

By Anne C. Baker

Directors, screenwriters, or other creative persons, when negotiating a deal with a producer or production company for their work and talents, obviously want the best in terms of what can be obtained in rights, money, credit, etc. But equally (and frequently more) important is getting a better idea of who the producer is—what is the producer's reputation and track record, and what is he or she like to work with? The producer will affect the creative person's work process, the quality of the final project, and possibly the reputation and career of the creative person. Thus, it is essential to

ing, luring, and flattering—developing and establishing mutual interest. At this stage, the creative person should do his or her homework: Pick everyone's brains who might know or have worked with the producer; find out what the producer's track record is; find out if the producer has the means and relationships to actually bring the project to completion. If the producer is established in the industry, these things should not be difficult to find out. Since many producers move into film from other fields, investigating an unproven producer's business past is advisable. Internet searches, trade publications, and pro-

and often whether or not the deal happens at all. Professional listings, the lawyer's credentials, law firm websites, and word-of-mouth comments are all important sources of information for finding the right lawyer. As with the producer, you will need to do your homework when choosing a lawyer: Make an appointment for a face-to-face meeting to observe and assess the lawyer's style, personality, ego, and integrity. You must ask questions: Who are the lawyer's other clients? What are his or her specialties? How long has he or she been practicing entertainment law? What will the financial arrangements be? Of course, the lawyer's expertise and specialized knowledge of the deal are essential, but you also need to assess the lawyer's ability and willingness to draw out, listen to, and really hear your priorities. Your lawyer is the filter through which you can further assess



Tough negotiations can be expected, posturing can be expected, but a “pit bull” approach (bullying, threats, insults, or devious, erratic, and contradictory behavior) on the part of the producer’s lawyer is altogether different. It may be indicative of the producer’s modus operandi.

know as much as possible about who the producer is before entering into an agreement for a creative project. Unlike many other deals (e.g., one for the sale of property involving primarily the transfer of the property and the payment for it), a deal which relates to a creative project involves an ongoing interaction and relationship between the parties—a creative partnership or at least a creative coexistence between the parties after signing the agreement—one which, ideally, should include respect and trust.

During the initial courtship, before the negotiations really begin, both parties usually engage in mutual sell-

ing, luring, and flattering—developing and establishing mutual interest. At this stage, the creative person should do his or her homework: Pick everyone's brains who might know or have worked with the producer; find out what the producer's track record is; find out if the producer has the means and relationships to actually bring the project to completion. If the producer is established in the industry, these things should not be difficult to find out. Since many producers move into film from other fields, investigating an unproven producer's business past is advisable. Internet searches, trade publications, and professional organizations are good sources of information. Remember, people don't change their behavior and ethics just because they change industry. You, the creative person, must ask some important questions before you begin negotiating with a producer: What kind of financing has the producer obtained in the past? What was it like working with the producer? Was a creative dialogue possible? How did his or her other projects work out in the end?

Since your lawyer is your representative, negotiator, advisor, and guide, choosing the right lawyer is central to how the deal is made and structured,

the producer you will be working with if, the deal goes through. Knowing your lawyer and how he or she thinks is an important part of being able to make intelligent judgments and decisions during the negotiations.

You, as the creative element in the project, should stay actively involved in the negotiations: Confer with your lawyer, ask questions, challenge ideas and assumptions. It is at this time that, through your lawyer, you have a further opportunity to really get to know the producer; to learn how the producer behaves; to observe what tactics he or she or the lawyer uses when business is being conducted; to

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assess whether there is a climate of respect; whether consideration is given to reasonable requests (even if the request is not granted in the end); and ultimately, to determine whether or not the producer is someone you continue to believe in and want to work with. Just as your lawyer should represent your values and thinking, so do producers' lawyers reflect their clients' attitudes and ideas. Remember that the style, strategies, and negotiating methods of the producer's lawyer may well reflect the overall style, methods, and integrity of the producer.

Tough negotiations can be expected, posturing can be expected, but a "pit bull" approach (bullying, threats, insults, or devious, erratic, and contradictory behavior) on the part of the producer's lawyer is altogether different. It may be indicative of the producer's modus operandi, and you should be alert to tactics such as: frequent temperamental outbursts; changes of position and denials of such changes; telephone hang-ups; dragging out negotiations (resulting in escalation of legal fees for the creative person and potentially causing loss of professional opportunities); unwillingness to negotiate the deal as a whole, but rather only in pieces; over negotiating; unwillingness to compromise on minor issues; threats to walk away from the deal over minor points; imposing imminent and arbitrary deadlines; retractions of offers; and insistence on tough negotiations of standard terms.

If the producer has a known and successful reputation, "bad" negotiating behavior is not likely to outweigh the prospects that a prestigious producer can offer. The creative person wants, almost above all, to get a deal and to get his or her work in front of the public. But bad behavior during negotiations may still indicate problems that lie ahead. You should understand that you may be getting into a situation in which the producer will

treat you exactly as his or her lawyer is now treating yours.

An overly aggressive approach on behalf of a producer with no significant reputation should be viewed as suspect, even if that producer is clearly well funded. Although money speaks, it doesn't always speak the loudest. If a producer's representative overreaches, misrepresents, or engages in erratic, devious negotiating tactics, they are even more likely to be symptomatic of the personality and behavior of the producer. To some extent, your lawyer can protect you from the politics and positioning of the negotiation, but, as the client, you need to know about any major problems before agreeing to be legally bound to the producer. You will want to be able to build a productive relationship with a producer, and bad behavior during negotiations may make this impossible. You may not want to take a chance with a producer who engages in such tactics.

At a certain point during acrimonious negotiations, a director or writer who is offered a good financial deal and other acceptable terms with real potential may still decide: "No, I don't want to go forward, it's just not worth it. I believe in my work and I no longer trust the producer to respect its integrity." Most creative people at some time in their career will be faced with this extremely difficult decision: How much can I swallow for the chance—never the guarantee—to see my work "go public?"

The potential for getting the film made is exciting and seductive, but the potential of being involved with a disrespectful, untrustworthy producer in a creative endeavor for a significant period of time and becoming bound in a soured relationship can (and often should) shift the balance and blow the deal! ■

Anne Baker is an entertainment attorney and a partner the firm Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard LLP.



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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.

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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, media advocacy information, web-original material, 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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Sending Video into the Wide Wired World

CHOOSE THE RIGHT COMPRESSION SOFTWARE FOR YOUR VIDEO OR FILM

By Greg Gilpatrick

After years of saving money, finding the best crew, and refining your filmmaking skills, you finally produce the short film that will prove your talent as a filmmaker. Unable to wait for festivals or other distribution, you want to share your work with the world immediately by putting the movie on the web. But what ends up online is not your beautiful 16mm film, but something that looks like it was shot with a

processes for compressing audio and video that the independent maker can pick up without having to have a degree in engineering.

The biggest limitation to watchable video on the internet is bandwidth, the potential amount of data that can be transferred between points of the internet. Digital video files require a huge amount of bandwidth since they are very large. A five-gigabyte file may not seem like much, now that computers come

ate a large, slow-to-download file that looks good, or a small, quick file that looks degraded, but quality compression is a balance between squeezing the file size and still retaining the qualities of the image and sound that make the clip worth watching in the first place.

At the most basic level, compression is a manipulation of video data files using software that reduces redundancies within them. But in practice, the successful compression of video starts earlier, when a compressionist changes the aesthetic characteristics of a clip to make it look better once it's been treated with the encoding software. These steps include blurring, color correction, and cropping. Ideally, compression will factor in earlier in the production of web-destined video, because there are shooting techniques that are helpful to the encod-

Compression is not just a simple shrinking process . . . it is a field that draws upon both aesthetic and technical skills to deliver the smallest file that still retains the quality of the original media.

PixlVision camera with a shattered lens; the actors' performances now sound like police walkie-talkies; and it still takes twenty minutes to download the whole thing.

This example may be a little extreme, but it's not that far from what many filmmakers experience when putting their films on the web—the internet's promise of widespread distribution comes at a price of image and sound quality. Still, the internet does hold great promise as a way to share video with collaborators, friends, and a worldwide audience, but one must first master the complexities of preparing media for the internet—a process called compression. The last few years have seen the development of mature tools and

standard with hard drives of twenty gigabytes or more, but the internet moves data like a dripping faucet, compared to the reservoir of your computer's hard drive. The typical home user, even with a DSL or cable connection, does not have nearly enough bandwidth to download a full-screen, high-quality video with little compression. To solve this problem, video files need to be compressed so that they are small enough to download and play on a user's computer.

Compression is not just a simple shrinking process, though; it is a field that draws upon both aesthetic and technical skills to deliver the smallest file that still retains the quality of the original media. It is fairly easy to cre-

ing process, such as shooting on a tripod instead of handheld.

Once a video's image has been altered, the process of compressing the video file's data is accomplished with codec software. A codec—which stands for COmpressor/DECompressor—is a piece of software that analyzes the data of a video file and reduces redundancies within it. A codec is usually a piece of a larger video format. For example, the Sorenson Video codec is a piece of the QuickTime format. Most QuickTime-format video on the web is encoded with the Sorenson codec.

Codecs and the science of data compression are not easy topics for most filmmakers to comprehend. Fortunately, compression software takes care of much of the difficult

Cleaner 6

Mac OS 9, Mac OS X (Cleaner 5 is the current release for Windows users)

\$599 · Discreet—www.discreet.com

As the first one-stop solution for video compressionists, Cleaner has been part of the broadband media scene since before most people had e-mail. The latest version, Cleaner 6, focuses on the tasks vital to compressionists by honing the program's core tools and features. Instead of flashy new features, Cleaner 6 brings a refined interface, improved performance, and a few new tools that will make the program more useful for the people who use it on a regular basis.

Cleaner is a technical and utilitarian tool that baffles most filmmakers when they first see it. The whole concept of this program is based on the fact that digitized video files need to be altered and shrunk—compressed—before being delivered to computers for viewing. Video compression is certainly an important task for anyone who needs to distribute professional-looking videos to computers, but it's not exactly a subject to make the hearts of filmmakers pound with thoughts of creative potential. So through the years, Cleaner's various owners—Discreet is the third company to sell Cleaner—have added features to make each release appeal to buyers. Video capture from DV cameras was one such feature tacked on to make Cleaner seem more powerful. Realistically, hardly anyone used the program to capture video—video for compression usually comes after it has already gone through a whole postproduction cycle, not right out of the camera. Cleaner 6 removes such redundant features in order to return to the program's roots, focusing on video and audio compression. The result is a clean and direct interface that is easier to manage and does its job well. With fewer features to worry about, the Cleaner engineering team has made the program's core compression duties faster and more intuitive to control.

One cool thing about Cleaner's one-stop solution to encoding video is that it allows automated encoding of video into several formats. Automation and customization are the two prime reasons to invest in a compression program, and Cleaner 6 makes significant improvements in both areas. The automation now includes a feature called "watch folders" that allows Cleaner to automatically encode video files saved to a folder which it watches. Cleaner also can be set up to automatically upload files to a web server once it has finished compression. These automation features may be hard to

grasp for the novice compressionist, but they are especially important. To give an example, imagine having a piece of video that needs to be delivered to several different users over the internet and on DVD. By exporting a reference movie from your editing program, you can leave Cleaner alone all night to compress the files you need without requiring any supervision. Cleaner's automation tools are especially helpful for people with many pieces of media to compress at once. Consider a classroom full of video projects that are turned in the same day and all need to be posted to the internet. With Cleaner, this process is as simple as copying all the video projects to a folder that Cleaner is watching, and coming back a few hours later to view the compressed versions.

Cleaner 6 is the first release to support the new MPEG 4 media standard. MPEG 4 is an open standard for media over the internet, cable television, mobile devices, and other systems. Currently, QuickTime 6 is the main way to view MPEG 4 media, but there will almost certainly be many adoptions of the standard across the telecommunications industry. While

it is nice to see MPEG 4 tools inside Cleaner 6, the feature is not particularly useful since the standard is so new. In the future, MPEG 4 will be a way to deliver media that can be played by all media architectures, but in the meantime, you will get better image quality and smaller file size by sticking with the proprietary QuickTime settings—which is exactly what Cleaner's default is.

Though I was very happy with my experience with Cleaner 6, there were a few weaknesses I couldn't help noticing. Most notably, the program lacks any kind of support for compressing files for the new Flash MX video standard. I can't really hold it against Cleaner, though, because

the Flash video standard is so new. (Wildform's Flix www.wildform.com is a great encoder for the Flash video standard.) Another drawback that isn't really Cleaner's fault is the lack of RealVideo encoding in Mac OS X. The fault here lies directly with Real, which has not released a RealVideo encoding architecture compatible with Mac OS X. RealVideo encoding works fine in Mac OS 9 in Cleaner 6.

Overall, Cleaner 6 is a solid release of an essential program for video encoding. Although I would like to see Flash video features in this release, the new focus on improving the core feature set, along with support for MPEG 4, make the program a solid upgrade for current users and an attractive product for people requiring a heavy-duty encoding tool. Cleaner 6, being Mac-only, will be especially suited for people distributing QuickTime format media. □



work. There are two general types of software for video compression: Plugins and compression features that are added to video editing software, and specialized compression programs designed for people who prepare internet media on a regular basis. Which is best for you will depend on many factors, but mostly on how much control you want over your compressed media.

The current versions of most video editing programs include some export settings suitable for internet delivery. These output modules usually offer a few simple settings designed for the compression novice, but they do not offer enough control to create a file that both looks good and is quick to download. If you don't expect many people to view your work and don't think they will mind waiting a little longer for a download, then exporting directly from an editing program can be just fine. People who expect their work to be viewed many times and want the best experience for their audience will need to consider a separate compression program.

There are not many compression programs available. The two most popular are Cleaner (see sidebar review) and ProCoder (Conopus, \$699). These two serve as one-stop programs for encoding all the major formats. There are also other programs that encode for just one type of format, such as RealOne Producer for RealVideo, Windows Media Encoder for Windows Media, Sorenson Squeeze for QuickTime, and Wildform Flix Pro and Sorenson Squeeze for Flash MX video.

Cleaner and ProCoder are designed for users who need total control over all their encoding settings, and also include specialized tools to automate the process of compressing many clips into different formats and settings. These programs are a good choice if you foresee a need to constantly encode a large number of

video clips. If you are planning to encode just a few clips, you can get away with using one of the cheaper, single-format programs. Since those programs support only one or two formats, find out ahead of time what format you will need to distribute your film in and then select the appropriate software.

Once you have chosen your encoding program, you're going to need more reference help than any manual can provide. The best guidebook is Ben Waggoner's *Compression for Great Digital Video* (CMP Books, \$49). Waggoner claims to be the "world's greatest compressionist." I don't know if that's the case, but his book is a great resource for anyone who would want to challenge him for the title. The book performs the seemingly paradoxical act of being very readable while going into incredible technical detail. Waggoner leaves no subject untouched and explains such diverse topics as how eyes and brains interpret images, a few notes on information theory, how TV's and VTR's work, as well as information about preparing video for the internet. Although a little pricey, the knowledge contained inside the book will make a huge difference in the quality of your online video.

The process of video compression is quite different from filmmaking. Don't worry if you feel out of your league when trying to prepare your media for the web. The best advice I can give is to look at what's already available on the internet—check out the leading vendors of online video, and notice the quality and loading times of their clips. Experiment with your own media, making several versions at different settings—which is exactly what professional compressionists do to find the best settings for each clip. ■

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To reach him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

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Festivals

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 (e.g., April 1st for June issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.**

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

ANTELOPE VALLEY INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, May 9-11, CA. Deadline: Feb. 1 (early); March 15 (final). Cats: short, doc, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Entry Fee: \$20 (early); \$40 (Final). Contact: AVIFF, 3041 West Avenue K, Lancaster, CA 93536; (661) 722-6478; fax: 943-5573; info@aviff.com; www.aviff.com.

BEG AND GROVEL FILM FESTIVAL, April 25-27, SC. Deadline: March 1; March 15 (late). Cats: doc, feature, short, experimental, student, Human Rights. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, Mini-DV. Entry Fee: \$15 (shorts), \$25 (features); late: \$25 (shorts), \$35 (features). Contact: Wade Sellers, Hybrid Films, PO Box 1443, Columbia, SC 29202; (803) 929-0066; hybridfilms@hotmail.com; www.hybridfilms.org.

THE BRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL, May 17, NY. Deadline: April 14. Featuring films by middle- & upper school students 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: 643-4868; acohen@brooklynfriends.org; www.brooklynfriends.org/bridgofilm/index.html.

THE CINDY COMPETITION, fall & spring, CA. Deadline: Sept. 30, Mar. 31 (late). Competition is one of world's longest-running audiovisual events. Founded in 1959 to honor talents of industrial filmmakers, fest now celebrates linear & interactive multimedia. Event held twice/yr. Fall event in San Diego, CA; spring in New Orleans, LA. Last yr's event drew over 3,700 entries from 29 countries, particularly in over 100 broadcast & nonbroadcast cats. 13 regional competitions worldwide. Regional winners automatically eligible for final judging for intl fest. Founded: 1959. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, experimental, animation, music video, student, youth media, children, family, installation, any style or genre. Awards: Gold, Silver, Bronze & honorable mention awards presented, along w/ John Cleese Comedy Award, Wolfgang Bayer Cinematography Award, Robert Townsend Social Issues Award & others. Formats: web, CD-ROM, 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS.

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: 327-1547; info@cinesol.com; www.cinesol.com.

CONNECTICUT GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, May 30-June 7, CT. Deadline: March 31. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DVD, Video. Entry Fee: \$10 (US); \$15 (nonUS). Contact: Dan Millett, Film Alternatives, PO Box 231191, Harford, CT 06123; (413) 618-9312; glff@yahoo.com; www.ctglff.org.

COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 28, DC. Deadline: March 16. The fest showcases films & videos that have received the support of foundations & corporate giving programs. Cats: Works may be of any length, from feature length to brief public service announcement. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: no entry fees. Contact: Evelyn Gibson, 1828 L St. NW Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 467-0471; fax: 785-3926; gibse@cof.org; www.cof.org.



The Art of Hype

A unique concept in the crowded field of film festivals, Hypefest aims to bridge the gap between filmmakers and the commercial community by screening shorts, commercials, and music videos, as well as organizing a screenplay competition. The newly launched fest will

take place in Hollywood, CA, over two days that promise to showcase a diverse set of works from emerging filmmakers. As festival Co-Director Jessie Nagel puts it, "We believe our strength is connecting people, their stories, and their business." See listing.

Entry Fee: Varies w/ format. Contact: Festival, Box 250, 57 W. Palo Verde Ave., Ocotillo, CA 92259; (760) 358-7000; fax: 358-7569; sheemonw@cindys.com; www.cindys.com.

CINESOL LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, June 26-July 26, 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,

DA VINCI FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 18-20, OR. Deadline: March 20; April 30 (final). Fest is looking for original works not exceeding 30 min. in length (documentaries can only be a max of 60 min.). Founded: 1988. Cats: short, any style or genre. Awards: Juried & People's Choice Awards given in each category. Formats: film, video, digital. Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: college/indie \$15 (early), \$25 (final); K-12 \$5 (early), \$15 (final). Contact: Tina Buescher, 2015 SW Whiteside Dr., Corvallis, OR 97333; (541) 752-5584; davincifilmfest@aol.com; www.davinci-days.org; fax: 754-7590.

DAHLONEGA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 26-29, GA. Deadline: April 15. Festival offers underexposed film & video makers in emerging digital formats a higher profile venue. Cats: 15 cats (see website). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10-\$50. Contact: Barry Norman, 661 Windcroft Circle, Acworth, GA 30101; (404) 885-4410; fax: 885-0700; info@diff.tv; www.diff.tv.

HOT SPRINGS DOC FILM FESTIVAL, October 10-19, AR. Deadline: March 28; April 25 (late). Annual fest accepting nonfiction film submissions for one of the country's premier nonfiction film celebrations. Non-competitive fest honors films & filmmakers each yr. in beautiful Hot Springs Nat'l Park, Arkansas. More than 70 films are screened, incl. the current year's Academy Award nominees in nonfiction cats. Special guest scholars, filmmakers & celebrities participate in forums & lectures. Founded: 1992. Cats: doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DVD, DV, Mini Dv. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25. Contact: Melanie Masino, HSDFI, Box 6450, Hot Springs, AR 79102; (501) 321-4747; fax: 321-0211; hsdff@docufilmstorg; www.docufilmstorg.

HYPEFEST, July 25-27, CA. Deadline: Feb 13; April 30 (final). Fest accepting short films (50 min. or less), commercials, music videos & promos for competition screening. Only works completed in the current or previous yr. eligible. Cats: short, music video, commercials. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. Entry Fee: \$35, \$20 (student w/ ID); Final: \$45, \$30 (student). Contact: Festival, 5225 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 403, Los Angeles, CA 90036; (323) 938-8363; fax: 938-8757; info@hypefest.com; www.hypefest.com.

INT'L FAMILY FILM FESTIVAL, May 16-22, CA. Deadline: April 11. Formerly the Santa Clarita Int'l Film Festival, IFFF 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. Formats: 1/2", Beta SP, 35mm. Preview on VHS ONLY. Entry Fee: film \$80/\$40, screenplay \$60/\$45. Contact: Patte Dee, PO Box 801507, Santa Clarita, CA, US 91380; (661) 257-3131; fax: 257-8989; www.sciff.org; patted012@aol.com.

LOS ANGELES LATINO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 18-27, CA. Deadline: April 14. LALIFF is dedicated to presenting the diversity & qual-

ity of Latino films made in the US, Spain, South 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., Ste. #500, Los Angeles, CA 90028; (323) 469-9066; fax: 469-9067; mdermer@earthlink.net; www.latinofilm.org.

LUNAFEST, September-October, CA. Deadline: April 30. Fest seeks films by women, for women, or about women. 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.

MADCAT WOMEN'S INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, September, CA. Deadline: April 4; June 4 (late). MadCat showcases innovative & challenging works from around the globe. Works can be produced ANY year. 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.

MAINE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 11-20, ME. Deadline: March 15 (early); April 30 (final). 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: \$35, \$40 (final). Contact: MIFF, 10 Railroad Sq., Waterville, ME 04901; (207) 861-8138; fax: 872-5502; info@miff.org; www.miff.org.

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MARGARET MEAD FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, November 7-10, NY. Deadline: March 1; April 5 (late). Premiere US fest for nonfiction work, with no restrictions on subject, length, or year of production. Founded: 1977. Cats: short, doc, animation, experimental, student, youth media. Awards: no awards; some financial assistance and honoraria. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. 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.

MAUI FILM FESTIVAL, June 11-15, HI. Deadline: March 20, April 20 (final). Compassionate & life-affirming storytelling in exemplary films from any & everywhere on Earth. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, animation, experimental, children. Awards: Silversword Awards, Audience, Feature Dramatic, Short, Feature Doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Barry Rivers, PO Box 790669, Paia, HI 96779; (808) 579-9996 or (888) 999 6330; fax: (808) 579-9552; mauiilmfest@mauiilmfest.com; www.mauiilmfest.com.

NANTUCKET FILM FESTIVAL, June 19-22, MA. Deadline: April 11 (film), March 14 (screenplay competition). Fest focuses on screenwriters & their craft. 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, 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 4. 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: \$3,000 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 Copop/NJMAC, 72 Lipman Drive, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (732) 932-8482; fax: 932-1935; njmac@aol.com; www.njfilmfest.com.

NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL, July, NY. Deadline: March 10. All work must be originally produced and/or postproduced in video/computer. NY premieres preferred. Founded: 1992. Cats: experimental. Formats: 1/2", 3/4", Beta SP, CD-ROM, Digital. Preview on 3/4", 1/2" (NTSC, PAL), CD-ROM (for PC). Do not submit preview in Beta. Do not send masters; tapes not returned. No entry fee. Contact: Sara Bensman, c/o Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, 4th Flr., New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; fax: 875-5636; sbensman@filmlinc.com; www.filmlinc.com.

NEXTFRAME, UFVA's touring festival of international student film and video, Oct., PA. Deadline: March 31, May 31 (late). 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 July. Year-long int'l tour of finalists begins after premiere. Tour travels to major universities & art centers across the US & around the globe. Past int'l venues have incl. Chile, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, & Portugal. Founded: 1993. Cats: doc, experimental, animation. 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: 204-6740; nextfest@temple.edu; www.temple.edu/nextframe.

OUTFEST: THE LOS ANGELES GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, July 10-21, CA. Deadline: March 14 (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 lab. Founded: 1982. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Features (over 60 min.): \$25, \$35 (late); Shorts: \$15, \$25 (late). Contact: Festival, 3470 Wilshire Blvd, Ste 1022, Los

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Angeles, CA 90010; (213) 480-7088; fax: 480-7099; programming@outfest.org; www.outfest.org.

PORTLAND WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, May 29 June 1, OR. Deadline: March 31; April 15 (final). Fest will showcase films & videos directed by women from around the US & beyond. Fest is open to all subject matter & production formats. The goal of POW! Fest is to provide a unique screening opportunity for emerging female filmmakers. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, short, any style or genre. Awards: Jury & Audience Awards. Formats: 16mm, DVD, 1/2", Super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (shorts, under 25 min.), \$30 (feature). Contact: Zonker Films, 6504 NE 22nd Ave, Portland, OR 97211; pow@zonkerfilms.com; www.zonkerfilms.com.

REAL TO REEL FILM FESTIVAL, July 17-19. Deadline: March 15, April 30 (late). Fest encourages independent film artists of all genres & skill levels to submit their work to this int'l competition, which allows students, amateurs & professionals a chance to exhibit their work. Founded: 2000. Cats: doc, short, animation, feature, music video, student. Awards: Best-of-show in all cats. Formats: 1/2", DVD. Entry Fee: \$35 (over the age of 18), \$15 (18 & under); late: \$50 (over 18) \$25 (18 & under). Contact: Paul Foster, Cleveland County Arts Council, 111 S. Washington St, Shelby, NC 28150; (704) 484-2787; fax: 481-1822; ccarts@shelby.net; www.realtoreelfest.com.

SAN ANTONIO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-22, TX. Deadline: April 9. Looking for features & shorts out of the mainstream. Include two-sentence synopsis. Cats: any style or genre, doc, short, feature. Awards: Grand Prize: Lowrider Bicycle. Formats: VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20, \$30 (late). Contact: Adam Rocha, 8030 Callaghan Rd., #611 PMB, San Antonio, TX 78230; (210) 977-9004; info@safilm.com; www.safilm.com.

SAN DIEGO ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, October 2-5, CA. Deadline: April 15, May 30 (late). Annual competitive fest, presented by the Asian American Journalists Association of San Diego seek short- to feature-length narratives, docs, experimental, animation & mixed-genre works made by or about Asian & Pacific Americans. Entry form avail. from website. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, animation, mixed genre works, short. Awards: Awards incl. Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc, Best Experimental, & Best

Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15, \$25 (late). Contact: Entry Coordinator, c/o Steve Lukas, 10084 Kaufman Way, San Diego, CA 92126; (858) 699-2722; info@sdaff.org; www.sdaff.org.

SAN FRANCISCO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, July 25-Aug. 12, CA. Deadline: March 15. Estab. in 1980, noncompetitive fest showcases new independent American Jewish-subject cinema & diverse selection of foreign films. Fest presents dramatic, doc, experimental & animated shorts & features about Jewish history, culture & identity. Filmmakers need not be Jewish; films selected by subject. 35-40 films showcased each yr. Founded: 1981. Cats: doc, experimental, animation, feature, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Contact: Janis Plotkin or Sam Ball, 145 9th Street, Ste. 200, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-0556; fax: 621-0568; jewishfilm@sffjff.org; www.sffjff.org.

SHRIEKFEST FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 11-12, CA. Deadline: March 21 (early), Aug. 8 (reg), Sept. 5 (late). Shriekfest, the annual Los Angeles Horror Film Festival held at Raleigh Studios in Hollywood. 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, young filmmaker (under 18). Awards: Best Young Filmmaker, Best Film, Fan Favorite, Scariest Film, Best Screenplay, Best Make-up, Best FX. Entry Fee: early, \$25 (shorts), \$35 s(features); regular, \$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.

SPROUT FILM FESTIVAL, May 31, NY. Deadline: March 15. Festival was created to showcase film & video related to the field of developmental disabilities at screening at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Entry Fee: \$15, \$25 (over 30 min.). Contact: Anthony Di Salvo, 893 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10025; (212) 222-9575; anthony@gosprout.org; www.gosprout.org/filmfest.html.

STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL, July 16-26, NY. Deadline: April 15. Eleven days, fifty screenings of features & short films ranging from the best & most exciting foreign, art & popular films to world & US premieres of the best independent cinema from the US & abroad. Cats: feature,

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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) 632-7234; fax: 632-7354; filmfest@stonybrookfilmfest.com; www.stonybrookfilmfest.com.

VIDEOGRAPHER AWARDS, April, TX. Deadline: March 14. Event is an awards program to honor talented individuals & companies in the video production industry. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Awards given for video production & special events video. Formats: S-VHS, DVD, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, Beta SP, CD-ROM. Entry Fee: \$40. Contact: VA, 2214 Michigan, Ste. E, Arlington, TX 76013; (817) 459-0488; fax: 795-4949; info@videoawards.com; www.videoawards.com.

INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA IN THE PICTURE, Sept. 3-14, Netherlands. Deadline: April 15. Africa In the Picture is one of the oldest African film fests in Europe. Held in Amsterdam & a number of other cities in the Netherlands, featuring works from Africa & the African Diaspora. Founded: 1987. Cats: feature, doc, short. Preview on VHS PAL/NTSC. No Entry Fees. Contact: Sasha Dees, Notorious Film, 207 W. 102nd Street, #5A, New York, NY 10025; (212) 864-5921; deessasha@cs.com; www.africainthepicture.nl.

BRISBANE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 29-Aug. 10, Australia. Deadline: April 8. More than 200 films, docs, shorts & animations at venues across Brisbane. Also adding to the fest fever will be the much-anticipated announcement of the Chauvel Award winner. Past winners 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, GPO Box 909, Brisbane, 4001, Australia; 011 61 7 3007-3003; fax: 011 61 7 3007-3030; biff@biff.com.au; www.biff.com.au.

COLOGNE INT'L TELEVISION & FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-25, Germany. Deadline: March 15. Founded: 1990. Cats: TV, feature, doc, any style or genre. Awards: TV Spielfilm Award, Phoenix Award, Author Award, Producer Award, Casting Award. Formats: 1/2", DVD,

Betacam. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Andreas Grabel, Cologne Conference GmbH, Im Mediapark 5 b, Koln, Germany 50670; 49 221 454 3280; fax: 454 3289; info@cologne-conference.de; www.cologne-conference.de.

COMEDIA, July 10-20, Canada. Deadline: March 31. Comedy feature programming as part of Just for Laughs, the Montreal Int'l Comedy Festival. 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. 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 10-20, Canada. Deadline: April 1. Comedy shorts programming as part of Just for Laughs, the Montreal Int'l Comedy Festival. Founded: 1997. Cats: comedy short films (funny, or funny & twist-ed), short. Awards: Best Film Jury Prize. Formats: Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Katharine Harris, Just for Laughs, 2101 St-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2T5; shorts@hahaha.com; www.hahaha.com.

FEST INT'L DU DOCUMENTAIRE (MARSEILLE), June 27-July 2, France. Deadline: March 15. Festival is open to every form, past & present, of doc film. Cats: doc. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Michel Tregan, 14 Allée Léon Gambetta, Marseille, 13001; 33 (0)4 95 04 44 90; fax: 33 (0)4 95 04 44 91; welcomer@fidmarseille.org; www.fidmarseille.org.

FUKUOKA ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, early July, Japan. Deadline: March 31. 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. No entry fee. Contact: Shu Maeda, Hirako bldg., 4th fl., 2-4-31, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka, Japan 810-0041; 011 81 92 733-0949; fax: 81 92 733-0948; faff@gol.com; www2.gol.com/users/faff/english.html.

HUESCA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 5-14, Spain. Deadline: April 1. Competitive showcase for Spanish & foreign short films has aim of "the dissemination of image as a con-

tribution 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 the last 2 years & be under 30 min. Of approx. 1,000 entries received each year, about 200 shown. Founded: 1971. Cats: short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS, Beta or DVD (NTSC). No entry fee. Contact: Jose Maria Escriche, Apartado 174, Huesca, Spain 22080; 011 34 9 74 21 25 82; fax: 21 00 65; huescafest@tsai.es; www.huesca-filmfest.com.

HUNGARIAN MULTICULTURAL CENTER FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 18-22, Hungary. Deadline: April 2. Annual fest accepts film is dedicated to promoting cultural expansion of the visual arts between Hungary & the United States. Work must be under 30 min. in length & completed in past 2 years. Cats: animation, feature, short, doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS (NTSC), incl. SASE for return. Entry Fee: \$35. Contact: Hungarian Multicultural Center, Inc., PO Box 141374, Dallas, TX, US 75214; (972) 225-8053; fax: 308-8191; bszechy@yahoo.com.

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL CINEMA JOVE, June 14-21, Spain. Deadline: April 15. Cinema Jove has two cats: Official Int'l Category for Videocreation, Electronic Graphics & Computer Graphics (open to any videomaker born after January 1, 1965), & Official Nat'l Category for Short Fictions produced on video (open to those born or resident in the Spanish State, born after Jan. 1, 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. No Entry fees. Contact: Rafael Maluenda, Festival Director, Calle Jeronimo de Monsoriu, 19, Valencia, Spain 46022; 011 34 96 331 10 47; fax: 331 08 05; cinemajove@ivaj.gva.es; www.gva.es/cinemajove.

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL INNSBRUK, June 18-22, Austria. Deadline: April 15. Films from & about Africa, South America & Asia. Founded: 1992. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Tyrol Award; Cine Tirol Distributor's Prize; Audience Award; French Cultural Institute's Francophone Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS PAL. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Raimund Obkircher, Otto Preminger Institute,

Museumstrasse 31, Box 704, Innsbruck, Austria 6020; 011 43 512 57 85 00-14; fax: 011 43 512 57 85 00-13; info@iffi.at; www.iffi.at.

INT'L SCIENTIFIC FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 27-Oct. 2, Hungary. Deadline: March 31. This fest presents film & video works of various genres which are somehow related to science: they deal w/ scientific work & achievements, or science plays an important part in their plot, language, or manner of interpretation. Festival provides free accommodations for accepted filmmakers. Cats: doc, short, experimental, animation. Preview on VHS PAL (not returned). No entry fee. Contact: Istvan Demeter, Tisza Mozi, Ltd., Templom u. 4., Szolnok, Hungary 5000; 36 56 511 270; fax: 420 038; tiszamozi@mail.externet.hu; www.tiszamozi.hu.

JERUSALEM INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 10-19, Israel. Deadline: April 18. Founded: 1984. Cats: feature, short, retro, 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. No entry fee. Contact: Lia van Leer, Box 8561, Derech Hebron, Jerusalem, Israel 91083; 011 9722 565 4333; fax: 011 9722 565 4333; fest@jer-cin.org.il; www.jff.org.il.

MELBOURNE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 23-Aug. 10, Australia. Deadline: March 22 (shorts), April 14 (features). Established in 1952, the Melbourne Int'l Film Festival is the oldest established Film Festival in the Southern Hemisphere & 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, spotlights on filmmakers, genres & retros. Founded: 1952. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$40 (short films only). Contact: Brett Woodward, Box 2206, Fitzroy Mailing Center, Fitzroy, Australia

3065; 011 61 3 417 2011; fax: 61 34173804; miff@melbournefilmfest.com.au; www.melbournefilmfest.com.au.

MILANO INT'L GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, May 28-June 3, Italy. Deadline: April 20. The largest event of public screenings of lesbian & gay films in Milan. 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). No entry fee. Contact: Giampaolo Marzi, C/O MBE 209, Via Del Torchino 12, Milano, Italy 20123; 011 39 023 319 118; fax: 39 0272 002 942; marzig@energy.it; www.cinema.gaylesbico.com.

PESARO FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-28, 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, non-fiction. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, U-matic, Betacam. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Fondazione Pesaro, Nuovo Cinema, Via Villafranca 20, Rome, 00185, Italy; 39 06 445 66 43; 49 11 56; fax: 49 11 63; pesarofilmfest@mclink.it; www.pesarofilmfest.it.

REVELATION PERTH INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 19-29, Australia. Deadline: April 11. Australia's major alternative film fest. Fest seeks to bring to Oz the best in maverick spirit & individual filmic style. Founded: 1998. Cats: Doc only for 2001, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Betacam SP, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$33. Contact: Richard Sowada, PO Box 135, Sth Fremantle, WA, Australia 6162; 011 61 8 9335 2991; fax: 61 8 9335 1589; admin@revelationfilmfest.org; www.revelationfilmfest.org.

VILA DO CONDE INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, June 29-July 6, Portugal. Deadline: April 15. Annual fest accepting films under 60 min. produced in the previous 2 yrs. Founded: 1993. Cats: short, doc, animation, any style or genre, experimental. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Mario Micaelo, Auditorio Municipal, Praca da Republica, Vila do Conde, Portugal 4480-715; 011 351 252 646 516; fest@curtasmetragens.pt; www.curtasmetragens.pt.

Films/Tapes Wanted

By Charlie Sweitzer

Noncommercial notices and screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Commercial notices are billed at classified rates. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., April 1 for June issue). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending.

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West 8th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. No minors. Prizes galore. For more info, call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience-dialogue must be subtitled. Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental for ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.



The Many Faces of Urban Mediamakers

Indie Cinema Night is an Atlanta-based monthly screening series that seeks short and feature work in any genre from filmmakers around the world. But Indie Cinema Night is just one of the many thriving branches of Atlanta's Urban Mediamakers Association. The quarterly Screenwriters Forum gives writers the opportunity to see their scripts read by actors in front of a live audience, and the Young Urban Mediamakers program teams younger filmmakers with mentors. Most recently, February marked the start of the Let the Good Times Roll! lunchtime film series for senior citizens. For more info, see the Indie Cinema Night listing.

S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, LA, CA 90028. Tel. (323) 466-3456 x115; fax (323) 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30- to 90-min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

FREEDOM FILM SOCIETY, presenter of the Red Bank Int'l Film Festival, seeks short (45 min. or fewer) & feature-length narrative, documentary, experimental & animated works for monthly screenings in NJ. Send preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry fee: shorts, \$25; features, \$45. Ph./fax: (732) 741-8089; contact@rbff.org; www.rbff.org/entry_form/submit.html.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in *Urban Mediamakers* magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. Tel. (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE seeks short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive 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 w/ name, title, length, phone #, & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St, San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

OCULARIS provides a forum for film & video makers to exhibit their work at Brooklyn's Galapagos Art & Performance Space. All works are considered for programming in our weekly series, travelling programs & other special projects. Local film/video makers can submit works under 15 min. to Open Zone, a quarterly open screening. Nat'l/int'l works & medium-length works (15-45 min.) will be considered for curated group shows. For submission guidelines & other info, visit www.ocularis.net; shortfilms@ocularis.net.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of

experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features discussion & reception after the screening. Any length or genre. Connection to New England through subject matter, locations, or hometown of filmmakers helpful but not required. Send VHS preview tape to: Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

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 bio & contract info. Deadline: ongoing. Tapes are not returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions & 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.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.artingeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013. Tel.: (212) 219-0473.

SPARK CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE is a collectively run gallery in Syracuse, NY. Currently accepting submissions of short (fewer than 15 min.) art videos for the next

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UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept., Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

SHOWCASES

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA features the excitement of an annual film festival w/ a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest & movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films & features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin w/ a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations & 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.

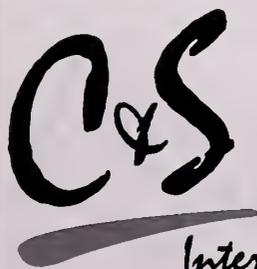
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SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films which airs nat'lly on PBS. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program & Cox Channel 4. Awards 5 Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266; ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

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Kathryn Bigelow- K-19: The Widowmaker, The Weight of Water
Lisa Cholodenko- High Art, Laurel Canyon
Sabrina Dhawan- Monsoon Wedding
Nicole Holofcener- Walking and Talking, Lovely and Amazing
Mo Ogrodnik- Ripe, Molly Gunn
Katharina Otto- The Need for Speed, Beautopia
Kim Peirce- Boys Don't Cry
Sarah Rogacki- Rhythm of the Saints
Maureen Ryan- Wisconsin Death Trip
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Notices

By Charlie Sweitzer

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., April 1 for June issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS bridge 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.

CYNOSURE SCREENWRITING AWARDS, presented by BroadMind Entertainment, is open to feature-length screenplays in two categories: scripts w/ female protagonists & scripts w/ minority protagonists (male & female). Works must not have been previously optioned, purchased, or produced & must be registered w/ the WGA or US copyright office. One \$2,000 award issued in each category. Entry fee: \$45, regular (postmarked by April 5); \$50, late (postmarked by May 3). Tel.: (310) 855-8730; cynsoure@BroadMindEnt.com; www.BroadMindEnt.com.

SCRIPTAPALOOZA 5TH ANNUAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION awards a first prize of \$10,000 & screenwriting software for the 3 winners and 10 runners-up. All 13 winners will be considered by Scriptapalooza's 40 out-

standing participants which include A Band Apart, Samuel Goldwyn Films, Film Colony, Evolution, Phoenix Pictures, and many more. Sponsored by Write Brothers, ScriptMag.com and WritersScriptNetwork.com. Regular deadline: March 3, 2003 (entry fee \$45). Late deadline: April 15, 2003 (entry fee \$50). www.scriptapalooza.com; (323) 654-5809.

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 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) during operating hours and sign up, or get in touch with Jim at (212) 254-7107 or jim@twoboots.com.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

TAOS WOMEN FILMMAKERS RETREAT 2003 seeks entries for 10-day retreat (Aug. 24-Sep. 3) at Georgia O'Keefe's Ghost Ranch, in New Mexico that will focus on digging deeply into the stories women filmmakers "really" want to tell. Only 20 applicants will be selected, so apply early. Deadline: Mar. 15. Submit your script, synopsis, outline & completed entry form (see www.tanomedianstitute.com) w/ a nonrefundable application check of \$50 payable to S.E.E./Tano Media Institute & mail to: Tano Women Filmmakers Retreat/Submissions, 1115 N. Flores St., Suite #10, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

TORONTO DOCUMENTARY FORUM runs from April 30 to May 1 and is held in conjunction with the Hot Docs Canadian Int'l Documentary Festival. The Forum is a co-financing market for Canadian & int'l filmmakers working in the social, cultural & political doc genres. 36 projects will be selected for 15 min. pitch sessions. Though the deadline for pitching has passed, observer seats are available for \$295 until Mar. 21. Tel.: (416) 203-2155 x228; info@hotdocs.ca; www.hotdocs.ca.

PUBLICATIONS

FELIX is a journal of media arts & communication. The next issue will be edited by Kathy High w/ guest editors Ximena Cuevas, Roberto Lopez & Jesse Lerner. Entitled RISK/RIESGO, it will be the magazine's first

bilingual issue (in Spanish & English) & will ask: What makes work/life/art risky business? What is the gamble? Where is the dare, the hazard, the danger? Felix is published by the Standby Program, Inc. Order by phone: (212) 219-0951; www.e-felix.org.

OTHERZINE, the e-zine of Craig Baldwin's Othercinema.com, seeks written works fewer than 1,000 words in length, including interviews, filmographies, alternative histories of obscure or marginalized work, criticism & theory. Previously published work welcome, though work previously published on the internet is not eligible. Text formats: MS Word, ASCII text & HTML. Submit to: noellawrence@sprintmail.com; www.othercinema.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

AGAPE FOUNDATION'S DAVID R. STERN MEMORIAL FUND offers loans to film projects committed to nonviolent social change. \$3,000 will be loaned for up to three months to filmmakers who promote the use of nonviolence in their work. Applications are due by the last business day of each month. (415) 701-8707; agapefn@sirius.com.

ALASKA HUMANITIES FORUM awards approx. \$100,000 yearly to nonprofit organizations & individuals. Grants generally go to projects that have an impact in Alaska through their subject, focus, analysis, or activities. Radio, TV, film, print & other media projects considered. Next grant deadline: Apr. 1. For more info, call (907) 272-5313; fax (907) 272-3979; grants@akhf.org; www.akhf.org.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's 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 & communities. Funding for research & 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.

EMEDIALOFT.ORG CREATIVE PROJECTS GRANT provides ongoing fee support for 8 artists a year w/ creative/fictional narrative

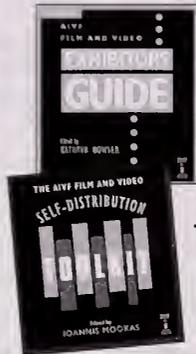
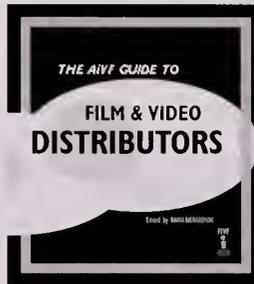
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The AIVF Film and Video Exhibitors Guide

Profiles of over 800 screening venues in the US: commercial art houses to schools to artists' spaces – with complete contact info. Kathryn Bowser, ed.; ©2000; \$35 / \$25 members

The AIVF Film and Video Self-Distribution Toolkit

Interviews with industry professionals and filmmaker case studies show how to make a go on your own and come out ahead. Ioannis Mookas, ed.; ©1999; \$30 / \$20 members

...or order both Self-Distribution titles for \$60 / \$40 members

Other essential resources for independents:

The AIVF Guide to Int'l Film & Video Festivals Michelle Coe, ed.; ©2001; \$35 / \$25 members

The Next Step: Distributing Independent Films and Videos Morrie Warshawski, ed.; ©1995; \$24.95

The Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit ©2001 (see www.mediarights.org/toolkit)

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projects who will work 50 hours to produce/postproduce digital video w/ editor/videographer. Documentaries, political & promotional tapes are not covered by this grant, but low rates & discounts for all work are available. There is no self-use of the equipment; grant recipients will work w/ editor/videographer. Send 250-200 word project description, resume & S.A.S.E. to Bill Creston & Barbara Rosenthal, eMediaLoft, 55 Bethune St., #A-628, NY, NY 10014-2035.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundation's goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote int'l cooperation & advance human achievement. tel.: (212) 573-5000; fax: (212) 351-3677; office-secretary@fordfound.org; www.fordfound.org.

HARBURG FOUNDATION seeks letters of inquiry for possible future funding for controversial, risky, or innovative projects that use communication systems (radio, computer, television, theater, documentary film, books) to educate & inform about serious issues. Preference given to new works. Contact Ernie Harburg; (212) 343-9453; ernie@harburgfoundation.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd; tel.: (651) 224-9431, or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766; fax: (651) 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

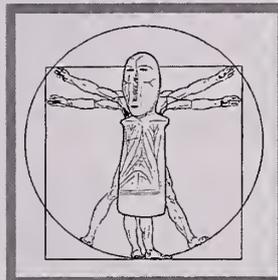
LOCAL INDEPENDENTS COLLABORATING WITH STATIONS (LINC) FUND is a funding initiative from Independent Television Service (ITVS) that provides matching funds (\$10,000-\$75,000) for collaborations between public TV stations & indie producers. Single shows & interstitial pkgs will be considered, as are projects in any genre or stage of development. Programs should stimulate civic discourse & break traditional molds of exploring complex regional, cultural, political, social, or economic issues. Indie film & videomakers are encouraged to seek collaborations w/ their local public TV stations. Deadline: April 30, 2003. Guidelines and applications at

www.itvs.org, or call Elizabeth Meyer, (415) 365-8383 x270; elizabeth_meyer@itvs.org.

NATHAN CUMMINGS FOUNDATION is rooted in the Jewish tradition & committed to democratic values & social justice, including fairness, diversity & community. Supporting artistic projects, including exhibitions & education outreach, that provide a deeper understand-

fee: \$25. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Annie Moriyasu, Media Fund, PIC, 1221 Kapi'olani Blvd, Ste. 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814; tel.: (808) 591-0059; fax: 591-1114; amoriyasu@piccom.org; www.piccom.org.

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films, lectures, conferences, research, and many other media which deal with Alaska, its people, and its art are considered. For more info, see listing below or visit www.akhf.org.

ing of issues pertaining to health, the environment & Jewish life. Grants range from \$10,000 to \$80,000. For more info, tel: (212) 787-7300; www.ncf.org.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, along w/ instruction & technical support. Students, media arts center members & unaffiliated independents are encouraged to apply. Commercial projects, music videos & PSAs not considered. Feature-length works are also discouraged. Provides camera on year-round basis. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 weeks minimum for processing. tel.: (206) 467-8666; fax: (212) 467-9165; filmgrant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS (PIC) COMPLETION FUNDS are provided for the final preparations of broadcast masters of Pacific Island-themed programs intended for nat'l public television. Categories: documentary, performance, children's & cultural affairs programming. PIC is particularly interested in projects that examine & illuminate realities of Pacific Islander issues such as diversity, identity & spirituality. Full-length rough cut must be submitted w/ application. Must be PBS standard lengths. Awards range from \$20,000 to \$30,000. Application

genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

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; www.fex.org/2.3.3_robeson.html.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area & Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must have nonprofit status/fiscal sponsorship. Send letter of inquiry and synopsis to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave., #209, San Francisco, CA 94133-3930; (415) 391-0911; <http://fdncenter.org/grantmaker/gerbode>.

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FIELD PRODUCERS SOUGHT for broadcast and non-broadcast series on health care beginning in 2003. Must have broadcast experience. Health care experience a plus. Send resumes and reels to Crosskeys Media, 2060 Alameda Padre Serra, Santa Barbara, CA 93103.

FORTRESS FILMS is looking for erotic, romantic, and action thriller screenplays for possible development. Low to medium budget. Submission should include feature-length script and a synopsis. Sent to: Fortress Films, 251 53rd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220.

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AT WWW.AIVF.ORG**

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Unless noted, AIVF programs take place at our offices (see below). RSVP is required for all AIVF events: call (212) 807-1400 x301 or www.aivf.org.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL

when: March 5-11
where: Anthology Film Archive, 32 2nd Ave. (at 2nd St.)



The 10th NYUFF returns with its unconventional showcase of experimental, nonfiction, and fiction features and shorts from video and filmmakers around the world. Don't miss the following AIVF panel:

reach AIVF...

Filmmakers' Resource Library

hours: Wed. 11-9

or by apt. to AIVF members

Tue., Thur., Fri. 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

DVD DIY

when: March 8, 12 p.m.

where: Anthology Film Archives

cost: Free and open to the public

With tools for creating DVD's in the feature sets of many new editing systems, most filmmakers are wondering how they can best exploit the new distribution medium. A panel of DVD experts will discuss the pros and cons of turning out work on DVD, what type of features are possible on a small budget, how to find distribution for independent DVD's, and what influences the format can have upon the future of filmmaking.

All NYUFF panels are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Check in online at www.aivf.org or www.nyuff.com for complete details.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN CINEMA FILM FESTIVAL



when: March 7-8

where: Tribeca Film Center, 375 Greenwich St., New York, NY

The AAWIC Film Festival is devoted to fostering continual awareness of artistic minority women in cinema. The festival showcases features, documentaries, shorts, and animation films by African, Latino, or Asian Diaspora women. AAWICFF is pleased to announce the premiere of the Screenplay Competition, sponsored by the Writers Script Network.

For more information on the African American Women in Cinema Film Festival, visit www.aawic.org.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS SXSW FILM FESTIVAL



when: March 7-15

where: Austin Convention Center

Through memorable and groundbreaking films, inspired panel discussion, and a comprehensive trade show, SXSW Film Festival offers a wealth of opportunity for anyone with a passion for the movies. At SXSW, AIVF will be cosponsoring the following panel discussions:

RAISING MONEY

when: March 8, 11-12:30 p.m.

Robert Townsend maxed out his credit cards. Robert Rodriguez took part in a pharmaceutical study. What are you willing to do? You have an idea that demands to be made into a film, and you need to raise money. As is the case with all aspects of the independent film industry, creativity is a must.

DOCUMENTARY DISTRIBUTION

when: March 11, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

What's more of a documentary success story: *Bowling For Columbine* or *The Osbournes*? There are many options for a documentarian who wants to share his or her work with the world, but how will the mainstream of 2003 view your film, and what distribution outlets are really viable for nonfiction work?

For more on the SXSW Film Festival, visit www.sxsw.com

**AIVF CO-SPONSORS
ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY
MEDIA NORTHEAST
REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

when: March 13-15

where: Brooklyn Marriott Hotel

cost: \$45 1 to 2-day reg (\$30 AIVF members); \$60 3-day full reg. (\$45 AIVF members)

Optional meals: \$20

Friday breakfast



**CHICAGO
PUBLIC TV
TO SHOWCASE
MEMBER SHORTS**

Image Union, Chicago public television's Emmy-award winning showcase of independent film and video, has put together a selection of work by local AIVF mediamakers, which is scheduled to air March 30.

Chosen from among a collection of films assembled and submitted with the help of Chicago-based AIVF board member Jim Vincent, the showcase is the first such collection for *Image Union*, which highlights local festivals and film programs.

The three films are:

The Taste of Dirt

by Yvonne Welbon

***Bessie Cohen, Survivor
of the 1911 Shirtwaist Fire***

by Hope Tucker

Twin Set, by Eva Saks

For more broadcast information, visit:
www.networkchicago.com/imageunion.

Thanks to the AIVF board members who conceived of the idea and the local filmmakers who stepped up to promote their local AIVF membership.

and box lunch; \$60 Saturday breakfast and luncheon with speaker

**ADVOCACY AFTERNOON:
POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
PANEL ON MEDIA ADVOCACY**

when: March 13, 2-5 p.m.

where: Brooklyn Marriott Hotel
33 Adam St., Brooklyn, NY

This afternoon program will put a human face on advocacy issues. A panel of guest speakers will provide an overview of contemporary issues. Following this panel will be three case studies that address these discussions in real experience. The afternoon will wrap with an opportunity to design advocacy strategies of your own.

The Advocacy Afternoon is presented by AIVF, MNN, NATOA, and CTCNet. Check in periodically at www.acm-ne.org for more details.

**ACM MEDIA
DEMOCRACY WEEK**

when: March 16-22

The ACM is designating March 16-22 as Media Democracy Week. Access centers around the country will join in reaching out to the communities through various activities to educate and advocate on behalf of media democracy.

For information on how to participate in your own community, visit the ACM's Legislative Action Center online at www.alliancecm.org/mediademocracy and stay tuned for future action.

**AIVF COSPONSORS
DALLAS VIDEO
FESTIVAL**

when: March 19-23

where: Angelika Film Center/Dallas
Museum of Art, Dallas, TX



Since 1986, the Dallas Video Festival has specialized in fiercely independent, imaginative, unusual, provocative, and sometimes description-defying electronic media. Check out festival at www.videofest.org/2003.

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Special Dallas Video Festival Program: AIVF FILMMAKER'S BRUNCH

when: 10 a.m.-12p.m., March 22

where: KERA TV 3000, Harry Hines
Blvd., Dallas, TX

cost: Free

AIVF is proud to host a Filmmaker's
Brunch at the Dallas Video Festival.
This is a time for makers to talk to
each other away from the audience.
Talk about your work, talk politics, or
just talk shop! All makers are invited.

IN BRIEF:

FINANCING INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTIONS

when: March 20,

6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$30/\$20 members



The AIVF Producers' Legal Series
helps answer common legal and busi-
ness questions about structuring and
negotiating deals in film and TV. This
session addresses issues of interna-
tional co-productions including inter-
national co-production treaties, euro-
pean and Canadian "point system,"
and other forms of co-producing
financing.

Series moderator Innes Smolansky
is an entertainment attorney with
Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams &
Sheppard. She specializes in repre-
senting independent production com-
panies, writers and directors, includ-
ing international co-productions.

DOC DIALOGUE: GENRE AND STRUCTURE

when: March 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$5 members/\$20 general

Is there an inherent structure to each
documentary genre? And after all,
what are the different documentary
genres? From personal documentary
to historical document, where does
your film belong? Come and join your

peers to discuss and share how to structure your film according to your vision and the topic you are shooting. Hosted by filmmaker and script/documentary doctor Fernanda Rossi.

PUBLIC TV MENTORSHIP SESSIONS: CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS



AIVF members are eligible to submit rough cuts of their nonfiction projects for selection in our Public TV Mentorship Sessions. Selected members will meet the greenlighting staff from the National PBS and CBS offices to discuss their projects in-depth, receive valuable feedback, and explore the project's broadcast possibilities.

For complete submission details, log on to www.aivf.org or contact us at (212) 807-1400, x507, to have packet sent to you by mail. **In-Office Deadline: Thurs., March 27.**

AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT FILMS AT THE LINCOLN CENTER

where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 west 65th St., New York, NY
www.filmlinc.com



AIVF members may attend select screening series (listed below) at a

MASTER CLASS SERIES

AIVF will present a 3-part workshop 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 with attendees.

Watch www.aivf.org for details.

discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Please bring your membership card to the box office.

MARCH PROGRAMS:

Through 3/6 **The Last of the Pioneers: Allan Dwan**
3/7-3/16 **Rendezvous with French Cinema**
3/19-3/25 **Celebration of NY Women in Film & Television**

DOCFEST/DOC SHOP

The New York Documentary Center programming continues year round with two monthly screening and discussion series: docshop and docfest monthly.

3/6 **SCHMELVIS: IN SEARCH OF ELVIS PRESLEY'S JEWISH ROOTS** 7:30 p.m., at the JCC Theater

3/18 **THE KID STAYS IN THE PICTURE** 8 p.m., at the Pioneer Theater

For info, visit www.docfest.org or call (646) 505-5708

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES SPRING MEDIA WORKSHOP SERIES



where: 462 Broadway, Ste. 500, New York, NY

WMM kicks off their spring media workshop series this month and continues to offer AIVF members the discounted rate.

FUNDRAISING CLINIC: SECRETS OF HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PROPOSALS

when: March 4th, 8th & 11th
cost: \$144 / \$120 disc. rate (3-day clinic); \$50 / \$40 disc. (per workshop)

BUDGETING SENSE

when: March 18, 6:30-9:30
cost: \$50 / \$40 discount rate

To register, call (212) 925-0606 x302, or visit www.wmm.com.

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FIVE 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:



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

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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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon 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
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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

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.

Cleveland, OH:

Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillora, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Independent 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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm)
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
washingtondc@aivf.org

DC Salon Hosts Talk with Screenwriter Gregory Allen Howard

AIVF DC Salon hit the ground running this year with a variety of educational workshops that range from the craft of screenwriting to understanding how the changing media landscape has impacted the independent film industry.

The first big event was a conversation with screenwriter Gregory Allen Howard in February. Howard penned the films *Ali* and *Remember the Titans*. Also on the slate was a visit with the Center for Digital Democracy's Jeff Chester, to discuss the effect media consolidation of independent filmmaking, as well as what filmmakers should know about the future of broadband.



In the works for March is a Salon on the history of black cinema. For dates and details, contact the DC Salon (see info above).

— Joseph Torres

Inspiring Films by Women

By Jason Guerrasio

Inspired by trailblazers such as Alice Guy-Blaché and Alison Anders, women directors have ignored the statistics and the naysayers time and again by making inspiring, funny, passionate films. Whether with a gripping documentary or a screwball comedy, women filmmakers have proven that they are more than capable of screaming "Action!" Here, five women in the film world share their thoughts on films that have influenced their careers and their lives.

Life and Debt, dir. Stephanie Black

"When I think of influential films, I naturally think of documentaries, and women filmmakers have made extraordinary contributions to this field. Stephanie Black is a newer kid on the block, but she has the same fabulous instincts to get to the heart of the matter, to be intelligent about it, and to pull no punches, as any of the great women filmmakers of the past [have done]. *Life and Debt* examines the new economic world order's plundering of the economies and therefore the life of developing countries by focusing on the particular problem of Jamaica. It will shake up anyone who sees it."

— Marian Masone, associate director of programming,
Film Society of Lincoln Center

Desperately Seeking Susan, dir. Susan Seidelman

"[It's] one of my favorite movies of all time. I just watched the DVD about a month ago and I always find new things in the film I like. It's groundbreaking, even for—especially for—today's film climate. It's a great girl buddy movie, with great roles for women. I must have been about fourteen when I saw it [the first time]. I was aware that there were women behind the scenes and it inspired me to become a filmmaker. The appeal wasn't that it was a Madonna movie. I was too old to think Madonna was cool back then (that came later). It was one of the only films I've ever seen in my life that showed a woman longing for a creative, exciting life and inspired by another woman to get it. It's an unsung classic."

— Sarah Jacobson, filmmaker
(*Mary Jane's Not a Virgin Anymore*)

Harlan County, U.S.A., dir. Barbara Kopple

"*Harlan County, U.S.A.* is among the most important films made by a woman. Her gritty, cinema vérité look at the lives of striking Kentucky miners' poverty and exploitation told a profoundly moving story of resilience, courage, and fighting spirit. This doc proved to the film establishment that documentaries could tell stories and be seen in theaters by the general public, not just by the committed few."

— Karen Cooper, executive director, Film Forum

Meshes of the Afternoon, dir. Maya Deren

"This was the first time a woman's vision was put on screen by an independent artist. Maya Deren was the mother of experimental film, and she established spaces for independents. She was the first woman filmmaker to receive a Guggenheim. She was a theorist as well. I wish I had known her."

— Barbara Hammer, filmmaker (*History Lessons*)

Boys Don't Cry, dir. Kimberly Peirce

"Hilary Swank won the Best Actress Award for her work in the picture, which is a thought-provoking and searing look into Brandon Teena's search for identity as a boy in the heartland, where his (her) experimentation ends in death. A story of prejudice, intolerance, and fear, it brilliantly highlights the issues that so many experience in trying to be comfortable in their own skin."

— Hollace Davids, Women in Film outgoing president and board member



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Know how to approach a festival and advance your film from the screening room to the festival screen.

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[by Ray Pride]

Photos: Barnacle geese from Jacques Perrin's *Winged Migration* (Mathieu Simonet/Sony Pictures Classics); (from left) Gail Zappa, Charles Amirkhanian, Susan Rubio, and Bernard Francis Kyle enjoy San Francisco's Eyes & Ears: The Other Minds Film Festival (Lisa Petrie); Lea Kurka as Regina and Sidede Onyulo as Owuor in Caroline Link's *Nowhere Africa* (Zeitgeist Films).

Page 5 photos: John Lee (Sab Shimono) and his digitized wife Helen (Eisa Davis), from the "Clay" segment of the feature film *Robot Stories* (Wesley Law); mobile curator Astria Suparak at home in Brooklyn (Mark Stephen Kornbluth); Brenda Lee and Elvis Presley, from Beth Harrington's documentary *Welcome to the Club—The Women of Rockabilly* (Brenda Lee); the Chiefs star player Beaver C'Bearing (Mark Junge/ITVS); Angelika Theater marquee (J. Allen Hansley).

On the cover: Almost fifteen years after *Roger & Me* was passed over for an Oscar nomination, Michael Moore receives a nomination and membership in the Academy's new documentary branch as *Bowling for Columbine* breaks nonfiction film box office records (United Artists).



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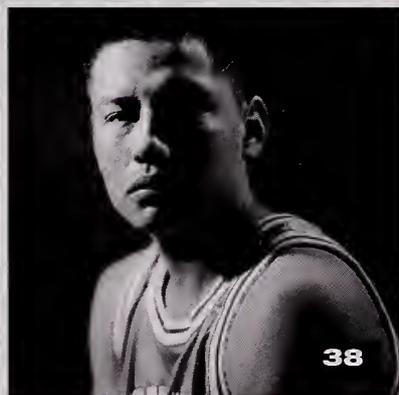
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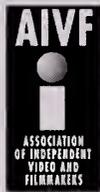
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Editor's Letter

I discovered independent film when I was fifteen at a one-screen calendar arthouse in Kansas City called the Bijou. This was where I first saw Water's *Pink Flamingos*, Sayles' *Return of the Secaucus 7*, and Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*, all of which seemed cool beyond cool to a fifteen-year-old girl from the suburbs. It's also where I was introduced to the music of the Sex Pistols, the poetry of Dorothy Parker, and to a wide variety of what we now call alternative lifestyles. Since I left Kansas City, the Bijou changed hands, closed, and reopened under new management with a new name, the Tivoli. The Tivoli has since relocated a couple of blocks away into a new building with four screens.

In the years since my days at the Bijou, there have been many changes in the exhibition of independent films. National arthouse chains like the Angelika and Landmark have arisen. Film festivals, beyond Sundance and the New York Film Festival, have blossomed into major venues for independent work. And the larger festivals have become major media events and markets for independent work.

The fact that there are venues across the country screening non-Hollywood fare is in some ways just as important as the fact that there are people out there creating alternative media. Without these screens there would be very few ways to share independent work. But it is never easy to keep a small business afloat. That's why we chose to dedicate this issue of *The Independent* to looking at exhibition, whether it be in small calendar houses, film festivals, or nontraditional venues.

To help you better understand how their projects make it from an envelope dropped in the mailbox onto the festival screen, Aaron Krach investigated "Unlocking the Secrets of the Screening Committee" (see pg. 44). Since independent distributors probably know more than anybody else about the climate of the arthouse scene, Ray Pride talked to several of them about their take on the field (see pg. 47). Meanwhile I set out to discover the recent changes to the awards for theatrically distributed documentaries, better known as the Oscars, for best documentary (see pg. 40).

We are also introducing a new department, Policy. This month, Ernesto Martinez highlights several different legislative and business initiatives that are on the forefront of the battle between those who are trying to create a cultural common ground and the industries that are attempting to control media works as a commodity (see pg. 51). This new department will give us a place to take a more in-depth look at media arts policy issues rather than reporting on them solely as discrete news events.

Exhibition is such a wide and varied subject that we have barely scratched the surface. We did not have the space to talk about microcinemas, or college screening programs, or museums, or any number of other places and ways people see movies. But as our First Person writer for the month, Phil Hartman of the Pioneer Theater in New York City (see pg. 13), might put it: We at *The Independent* salute you and your increasing fellows who refuse to accept less-challenging entertainment in exchange for being stadium-sat and super-sized. And we commend exhibitors that continue to show high-risk material and offer real butter.

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FILM STATS FROM LAUZEN STUDY OF 100 TOP FILMS OF 2002

Guerrilla Girls Take On Film Industry Sexism

By Charlie Sweitzer

“From our billboard last year we were invited on a few conservative radio talk shows, which really surprised us,” says the Käthe Kollwitz of the Guerrilla Girls, an anonymous feminist arts agitation group. “But we learned something really interesting—the only thing ultra-conservatives hate more than feminism is the film industry! So they’re our new best friends!”

The Guerrilla Girls, a group of activists whose public appearances are marked by anonymity, gorilla masks, and a healthy intolerance for institutional sexism, are not the sort of “new best friends” one might imagine alongside Rush Limbaugh. Last year, to protest the generally horrifying state of affairs facing women in Hollywood, in association with the anonymous group of women in the film industry, Alice Locas, they designed and displayed a billboard featuring the “Anatomically Correct Oscar”—he’s white and male, “just like the guys who win!”

This year’s billboard, which was on display throughout March at the cor-

Trent L’Ottscar billboard was on display at the corner of Melrose and Highland in LA throughout March.

ner of Melrose and Highland in Los Angeles, featured the “Trent L’Ottscar,” honoring the fact that “even the US Senate is more progressive than Hollywood.” (Fourteen percent of the Senate is female, while four percent of last year’s one hundred top-grossing films were directed by women.)

“If you say, ‘Is Hollywood an old boys’ network?’ they’ll say, ‘Yeah, yeah, yeah—it’s all people and their cousins and their uncles and this and that,’” says Kollwitz (all the Girls take the names of dead female artists; others include Frida Kahlo and Rosalind Franklin). “[And] even though they’ll admit that, they’ll still say there aren’t any good women film directors. . . . They still want to believe that the fields of culture are meritocracies above it all.”

The Guerrilla Girls commenced operations eighteen years ago, “when statistics in the art world were as bad as they are in the film world today.” Their earliest protests were aimed squarely at the art world, including 1989’s famous “Do women have to be naked to get into the Met Museum?” piece. Originally commissioned as a billboard by New York’s Public Art Fund (PAF), the project was later

rejected. “The PAF said our design wasn’t clear enough,” explains the Girls’ website. Finally PAF rented space on the sides of New York buses (until the bus company deemed the image “too suggestive”). The piece—Ingre’s *Odalisque* with a gorilla head—was accompanied by a pair of uncomfortable statistics: “Less than five percent of the artists in the Modern Art sections are women, but eighty-five percent of the nudes are female.”

“Over the years, people have said to us, ‘Are we quota queens?’” says Kollwitz. “And we’ve never complained about statistics that were even twenty, thirty percent. But when statistics are this low, something is at work.”

Beyond the Oscar protests (which included some covert work putting up Guerrilla Girls stickers in the bathrooms at the venue, the Kodak Theatre), 2003 will be a busy year for the Guerrillas. In addition to the Girls’ numerous appearances at colleges and universities, later this year Penguin will publish *Bitches, Bimbos, and Ball-Breakers: the Guerrilla Girls Illustrated Guide to Female Stereotypes* and *The Guerrilla Girls Guide to New York City Museums*, a comic book which will teach you how to go to museums “the Guerrilla Girls way,” which Kollwitz says includes “understanding why what you see on the walls is what you see. . . .”

“I think there’s something about culture, there’s something about the stereotypes of who the creative geniuses



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are, that die really hard," she says. "And culture's just lagging behind the rest of society. . . . It's just ridiculous that the film industry, which is supposed to be hip and edgy and cool, is so out-of-date."

To learn more about the Guerrilla Girls, visit their website at www.guerrillagirls.com.

SAG and AFTRA Poised to Unite

Following months of talks, years of speculation, and a recent failed attempt, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) announced on February 8 their boards' near-unanimous resolution to draft plans to merge the two unions, citing as their principle reasons "rapid industry and technological changes" and "the gross inefficiency of parallel operating structures."

The "new" union will operate over three Affiliates: Actors, Broadcasters, and Recording Artists. In the boards' report, they anticipate "that in the future, other organizations representing performers and media artists may be invited to consolidate and affiliate following the creation of [the new union]."

The two unions have a significant overlap between their memberships. Of the 150,000 total workers who currently belong to SAG and AFTRA, more than 40,000 belong to both—sixty percent of AFTRA's members also belong to SAG, and forty percent of SAG's members belong to AFTRA.

The unions' next step was to draft a constitution, along with a business plan and plans for implementation and transition. These were presented to the joint boards of directors on April 5. Once approved by both boards, all members of both unions will vote on whether to approve the plan and merge. To pass, the plan must be approved by sixty percent of each union. In 1999, a similar merger between SAG and AFTRA was voted down in referendum. It passed AFTRA, but not SAG.

Today, though, there is good reason to believe the merger will be approved. "We are in the midst of a crisis," says Jayne Wallace, AFTRA's national communications director. "The economy sucks. Like everybody else, unions are impacted by this kind of thing. . . . Wouldn't we save money by combining resources?"

Digital video—only a "theoretical" concern, according to Wallace, in 1999—has also become a major factor and, at times, a point of contention between the two unions. Robert L. Seigel, attorney at law, sees the merger as "an inevitable consequence of such factors as the growth of digital video, and whether a format indicates whether a project is a movie or not." Last year, dispute broke out between SAG and AFTRA over negotiating a series of Fox pilots shot on digital video. Seigel says that further confusion can come from the fact that many films originally shot and intended for theatrical release are now distributed via television or DVD. Wallace comments, "Our relationship [with SAG] is based on technology that is obsolete."

The union will continue to honor all contracts by SAG and AFTRA, including low-budget production contracts that many independent producers use for their union cast members. Ilyanne Kichaven, SAG's national director of communications, points out: "One of the principles [of the merger] is the continuation and seamless transition of all SAG and AFTRA collective bargaining agreements. Therefore, low-budget agreements continue under the Actors Affiliate of the new union."

"The impact of the proposed merger on many performers who are in SAG will be minimal," says Seigel, "since SAG generally provides comparable economic treatment to those professional performers who are in other unions."

As a result of the merger, producers will probably have an easier time obtaining archival footage. In the



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Outgunned, But Unbowed

INDIE EXHIBITORS MAKE A STAND

By Philip Hartman

Indie exhibitors are the Gary Coopers of the exhibition business. Outnumbered and outgunned in the *High Noon* showdown against megaplexes, video superstores, and cable TV, indie cinemas heroically fight back with beer and pizza, raffles and contests, or by turning the theater lobby into a café or a copy center. Lonely outposts on an often forbidding frontier, the

Serving beer, burgers, and more in an informal setting, the Alamo Theaters offer a madhouse mixture of vintage and first-run programs—at three area locations—all sharing the owners' idiosyncratic point of view. Where else can you experience *Weird Wednesdays* and enjoy (or is it endure?) a free screening of *Black Gestapo*? Spaghetti Westerns come with all-you-can-eat spaghetti, focaccia, and Caesar salad.

(born in 2000), the Pioneer has quickly become an important advocate for American independent films, often showcasing worthy work without distributors. Partnering with the IFP, Slamdance, DocShop, and Cinema Tropical has given the Pioneer access to a wide cross-section of the indie film community, but unfortunately, with forty-six screens within walking distance of its East Village location, access to first-rate first-run indie product has been harder to come by. Hence the onset of relationships with a couple of new partners: Blue Underground and Sleazoid Express, two enterprises reviving vintage exploitation films from the seventies. The Pioneer hopes that adding some spice to its



Lonely outposts on an often forbidding frontier, the indie cinema remains a sanctuary for the moviegoing iconoclasts, for the cinematic adventurers who refuse to be stadium-sat for studio blockbusters or supersized into buckets of popcorn and root beer.

indie cinema remains a sanctuary for the moviegoing iconoclasts, for the cinematic adventurers who refuse to be stadium-sat for studio blockbusters or supersized into buckets of popcorn and root beer.

This amazing amalgam of heterogeneous venues, over four hundred-strong nation-wide, is constantly adapting to new challenges. As megaplexes proliferate but become utterly interchangeable, Omaha equaling Miami equaling Butte, the indie theater seeks to make itself utterly unique; through its programming, its decor, its concessions, its personality. Utilizing a crazy mix of fifties showmanship, sixties art house ambiance, and seventies sleaze, the indie theater is determined to survive.

The heyday of fifties showmanship is well represented by the Alamo Drafthouse Theaters in Austin, Texas.

And you'll never mistake yourself for being in a mall multiplex as you enjoy Hong Kong Cinema and Cuisine.

The venerable Brattle Theater in Boston represents the more traditional sixties arthouse approach. A long-time Cambridge institution, the Brattle has offered a heady mix of rep and first-run for over thirty years. Tradition is important here, with *It's A Wonderful Life* marking Christmas, and Valentine's Day celebrated with *Casablanca*. But topical programs are also featured, like the Boston Faith and Film Festival earlier this year, which provided a much-needed opportunity to reflect on the scandals shaking the community's religious institutions.

An experiment in seventies sleaze (in the best sense of the word) is taking place at the Pioneer Theater in New York City. A relative newcomer

mix of art and indie films will diversify (and yes, titillate) its audience.

Perhaps most creative of all, and an example of, shall we say, eighties ingenuity, is the Northwest Film Forum (NWFF) in Seattle, Washington. With two screens, the Little Theatre and the Grand Illusion, as well as the state's largest filmmaking cooperative, Wigglyworld Studios, the NWFF appeals to both filmmakers and filmgoers. Playing a hi-lo programming game, both Guy Maddin and *Hell Hole High* can (and do!) appear on the same calendar, and gallery shows, live performances, seminars, and panels all complement the screenings to explode the role of the traditional cinema into a multipurpose, multi-use arts emporium.

Arriving like the cavalry in a John Ford film, indie exhibitors will soon have a new ally: the nascent League

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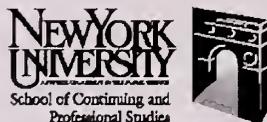
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of Independent Cinemas (LINC). A national coalition of independently owned and operated theaters, LINC will work to ensure the survival and success of member exhibitors across the country. Part trade group, part group therapy, LINC will operate under the theory that there's security in numbers—and leverage, too. By establishing relationships with filmmakers, distributors, film festivals, vendors, and most of all each other, indie theater owners—the forgotten link in the indie food chain—will be able to improve the experience for filmgoers, as well as their own bottom line.

LINC's broad-based advisory board is made up of theater owners from across the country, as well as forward-thinking distributors like Cowboy Pictures and Magnolia Pictures, and filmmaker organizations like the IFP, AIVF, and Slamdance. The first annual convention is planned for October of 2003 in NYC, and will include an Indie Showman/woman of the Year Award, as well as panels, parties, and screenings.

From the Zeitgeist in New Orleans to the Roxy in San Francisco, from the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor to the Pleasant Street Cinema in Northampton, indie exhibitors continue to find creative ways to offer alternatives to the public. The nature of "independent film" has dramatically changed in the last ten years as Hollywood and the big theater chains have co-opted both the term and the concept. True "independent films" are an endangered species, and only a determined effort by truly independent theaters can help save them and ensure that a truly alternative moviegoing experience thrives deep into the twenty-first century. Are the odds against us? Maybe—but the odds were against Gary Cooper, too. ■

Filmmaker Phil Hartman (No Picnic, Erie) is co-owner of the Two Boots Pioneer Theater in NYC and interim executive director of LINC. To reach him, send e-mail to phil@solidlinc.com.

Astria Suparak

EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA CURATOR AS ROCK STAR

By Matt Wolf

Clad in a puffy fur coat and standing at five foot two inches, Astria Suparak may look like a rock star, but the ethos of a hardcore film nerd rumbles inside. At age twenty-four, Astria Suparak has already invented an unstoppable experimental film enterprise. She is aggressively building sexy niches for visceral and demanding new films and videos by cutting-edge artists from around the world who may seem freaky or misplaced in traditional art- or film-world contexts. Last year Suparak traveled to over fifty venues across the nation and abroad. From contemporary art museums to microcinemas, sports bars to Harvard classrooms, Suparak introduces all her programs in person, whether the audience is eager students, or the quieter bunch who converge in the dark corners and parking lots of undiscovered art worlds.

Growing up in Los Angeles in the nineties, Suparak was entrenched in the Riot Grrrl scene and influenced by the do-it-yourself feminist ideology of her peers. She began her curating career at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute. Dissatisfied with departmental divisions and old ways of thinking, She founded a weekly avant garde media series that showcased film, video, and multimedia works by experimental artists and musicians.

When approaching artists and distributors, the teenager lied about her age and booked shows via e-mail, concerned that established professionals in a boy's world would question her curatorial legitimacy. "I tried to cover up that I was a teenager, a student,

and I wasn't from a film background. E-mail enabled me to be age, gender, and ethnicity ambiguous."

The series expanded rapidly, and soon audiences from outside of the student body were venturing to Brooklyn to view her edgy presentations. Pratt grumbled antagonistically and contested her student-initiated series, but each semester, Suparak staged a healthy fight and kept the program running. Ultimately she presented over one hundred shows, but her venues soon stretched beyond academia. She presented programs at institutions like P.S.1, the Museum of Modern Art's contemporary art affiliate, and the New York Underground Film Festival. She also embarked on a tour with performance and video artist Miranda July and music collaborator Zac Love in the fall of 2000.

When she was twenty-three, Suparak again proved the eclecticism of her curatorial verse and mixed established hardball film abstractionists with conceptual video artists in a program accompanied by the live music of Boxhead Ensemble. The ever-changing group of Chicago post-rock music stars toured with Suparak on a bus, making performance pit stops at cinemathèques and rock clubs in different countries each day. Suparak grabbed on to the curator-as-rock-star model and is using it to bring alternative artist film and video to new audiences around the world.

This fall, Suparak traveled solo on an extensive tour through the South, Southwest, East Coast, and Mexico. Sites ranged from the Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporaneo in Mexico City to the basement of an old pie factory in Boston. She presented and remixed two travelling programs, *Dirges* and *Sturgeons*, and *Looking is Better than Feeling You*, plus a special presenta-

tion for Mexico City audiences: *Adolescent Boys*, and *Living Rooms*.

Dirges and *Sturgeons* originated as a project commissioned by experimental film legend Jonas Mekas at Anthology Film Archives in New York City. "Jonas said the concepts and aesthetics in my shows were fresh and innovative and he wanted me to bring that energy to Anthology," she says. In *Dirges*, Suparak includes a heady mix of lo-fi videoworks from the sampled pastiche of video



freaks *Animal Charm* to Miranda July's emotive abstract narrative. She tactfully wrangles Bjørn Melhus' avant-fantasy worlds and Seth Price's crypto-theoretical digital landscapes in logical configurations which combine new technology and 1980's nu-romantic nostalgia. The program notes read: "YACHT: Young Artists Challenge High Technology (for a Total eclipse of the heart)."

But *Looking is Better than Feeling You* is the real crowd pleaser, grounded in emotionally expressive narrative and gutsy performance art. Ladyfest

Brooklyn-based curator Astria Suparak takes experimental film to the people.

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Bay Area, part of the growing international movement of feminist political art festivals, asked Suparak to curate a program of short videos by women artists. Next to performances by she-rockers like The Gossip and Sleater-Kinney, Astria showed works by veteran feminist filmmakers like Kathy High and gallery regulars Karen Yasinsky and Shannon Plumb, including also lesser-known emerging artist and student videos. The program re-imagines feminist art history with Dara Greenwald's smart revision of Bruce Nauman's video performance, but also treads through new terrain in Jacqueline Goss' anthropomorphic adventure theory. Suparak's curatorial choices indicate a personal video art aesthetic that is accessible, immediate, and purposefully absurd.

She consistently draws large, sold-out crowds to her screenings. In Mexico City, people were lined up outside of the museum two hours before the screenings. The enormous Victoria Theater in San Francisco was packed for Ladyfest's opening night. Even tiny screenings in obscure locales such as a sports bar in Texas, get filled. "E-mail! I harass audiences in each town for their e-mail addresses, and I have built a complex system of mailing lists. Each time I return to a town, previous viewers arrive with a friend, and the audience grows," she explains.

The rock-star model works. Suparak attaches her now-recognized name to programs of obscure art. She charms hip art students and cinephiles, even the occasional groupie, at intimate class presentations, followed by more public screenings at city venues throughout the week. Word-of-mouth builds momentum, and audiences report back with glowing approval. Without a traditional budget or funding, she relies on income at the door or limited support from small arts organizations. She can't guarantee her artists rental fees, but she



delivers extensive feedback from the road and publicizes the work as few other curators in the field can. Suparak is bringing noncommercial, alternative, and feminist art to the masses.

Of course life on the road is not filled with the comforts of a Rolling Stones farewell tour. Suparak has her share of horror stories. She rerouted a tour through the South to avoid hurricanes after catching a nine-hour ride from strangers to her next stop. She slept on the floor of a kitchen in New Orleans, where a small colony of house cats walked and urinated over her. Nomadic and friendly, Suparak finds herself sweet-talking new friends for a lift from one obscure site to the next, because she is absolutely determined to bring you, your friends, and your family good experimental film.

Originally Spuarak's goal was to curate for a larger institution, but independence has its benefits. "I can spend time nursing a smaller amount of very tight shows. I like the versatility and challenges with creating custom programs for specific audiences and locations," explains Suparak, who is currently organizing shows for the Yale School of Architecture and an upcoming festival at the Chicago Cultural Center. She continues to plan a spring tour through the Midwest, California, East Coast, and Canada and looks forward to an extensive European jaunt through Italy, Belgium, England, and France in the late summer. □

Check it out: www.astriasuparak.com

Matt Wolf is a filmmaker and writer
in New York City.

Bjørn Melhus' *Das Zaberglas* is part of
Suparak's Dirges & Sturgeons show.

Beth Harrington

TELLING THE LEGEND OF ROCKABILLY WOMEN

By Charlie Sweitzer

It's been said that every filmmaker secretly wants to be a rock star, and vice versa. Beth Harrington has been both. In what she calls "a former lifetime," she performed with Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers. She's since worked on an array of documentary programs, from *NOVA* to *Frontline* to *Health Quarterly*. But her most recent independent documentary, *Welcome to the Club: The Women of Rockabilly*, finds her with a foot planted squarely each world.

"You always wind up making films and thinking they're about somebody else, and then you find out they're



about you, on some level," says Harrington, whose previous film (*The Blinking Madonna and Other Miracles*) was largely autobiographical.

Rockabilly—a vigorous cross-pollination of R&B, country, and "hillbilly"

Left: Wanda Jackson, America's "Number One Party Girl," and Right: Lorrie and Larry Collins are subjects of Beth Harrington's documentary *Welcome to the Club—The Women of Rockabilly*.

music—is considered the forerunner of rock and roll. It's also largely remembered as the province of men like Elvis Presley and Carl Perkins. But Harrington was introduced to the feminine side of rockabilly twenty years ago, through a compilation album. "With a few exceptions I didn't know the women on the anthology and I thought that was really weird, because I followed music really closely," she says.

Weirder still, it turns out these women were celebrities—*big* celebrities—in their own time. Janis Martin was so loved by Elvis Presley that she was given permission directly from the King to tout herself as "the female Elvis." Wanda Jackson was described by music journalist Nick Tosches as "the greatest menstruating rock 'n' roll singer whom the world has ever known."

Harrington was hooked.

"I'm interested in the way history gets told, and how certain stories get legitimized by the media," she says. "It's also an interesting way of telling women's history. Where were we in the 1950's, and where are we now? I think a lot of younger women are surprised at some of the things that seemed like constraints [to one's career] in 1950, like getting married."

Harrington began *Welcome to the Club*, her second independent feature as director, in 1997. In the years since her gig with Richman, she worked on an assortment of documentary films, most notably for the Documentary Guild, which produces exclusively for Boston's WGBH. She credits much of her production savvy to her work with the Guild. "I learned from [the Documentary Guild] the value of really conceptualizing what you're doing, the value of going on scouting trips,

and the value of spending time with the people who'll be in the film. When you're an independent, you sort of feel like you need to cut corners somewhere, and [you think] maybe that's where you can cut corners," she says. "In fact, that's *not* where you can cut corners. That's the place where you *shouldn't* cut corners."



Sometimes, though, you have to be prepared to go with the flow. Having procured just the first chunk of money for *Welcome to the Club* from the Pacific Pioneer Fund, which helps emerging filmmakers—"people who aren't household names," says Harrington—in California, Oregon, and Washington, Harrington abruptly found herself swept into production. "Within a week of getting the money, Wanda Jackson came to Portland for the first time in thirty years. And it was like, 'Oh my God—she's here! This is meant to be! I've got to go get her!'" she says. "I hadn't intended to start that quickly, but there she was."

Harrington later received support from the Washington's Artist Trust and ITVS (which also funded *The Blinking Madonna*). "It's really hard to get big sums of money cold, with just a piece of

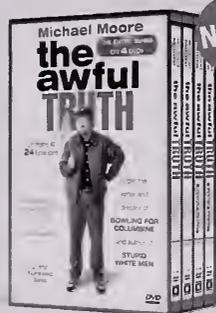
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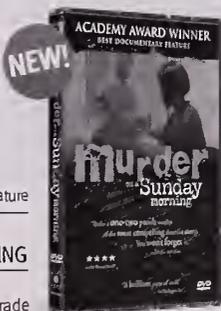
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paper," she says. "No matter how well your proposal is written, it's so much nicer to have material that says, 'Oh, look, I shot this interview with Wanda Jackson! I went to this concert in Las Vegas! I have this archival footage!'"

Though Harrington says that the production was ultimately a pretty "even-keeled experience," she did encounter her share of obstacles. Concurrent to *Welcome to the Club*, she was also producing and writing *Aleutians: Cradle of the Storms*, a two-hour documentary for Oregon public television. For a while she was literally split between the two projects, often spending one half of the week in the Arctic circle and the other half in Memphis, Tennessee.

"Here's a classic freelancer problem," she says. "You don't have any work for a while, and then all of a sudden you have not one but two projects. And they're both really high profile, and one you really should do because it's good for business, and the other one you should do because it's your baby," she says. "It's a ridiculously good problem to have for a change, as a filmmaker," she confesses, though at the same time she admits she "didn't do anything last year."

Harrington is happy to say she's

started her next film. At the urging of Roseanne Cash (who narrates *Welcome to the Club*), she's planning a documentary on the Carter Family, and will interview June Carter soon.

And despite any difficulties, Harrington is more than pleased with how *Welcome to the Club* turned out. "The big achievement to me is the women who were in it really liked it a lot," she says. "It's not necessarily something every filmmaker has to strive for, depending on what kind of film you're making. But for this, it was so personal to them, and it was so important to do them justice, because their story hadn't been told much.

"Several of them called me and said, 'People are really seeing this, people are really understanding what happened to me.' A lot of these women have very quiet lives now. They perform, but the people they know in their daily life don't really know that much about what their experience was. So that's kind of cool."

Since its premiere on PBS in March 2002, *Welcome to the Club* has garnered increasingly high-profile encomium, most notably a Grammy nomination for Long Form Music Video. "There are 104 categories," she says, "and this is the 104th category." Her film competed against four other (in the words of the Grammy ballot) "video album packages consisting of more than one song or track." These range from a Robbie Williams concert video produced by Capitol Records to Palm Pictures' *I Giant Leap*, a three-years-in-the-making world music documentary.

"I know everyone says the corny 'it's an honor to be nominated' line, but in this case, it's all gravy. I never expected to be nominated for a Grammy award under any circumstances, and here I am, what a joke," says the former rocker. "At this point in my life, I haven't performed in years! I'm delighted." ■

For info: www.bethharrington.com.

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer currently interning at The Independent.

Beth Harrington on set.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF MARY BETH MEEHAN; FACING PAGE, LISA PETRIE

San Francisco Screens

INDIE FILM VENUES OF THE BAY AREA

By Caitlin Roper

In her review of Phil Kaufman's 1978 remake of *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, legendary film critic Pauline Kael wrote, "The story is set in San Francisco, which is the ideally right setting, because of the city's traditional hospitality to artists and eccentrics." This hospitality extends to movie venues. With its wealth of alternative screening spaces, San Francisco is one of the most welcoming cities in the country for non-Hollywood film.

The Bay Area's openness to ideas and diversity is rooted in its history. In 1849, when the Gold Rush was in full effect, San Francisco was a wild, colorful city that attracted people willing to stake everything on a shot at fortune in the shape of a shiny gold nugget. Many of the Forty-Niners deserted stodgier pasts to strike it rich. This legacy of eccentricity is still evident in the residents of Northern California. Daring artist types continue to flock to the City by the Bay. San Francisco's heritage of experimentalism remains clear in its residents' continued patronage of art houses and independent cinemas.

Roxie Cinema

The Roxie is the oldest continually operating movie theater in San Francisco. It has a long and illustrious history. In 1909 it opened its doors as the C.H. Brown Theater, it was The Poppy in 1913, The New 16th Street in 1918, The Rex in 1920, The Gem in 1926, The Gaiety in 1930, and finally became The Roxie Cinema in 1933-34. In 1976, after having spent a brief period as a porn house, the theater was taken over by

manager Robert Evans, who began programming the independent, foreign, and domestic art and esoterica which one still finds today, according to the Roxie's current helmsman, Rick Norris.

In 1983, Bill Banning bought the Roxie. He also created Roxie Releasing as a means to show films that did not have distribution and to create a supplemental income for the theater. Over the years, Roxie Releasing has distributed George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*, Nick Broomfield's *Kurt and Courtney* (see pg. 33), Matthew Bright's *Freeway*, the Maysles' *Gimme Shelter*, John Dahl's *Red Rock West*, and the latest Roxie Release, *Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy: Working With Time*.

Over the years, the Roxie has had to struggle to keep its doors open. At a fundraising event last April, ("thanks to the generosity of the San Francisco filmgoing community," according to Norris), the theater was able to raise \$35,000. This money allowed the Roxie to pay back rent and discover *Rivers and Tides*, which has proved a box-office success on both coasts.

The Roxie, located in the heart of the Mission, is a 277-seat single-screen independent art house and revival theater with a reputation for showing documentaries and maintaining strong film noir programming. Their colorful, double-sided monthly calendar is sent out to a large mailing list, delivered to businesses all over San

Francisco, and available in the theater's lobby. Films generally screen for one to three days, with occasional weeklong runs. The theater does "four-walling," playing host to film festivals like this year's San Francisco Indie Fest, as well as one-night exhibitions and cast and crew screenings.

www.roxie.com

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(415) 863-1087

The Castro Theatre

"Some of the most memorable cultural events of my life have taken place at the Castro," says Daniel Wohlfeiler, chairman of the board of



the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival. He cites several examples. The sing-along *Sound of Music* was unforgettable, as was the Jewish Film Festival screening of *Trembling Before G-d* after which a gay actor who is shown seeking (unsuccessfully) the acceptance of his rabbi several times in the film came onstage with a rabbi and a lively Q&A ensued.

"Everybody I know loves when the organist plays *San Francisco Open Your*

The historic Castro Theatre, San Francisco

Golden Gates before a screening," says Wohlfeiler. The pipe organ, an immense Wurlitzer finally assembled in 1982 from parts found far and wide, inspires even the most cynical moviegoers to reverence. As does the Castro's impressive decor. The theater, which was designated a registered landmark in 1977, is considered one of the best and most well-preserved examples of a 1920's movie palace.

Timothy L. Pflueger (1894-1946), a celebrated figure in Bay Area architecture whose career began with the commission of the Castro, designed the theater, which was built in 1922. He borrowed fancifully from many styles. The theater seats more than 1,400 under a breathtaking plaster cast, richly painted ceiling that looks like an elaborate oriental cloth canopy. Colorful murals adorn the auditorium walls. The Castro has recently undergone a renovation that

included replacing its famously uncomfortable seats and fixing its striking vertical marquee.

The Castro hosts many local film festivals, including the San Francisco International Film Festival and the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival. The theater's regular programming is a mixture of foreign films, vintage classics, and art and independent films. The Castro's thoughtful programming offers regular interviews with filmmakers. Recent visitors include independent producer Christine Vachon (*Velvet Goldmine*, *Far From Heaven*, *I Shot Andy Warhol*, *Boys Don't Cry*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*) and documentarians Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman (*The Times of Harvey Milk*, *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt*, *The Celluloid Closet*).

www.thecastrotheatre.com
429 Castro Street, San Francisco;
(415) 621-6120

Pacific Film Archives

The Pacific Film Archives' (PFA) programming is nothing short of dazzling. In one month the Archives showed selections from the Children's International Film Festival, the Bay Area High School Film & Video Festival, the Human Rights Watch Festival, a Gus Van Sant tribute featuring films such as *Mala Noche*, *Drugstore Cowboy*, *My Own Private Idaho*, and *To Die For*, and hosted a visit from the director himself. The Archives also screened selections from the Deaf Film Festival, films in a program called Czechoslovakian Gems, and other one-night stands.

Director Edith Kramer, who, together with Kathy Geritz, Steve Seid, and Mona Nagai, programs the PFA, demurs when complimented and asked how the group, which meets weekly to discuss ideas and work out their upcoming programs, manages

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month after month to present such a broad range of films. "It is our job," she says. "It begins with an unholy passion for cinema. It is an obsession. Video, art, the technology, the art of the moving image, the endless non-stop viewing of everything you can see. We are constantly consuming."

The PFA is housed with the Berkeley Art Museum on the southernmost edge of the UC Berkeley campus. The theater is more functional than phenomenal; no match for the PFA's remarkable programming and beautiful, carefully chosen film prints. But that's only temporary, as plans for a new museum and theater are underway.

On the PFA's website, Kelly Vance, associate editor and film critic at the *East Bay Express*, offers "I Wake Up Screening: An Appreciation of PFA."

"I've often thought my ideal job would be to cover the Pacific Film Archive exclusively, to report on its film programs and no others, perhaps (in my fantasy scenario) to rig up some sort of apartment in the Archive where I could go to sleep and wake up thinking of movies and never, ever miss a showing," he says.

Says Kramer: "I love our audiences, watching them experience and question and deal with what we've presented. It's a little like the chef coming out of the kitchen to see what people think of the food." Bon appetit.

www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/pfa
2575 Bancroft Way, Berkeley;
(510) 642-1412

Some Other Options

There are so many notable film venues in the Bay Area; it is hard to compile a list, because you are sure to leave out someone's favorite. In the East Bay, Oakland is home to both the Historic Grand Lake Theater, and the Parkway Theater.

In 1926, the Grand Lake opened as a Vaudeville Show and Silent Movie House. The vaudeville shows were discontinued, as "Talkies" became popular.

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The theater has an enormous auditorium, with a balcony, massive, sparkling chandelier, and a Wurlitzer organ that is played briefly before selected weekend screenings of first-run Hollywood films.

The Parkway Theater is a community theater that bills itself as a drive-in-like experience indoors, featuring "pizza, pub, and picture." The theater doubles as a restaurant, with an extensive menu accompanied by premium beer and wine. The Parkway offers two theaters with comfortable loveseat sofas and cocktail tables with chairs convenient for eating and view-



ing. The Parkway is a popular date destination, but it is also loved for its Baby Night/Cry Room, where parents are encouraged to bring infants less than a year old. Patrons can avoid paying babysitters and don't have to fear angry groans if their babies let out a wail.

Back across the bay in San Francisco is the worker owned and operated, 140-seat Red Vic Movie House, in the middle of Haight-Ashbury. This theater shows a wide range of second-run Hollywood films, classic, art, independent and documentary films. "It's a very casual place, with padded church pews. It's a collective," says Gary Meyer, cofounder of Landmark Theatres and a local film venue expert.

The Foreign Cinema, is a stylish restaurant and bar that offers three evening shows of one film projected on a large wall in their courtyard. Watching a film outdoors here is most



appealing in summer, when the evening temperatures only require a sweater, rather than a down jacket.

Artists' Television Access, is a dependable venue for true independent film and video in the Mission. ATA is a nonprofit organization run by volunteers since the eighties. It is a resource for artists working in film and video and offers classes and access to low-cost editing equipment as well as screenings of new work.

Microcinema International's Bay Area homebase is 111 Minna Gallery, 111 Minna Street, between Howard and Mission (ph.: (415) 864-0660). Cofounder and curator Joel S. Bachar offers "Independent Exposure" on the last Monday of every month. It is a 60- to 90-minute program of short film, videos and digital work from around the world. The program is coproduced by the Film Arts Foundation.

The Yerba Buena Center for the Arts offers a screening room where patrons can enjoy independent, ethnically diverse films they are unlikely to find elsewhere. ■

Clockwise: Parkway Theater, Foreign Cinema, and the Grand Lobby of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

Historic Grand Lake Theater, 3200 Grand Ave.; (510) 452-3556; www.renaissancerialto.com/current/grandlake.htm

Parkway Theater, 1834 Park Blvd.; (510) 814-2400; www.picturepubpizza.com

Red Vic Movie House, 1727 Haight St.; (415) 668-3994

The Foreign Cinema, 2534 Mission St.; (415) 648-7600

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 701 Mission; (415) 978-ARTS.

Artists' Television Access, 992 Valencia St.; (415) 824-3890

Originally from Berkeley, California, Caitlin Roper currently lives in NYC, where she is a freelance writer, editor, and filmmaker.



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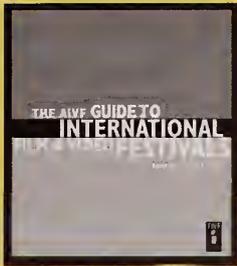
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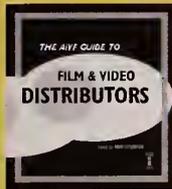
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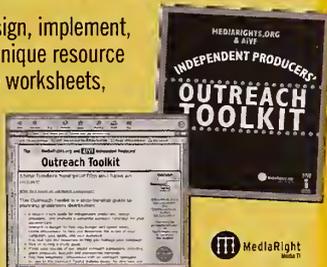


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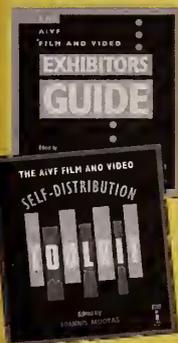
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Ask the Documentary Doctor

WHEN AND HOW TO SHARE UNFINISHED WORK

By **Fernanda Rossi**



Dear Doc Doctor: I have a fifteen-minute cut of a one-hour documentary, and the editor and I are not sure about the main story-

line and characters. Should I have a test screening? How many should I have?

Even if you had a perfect fifteen-minute opening and all you wanted was to practice your speech for the Oscars, I would advise you not to screen the project so early in the editing process. And if you have doubts about those fifteen minutes, I would suggest even more strongly that you not put it in front of an audience.

The creative process is very delicate. Even the right comment can prove to be destructive if it is said at the wrong time. Why risk postscreening depression any sooner than necessary? Rather than asking when or how many times to screen, ask yourself: Why do you want to show your film at this point?

If the answer is, "to find out how to go on," then don't call an army of well-intentioned people to tell you what to do. You won't end up with an answer, but with twenty different opinions. And the math inside of a screening room is very simple: Twenty opinions equals one director's headache.

Instead of a test screening, what you and your editor probably need to do is step back, forget it all, and then evaluate the film at the plot level with clean, fresh eyes. If time off from the cutting room doesn't do it, then con-

sider calling in one person—not an army. An outsider knowledgeable in narrative structure can often help you through the maze. They do not even have to be in the film business. Just talking to someone new about the project can lower your anxiety, and hearing yourself explain the film will probably help materialize the key to final cut kingdom.

Test screenings are an American phenomenon, created by Hollywood's strategy of securing the broadest possible audience for films by appealing to the lowest common denominator. In other parts of the world, filmmakers wait until they are almost ready to lock picture before they show their

you like and want to know if other people like too? Test. Is the story solid but loaded with information and you want to make sure it is all crystal clear? Test. Is the ending compelling? Test. Test screenings are a tool to help you determine if what you are doing is working, not a manual to tell you how to edit your film. Test what you already know.

Dear Doc Doctor:

I'm close to final cut and am preparing for a test screening. How do you suggest I prepare for the screening?

First of all, are we talking about a work-in-progress screening or a test screening? A work-in-progress screening, for the purposes of this discussion, is a screening in which your primary goal is to generate buzz for your film. The testing happens, but it is secondary. A test screening's primary goal is to assess if certain things in your film are working out.

If you are showing a work in progress to start an early buzz, you are probably planning to screen at a

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films, and then they only hold a very small, private screening. Still, some think that compulsive testing is the way to go. I know one filmmaker who held fifteen test screenings before finishing a film.

I advocate the middle path. Don't constantly show the film at every turn, but don't shy away from screenings as if the film weren't intended to ever be seen either. The screening of a rough cut is a great opportunity to test your key assumptions. Is there a character

venue, such as a festival or market, that holds programs specifically for works in progress. In this situation, most of what goes on is beyond your control. Bring a smile and a ton of publicity material. Approach the people that had a positive reaction to your documentary—these are your target audience, so it is good to learn who they are.

But if you are planning your own test screening, there are a few things you should consider. When making

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the guest list, the fewer the merrier. Ten people are more than enough. With a larger group, you will still get the opinions of only ten people—the loudest ten. The rest will echo their comments. Ten well-chosen people are much easier to listen to. Save the rest for the opening night.

Whether you invite ten or ten thousand, hand out a questionnaire to help the audience to organize their

When making the guest list, the fewer the merrier.

thoughts. Pay special attention to the issues that come up for several people. If three find the first ten minutes unclear, try to determine why. But if one person says she doesn't understand the ending, let it go.

When possible, use a moderator, especially if a large audience screening is unavoidable. She or he will be more detached and can make sure that nobody monopolizes the discussion. Also, a moderator can remind the audience that works in progress should never be compared to finished films. If people do mention a specific film, avoid comparing your film to it when you get back in the cutting room. Just keep following the natural development of your own story.

And finally, don't forget to feed the crowd. They are taking time to work on your film. The more they sense that you appreciate their input, the more they will want to contribute to your success. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

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

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LITTLE SISTER, DO WHAT YOUR BIG SISTER DONE

By Maya Churi

Since 2001 the folks at the Sundance Film Festival have been slowly nurturing the festival's little, electric sister, the Sundance Online Film Festival. Now three years old, the festival is starting to come into its own. Programmed by John Cooper, Shari Frilot, and Trevor Groth, the festival, which runs simultaneously with the regular festival, offers online film-

this year's festival featured a wide variety of films that explored mature themes and storytelling techniques, and differentiated themselves from what online films have been in the past. "The originality of the work is changing by leaps and bounds. Even in the simplest of [technological] creations, the originality of the storytelling shined through," he noted.

During the ten-day event this past

than just the Park City ten days. It stays up a month total."

Programming the festival is not an easy task. Since they present a new form of storytelling, there is still a limited amount of work out there, and many online filmmakers don't even know about the festival. So, unlike the film festival, which receives thousands of submissions, the online festival went looking for work. "We scoured pockets of creativity to find work. A lot of outreach. Also, all shorts are automatically considered for the online festival." Cooper continues, "[The selection process is] very old fashioned . . . we watch . . . then argue . . . and I try to listen for 'when passion is strong.' Programming is not about being critical . . . it is the opposite . . . It's about staying open to new ideas and styles."

Being open to new styles is just what makes this festival so unique. With the *New Forms* section of the festival, viewers can explore websites that use multiple techniques to tell stories. But that isn't always what the audience is looking for. As Cooper points out, "*New Forms* always takes the most commitment. I find a visitor will skip over that for the quick bursts of creativity (instant gratification) first. But they usually come back to the *New Forms* later. It can be very rewarding." This is one of the biggest challenges facing online storytellers today. How does one get the audience to sit down, open up, and start exploring? That answer, Cooper says, is "staying ahead of the curve creatively, not just technologically. Pushing the limits of their own storytelling abilities—and I don't just mean linear narrative. Seeing if they can get an audience to take the journey with them."

For filmmakers Brooke Burgess and Stewart Hendler, getting the audience to take the journey wasn't a problem. They both won online audience awards at this year's festival.

Burgess's *Broken Saints*, a twenty-four-chapter series that fuses still



makers and storytellers an outlet for their projects where they can connect with the film community at large and acquire that potentially lucrative Sundance brand.

This year's online festival was bigger and better than previous years. There were more films, a new category for websites entitled *New Forms*, and a new online "look" that mixed art and technology. Cooper points out that

Brooke Burgess's *Broken Saints* took the animation title at Sundance Online.

January, the online films were exhibited each day in the Zenith Theater, where the filmmakers had the opportunity to answer questions from audience members. In addition, viewing stations were placed in various locations throughout Park City, giving moviegoers a chance to stop at a moment's notice and watch a film. And of course, millions of viewers at home could also watch the films anytime they wanted. Cooper says, "Last check, we had over a million unique visitors. And the site stays up longer

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images, text, and music, won in the animation category. Burgess was inspired by a love of graphic novels and comic books and also a desire to tell a long-form narrative using Flash. "The urge to do online narratives came from the freedom to develop mature content for a global audience hungry for stories that challenge their

watch it in—was phenomenal." Hendler continues, "We've been getting e-mails from all over the world from people who have taken to or been moved by the film. That's really gratifying; if we'd screened only in Park City, maybe a couple thousand people would have seen it."

But what about at the festival itself?



beliefs and touch them psychically and emotionally," Burgess says. "The world's a pretty freaky place right now . . . and I think that people are craving avenues of expression and opportunities to explore ideas that may conflict with mainstream media's goals. By going online, we could avoid the pitfalls of bowing to corporate/advertiser/sponsor/network pressures and compromising the message of the series."

Unlike Burgess's film, Hendler's short-subject audience award winner *One* was not made specifically for the internet. In fact, online exhibition was not something Hendler had initially thought of for his 35mm, very visual, large-scale production film, but that didn't make the experience any less worthwhile. "My first gut reaction to the news that we got in was pretty indignant, like 'just online!' But the Sundance experience has forced me to step back from that exclusive, theater-only mindset, because the exposure that the film got online—despite that tiny, tiny window people have to

Cooper stresses that it wasn't always easy to get the actual festivalgoers to sit down and watch the films, but once they did they were hooked. "The audiences in Park City that I drug to one of our many viewing stations were blown away. I am used to this. It is the same reaction I get to short films when you can actually get a person to sit down and watch them!"

Though festival audiences have yet to fully grasp the storytelling capabilities of online filmmaking, the future of the Sundance Online Film Festival is bright, and it can only get better. For Cooper, the goal is to "keep it going. . . . I find that using the principles we used to grow the film festival still prevail . . . you watch trends in creativity and try to match them with growth. I want to continue to be selective on the quality of work. I want to build audience trust . . . so when they log in . . . they know they are about to get something exciting. As corny as it sounds, I want that kid at home with a computer and an idea to know there is a place for them at Sundance." □

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on a web narrative about a gated Texas community.

Nikki Bridges and Drew Fuller in Stewart Hendler's *One*.

Film Movement

Jason Guerrasio interviews Larry Meistrich

What is Film Movement?

We're a company that matches consumers with deserving filmmakers. We do this in two ways: through theatrical releases and by combining them with a subscription-based service so that people everywhere in the United States and ultimately Canada can get access to the same films as people in New York City, Chicago, or Los Angeles. For example our first film, *El Bola*, opened theatrically on December 10 and we shipped it to our members nationwide December 10 as well. If you're in a city that we play theatrically and you're a subscriber, we'll buy your ticket. You go to the website and from the account page you can download a ticket. Even if you go to the theater you get the DVD as well.

Why was Film Movement created?

I don't live in a city anymore and I have three kids, so for me it's really hard to participate in the films that I want to participate in. They very rarely come to where I live. I wanted to create a platform for people who are educated, sophisticated, and culturally connected no matter where they live, as well as create a marketplace for filmmakers who'll actually be able to make some money on their movies. I think the theatrical release platform model is finished, it's too expensive. We're leading with our subscription business and using our theatrical as a marketing initiative, which takes a lot of pressure off of the film and the filmmaker. We'll play the movie for a year and a half—we don't really care.

How did the subscription idea come up?

Well, I'm a member of the Academy,

Yamina Benguigui's *Inch'Allah Dimanche*.

and two years ago I got a copy of *Harry Potter* when it was still in theaters, which caused quite a stir in my daughter's first grade class. I thought, wouldn't it be great to give everybody that kind of experience, but for good films?

We've also done something different in regards to the financial model for filmmakers. Everybody's on a "true dollar one straight gross." What that means is literally every time someone subscribes, filmmakers get paid.

How large is the subscription base at the moment?

We're not giving out our numbers, but I can tell you we're in over 725 cities



and in forty-eight states, so filmmakers are getting true national exposure.

Other than the subscription, how else does Film Movement distinguish itself from other independent distributors?

Quality. There are no horror films. There are no hip-hop films. We're actually trying to lead with our brand

and then let the film support that brand. We're trying to stand for something of substance or quality.

What types of films are you seeking?

We're seeking award-winning, well-written, well-crafted, well-performed, well-produced independent cinema. It can be documentary. It can be feature. It can be foreign language. It just has to be good.

You guys are doing shorts, too?

Yes, each feature comes with a short.

How do you choose your films?

Our criteria for the films is they have to have been in one of the top seven film festivals (AFI, Berlin, Cannes, New York, Sundance, Toronto, Venice). So far, everything we've bought has won something in those film festivals. We have a panel of curators; Richard Peña from Lincoln

Center, Christian Gaines from AFI, Nicole Guillet, who used to be at Sundance [currently director of Miami International Film Festival], Nate Kohn [director, Roger Ebert's Overlooked Film Festival]—really good professional curators. They have to sign off on the films. They are the best of the festival films. What we're really doing is bringing Sundance to



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people's houses as well as to people in the theater community.

How many films do you acquire per year?

We're doing one a month. So it's twelve per year. We've acquired the first nine, and we'll probably round out the year here [in January] and start our next year at Cannes.



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He Died With a Felafel in His Hands, dir. Richard Lowenstein,
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Ali Zaoua, dir. Nabil Aypouch,
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Marion Bridge, dir. Wiebke von Carolsfeld, April 2003

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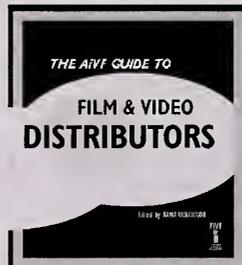
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The Next Step: Distributing Independent Films and Videos Morrie Warshawski, ed.; ©1995; \$24.95

The Independent Producers' Outreach Toolkit ©2001 (see www.mediariights.org/toolkit)

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How do you work with a filmmaker in the distribution process?

The filmmaker is truly a partner. They're a marketing partner, a financial partner; we're really doing every-



thing together: trailers, posters, campaigns. I'll play films at film festivals after a theatrical run because I don't really care what my box office numbers are. For example, *El Bola*, which technically had its opening in December, is opening theatrically in New Orleans, then it's playing in a festival in February in San Diego and a bunch of other festivals. The more we're getting a film out there, the more people know about it and about Film Movement. It really takes the pressure off of that opening weekend because very few films have the marketing dollars behind them to be able to open [big].

At what stage of postproduction should filmmakers approach you? Rough or final, which do you like to get?

So far we haven't bought anything that wasn't finished, but if something was a fine cut and was really good we would look at it.

What were the lessons you learned at the Shooting Gallery that you think

Left: Nabil Ayouch's *Ali Zaoua*. Right: Noah Taylor in Richard Lowenstein's *He Died With a Felafel in His Hand*.

will help make Film Movement a success?

I learned how to market a movie. I'm proud of what we did at Shooting Gallery, the business was very successful. I learned what consumers want and how to reach them. I think the business has changed in the last five to six years. When you have things coming out on eight and ten thousand screens, it really changes the market, because small distributors can't get screens and can't hold screens. It's become a three-day execution. I don't

believe in that business model anymore, unless if you're a studio; then it works.

What advice can you give to filmmakers who are looking for distribution?

I think filmmakers need to pay attention to marketing more. It's one thing to make a movie, it's another thing to know who's going to see your film. Your job isn't done once



the film is in the can. Whether it's the producer or the director, someone involved has to have an idea of where the film is going to go when it's done. I think very few filmmakers pay attention to that. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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The Other Park City

ALTERNATIVE FESTS COMPLEMENT SUNDANCE

By Susan Diane Freel

The great thing about Park City, and honestly the great thing about Sundance—'cause they started this whole mess—is that it's the single biggest film event in the US," exclaims Slamdance cofounder Dan Mirvish. "It's unique because literally everyone you talk to is involved; they're press, they're industry, they're another filmmaker—everyone is worth talking to."

The fact that the independent film world is one sprawling, diverse community was never clearer than in Park City, Utah, in January 2003. Although there were several film festivals sharing venues, and some problems with Park City regulations regarding signs, posters, fliers, and their implications, it is clear that the non-Sundance film festivals are not to be discounted. It's

the seventies, as is the case of *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*. While their generally smaller budgets may represent a different hype level, it doesn't necessarily mean the films are lower quality. If you didn't know which film festival was in which venue you wouldn't be able to tell them apart by the *quality* of their films, or even by the names of the filmmakers.

Slamdance: Old School

Slamdance weighs in as the most established Sundance alternative, where ticket-holders waiting in line for an hour is not unusual. As Sundance moved on to bigger films, films with distribution, films with second-time directors, and films with stars, Slamdance became the festival where the main competition was populated by first-time directors and low

tance," says Slamdance cofounder Paul Rachman.

It's not easy growing up in Park City with a glamorous older sibling to compete with for everything. In nine years Slamdance has bounced between two theaters. This year, they were found back on Main Street at the Treasure Mountain Inn. And while Sundance has mushroomed, Slamdance has barely increased the number of feature films they screen. In 1994, they started with twelve features and twelve shorts, and this year the count was fourteen features and fifty shorts. But keeping the number of filmmakers small allows people to get to know each other. And Slamdance has grown in other ways, away from Park City. There have now been alumni-driven events year-round in Stockholm, Amsterdam, Zanzibar, Poland, and New York, most with local sponsors. Every few months, LA's best Cuban restaurant, Versailles, turns into the Slamdance alumni association, hosting sixty to eighty people, including Oscar-winners, for film chat and a garlic-soaked roast pork.

Slamdance is part of a wave of festivals that emerged in the mid-nineties to exhibit new breeds of independent film. "Ninety-four was the first year of [Slamdance], the New York Underground, Chicago Underground, Los Angeles Independent Film Festival, South by Southwest," comments Mirvish. "Each one of us was in response to something a little bit different, but all [of us were] breaking this hegemony that Sundance had on what's independent. At the time, if you didn't get into Sundance, not only didn't you get distribution [you didn't get considered for] a lot of the big regional festivals. . . . Part of what we did with those other five or six festivals is say to filmmakers, 'Hey, if you don't get into Sundance it's not the end of the world.'"



hard to see these festivals as marginalized when one is cosponsored by Forest Whitaker, others are showing films by well-known directors such as Tamra Davis, and many other films have stars like Pauly Shore and everybody who was anybody in film during

budgets (under a million). "We keep the budgets low so we don't have the [big] three-million-dollar film with the twelve-hundred-dollar publicist pushing around the little filmmaker with the thirty-thousand-dollar film that he made with Grandma's inheri-

Left: Tim Kang in *Machine Love*, part of Greg Pak's collection, *Robot Stories*.

Slamdance, the rebel child, now has a brand of its own that offers weight and credibility to films. Today the Slamdance catalog itself has become fodder for other festivals. And while it's rare for Slamdance films to make the list of projects acquired during the ten days when Park City is the epicenter of the film world, films first seen at Slamdance are often picked up a

month, a year, or even several years later. "There is a perception that Sundance has become basically a festival for the mini-majors," comments Ken Bowser, director of Slamdance's opening night film, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, based on Peter Biskind's best-seller. "Slamdance is now the place where, if you've got a picture without stars, you're going to get seen."

What is an independent film according to Slamdance?

"We like to think of it as *dependent* filmmaking. The whole point is that if you're on a low budget, you're completely dependent on friends. You're dependent on wives; on grandmothers dying at the right time to get their inheritance; favors; everything . . . You're dependent on so many different people that no *one* person can tell you what to do. In the studio system, if you're working for one studio, someone's telling you what to do."

—Dan Mirvish, *Slamdance* cofounder

What is an independent film according to Slamdunk?

"Independent filmmakers are willing to try. They're not willing to take no for an answer. Persistence is important. It's a fine line between selling out and cashing in."

—Justin Henry, *Slamdunk* cofounder

"I have become increasingly annoyed with the label 'independent film,' because we've got the press calling things like *Adaptation* an independent film. I love that movie, don't get me wrong, but it's not a fucking independent film. Spike Jonze, Nicholas Cage, Meryl Streep do not an independent film make. To me . . . it's some wackos in the middle of nowhere deciding . . . to put themselves in debt, to take this risk that has absolutely no guarantees of paying off, because they are so dedicated."

—Ben Coccio, director/writer of *Slamdunk's* Zero Day

What is an independent film according to Nodance?

"I think independent is not having to answer to someone with a check. When money is making creative decisions, I think that makes it less independent."

—Bessie Morris, producer of *Nodance* film *Our House*

What is an independent film according to X-Dance?

"I think it's all DIY—Do It Yourself . . . The trick with an independent film is when it's done it's not always guaranteed who's going to see it, and that's when your heart can be broken."

—Tamra Davis, director of *X-Dance* film *Keep Your Eyes Open*

What is an independent film according to Tromadance?

"We believe in people that are trying their hardest to have fun, to tell a good story, and to experiment."

—Jonathan Lees, *Tromadance* director of events

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**Slamdunk: A Diamond
in the Rough**

The brainchild of a couple of filmmakers who didn't make the Sundance deadline in 1998, Slamdunk made a name for itself the first year it appeared by screening Nick Broomfield's *Kurt and Courtney*, which Sundance yanked after Courtney Love threatened to sue for copyright invasion of her late-husband, Kurt Cobain's, songs. Since Slamdunk, which had only rented its venue at the Elk's Lodge two weeks before, basically didn't exist, there was nobody for Love's lawyers to threaten. "We had six hundred people trying to get into a screening room that held two hundred people, for a film festival that did not exist two weeks beforehand," remembers Justin Henry, the festival's cofounder. As it turned out, Slamdunk's screening was one of the few times anybody would see Broomfield's original version of the film. After a series of increasingly threatening letters from various lawyers, the Nirvana songs were cut from the film when it was distributed theatrically by Roxie Releases (see page 19).

Slamdunk had discovered that there was a need for films not qualifying for Sundance: the films that were not Sundance's taste, films that were not finished in time, that were not North American premieres, or were just too much of a legal mess for a major nonprofit to handle. Like Slamdance, the festival has remained small in the number of films screened. Usually they take ten to twelve films through open submission, but this year, due to economics, only seven films screened, including the premiere of Paul (Pauly) Shore's film, *You'll Never Weiz in this Town Again*.

Also like Slamdance, Slamdunk has ventured beyond Park City, putting on an event at Cannes that introduces American independent films to a worldwide audience. "I hope that

we're getting a reputation as sort of a diamond in the rough," notes Henry. "We have a much bigger event in Cannes than we have here because honestly we don't want to think we're competing with Sundance."

Nodance: Star Sponsorship

This year, Forest Whitaker brought some star power to Nodance as a presenting sponsor. This six-year-old is dedicated to "alternative digital film culture" and focuses on first-timers. To this end, the screenings are free to the public, there are industry panels,



networking events, and an award for the "most innovative guerrilla marketing campaign on the mountain," the Golden Orb. This year's Orb winner *Our House*, a documentary about assisted living, mounted one of the most aggressive postcard campaigns Park City has ever seen.

Nodance is carving out a niche in Park City for filmmakers who are even more of outsiders than the rest of the alternative festivals, which is perhaps why Nodance takes a cue from Sundance and focuses on panels directed at providing filmmakers information about the industry. Most of these filmmakers didn't make it into Sundance or Slamdance, but they're delighted to be screening in Park City. "I had heard good things about [Nodance] through other filmmakers. I knew of Slamdance, of

Vilka Tzouras's *Shadowboxer* claimed the Best Short title at this year's Nodance.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF VILKA TZOURAS

course, and Sundance, which I applied to," explains Vilka Tzouras, whose film *Shadowboxer* won Best Short at Nodance. "All festivals have kind of their genre, so you start to learn which festivals might want *your* film."

X-Dance: Easy Rider 2003

Founded by former *China Beach* star Brian Wimmer in 2001, X-Dance is leveraging the Park City spotlight to push action sports films into a genre that is taken seriously. Sharing a venue with Slam Dunk for part of the time, the festival closed this year with Tamra Davis's (Crossroads, CB4) x-treme sports feature, *Keep Your Eyes Open*. This festival attracts a crowd with demographics that make marketing execs' mouths water—young, hip, and action-sports oriented. "We're trying to elevate the independent film scene of action sports and bring the whole bar up," comments Dave Simmer, producer of *Keep Your Eyes Open*. "All these filmmakers have been making films for twenty years on these sports. Hopefully it will allow them to get distribution . . . rather than just having to sell on the internet or in skate and surf shops."

Tromadance: For the People and By the People

Claiming to be sick of corporate-run film festivals, Tromadance Film Festival was founded by Lloyd Kaufman, president of Troma, the company that brought you *Toxic Avenger 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5*. There's no submission fee and they screen any genre. This year, their fourth, was fifty-five shorts and one feature.

But Troma doesn't totally turn its back on corporations, not when it will benefit their filmmakers. Kodak is a sponsor. Tromadance gives their \$1,000 film stock prize (courtesy of Kodak) not to the "best" filmmaker but to the person who does the best job of taking care of business—the best festival personality, the filmmaker and volunteer that

does the best job of working his or her ass off. "I tried to pick the strongest efforts, and that's why . . . the majority of our selections are shorts," explains Tromadance's director of events Jonathan Lees. The single feature *All the Love You Can* is a Troma film about guerrilla marketing at the Cannes Film Festival. "People may know (Troma) for parties," says Lees. "I'm bringing the focus back to films."

Tromadance is another festival with a non-Utah footprint. DVD's of their films, and footage of their panels featuring Michael Rugerrio of Independent Film Channel and Jean Pruitt of American Film Market, are distributed throughout the year. They also screen selections from Tromadance in Cannes, LA, Florida, and New York.

Honorable Mention

Finally, there are even smaller new festivals sprouting up. SheDance started this year, featuring work by women filmmakers. The Phat Tire Saloon, home to Tromadance, also hosted the first annual Backseat Film Fest 2003, a mixture of films, music, and a few surprises "to tenderize your senses." There's the SchmoozeDance Film Festival, held on January 17 at Congregation Temple Har Shalom of Park City, following Oneg Shabbat and "a Kiddush and reception for congregants, filmmakers, tourists, distributors, and everybody else visiting or residing in Park City and Utah." And there was also something called Road Dance, which nobody seemed to know anything about other than its name. But as Lees says, "Don't ever think you're too small, because you're not. You need to be seen." □

Full disclosure: The editor of this magazine was the assistant costume designer for *Toxic Avenger part III, The Last Temptation of Toxie*.

Susan Freely is a filmmaker and a special-project coordinator for AIVF. She is in postproduction on her documentary We All Represent Kailua High.

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FCC Changes Afoot?

FORUM ADDRESSES TV DEREGULATION ISSUES

By Charlie Sweitzer

What do a former president of the Screen Actors Guild, the host of a long-running Harlem public access show, vice presidents at Fox and CBS, and Federal Communications Commission chairman Michael Powell have in common? They're all concerned about the future of media ownership laws, and were among the several dozen panelists who assembled at Columbia University for an FCC forum presented by Columbia's law school and organizations including the Writers Guild of America, Media Access Project, and AIVF.

television audience, as well as mergers among a community's television stations, radio stations, and local newspapers. This spring, as part of their biennial review, the FCC is expected to vote on whether these rules should be revised, repealed, or left in place.

Other forums for public discussion of FCC regulations are scheduled for this spring. These forums are largely the work of Commissioner Michael J. Copps (who was also present on January 16). In a recent FCC press release, he expressed his belief that these forums fell within the commission's "responsibility to reach out."

Support from Powell for these forums has been mixed: "I would be the first to agree that this kind of public discourse is one of the most critical things that the commission can participate in," he said at the forum on January 16, though he later admitted he finds the FCC's biennial review process "regrettable,"

adding: "I think it's destabilizing to necessarily look at rules at such intervals." Powell also issued a press release on February 5 which questioned these forums' effectiveness, comparing them to "a nineteenth century whistle stop tour."

"Whistle stop" or not, the Columbia University forum sparked some emotional debate both for and against deregulating television. The effect of the 1996 Telecommunications Act

was frequently cited as an example of how deregulation can fail the public interest. The act contained a provision which freed radio stations from ownership limits similar to those being discussed for broadcast.

The result? Today, two corporations—Clear Channel and Infinity—own nearly every radio station in the country. To many, this was a frightening model of what could happen if television is deregulated. "The deregulation of the radio industry has been an unmitigated disaster," said Michelle Jennings, executive vice president of Sherwood Outdoor. Jennings, who has worked for twenty-five years in radio management and sales, said, "After deregulation, the competitive landscape altered drastically. Our business contracted, and our ability to grow was drastically diminished. . . . Many media executives and programmers share my view, but are afraid to speak out publicly because their livelihood depends on them holding an opposite view." She admitted, "Friends and colleagues in the industry have warned me that I may be blackmailed if I speak out against deregulation at this event."

Some sought to connect media consolidation and deregulation to vulgarity on television. Commissioner Kevin J. Martin asked: "Are network executives more willing to put on questionable programming when they know they won't see you and your family at the local grocery store tonight, at the big game Saturday, or at church on Sunday?"

Another vein of opposition towards deregulation came from Charles Lewis, founder and executive director of the Center for Public Integrity. "I don't know how to put this delicately, so I'll just spit it out," he said. "There is a general perception that the Federal Communications Commission and Congress have been a little too close and a little too accommodating to the



The forum also attracted three of the four other FCC commissioners, about two hundred attendees, and was seen and heard by many more via webcast (archived on Columbia's website—see the URL below) and broadcast on Pacifica Radio.

Up for discussion were the FCC's current rules, which prohibit, among other things, one company from owning stations which reach more than thirty-five percent of the American tel-

FCC commissioners (from left) Jonathan Adelstein, Michael Powell, Kevin Martin, and Michael Copps.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DUSTIN ROSS

broadcast industry.”

Lewis shared some frightening figures: Media corporations gave \$75 million to Congress over the past five years, and spent \$111 million lobbying. Furthermore, the same members of Congress who voted for the 1996 Telecommunications Act were treated, courtesy of media corporations, to 315 trips around the world. Even worse, the Center found that between 1995 and 2000, FCC personnel accepted 1,460 “all-expense-paid” trips, courtesy of media corporations and associations. “How can the FCC judge or discuss media ownership if they’re taking trips on these guys?” said Lewis. “Call me crazy, but I have a problem with that.”

Tom Carpenter, national broadcast director of AFTRA, expressed concern over the future of local news coverage in a deregulated world. Carpenter cited the rise of voice tracking employed by Clear Channel, or “live” radio that is actually prerecorded for a specific market, as one of the negative and inevitable consequences of deregulation. “The announcers who do these voice track shifts have cheat sheets, with local community names and places,” he said. “They are required to pretend, in fact, that they are living and working in the communities where they are broadcasting, but they’re not.”

Carpenter believes that if deregulated, television would follow suit. “I hate to say it, but it’s already starting to happen,” he said, noting how Sinclair (a large owner of television stations) now tapes its weather forecasts for Dayton, Ohio, in its Baltimore, Maryland, corporate offices.

Though outnumbered at the forum, proponents of deregulation argued for the advantages of looser ownership laws. “In a way, it should be flattering to my male ego that so many people have been up here today talking about how powerful we are, and how good we are at executing conspiracies,” said Martin D. Franks, executive vice presi-

dent of CBS television. “Folks, we’re not that good . . . there isn’t this big media conspiracy out there to subvert the underlying values of America.”

Franks also said that a different climate required different laws. “Somehow the notion that the media landscape bears any resemblance today to what it looked like five years ago, or six years ago, much less *sixty* years ago, when many of these regulations were first written, is mind-boggling to me,” he said.

“Free television is much more endangered than I’ve heard articulated in this room,” he added. “Two of the networks—NBC and CBS—will make money this year. The other two are going to lose a ton. One of the reasons is all the programming investment is made at the network level. Much of the recoupment of that is made at the station level. If we aren’t able to own more stations, and therefore recoup more programming investment, our programming investment will decline. When our programming investment declines—as it has at NBC in the sports arena—more and more sports goes to pay [per view]. . . . That’s not anti-American, but it’s not ultimately in the public’s interest.”

Ultimately, though, it’s difficult to predict precisely what might happen should television become deregulated. Perhaps Lewis put it best: “[Have] the FCC commissioners given adequate explanation to the public about why giving billions more dollars [in the form of income from public airwaves] to the existing broadcast companies is in the national interest? . . . Is the FCC sufficiently objective and independent to render such judgements, given its past history? It is not for me to answer these questions, but to let time and history itself be the ultimate judge.” ■

To see this forum go to www.law.columbia.edu/news/PressReleases/media_forum.htm

For more info visit aivf.org/advocacy/index.html

Visit the FCC’s website: www.fcc.gov.

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer and intern at The Independent.

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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Raising Victor Vargas

Dir. Peter Sollett

(Samuel Goldwyn, March 28)

After the success of their NYU thesis film *Five Feet High and Rising*, which received awards at the Cannes and Sundance Film Festivals, director Peter Sollett and his partner writer/producer Eva Vives decided to bring the cast (now older and in some

and tried to cast it with the kind of kids that I grew up with," says Sollett about writing *Five Feet High and Rising*. But after being unsuccessful in the traditional ways of casting (talent agents, putting an ad in *Backstage*), Sollett and Vives decided to post flyers around their neighborhood, which is ultimately how they found the cast for *Five Feet High*, later the cast for *Victor Vargas*.

Sollett admits the young, hip dialogue that's found throughout the film is entirely made up by the actors. He found that the best way to get what he wanted from his actors was by not letting them see a script. "We noticed right away that all of these kids were much more interesting after cut and before action," says

Sollett. "So we stopped giving people the script and we spent a month basically preparing the scenes based on their improvisations and using the script as a roadmap," a technique Sollett says the actors loved. "They were all for it because it made it their movie."

XX/XY

Dir. Austin Chick
(IFC, April 11)

Another coming-of-age story, this one centers around Coles (Mark Ruffalo), a free-spirited artist whose rebel attitude and lack of ambition is a turn on for Sam (Maya Strange) and her friend Thea (Kathleen

Robertson), who both fall for him. A late-night incident breaks up the trio, but they run into one another ten years later. Though they're now more sophisticated than when they saw each other last (and each now have significant others), their reunion leads to costly mistakes.

Fellini: I'm a Born Liar

Dir. Damian Pettigrew
(First Look, April 2)

Highlighting the career of Federico Fellini, this documentary takes a candid look at the legendary Italian filmmaker. Including a series of interviews conducted before his death, *Fellini* is filled with revealing interviews from actors who've worked with the maestro (Terence Stamp, Roberto Benigni, and Donald Sutherland), as well as never before-seen private archive footage.

The Man Without a Past

Dir. Aki Kaurismäki
(Sony Pictures Classics, April 4)

The always uncharacteristic, Aki Kaurismäki follows his 1999 silent black-and-white movie, *Juha*, with this full-color, dialogue-heavy film. Traveling to Helsinki to find work, a blue-collar man (Markku Peltola) rests on a park bench when, out of nowhere, he's attacked by a group of thugs who beat him unconscious. When he comes to, he realizes he has amnesia and must begin a new life. As the film continues, the man gets through his disability through the kindness of strangers who are willing to take him in.

Television

Chiefs

Dir. Daniel Junge
(PBS, April 1)

Growing up in Wyoming, director Daniel Junge has always known about the Chiefs, the Wyoming Indian High School basketball team. Their dominance is heralded throughout the state. The idea to do a documentary about the team "came while I was sit-



cases taller) back for the feature-length sequel, *Raising Victor Vargas*.

Shot entirely in the Lower East Side of New York City, this coming-of-age story follows sixteen-year-old Victor Vargas (Victor Rasuk), now well over five-feet tall and a self-proclaimed babe magnet, who chases after the neighborhood beauty "Juicy" Judy Ramirez (Judy Marte). Hassled by his eccentric Grandmother (Altagracia Guzman), who thinks his fraternizing with girls is a bad influence on his younger brother, Nino (Silvestre Rasuk), Victor learns that there's more to life than being a ladies' man.

"I decided to write something autobiographical about my neighborhood

ting on the bench,” says Junge, who admits to spending much of his high school basketball career getting splinters on the pine. “I had many hours contemplating this film.”

Chiefs takes a look at life on the reservation for the high school basketball team through two seasons. Treated like gods off the court, the



Chiefs team members must deal with stereotypes and the pressure of making it to the state finals while on it. “That’s very much how it is on the res with basketball,” says producer Donna Dewey. “The boys are heroes before they are men.”

Living on the reservation while filming, Junge became very close to everyone who lives there. So close that he eventually is invited to sit in on the sacred smudge ceremonies that the coaches and players perform before each season to cleanse and protect them. “I’ve been embraced by these people and it makes it all the more important that they like the film.” With all the bootlegs of the film on the reservation, it’s more than evident that they like the film.

Left: Victor (Victor Rasuk) and Judy Ramirez (Judy Marte) in *Raising Victor Vargas*. Above: The 2001 Wyoming State Champion Chiefs.

“I don’t think anyone on the reservation is going to need to see it when it’s on PBS,” says Junge.

***Bird by Bird with Annie*
Dir. Freida Lee Mock
(PBS, April 22)**

This documentary on novelist and essayist Annie Lamott is both funny

and inspiring as we follow her through a year of book readings, teaching, and writing while being a single mother. Director Freida Lee Mock explores how Lamott has rebounded from a life scarred by substance abuse and depression through the help of the written word.

***AMANDLA! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony*
Dir. Lee Hirsch
(Cinemax, April 22)**

A testimony to the power of song, *AMANDALA!* looks at how important music was in the last half-century struggle against black oppression in South Africa. The documentary received the Audience Award and Freedom of Expression Award at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for *The Independent*.

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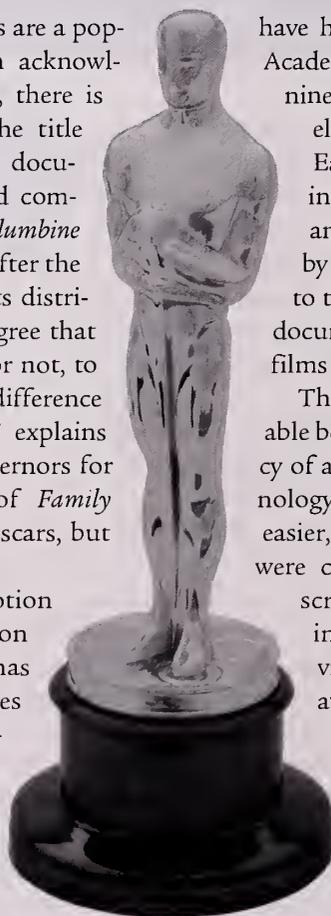
NEW RULES FOR THE ACADEMY'S FLEDGLING DOCUMENTARY BRANCH

By Maud Kersnowski

Whether you believe the Oscars are a popularity contest or a golden acknowledgement from one's peers, there is no denying that tagging the title "Oscar-winner" onto any film, including a documentary, increases its name recognition and commercial value. Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* ticket sales increased by 30 percent the week after the film was nominated, and the film received its distribution from United Artists. "Whether you agree that the Oscars are the pinnacle of achievement or not, to be recognized by the Academy can make the difference in whether or not that message gets out," explains Arthur Dong, a member of the board of governors for the documentary branch and director of *Family Fundamentals*. "The public loves to dis the Oscars, but everybody watches it."

For the last few years the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the organization that gives out those hot little statuettes, has been increasing the position of documentaries within the Academy by awarding documentaries a hard-won branch of their own last year, and a total of three seats on the board of governors, the same number as the other branches.

For a number of years documentaries



have had a somewhat uncomfortable home at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. In the nineties the board of governors twice voted to eliminate the short subject documentary award. Each time, they reversed their decision after intensive lobbying from groups such as AIVF and IDA and exhaustive information presented by the documentary makers within the Academy to the board proving that short subject films and documentaries in general were viable theatrical films deserving of the Academy's recognition.

The short subject award was particularly vulnerable because of questions surrounding the legitimacy of a number of recent entries. Since digital technology has made creating multiple versions of a film easier, the category has received submissions that were cut down versions of longer pieces already screened at festivals and on television. The intention was to grab an Oscar in what was viewed as a less competitive category. "The award recognizes the integrity of the short film," explains Freida Lee Mock, head of the documentary branch and winner of the 1994 for *Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision*. "A number of films were submitted that were chopped down from feature length films, *Reader's Digest* versions."

Another reason that members of the board may have viewed documentaries as projects intended for television, rather than ones that were re-released for broadcast after their theater days, was because television was the only place they saw documentaries. "The people on the board of governors in the nineties certainly weren't going to an art-house," Mock comments.

At the same time that the Academy had begun viewing nonfiction film with suspicion, many makers were feeling

says. "But a number of us were nominated and won under the old system."

The difficulty of entering the Academy, for many non-fiction filmmakers, further increased the image that documentarians were not represented in the Academy. Before acquiring their own branch, documentarians joined directors', producers', or members-at-large's branches, none of which had any deep commitment to recruiting documentary filmmakers into the largely fiction-focused, invitation-



alienated from the awards process. When critical and box office successes like Steve James' *Hoop Dreams* and Michael Moore's *Roger & Me* failed even to be nominated, many in the field began to question the nomination process for an award which did not have a branch of its own. Originally, in order to be able to take part in the nominating process, members were required to view all the submitted films at Academy screenings in Los Angeles, a three-day-a-week commitment for several months, something out of reach for many working documentarians, which made the award seem less of a peer award than the other Oscars. "Over the last eight years, a lot of the bigger films didn't get nominated. It seemed clear something wasn't working," Mock

only membership. As a result, until the introduction of the new branch, many of the major names in the field had not only not received an Oscar, they were not even members of the Academy, including Albert Maysels, D.A. Pennebaker, Michael Moore, and Wim Wenders.

The governors and other members of the new branch are now in the unique position of protecting the Oscars for documentaries. To this purpose they have created a new set of rules to answer the concerns of the Academy, an organization that gives out awards for theatrical films, not television. In all likelihood, the rules will continue to evolve, and people will continue to work their way around what the rules are intended to prevent.

Last year the board of governors' worst suspicions about documentaries were confirmed when the best-feature winner, *Murder on a Sunday Morning*, by Jean-Xavier de Testrade

Above: African white pelicans from Jacques Perrin's *Winged Migration*.

DEFINITION

A theatrically released nonfiction motion picture dealing creatively with cultural, artistic, historical, social, scientific, economic, or other subjects. It may not be a promotional film, a purely instructional film, or an unfiltered record of a performance.

CATEGORIES

Feature: more than forty minutes running time

Short Subject: less than forty minutes, including titles

ELIGIBILITY

Feature:

- Must run for seven consecutive days in a Los Angeles or Manhattan commercial theater before a paying audience.
- Must meet one of the following requirements: screen in four cities in a commercial theater running for two consecutive days in each venue; or be withheld from television and/or internet transmission for the nine months following the day the nominations are announced.

Short Subject:

- Follow the same seven-day Manhattan or LA roll-out as features; OR
- Win "best short documentary" at a festival the Academy considers a "competitive festival."

Shorts must also either:

- Release in four cities as above; or
- Be withheld from television and/or internet for nine months as above.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

- Showings must be advertised on the film page of a major newspaper.
- No television or internet release prior to or within six months of the qualifying run or festival win.
- Short subject films may not be edits of feature length films that have screened on TV, in theaters, or at festivals.
- Films must be submitted to the Academy.

For complete rules see: www.oscars.org/75academyawards/rules/rule12



and Dennis Poncet, aired on HBO a week after taking home the statue. "It won on a Sunday, and the following Sunday it was on HBO. It really woke up the board of governors and confirmed all their suppositions that documentaries were television productions," Mock recalls. "The television thing has haunted us."

In answer to the concern that an Academy award was being used to market a television show, new rules designed to restrict eligibility to films intended for theatrical distribution were drafted for the 2003 nomination process. While documentaries were once required to screen for only seven consecutive days in Manhattan or Los Angeles, nonfiction films must now also play in an additional four cities for at least two consecutive days. If this condition is not met, the film can still be nominated, but it cannot be broadcast for nine months after the nominations are announced. Whether these restrictions achieve their goal remains to be seen, but they will certainly increase the theatrical distribution of documentaries outside of New York and Los Angeles.

The shorts category, on the other hand, has seen a loosening of the qualification requirements. These films may earn eligibility either through the same type of theatrical roll-out as features, or they may use the "Best Short Award" at a newly expanded list of festivals as part of their qualifying exhibition.

One thing that will not change is that the so-called short list will not be released. Earlier this year there was a great deal of murmuring and high hopes that the list of films in serious consideration for nominations might be released. "The Academy has nominations and Oscar winners. The short list is part of an internal private review. It's not public," comments Dong. □

Maud Kersnowski is editor in chief of The Independent.

This page: Actor, director, and cabaret performer Kurt Gerron in Malcolm Clarke and Stuart Sender's *Prisoner of Paradise*. Opposite page, left: Mother-daughter reunion in Gail Dolgin and Vincente Franco's *Daughter from Danang*, Right: The Jacob brothers with their grandmother, Erslena, in Roger Weisberg and Murray Nossel's *Why Can't We Be a Family Again?*



And the documentary nominees are:

Feature:

Bowling for Columbine

Director: Michael Moore

Producer: Michael Donovan

Michael Moore's examination of gun culture and gun violence in the US.

Distribution

Theatrical: Now showing

Television: No plans for broadcast

Daughter from Danang

Directors: Gail Dolgin and Vincente Franco

The daughter of a US soldier fighting in Vietnam and a Vietnamese national searches for the mother who sent her to America.

Distribution

Theatrical: Now showing

Television: PBS's *American Experience*, April 7

Prison of Paradise

Directors: Malcolm Clarke and Stuart Sender

While held in a concentration camp, a leading Jewish actor, director, and cabaret performer was forced to direct and write Nazi propaganda films.

Distribution

Theatrical: No longer in theaters

Television: PBS, scheduled to air in late April.

Spellbound

Director: Jeffrey Blitz

Producer: Sean Welch

A behind-the-scenes look at the National Spelling Bee with children from around the country.

Distribution

Theatrical: Now showing

Television: HBO; not yet scheduled

Winged Migration

Director: Jacques Perrin

The story of the lives of migrating birds from the birds' perspective.

Distribution

Theatrical: Now showing

Television: Through Columbia/TriStar

Short subject:

The Collector of Bedford Street

Director: Alice Elliott

A profile of Larry Selman, a sixty-year-old disabled man who spends much of his time raising money for charities.

Distribution

Theatrical/Festival: In theaters and on festival circuit

Television: Cinemax, late May

Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks

Director: Robert Houston

Producer: Robert Hudson

The story of one of the Civil Rights Movement's most important figures.

Distribution

Theatrical/Festival: On festival circuit

Television: HBO, February 2004, as part of Black History Month

Other: Educational distribution through Teaching Tolerance (www.tolerance.org)

Twin Towers

Directors: Bill Guttentag and Robert David Port

Profiles of one of the first Emergency Service Units to respond on September 11.

Distribution

Theatrical/Festival: Still on festival circuit

Television: None as of press time

Why Can't We Be a Family Again?

Directors: Roger Weisberg and Murray Nossel

A grandmother raises her drug-addicted daughter's children.

Distribution

Theatrical/Festival: On festival circuit

Television: None

Other: Educational rights sold to Filmmaker's Library and Pyramid Media Distribution.

Note: All information current as of press time (March 3).



Unlocking the Secrets of the Screening Committee

By Aaron Krach

For almost every independent film its first exhibition space will be a festival screening room. It doesn't matter if your film's budget was in the hundreds and the crew ate bologna sandwiches, or if you spent a million-plus and had a cappuccino machine at the craft services table—once the videotaped copy is dropped into the mail (with festival entry form, fee, and photos) all films become equal. They are just videotapes in padded envelopes waiting to be unwrapped and watched by a stranger, waiting to be discovered, to be loved, and hopefully, to be chosen to screen at the festival.

Okay, so it's not quite that easy. Not all films are created equal; some have an edge. Maybe your film has Parker Posey in it. Maybe someone else's film was produced by a guy sleeping with the festival programmer. But in many ways, film festival entries become equalized, if not equal. Each film entered is exactly that: an entry. It is just another film to be watched, approved, and liked, or not. Hundreds, even thousands, of films will arrive at any given festival office each year, all vying for the exact same thing, a spot in the lineup, but only a few will be chosen. They don't call them competitions for nothing.

There are undoubtedly more film festivals in more countries than ever before. Of course, that is little compensation to filmmakers who are getting more rejection letters than ever before. Isn't there something (any-

thing?) filmmakers can do with their docs, dramas, and shorts to make sure they not only get noticed by the screening committee, but get programmed into a festival or two? Understanding the screening process will go a long way to unlocking the mystery of which films are chosen to screen at a festival. And once you get a few festivals under your belt, the ball has a tendency to keep on rolling, because so many festivals solicit submissions straight out of the catalogs of other festivals.

Few situations in life are as humbling as dropping your film into the mailbox. You might open and close the lid on it a few times to make sure it's hasn't gotten stuck, but it's gone. You couldn't get it back if you wanted to. And whether the festival is in Austin or East Hampton, your film's journey—from delivery to decision—will be remarkably similar.

"Every single tape we receive [at South By Southwest] goes into an office where one person logs them all in," says Mocha Jean Herrep, an associate professor of radio, television, and film at Austin Community College in Austin, Texas, and a veteran volunteer screener.

At South by Southwest (SXSW) and most other festivals, logging the tapes involves separating any accompanying paperwork from the videotape. Each tape is coded and put into a pile with other submissions in the same category. Larger groups are then divided into smaller batches of tapes,



which are sent to screening committee members who will view them at home. Screeners usually receive only the tapes, without supplementary paperwork, cast lists, etc. Thus the film has to stand on its own and capture the home-viewer's attention. The screener gives the films numerical ratings, so films with higher marks can be easily culled for second viewings.

"Over the whole process, I'll watch approximately forty features total on my own," continues Herrep. "This year I'm mostly watching documentaries, and with documentaries we're also careful to judge the importance of the story verses how well the film 'works.'"

At smaller or more thematically focused festivals, where the submissions are fewer, the initial screening step may be skipped and the films will be first watched by a group. In the case of very young festivals, like Other Minds, a San Francisco film festival dedicated to films about new music and avant garde composers, the programming is "curated" by one individual. In this case, it was Charles Amirkhanian. "We originally wanted to show all the great European television documentaries about new music that Americans are missing," Amirkhanian explains. "While putting the line up together, I asked some people for advice, but I had so much that I wanted to show . . . that I programmed the first festival myself."

Daryl Chin, a twenty-five-year veteran screener at the Asian American International Film Festival in Manhattan, remembers similarly simple days when AAIFF was starting out. "There wasn't always a committee," Chin says, "there was just whoever was working on the festival at the time, and we would watch what came in." Chin has also served as a screener for New York's Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Both AAIFF and NYGLFF have become large enough to need individual screeners as well as screening committees, where submissions can be discussed. SXSW also uses second-round screening committees to assess the films given to the take-home screeners. "We'll look at the ones that did well and the ones that didn't do as well," Herrep says.

During these meetings, choices are narrowed until a consensus is formed for including or excluding each film. But this isn't a silent jury. Screening committee members lobby for the films they care about. In these meetings, it is possible for a film without much support to move on after one or two individuals argue strongly in its defense. Herrep remembers many times where individuals became

advocates for a certain film and were able to convince the group to get behind a film. "One of the benefits of programming committees," says Chin, "is keeping the process open for many points of view. Filmmakers should know that unless their work is really bad . . . there are people trying to find a way to fit their work in so that it can be programmed and seen by an audience."

"The screening committee is exactly what it says it is," says Rajendra Roy, director of programming at The Hamptons International Film Festival in New York. "The individuals on the screening committee are a filter, and one I have to be able to trust: Watching all the submissions myself would be simply too time consuming." As the director of programming, Roy knows that it is ultimately his rep-

utation that is on the line. So after the committee has done its job, his is really only beginning. Roy watches all the highly ranked films, as well as some that received the lowest marks, to see what inspired such a negative reaction.

Every festival programmer is different, and every film festival has its own set of goals. A festival's agenda might be to support Asian American filmmakers (AAIFF), or independently produced films (SXSW), or world-class auteurs (Cannes). Upon close inspection, applicants may find that each festival has a surprisingly narrow focus. Every programmer who spoke with *The Independent* for this article was adamant that filmmakers must first try to understand the focus of each festival they want to enter.

"All festivals have a focus," says Chin, "even the New York Film Festival, which is supposed to show the best of the best of the festival crop of that year, has a focus. AAIFF is different from [other Asian and Asian American] festivals put on by the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) in San Francisco or by Visual Communications (VC) in LA. They focus on work dealing with 'the Asian and Asian American experience.' AAIFF's focus has always been to showcase work made by Asians and Asian Americans. If we had been offered *Sense and Sensibility*, we would have shown it because of Ang Lee's participation. NAATA and VC would definitely not have shown it."

At more broadly programmed festivals such as The Hamptons, accurately understanding the festival's specific guidelines will help filmmakers decide if the festival is an appropriate place to submit their films. "Filmmakers should know the rules," Roy says, "absolutely. Rules control so much of what we do at The Hamptons that filmmakers really need to ask questions to get the right information."

When it comes to The Hamptons, only very specific kinds



Left: Hamptons programmer Rajendra Roy. Above: Mocha Jean Herrep and SXSW panelist Molly Steenson.

of films are accepted. "American first- or second-time directors—not necessarily born in the US but produced here—and without distribution compete for The Golden Starfish Award; features and documentaries about world conflict are part of the traditional 'Conflicts and Resolutions' segment. Everything else is out of competition, in the World Cinema category," Roy explains. Thus if your film is an American independent but not a premiere, its only hope at The Hamptons is if it is considered special enough to hold its own among films from world-class directors from across the globe in the World Cinema category.

"I think filmmakers need to figure out exactly what they need," says Roy. "Is it press coverage? Is it prize money and press coverage but perhaps not a distribution deal? Once they decide what they need, then they should strategize."

At The Hamptons, a film can garner one of the largest cash prizes of any festival, The Golden Starfish, which will earn significant press coverage, but The Hamptons is not traditionally a place where distribution deals are made. In contrast, a film playing at Sundance, even in a low-profile category, may garner distributor attention by the mere fact that it is at Sundance.

The Hamptons is by no means alone in its focus on premieres. SXSW tries to show only films that haven't shown in Austin before. "We don't focus on premieres just for premieres' sake," says Roy, "but because when a premiere wins, it will garner press, as opposed to getting press first someplace else where it played first. This brings attention to the festival and to the filmmaker. It's a two-way street. We can get front-page notice in *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety* for our winner, and that wouldn't happen if the film had already been in Sundance or Toronto. Regionally it would get press, but nationally and internationally it wouldn't work."

The decision of which films ultimately screen at a festival is also highly influenced by the personal idiosyncrasies of programmers and the screening committee members. While some of the tastes and interests of various festival staffs can be deciphered by their programming histories and reputations, different things will influence them each year.

"It is very personal," says Roy. "I'm personally interested in diversity—of subject, filmmaker, etc.—and I'm interested in good stories. Last year we ended up with fifty percent of our competition entries directed by women. It wasn't something we planned; it slowly became apparent that we had a lot of strong entries by women, and that fed us to look for more. It was a naturally developing trend that we saw and then pushed. And it's not something I would necessarily repeat."

Everyone who spoke to *The Independent* for this article

perked up when asked: What advice would you give filmmakers considering submitting a film to your festival?

"When I get a film," Herrep says, "I don't get any of the publicity materials or anything. I just get the tape. So if there is anything I need to know—a section with bad sound that I need to overlook, or a key section you want to highlight—put it [physically] on the tape. Don't write it on the box or tape it on the cassette, because even that might get lost: Write the note directly on the video, otherwise I may not see it."

"Also, if the filmmaker knows someone on the committee—even if it's someone they met for two minutes at another festival—they should definitely e-mail them or contact them in some way so their film is flagged." Herrep continues, "It's no guarantee, but like I said, all the tapes at SXSW go through one office and it's very easy to not get a specific film to the right person."

"Personal recommendations always help," says Roy. "It's just a way of flagging something for extra attention. Also important is that you submit your best work. You don't want to get into a situation where you're submitting something that is not quite finished and if it doesn't get in, you are going to go back, work on it, and resubmit it next year. It just won't work. Don't rush something you don't feel is the best it can be. Unless you're a known quantity."

A specific issue Roy noticed programming The Hamptons last year involved short films. There was a large quantity of films that were in between shorts and features and thus were very difficult to program. "The problem this year [2002] was all these mini features. There is nothing a programmer can do with them. They are too long to play before a feature, and two of them make a whole program. I would tell filmmakers not to make mini features, but if that is what they really want to do, then they need to prioritize the festivals they submit to. Send their films to short film festivals like Aspen's shorts festival, and not someplace like The Hamptons, who just doesn't have the space for programs of shorts."

Chin, perhaps because he's been screening films longer than anyone else *The Independent* spoke to, hopes filmmakers don't see the relationship between programmers and filmmakers as adversarial. "Filmmakers should never take a rejection personally. There are just too many extenuating circumstances," he explains. □

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Asian American International Film Festival veteran programmer Daryl Chin.

Specialty of the Arthouse

By Ray Pride

If moviemaking is smoke and mirrors, the distribution and exhibition of films proves that smoke is only another special effect.

Between the Oscar campaigns for studio specialty films (sometimes labeled “arthouse” or “indie” movies), the record take at the box office last year, and 2002’s big, fat independent Cinderella story, it might seem as if this is a great time for venues showing independent films. And to some degree it is—just not for any of those reasons.

While box office sales were up twelve percent in 2002, grossing almost \$9.4 billion, most of the money was from blockbusters such as *Spider-Man* and James Bond’s promise to *Die Another Day*, products that must reap their immense grosses over a few weekends. And unlike *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, most movies that thrive on word-of-mouth advertising, rather than multimillion-dollar ad campaigns, would hardly flatter the bottom lines of the big studios. But the release of a smaller feature does not have to be only another way to build word-of-mouth interest for its eventual video release. Increasingly, there is a substantial amount of money on the table for alternative distributors and venues that want to cater to the moviegoers outside of the teenage demographic—substantial in the real world, if not in Hollywood bookkeeping.

There are more screens and more films in more cities for independent work than ever before. “The penetration of specialized films has grown dramatically in the past few years,” says Eamonn Bowles, who heads Magnolia Pictures, distributor of *Late Marriage* and *Read My Lips* and who programmed the late, lamented Shooting Gallery Film Series. “I’m routinely playing cities that I never would have ten years ago—not that these cities are doing particularly well with most of the art product. Because of the boom in

screen expansion of a few years back, there are still excess screens in many markets. Add that to the fact that the upside for specialized films has taken a quantum leap over the last few years, and you have just about every quasi metropolitan area booking more art films.”

The larger chains such as AMC and Loews offer the chance for wider releases of movies like Todd Haynes’ *Far From Heaven* or Pedro Almodóvar’s *Talk To Her*. But these films still need to be nurtured on the festival circuit to build up steam and make them viable chain products. As



Silas Kerati as Jogona and Karoline Eckertz as Regina in Caroline Link’s *Nowhere Africa*.

the quality and size of the screens they assign these film makes clear, the oligopoly of exhibitors aren’t there for the health of distributors, moviegoers, or filmmakers. And they don’t usually try their hand at films from smaller distributors, such as Zeitgeist’s Oscar-nominated German entry *Nowhere Africa* or Cowboy Pictures’s release of Lynne Ramsay’s *Morvern Callar*.

The true home of the independent film is the arthouse. “Major chain exhibitors generally don’t provide the support or savvy on a local level needed to find audiences for specialized films,” Cowboy head John Vanco says. “Most of the time, success for smaller films in small markets is driven by

devoted individuals with a vested interest in their own independent theaters—sometimes commercial venues but often nonprofit or semitheatrical.” Vanco cites examples such as the Hopkins Center in Hanover, New Hampshire, the Abbey Theatre in Durango, Colorado, and the Ragtag in Columbia, Missouri. “They all have developed audiences that trust their programming enough to go see movies there that don’t have the benefit of studio machinery and national media muscle behind them,” he says.

But United Artist’s Bingham Ray, another veteran of independent film distribution, argues that Hollywood’s muscle is being used to help arthouse films. In the case of UA, which is a subsidiary of MGM, its ongoing release of *Bowling for Columbine* is already the highest-grossing American narrative documentary ever. At about \$25 million, *Columbine* has taken in more than triple the amount of the last record holder, which happened to have been Moore’s own *Roger & Me*. “Because of the unique relationship between UA and MGM,” Ray says, “UA is able to tap into the strength of their distribution force and accomplish what is difficult or impossible for the smaller independent companies. Films like *Bowling for Columbine*, and really all our other films, can be nurtured and handled with TLC, and then at the appropriate time broadened out into multiplexes throughout North America, big and small markets alike.”

The term “arthouse” no longer refers solely to the one- or two-screen calendar house rotating a mix of classics, for-

In the 1990’s, chains like Loews Cineplex and United Artists Theaters overbuilt and overspent in their rush to megaplex the landscape. As with most boom scenarios, this led to bankruptcies as a result of the millions invested in stadium seating, stereo sound, and super-size cupholders. An unintended result was the consolidation of the industry, with a handful of players swooping down and cherry-picking the most profitable venues. Regal Entertainment Group, owned by reclusive Denver billionaire Philip Anschutz, is the largest chain, with more than 5,790 screens in 545 locations, combining Regal Cinemas with Edwards Theaters and United Artists Theaters. Anschutz’s Qwest Communications owns one of the most advanced fiber-optic networks, which will be an important factor in the acceleration of digital delivery and projection of movies. (In February, Regal signed to pay \$200 million for over half of the theaters owned by Hoyts Cinemas.)

Larger chains, like most corporations, are interested in their own future. By buying screens out of bankruptcy, or smaller chains, without having to assume their past obligations, these debt-free concerns are free to invest in capital improvements, such as the digital projection equipment that the Regal Cinemas concern has begun to install in many of their newly purchased theaters. But this does not mean that smaller, shot-on-digital-video features are coming your way soon. More likely, it means that nighttime showings of *Star Wars: Episode III* will be augmented by daytime video conferencing, or, as many fear, the distribution of major sports events that were formerly on network television. “For the most part, only the real high-profile breakout films play to any meaningful gross, but at least other quality films get exposed to an audience in these towns, where they hadn’t been before. This is a point to grow from,” Bowles comments.

Two other deep-pocketed concerns have benefited from the consolidation—Oaktree Capital Management and a Canadian company called Onex. Onex attempted to acquire Landmark Theaters for \$80.2 million, reportedly intending to rebrand many Loews Cineplex houses with the classier Landmark moniker. But as a result of the antitrust laws brought about in the 1950’s, when studios were forced out of their exhibition monopolies, the deal didn’t take: “The parties were unable to obtain the required regulatory consents for the transaction,” according to the company’s own press release.

The plan to purchase the financially shaky Landmark chain may have been an attempt to dance around the very letter of the law, which prohibited the sale and kept the arthouse chain on its own. According to *LA Weekly* columnist Nikki Finke, the acquisition strategy “appears to have been devised to avoid antitrust scrutiny and to keep a low profile with government agencies.” By purchasing debt instead of assets, it avoids a long-standing antitrust



eign, and independent film. Arthouses are now a multi-tiered collection of niche markets. Any number of conflicting economic and social forces are at work for and against the arthouse, and single-screen theaters in particular are finding it hard to survive. These old-fashioned cathedrals of dreams continue to close; this winter saw the New Art Cinema in Champaign, Illinois, close, as well as Salt Lake City’s Vista Theater, one of the last Cinerama-sized theaters still in operation.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF MUVICO THEATERS; FACING PAGE, JIM ANDERSON

requirement “which prohibits any ‘person’ from making acquisition of stock or assets where the effect might be substantially to lessen competition or to create a monopoly.”

In Seattle, as in several other cities around the country, Landmark Theaters has entrenched itself as the brand name exhibitor for specialty films. Landmark has been so successful in Seattle that the Loews Cineplex’ Uptown has begun competing with them, showing movies like *Roger Dodger* and *The Quiet American*.

This battle between the little chain and the big chain seems to be creating an atmosphere where even smaller venues that rely on creative programming and less-publicized “art films” are finding success. The Northwest Film Forum, which bought its first theater, the compact Grand Illusion Cinema, in 1995, expanded by opening the Little Theatre. The Northwest Film Forum has come to rely on innovation, such as an upcoming Claire Denis retrospective, a four-film Douglas Sirk sampler, and such brilliant but strange films as *Songs from the Second Floor*. They have also brought makers to Seattle, such as Deco Dawson, the prolific Winnipeg filmmaker who was Guy Maddin’s cinematographer on *Hearts of the World*, and they even commissioned him to write a play for the event.

As the large commercial chains lean towards “indie” films, making “indie” mean “clever mainstream,” Landmark finds itself choosing edgier work again, which then pushes the Grand Illusion toward international movies and retrospectives, with the Little Theatre standing up for the underground. A pretty picture, especially with even smaller concerns bringing up the rear guard. A dozen independent curators plan an April alternative-venue film festival called Satellites, which began as a reaction to the Seattle International Film Festival, in much the same way that Slamdance arose as a response to Sundance.

Collaborations are taking place between independent exhibitors in ways unheard of in the past, particularly where technology is concerned. “The alternative venues are teaming up, communicating, and cooperating. And that never used to happen,” comments Andy Spletzer, a Seattle-based programmer and former critic for that city’s weekly, *Stranger*.

In Memphis, a group called Indie Memphis split a booking of Jean-Luc Godard’s recent digital film *In Praise of Love*, between the Muvico chain’s Peabody Place 22 and the Memphis Digital Arts Cooperative’s First Congo Arthouse Theater, a 108-seat venue located in a church. The critic of the metro daily *The Commercial Appeal* approvingly described the showing as “the most challenging, intimidating, and anti-commercial work to be booked into a Memphis theater since at least 1996.”

A twenty-something gallery scene is burgeoning in

Chicago. The artist-run Wicker Park Heaven Gallery split a March series of internationally selected shorts, Video Mundi, with one of the city’s more complex edifices, the Cultural Center. And on another level, the Starz Filmcenter in Denver was created through a collaboration between the University of Colorado, the Denver Film Society, and mini-



distributor and exhibitor Magnolia Pictures, which manages and programs the venue.

“Things have really started to cook theater-wise,” Bowles comments about Magnolia, which also owns successful theaters in Texas and Colorado, and is responsible for booking films in the new Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. “[Fort Worth] is a market that has no appreciable art film scene, but a vibrant museum, theater, music, and overall high-culture scene,” Bowles explains. “It just didn’t make sense that there was such a small audience for film [there]. But putting the films in the right context seems to galvanize the audience.”

For arthouses, success continues to be keyed to finding the right audience. Cowboy Pictures’s John Vanco has done unexpectedly well with films like *The Hank Greenberg Story*. He breaks out the resilience of George Butler’s *Endurance* documentary as an example of a film that found an audience in many different smaller cities. “We had long runs with indie theaters in all of the upper Midwest, northern California, and Pacific Northwest. Fifteen weeks at the Nickelodeon in Santa Cruz, nine at the Crest in Sacramento, nineteen at the Rafael Film Center in Marin County, plus lots of short good runs in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington state, [and] seven weeks at the Wilma in Missoula,” Vanco says.

Ray Pride’s column, “Pride, Unprejudiced,” appears each Friday at Moviecitynews.com. He writes about movies for indieWIRE, Filmmaker, Cinema Scope and Chicago’s Newcity, among other publications.

Left Page: Muvico’s Peabody Place 22, Memphis. Above: Seattle’s Little Theatre.

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TOTALLY INDEPENDENT

The Media Policy Wars

NEW TECHNOLOGY MEETS OLD INDUSTRY

By Ernesto Martinez

There is a tremendous and silent battle being fought these days, the effects of which could create a culture (locally, nationally, and globally) that is completely beholden to the media giants, even more so than the present. The old-culture industries are engaging with the new digital spaces and internet users on a number of fronts to wrest the rights and uses of emerging technologies in their favor. Since this amorphous collision is taking place in Congress, the courts, and in the regulatory arena, there is a tendency to report the events piecemeal and thus they never quite enter the national stage as pressing issues for the broad citizenry.

The war, as Stanford law professor Lawrence Lessig describes, is about whether the old-culture industries will forge the new internet architecture into their own image, or if the internet and its diverse users will force these media leviathans to re-invent themselves and allow an extensive “innovation commons” to flourish. While the corporations are forming concerted efforts to shape the internet, and thus culture, in their own image, the public, unorganized and often ill informed, is left holding a certain blind faith in their congressional senators and representatives to speak on their behalf. Ironically, it is presumably the responsibility of these very media giants to inform the public about what is taking place.

This stealth collision is taking place at the busy intersection where copyright law, technology policy, telecommunication policy, cultural policy, and the public interest meet. In recent years the culture industries have been successfully lobbying to

establish legislated digital technologies to limit both legal uses of, and access to, their copyrighted works. At the same time the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), under Chairman Michael Powell, is lurching closer to further deregulation of all industries under its long reach. Deregulation of the telecommunications industry continues the trend of the past forty years to extend ownership of media into private hands and out of the public’s grasp. During this period, copyright terms have been extended eleven times, with the

review two of the media ownership rules. A year later the review was expanded to all six rules. The Telecommunications Act of 1996, which relaxed national broadcast ownership limits, requires the FCC to review its media ownership rules every two years and to justify those rules or, if unable to, to remove them. The FCC has based the standard of whether these rules are necessary within the framework of marketplace competition.

While the all important phrase “serving the public interest” may seem to support diversity and localism, it is clear from the FCC’s actions in the past, such as the examination of digital television, that the public are positioned as consumers of broadcast television. The questions of diversity become questions of diversity of channels and genres of content, and a

This stealth collision is taking place at the busy intersection where copyright law, technology policy, telecommunication policy, cultural policy, and public interest meet.

latest copyright extension being the 1998 Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act (CTEA). CTEA defines the constitutionally permitted “limited time” of exclusive rights as ninety-five years for corporations (from seventy-five years established in 1976), and author’s life plus seventy years for individuals or their estates.

Following are some of the recent events unfolding in the courts, in Congress, and at the FCC. It behooves media arts participants to seize the debate on these issues and to stave off the attempt at suffocating the precious little air given to independent media.

FCC: deregulation and big media

In September 2001, the FCC initiated a “Notice of Proposed Rulemaking” to

‘democracy’ of television becomes universal access.

On October 1, 2002, the FCC released a series of studies and analyses that serve as a framework for the media ownership proceeding. The FCC sought comments on the studies until 2003. There was an unprecedented number of responses filed by individuals and organizations opposed to media consolidation. The existing rules under consideration are:

National Broadcast Ownership Cap limits any one entity from owning an interest in more than thirty-five percent broadcast licensees in relation to national coverage.

Dual Network Rule prevents major broadcast networks from owning interests in each other.

Newspaper Broadcast Cross-owners limits an entity from owning a broadcast station and a daily newspaper in the same market.

Duopoly Rule limits the number of broadcast stations an entity can own in a particular market.

Local Radio Competition Limits restricts local radio ownership to up to eight stations, depending on total number of stations in a market.

Television-Radio Cross-Ownership Rule prevents one entity from owning both a radio station and a television station in the same market.

The FCC studies are based on policy findings of previous FCC committees that looked to the marketplace for regulatory salves, specifically from the Reagan era under the leadership of Chairman Mark Fowler. The Powell-led FCC is well known for favoring further deregulation as a regulatory policy. The measures for meeting the “public interest” are then based on competition and diversity of programming standards. Powell has stated at various times that competition in the marketplace is sufficient to ensure diversity and thus the “public interest” obligation.

Originally the FCC declined to hold any public meeting on the review but has recently held forums across the country (see pg. 36).

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) 1998

The DMCA became law in 1998. The law attempts to codify unauthorized access to, or use of, copyrighted works by restricting the end-user activity, much of which many believe falls under fair use and other unregulated uses of works. The DMCA enjoins individuals circumventing industry encryption devices in order to access works. It further criminalizes the intellectual process of creat-

ing and distributing circumvention tools. Pamela Samuelson, a Berkeley law professor, argues that the DMCA was an outcome of the battle between Hollywood and Silicon Valley. She believes that the content industries on the one hand wanted to strictly control their works and ban technologies that have circumvention-enabling uses. Silicon Valley, on the other hand, opposed the broad legislation because of the detrimental effects on their practice of reverse engineering, computer security testing, and encryption research. The end result was the DMCA, a highly unwieldy and incoherent piece of legislation. The apparent far reach of the DMCA has been tested in two cases recently, one a case

ElcomSoft. The jury instructions said that merely offering a product that could violate copyrights was not enough to warrant a conviction. The establishment of this precedent, along with new bills by Rep. Zoe Lofgren and Rick Boucher named the Digital Choice and Freedom Act of 2002 and the Digital Media Consumer’s Right Act (DMCRA), respectively, attempt to restore some of the public’s rights with respect to copyrighted works which have been eroded over the past few years through the use of restrictive technologies and so-called “end-user license agreements.” And significantly, these bills set forth the importance in providing the greatest degree of access to creative works. In other

The war is about whether old-culture industries will forge the new internet architecture into their own image, or if the internet and its diverse users will force these media leviathans to re-invent themselves and allow an extensive “innovation commons” to flourish.

against the distribution of software (DeCSS) that allows DVD’s to be played on an open-source Linux operating system and another case that involves ElcomSoft, a Russian software firm that designed software to enable access to encrypted works. Russian cryptographer Dmitri Sklyarov was arrested by US federal agents after he presented parts of a paper on “eBooks Security.” Sklyarov outlined a program used to disable Adobe’s e-book Reader in order to change content to an easier reading format, for printing or copying. Sklyarov was eventually set free with the condition that he testify against ElcomSoft.

In December in San Jose, California, the jury rendered a “not guilty” verdict in the case against

words, although the majority of the discussion focuses on citizens as consumers, there is a tacit understanding that creativity is cultivated best when cultural producers have a certain degree of freedom to build on the past in creating their works, while access to these works is of equal importance in completing the circuits among production, distribution, and consumption of culture.

Digital Rights Management: technological fixes to the problem of copyright

The DMCA set the precedent for attempting to legislate beyond copyright restrictions for the protection of works, although these extended restrictions are now being lessened through the above-mentioned bills. A

bevy of approaches to content control is being launched through what is being euphemistically called “digital rights management” (DRM). This tertiary strategy by the content industries in their battle for maintaining control of digital spaces is an attempt to control technologically, under the force of law, uses of their content and thereby uses of other’s content, i.e., independent media. The rationale by the industry is that digital technology has created a digital space where piracy has run amok. Digital copies are perfect reproductions and cost almost nothing to make. Therefore, greater control is necessary for the protection of “intellectual property” (copyrighted works). But public interest organizations such as Public Knowledge, the Media Access Project, the Center for Digital Democracy, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and law professors at Harvard, Berkeley, Stanford, and other respected universities agree that the content industry is more concerned with regaining control over the uses of copyrighted works in the developing digital environments that will integrate the internet, television, home recorders, and computers. At least two digital rights management systems are being proposed as legislation.

The broadcast flag

One DRM issue, the broadcast flag, is designed to allow content owners to protect their copyrights by marking digital-television programs so that new TV’s, recorders, and computers will recognize the “flags” and limit copying, the purpose being to strictly tether content to specific hardware so that the content can not be digitally redistributed.

The broadcast flag is being championed by the Broadcast Discussion Protection Group, an organization formed from within affected industries (content producers and hardware makers) of the newly arriving digital television environment. The group’s

express purpose is to “evaluate technical solutions for preventing unauthorized redistribution” of digital TV content. On August 8, 2002, the FCC formally began considering whether or not to adopt a broadcast flag standard for new digital-broadcast television programs.

This proposal raises questions about how previously unregulated uses of copyright works would be limited or restricted under the broadcast flag. Other questions raised by Public Knowledge, the Consumers Union, and the Center for Democracy and Technology are whether this flag, initially intended for HDTV, might set a precedent and unleash more intrusive DRM technologies into other digital environments such as the internet. The Consumer Broadband and Digital Television Act introduced by Hollings is just such a bill, but its passage is not imminent at this time.

Secure platforms

Another group introducing ideas on technology into Washington is the Trusted Computing Platform Alliance (TCPA), a group with just under two hundred corporate members. Their goal is to create a “new computing platform for the next century that will provide for improved trust in the PC platform.” One piece of software designed to build on the TCPA hardware is Microsoft’s Palladium. What this type of configuration could possibly do is provide a highly secure, trusted environment for systems such as electronic payment. But this type of platform could also function as a “trusted” digital rights management environment where tightly circumscribed pay-for-play uses reduce the general computer to a sophisticated television. In this sense “trusted” means the provider is sure that the user will not be able to leave the technologically specified uses delimited by the provider. Senator Fritz Hollings is also pushing Congress on behalf of TCPA to incor-

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The courts and the Constitution: copyright extensions vs. creative freedom

In the name of creativity and freedom of expression, the Constitution states an intention "to promote the progress of science and useful arts" and grants an "exclusive right" for a limited time to authors and inventors of their respective writings and discoveries. Temporary (limited times) monopoly control and profits that the Constitution lets Congress give to authors, artists, scientists, and corporations (a type of "body") are important in a society to balance the promotion of creativity and free expression by supporting the creators. Long after Walt Disney's death, Disney Inc. remains vital and profitable, as does Mickey Mouse, whose films would have started falling out of copyright in this year if the 1998 Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act had not passed.

In the case *Eldred v. Ashcroft* Lawrence Lessig and others argued to the Supreme Court this past October that the Sonny Bono law violates the Copyright Clause requirement of "limited times," claiming that if Congress can repeatedly extend existing copyrights, then "limited times" has no valence. Lessig also argued that the law stifles the promotion of creativity, a primary purpose of the Copyright Clause, because it does not allow creative works to build on the past. Extending monopoly rights for existing works does nothing to cultivate the creation of new works building on what came before. Finally, Lessig et al. argued that the law violates the First Amendment by preventing older works from entering the public domain. Although the Supreme Court justices were openly disdainful of the 1998 legislation, they questioned whether the issue was one of unconstitutionality or just bad law.

The decision in *Eldred v. Ashcroft* was rendered rather swiftly on January 15, 2003. The Supreme Court upheld the CTEA seven to two, stating that congressional power to extend the copyright term was constitutionally authorized. The majority decision by Justice Ruth Ginsberg stated that the court did not have the power to question congressional determinations of copyright law even if the law was bad law. The dissenting opinions by Justice Stevens and Justice Breyer expressed doubts about the majority decision's deference to congressional policymaking while in other cases exercising judicial power to restrain congressional acts. Justice Stevens stated that if congressional action on copyright law was "judicially unreviewable" then the "basic tenets of our constitutional structure" do not frame the decision.

The independent media arts communities must seize the debate on these issues and expand their roles to include artist/citizen/activist/organizer. Given the sober fact that media concentration is a *fait accompli*, what remains imperative for independent media activists is vigilance for potential spaces where alternative voices can be cultivated and to speak out about policy that threatens to imperil the limited space for alternatives to corporate media. □

For more information on these issues, contact:

AIVF: www.aivf.org/advocacy

Center for Digital Democracy
www.democraticmedia.org

Center for Democracy and Technology
www.cdt.org

Electronic Frontier Foundation: www.eff.org

Media Access Project: www.mediaaccess.org

Public Knowledge: www.publicknowledge.org

Ernesto Martinez is a doctoral candidate at UCLA's Department of Film, Television and Digital Media, focusing on independent media arts in the US.

Building a Tech Library

THE RIGHT BOOKS FOR YOUR REFERENCE STACK

By Greg Gilpatrick

Understanding the technical advances that fuel the latest film and video tools and techniques is often an overwhelming task for filmmakers who just want to tell their stories. One of the best ways to master a wide variety of tools and techniques is to build a reliable library that you can consult when in need of a definitive technical answer. Technical books for the film/video crowd is a growing market for publishers, and each week a new book on nonlinear editing or digital filmmaking seems to arrive on bookstore shelves. Although most of these books are competently researched,

as well as knowing their subject inside and out. Although none of the following books will end up on your list of great literature, they will be books you return to over and over both because of their expertise and their readability.

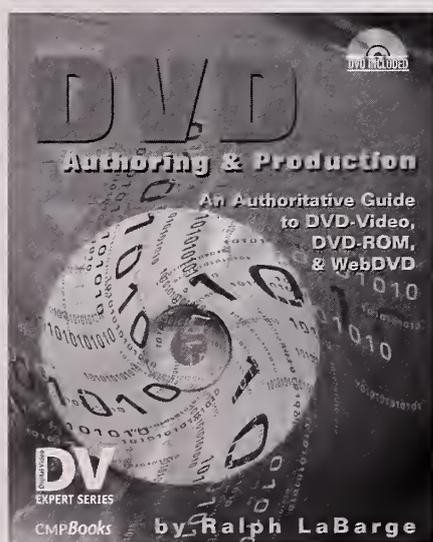
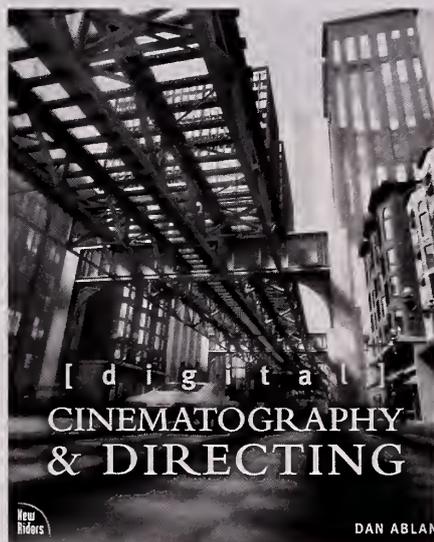
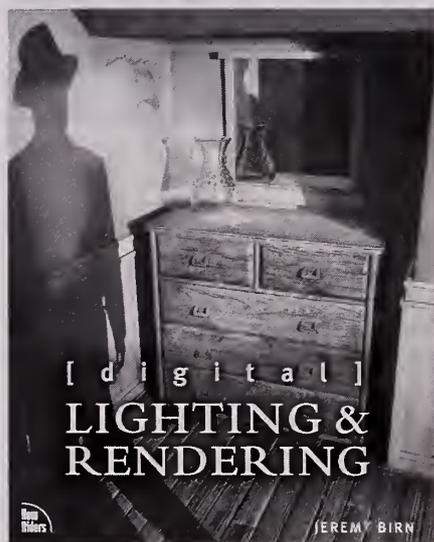
Production Essentials

There are few people working in production who wouldn't benefit from a little basic knowledge of topics such as camera operation and handling film and video media. A film school education usually lays this groundwork, but for those who didn't go to film school or need a refresher course, *The Filmmaker's Handbook, revised edition,*

ing the reader with nonessential information. This book is a little too dry to curl up with and read cover-to-cover, but *The Filmmaker's Handbook* makes a great reference to flip through when you need information on a specific part of the filmmaking process.

While *The Filmmaker's Handbook* is written as an introduction to filmmaking, Anton Wilson's *Cinema Workshop, 4th edition* (ASC press, \$19.95), is a reference text for people already working in production who need definitive information about a filmmaking tool or technique. This detailed book focuses mainly on camera equipment and production strategies, but there is additional information about handling and working with film media and postproduction equipment.

The recent popularity of DV-format equipment to shoot and/or edit projects has led to an avalanche of books on the subject. Most of these books



there are definitely some that are a better investment than others.

Most filmmakers usually have at least a couple of technical books they've picked up over the years, but they typically view them with distaste because the writing is so excruciatingly bad or boring. But there are some technical film and video books out there whose authors actually know a thing or two about keeping their readers interested

1999 (Plume, \$20), by Steven Ascher and Edward Pincus is a good place to start. This classic text covers the entire process of filmmaking from preproduction to distribution. Usually, books that try to cover every nook and cranny of a topic as vast as the film world collapse under the weight of their own details, but Pincus and Ascher manage to impart a huge amount of knowledge without crush-

are written for the first-time videomaker and are rarely the type of text that professionals use when they need specific technical information. One of the few really useful books for experienced makers is written for those working with Sony's popular, professional DVCAM format, Jon Fauer's *DVCAM—A Practical Guide To The Professional System* (Focal Press, \$24.99). Fauer covers the range of

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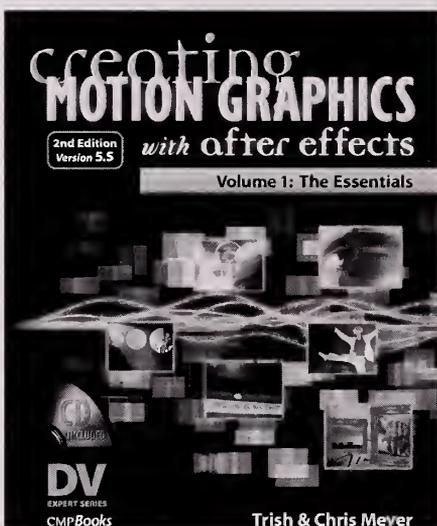
212-366-0588

DVCAM cameras, VTR's, and media with an authority that few writers in the field can lay claim to.

Editing

Even though scores of books on editing are published every year, the vast majority of them fail to rise above the level of "just another book about editing." Since editing encompasses such a wide range of technical issues, there are few people who have the expertise nec-

If you are learning to edit film or video for the first time with a nonlinear system, do yourself a huge favor and start your education with a book on the general concepts and process of editing, such as Hollyn's book and Walter Murch's *In the Blink of an Eye*, second revised edition (Silman-James Press, \$13.95). For application-specific information, start with the manual that came with the software. These companies have entire staffs of professional writers who create their manuals,



essary to write an especially informative text on the subject and possess the language skills to make such a tome anything other than an extremely dry read. Thankfully, Norman Hollyn is blessed with both these skills. His book, *The Film Editing Room Handbook*, third edition (Lone Eagle Press, \$24.94) will fill you in on virtually all you need to know about working in a professional editing environment. A career in postproduction requires much more than just knowing how to operate editing software. Hollyn offers his expansive knowledge of editing room etiquette, organization, process, and technology in this surprisingly fun-to-read book that is found on the bookshelves of many professional editors.

Even though Avid, Apple, and the other software companies dedicate huge marketing budgets to convincing you otherwise, editing software all pretty much works on the same fundamentals.



so they're usually much more useful than you'd expect. For more information about Final Cut Pro pick, up Lisa Brenneis's series *Final Cut Pro For Macintosh: Visual Quickpro Guide* (Peachpit Press, \$29.99). This is the first popular handbook for Final Cut and it has been revised with each new release of the program. For Avid users, *Avid Editing: A Guide For Beginning and Intermediate Users*, second edition, 2003 (Focal Press, \$52.95), by Sam Kauffmann, is a well-rounded introduction to the world of Avid (see my review in the September 2002 issue of *The Independent*).

Titles, animation, and effects

Even for experienced editors, learning how to design and create titles and effects using software like Adobe After Effects can be a long and arduous process. To help lessen the pain of learning such a complicated topic, the must-read is *Creating Motion Graphics*



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, media advocacy information, web-original material, 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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with *After Effects*, second edition, Version 5.5, 2002, by Trish and Chris Meyers (CMP Books, \$54.95). The Meyers were the first After Effects experts to write an effective text on video compositing and design for video and film. In the two years since its original release, the book spawned a sequel, *After Effects In Production* (CMP Books, \$49.95), and a new release of the original is split into two volumes, one for beginners and one for experienced designers.

For people looking for help weeding through the vast amount on information on 3D animation, it turns out the best publication for a beginner isn't even a book. It's the tutorials that come with DV Garage's 3D Toolkit. This is a great introduction to the production of 3D images and animation. For texts that go beyond the basics of 3D, New Riders' Digital series of books is an incredible resource for 3D artists. Each book in the series focuses on a specific element of the 3D animation process, such as *Digital Texturing & Painting*, by Owen Demers, and Jeremy Birn's *Digital Lighting & Rendering*. The books explain the concepts in easy-to-understand, nonsoftware-specific terms.

Internet, DVD, and digital distribution

Internet video, DVD's, and Video-CD's are just three of the new distribution methods available to independents possessing typical video editing hardware, and each requires a certain level of specific knowledge to effectively take advantage of them. But there is one skill set that all forms of digital media distribution require—compression. So far, the best book about video compression available is *Compression For Great Digital Video* (CMP Books, \$49.95), by Ben Waggoner. Waggoner was one of the first professional video compressionists, and his knowledge extends from the edges of vision science and information theory all the way through the different types of digital video and internet media standards.

Apple's QuickTime, a versatile system

for distributing video over the internet, is so feature rich that it takes an eight-hundred-page book to explain it all. Thankfully, Steve Gulie's *QuickTime For the Web: For Windows and Macintosh*, third edition, 2000 (Morgan Kaufmann, \$59.99), covers these technical features in plain language that makes sense of the many internet-related features of QuickTime. Anyone who wants to know how to make their video presentations on the web seem more professional should take a look at the book.

Ralph LaBarge's *DVD Authoring & Production*, 2001 (CMP Books, \$54.95), exhaustively explains the process of making DVD's. Although the book is written for people who want to make DVD's as a full-time job, the book should be an essential reference for filmmakers turning out their own work on DVD.

General computing books

Anyone interested in digital media production needs a solid understanding of general computer operation. A simple yet comprehensive guide to a computer's operating system software is a good idea for anyone interested in using the computer to create their work. While there are hundreds of catch-all guides to Windows and Macintosh operating systems, some of the most useful and readable are part of the Missing Manual series by New York Times technology journalist David Pogue. *Mac OS X: The Missing Manual*, second edition, 2002 (Pogue Press/O'reilly, \$29.95), and *Windows XP: The Missing Manual*, first edition (Pogue Press/O'reilly, \$24.95), should be enough to address any operating system software-related questions or problems most independent media-makers are likely to have. Though these books are not specifically about media-creation software, most of the general information in them applies across the realm of computer usage. □

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To reach him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

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Hard Disk Recorders

BOON OR BUST?

By Robert M. Goodman

A wide variety of inexpensive digital disk recorders (DDR) with FireWire hard drives have hit the market recently and they are being touted as the digital filmmaker's answer to a host of production and postproduction storage and transfer needs. DDR's are digital disc recorders that can record video on a hard drive with the same controls as a videotape recorder. These direct-to-edit devices can store your digital camera's signal

as you shoot and later transfer the footage to an edit system's media drives. The footage will be available instantly because the drive with its files (clips) will automatically appear on your system's desktop—no capture or transfer step required.

But since you can record your DV signal on a miniDV tape and connect your camera to a FireWire hard drive with a cable, the question is: Are DDR's useful tools or just another gimmick?

Most of these devices are being sold

for use in the studio, editing bay, and on location. While there are some circumstances when it would be useful to have a DDR in the field, there are not many. Portability is just too big of an issue for most videomakers to make even the smallest of these units (the CitiDISK DV by Shining Technology) practical. The DDR has to be tethered to your camcorder with a FireWire cable and secured somewhere, even if that means slipping it into your pocket. Unless you're shooting a single-take movie or an over ninety minute event (the longest miniDV tape) there are not a lot of advantages to using DDRs in the field. A sixty-minute tape is under \$5, and stores the identical material as DDR costing \$221 to \$750.

Where DDR technology becomes truly useful is in postproduction. You can con-



FireStore FS-1
(\$995; hard drive sold separately)

Focus Enhancement;
www.focusinfo.com

The FireStore's greatest strength is that it is the only DDR with the ability to record in DV in seven different editing system formats and that FireWire drives can be added or daisy chained for near universal compatibility and maximum flexibility. It has the most features, largest display, and biggest buttons. FireStore can display the source time

code, what the camera is generating, and what is being recorded on its front panel display. But the FireStore doesn't include its own FireWire drive, which adds to the price, and it is big (8.5" x 6" x 3"). This unit works best in a post setting. On location, it would be cumbersome.

Sony DSR-DU1
\$2250
www.sony.com/professional

The DSR-DU1 is a 40GB hard drive encased in what looks like a compact (4" x 1.75" x 5.6") Sony VCR that weighs 1.3 pounds. This unit is designed to work equally well on location or in a post environment. Meticulously crafted, this version of

a DDR is expensive and limited by its single file format and hard drive size.

One particularly good feature on this unit is the DSR-DU1 cache memory buffer, which keeps you from inadvertently missing the beginning of a shot by recording the eight seconds prior to when you begin shooting. This feature, until now only available on professional hard drive-based ENG cameras, continuously stores up to eight seconds of footage in memory until you decide to save it to the disk by pressing the record button on your camera.



nect your DV recorder or camcorder to one of the DDR's, review footage, and store the shots you want to work with as files on the DDR without tying up the editing system. This saves a lot of time and money if you are renting an editing system. Even if you own the system, having an inexpensive logging/transfer workstation is worthwhile because it shifts the mundane process of locating and transferring shots to hard drive storage away from the most expensive place to accomplish the task.

What separates a standard FireWire drive from a DDR is the AV/C protocol. This protocol provides VCR-like controls that allow you to record, stop, and play so that you can choose the footage you want. How these con-

trols are exactly implemented, with buttons or switches, varies from manufacturer to manufacturer. But one important difference is whether or not a camcorder can control the DDR. On the Shining Technology CitiDISK DV or Datavideo's DV Bank devices, you must manually press record and stop on the DDR. But triggering the camcorder's record button can start or stop both the Firestore FS-1, by Focus Enhancement, and Sony's DSR-DU1.

The real value of having clips on a DDR is the time you save by being able to copy the files to your editing systems, storage drives, or simply use the DDR as another drive. This is only useful if the DDR stores files in the same format as your editing system. The Firestore FS-1 is the only DDR

that provides format options which allow the files to really be instantly ready to use. The others all use the raw DV format. Editing programs such as Premiere, Final Cut Pro, and XpressDV can import raw DV files but then must render the files before they can be used. (Premiere uses the AVI Type 2 format; Final Cut accepts AVI Type 2 or Quicktime; and XpressDV uses OMF format.) Rendering files into the correct format is fairly quick, but copying huge files from one hard drive to another is much slower. The fastest method is to connect the drive and use the files directly from the DDR rather than copy them. □

Robert M. Goodman is a filmmaker and coauthor of Editing Digital Video. Write him at robert@stonereader.net.

DV Bank
\$999; Datavideo
www.datavideo.com

This DDR integrates all system and communication functions, providing unprecedented "instant on" service, and eliminating the frustrating computer boot-up time lag that's typical of computer-integrated devices. With its large, illuminated buttons and two-line LCD display, DV Bank looks like a VCR. The unique features of this recorder are its ability to do seamless loop play, forward or reverse variable-speed play, and frame-by-frame forward or reverse



DV Bank

play at the touch of a button. DV Bank EZ Cut, a free download from the company's website, adds basic editing functionality. An optional intervalometer makes it possible to do time-lapse recordings with this unit.

At 6.7" x 10" x 2.8", the DV Bank is the largest of the four devices, weighing in at 4.5 pounds. Its 60GB drive provides more capacity than the Sony DDR for about half the price. The penalty you pay is size and minimal features.

CitiDISK DV
\$499-\$649
Shining Technology
www.shining.com

CitiDISK DV is the simplest approach to DDR. The unit is a 2.5" shock-mounted FireWire hard drive available in capacities of 20, 30, 40, or 60



gigabytes with buttons for power and record, and switches for battery on/off and erase. The smallest capacity model (FW1256-20), the one I tested, only supports raw DV files, and the drive, which comes preformatted, uses the FAT32 file system, which is compatible with Macs and PC's.

CitiDISK DV is the least expensive, smallest (5.5"x3"x1") and lightest (under a pound) option, though it also has the fewest features.

Festivals

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 (e.g., May 1st for July issue).** Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

ANNAPOLIS FILM FESTIVAL, October 31-November 3, MD. Deadline: May 31. A three-day fest showcasing independent films & documentaries produced by local & nat'l filmmakers. Its mission is to "celebrate the capacity of independent film to move us, teach us, & entertain us." Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 shorts (under 30 min.); \$35 features. Contact: Festival, PO Box 591, Annapolis, MD 21401; (410) 263-2388; info@annapolisfilmfestival.com; www.annapolisfilmfestival.com.

ATLANTIC CITY FILM FESTIVAL, August 9-16, NJ. Deadline: March 1; May 25 (final). Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35, \$45 (final); Student: \$20, \$30. Contact: James Doorn, PO Box 1839, Absecon, NJ 08201; (609) 487-9299; admin@atlanticcityfilmfestival.com; www.atlanticcityfilmfestival.com.

BOSTON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, November 6-16, 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 Massachusetts. Founded: 1989. Cats: feature, experimental, animation, doc. Formats: Beta SP, 35mm, 16mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact:

Festival, 1001 Watertown Street, West Newton, MA, 02465; (617) 244-9899; fax: 0244-9894; programming@bjff.org; www.bjff.org.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, October 23-November 2, IL. Deadline: May 1. The CICFF is the largest competitive fest for films & videos for children in North America, and programs over 200 films & videos from 43 countries targeted primarily for children ages 2-13. Entries must have copyright date of previous year or later. Fest presents films in contexts which encourage dialogue between filmmakers, children, parents and educators. Goal is the sustenance and 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee: \$40 short (less than 60 mins.) \$80 feature (60 mins. or more); No fee for child-produced films (age 3-13); \$5 discount

CHICKS WITH FLICKS FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, August 21, NY. Deadline: May 23. Chicks With Flicks is a one-day film event in NYC that showcases the works of independent women filmmakers. The goal of the fest is to encourage, support & foster indie filmmaking and generate an audience & supportive following for women filmmakers. Founded: 1999. Cats: Films must be under 30 min., any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: Yhane Washington, 188 Norfolk St., #6G, New York, NY 10002; (212) 533-7491; www.chickswithflicks.org.

CINEMATEXAS INT'L SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 16-21, TX. Deadline: May 15. Annual fest continues tradition of exploring the short film as a laboratory for cinema. Emerging as one of the premiere short film fests in the world, fest features multimedia performances by musicians & artists. Retrospectives have included a program of favorite shorts introduced by Jim Jarmusch,



San Diego Asian Film Fest

Taking place on the sun-kissed shores of San Diego from October 2-5, the San Diego Asian Film Festival is one of the fastest-growing festivals around. Since its inception in 2000, the fest has been steadily building, with a high of over 8,000 attendees and 115 films screened at last year's event. This year's festival promises to continue serving So-Cal audiences with a wide array of Asian cinema works. Another noteworthy point: The SDAFF is one of the only Asian American fests with an animation category. See listing.

if submitted via fest's site. Contact: CICFF, Facets Film and Video, 1517 West Fullerton Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614; (773) 281-9075; fax: 929-5437; kidsfest@facets.org; www.cicff.org.

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, August 27-September 2, 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. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, S-8, Super 8, DVD, Video, Beta SP, Mini DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30; \$35 (late). Contact: c/o Bryan Wendorf, 2545 West Altgeld #1, Chicago, IL, 60647; (773) 327-FILM; fax: 327-3464; info@cuff.org; www.cuff.org.

as well as the short films of Robert Frank, Abbas Kiarostami & a tribute to contemporary female avant garde filmmakers. Founded: 1996. Cats: short, experimental, animation, youth media, installation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, Super 8, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30 (early); \$35 (final). Contact: Laurel Row, Dept. of Radio/TV/Film, CMA 6.118, Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX 78712-1091; (512) 471-6497; Fax: 471-4077; cinematexas@cinematexas.org; www.cinematexas.org.

CITY OF IRVINE HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL, October, CA. Deadline: May 1. 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. No Entry Fee. Contact: UCI Human Rights Film Festival, 1200 N. Alvarado

St., Irvine, CA 90026; (213) 484-8846; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.polyesterprince.com.

DA VINCI FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 18-20, OR. Deadline: March 20; April 30 (final). Fest is looking for original works not exceeding 30 min. in length (documentaries can only be a max of 60 min.) Submissions of any style are welcome: animation, narrative, doc, music video, foreign, etc. in three main cats: K-12, college & independent. Founded: 1988. Cats: short, any style or genre. Formats: film, video, digital. Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: college/indie \$15 (early), \$25 (final); K-12 \$5 (early), \$15 (final). Contact: Tina Buescher, 2015 SW Whiteside Drive, Corvallis, OR 97333; (541) 752-5584; fax: 754-7590; davincifilmfest@aol.com; www.davinci-days.org.

DAHLONEGA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 26-29, GA. Deadline: April 15. Festival offers underexposed film & videomakers in emerging digital formats a higher-profile venue. Cats: 15 cats (see website). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10-\$50. Contact: Barry Norman, 661 Windcroft Circle, Acworth, GA 30101; (404) 885-4410; fax: 885-0700; info@diff.tv; www.diff.tv.

FILM FEST NEW HAVEN, Sept. 19-21, CT. Deadline: May 1; June 16 (final). Film Fest New Haven is committed to supporting the creativity of independent filmmakers. A year-round presence in New Haven, this fest showcases the finest independent films to film-loving & film-literate audiences. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Jury, Audience & Cinematography awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25/\$30; \$30/\$40 (final). Contact: Nina Adams, Box 9644, New Haven, CT 06536; (203) 776-6789; fax: 776-4260; info@filmfest.org; www.filmfest.org.

GREAT PLAINS FILM FESTIVAL, July 12-29, NE. Deadline: May 30. Fest is a biennial regional venue for indie film & video artists working in the US & Canada. Open to film & videomakers either from the Great Plains region, or those whose film/video realates in content or in narrative to the Great Plains. Fest provides a forum of the diversity of life on the Great Plains through panel discussions, special appearances & tributes. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media. Awards: 12 cash prizes ranging from \$500-\$5,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic, DVD.

Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 or \$30. Contact: Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Box 880302, Lincoln, NE 68588-0302; (402) 472-9100; fax: 472-2576; dlately1@unl.edu; www.greatplainsfilmfest.org.

HAMPTONS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-26, NY. Deadline: May 23 (shorts); June 13 (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 US. 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. 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.

HOT SPRINGS DOC FILM FESTIVAL, October 10-19, AR. Deadline: March 28; April 25 (late). Annual fest accepting nonfiction film submissions for one of the country's premier nonfiction film celebrations. Noncompetitive fest honors films & filmmakers each yr. in beautiful Hot Springs Nat'l Park, Arkansas. More than 70 films are screened, incl. the current year's Academy Award nominees in nonfiction cats. Special guest scholars, filmmakers & celebrities participate in forums & lectures. Founded: 1992. Cats: doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", DVD, DV, Mini DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25. Contact: Melanie Masino, HSDFI, Box 6450, Hot Springs, AR 79102; (501) 321-4747; hsdff@docufilmst.org; www.docufilmst.org.

HYPEFEST, July 25-27, CA. Deadline: Feb 13; April 30 (final). Fest accepting short films (50 min. or less), commercials, music videos & promos for competition screening. Only works completed in the current or previous yr. eligible. Cats: short, music video, commercials. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. Entry Fee: \$20 (student w/ ID), \$35; final: \$45, \$30 (student). Contact: Festival, 5225 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 403, Los Angeles, CA 90036; (323) 938-8363; fax: 938-8757; info@hypefest.com; www.hypefest.com.



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IFP MARKET, Sept. 21-26, NY. Deadline: May 1 (emerging narrative script and No Borders); June 1 (shorts, docs, WIP narrative). Annual event is the longest-running U.S. market devoted to new, emerging film talent. Large focus on Narr./Doc. Works-In-Progress, Doc./Narr. Shorts (under 40 min.), Doc. Features and feature-length Scripts. Works compete for acceptance into the following sections: Emerging Narrative, No Borders International Co-Production Market and Spotlight on Documentaries. Cats: feature, doc, work-in-progress, short, script. Awards: More than \$100,000 in cash and prizes awarded to emerging artists, including two \$10,000 Gordon Parks Awards for Emerging African-American filmmakers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: application fee: \$50; Registration fees, paid on acceptance only: \$200 - \$450. Contact: Festival, 104 West 29 St., 12 fl., New York, NY 10001; (212) 465-8200 x. 107 (Market), x216 (No Borders); fax: 465-8525; marketinfo@ifp.org; www.ifp.org.

INFACIT FILM SERIES, August 15-21, CA. Deadline: April 25. Formerly DOCTober: Int'l Doc Film Festival, fest is a weeklong int'l showcase for documentaries. Fest qualifies feature & short-length films for Academy Awards consideration as long as they meet minimum requirements: no broadcast or other TV airing anytime prior to March of current year. Only individual doc films are eligible. Cats: doc, short. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: see website. Contact: Infact, IDA, 1201 West 5th Street, Ste M320, Los Angeles, CA 90017-1461; (213) 534-3600; fax: 534-3610; info@documentary.org; www.documentary.org.

INT'L FAMILY FILM FESTIVAL, May 16-22, CA. Deadline: April 11. Formerly the Santa Clarita Int'l Film Festival, IFFF 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: incl. trophies and certificates. Formats: 1/2", Beta SP, 35mm. Preview on VHS ONLY. Entry Fee: film: \$80/\$40 script: \$60/\$45. Contact: Patte Dee, PO Box 801507, Santa Clarita, CA, US 91380; 661-257-3131; fax: 661-257-8989; patted012@aol.com; www.sciff.org

LESBIAN LOOKS. September/October, AZ. Deadline: May 15. Fest seeks work of all lengths. Fee paid for all works screened. Incl. synopsis, brief artist bio & B/W still(s) w/ entry. Founded: 1993. Cats: short, doc, feature, experimental, any style or genre.

Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: \$10. Contact: Beverly Seckinger, Media Arts, Harvill 226, U. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721; (520) 621-1239; fax: 621-9662; bsecking@u.arizona.edu; www.arizona.edu/~lgbcom.

LONG ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL, May 15-18, NY. Deadline: April 1 (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; (631) 218-4741; fax: 853-4888; suffolkfilm@yahoo.com; www.lifilm.org.

LOS ANGELES LATINO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 18-27, CA. Deadline: April 14. 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, So. 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. 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; mdermer@earthlink.net; www.latinofilm.org.

LOUISIANA VIDEO SHORTS FESTIVAL, August 23, 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 incl. a special Youth category for ages 13-18. Founded: 1989. Cats: 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, 4840 Banks St., New Orleans, LA 70119; (504) 486-9192; novac@neosoft.com; www.novacvideo.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.

MADCAT WOMEN'S INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, September, CA. Deadline: April 4; June 4 (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; info@madcatfilmfestival.org; www.madcatfilmfestival.org.

MAINE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 11-20, 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." Recent fest guests & winners of MIFF's Mid-Life Achievement Award 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: \$35; \$40 (final). Contact: MIFF, 10 Railroad Sq., Waterville, ME 04901; (207) 861-8138; fax: 872-5502; info@miff.org; www.miff.org.

MARGARET MEAD FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November 7-10, NY. Deadline: March 1; April 5 (late). Premiere US fest for non fiction work, w/ no restrictions on subject, length, or yr. of production. Film & videomakers whose works are selected receive a pass to all fest events, limited financial assistance & housing. After the New York Festival, select titles

tour to independent film & community centers, museums & universities as part of the nat'l Margaret Mead Traveling Film & Video Festival. Founded: 1977. Cats: short, doc, animation, experimental, student, youth media. Awards: no awards, some financial assistance & honorarium. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: American Museum of Natural History, Dept. of Education, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, NY 10024; (212) 769-5305; meadfest@amnh.org; www.amnh.org/mead.

MAUI FILM FESTIVAL, June 11-15, HI. Deadline: March 20, April 20 (final). compassionate & life-affirming storytelling in exemplary films from any & everywhere on earth. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, animation, experimental, children. Awards: Silversword Awards; Audience, Feature Dramatic, Short, Feature Doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: No entry Fee. Contact: Barry Rivers, PO Box 790669, Paia, HI 96779; (808) 579-9996 or (888) 999-6330; fax: 579-9552; mauifilmfest@mauifilmfest.com; www.mauifilmfest.com.

MILL VALLEY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 2-12, 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 line-up of filmmakers & industry professionals. Filmmakers, distributors, press & large local audience meet in "an atmosphere where professional relationships thrive." Around 100 programs of independent works are shown, as well as interactive exhibits, tributes, a children's filmfest, seminars & special events. Entries must have been completed within previous 18 months; industrial, promotional or instructional works not appropriate; premieres & new works emphasized. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short, Interactive, Children, Animation, Experimental. 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: 383-8606; info@finc.org; www.mvff.com.

NANTUCKET FILM FESTIVAL, June 19-22, MA. Deadline: April 11 (film); March 14 (screenplay competition). Fest focuses on screenwriters & their craft, presents films, staged readings, Q&A w/ filmmakers, panel discus-

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sions & 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 US 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, 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 4. 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: \$3,000 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.

NEXTFRAME: UFVA's touring festiva of international student film & video. Oct., PA. Deadline: March 31 (early); May 31 (Late). Fest was founded in 1993 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/video-makers; finalists sent to judges. About 30 works showcased each year. All works premiere at annual conference of Univ. Film & Video Assoc. (UFVA), in July. Year-long int'l tour of finalists begins after premiere. Tour travels to major universities & art centers across the US & around the globe. Past int'l venues have incl. Chile, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand & Portugal. Founded: 1993. Cats: Doc, Experiment-tal, Animation, Feature. 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; nextfest@temple.edu; www.temple.edu/nextframe.

PHILADELPHIA VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 6-7, PA. Deadline: April 15; April 25 (final). No film will be accepted; works must be shot on video or digital video. Founded: 2003. Cats: feature, doc, music video, animation, experimental, short. Formats: DVD, 1/2". Preview on VHS or Mini-DV. Entry Fee: \$25; \$35. Contact: Festival, 5220 N. Leeward Rd., Bensalem, PA 19020; (215) 698-2686; mike@phillyvideofest.com; www.phillyvideofest.com.

PORTLAND WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, May 29-June 1, OR. Deadline: March 31; April 15 (final). Fest will showcase films & videos directed by women from around the US & beyond. Fest is open to all subject matter & production formats. The goal of POW! Fest is to provide a unique screening opportunity for emerging female filmmakers. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, short, any style or genre. Awards: Jury & Audience Awards. Formats: 16mm, DVD, 1/2", Super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (shorts, under 25 min.); \$30 (feature). Contact: Zonker Films, 6504 NE 22nd Ave, Portland, OR 97211; POW@zonkerfilms.com; www.zonkerfilms.com.

RHODE ISLAND INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 5-10, RI. Deadline: May 15, June 1. Fest takes place in historic Providence, RI & has become a showcase for int'l independent filmmakers & their work. In previous years the fest has screened more than 23 world premieres & over 12 US premieres. Fest programs over 175 films & provides high-end industry workshops. Fest accepts shorts, features & videos produced in last 2 years. Fest is a qualifying fest in the Short Film category w/ the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student, youth media, family, children. 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.filmfest.org.

RURAL ROUTE FILM FESTIVAL, July (dates TBA), NY. Deadline: May 25. Festival has been created to highlight works that deal w/ rural people & places. Works that incl. alternative country, country western & folk music are encouraged. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, mini DV, DVD. preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$15 shorts; \$35 features. Contact: Alan Webber, PO Box 3900, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; (718) 389-4367; www.ruralroutefilms.com.

SAN ANTONIO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-22, TX. Deadline: April 9. Looking for features & shorts out of the mainstream. Include two-sentence synopsis. Cats: any style or genre, doc, short, feature. Awards: Grand Prize: Lowrider Bicycle. Formats: VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20; \$30 (late). Contact: Adam Rocha, 8030 Callaghan Rd. #611 PMB, San Antonio, TX 78230; (210) 977-9004; info@safilm.com; www.safilm.com.

SAN DIEGO ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, October 2-5, CA. Deadline: April 15, May 30 (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 website. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, animation, mixed genre works, short. Awards: Awards incl. Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc, Best Experimental, & Best Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: \$15; \$25 (late). Contact: Entry Coordinator, c/o Steve Lukas, 10084 Kaufman Way, San Diego, CA 92126; (858) 699-2722; info@scaff.org; www.scaff.org.

STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL, July 16-26, NY. Deadline: April 15. Eleven days, fifty screenings of features & short films ranging from the best & most exciting foreign, art & popular films to world & US premieres of the best independent cinema from the US & abroad. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation. 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) 632-7234; filmfest@stonybrookfilmfest.com; www.stonybrookfilmfest.com.

THE BRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL, May 17, NY. Deadline: April 14. Featuring films by middle & upper school students 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, nonviolence, 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; acohen@brooklynfriends.org;
www.brooklynfriends.org/bridgefilm.

VISIONFEST, July 22-29, NY. Deadline: May 15. Formally Guerilla Film & Video Festival. Founded: 2001. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, any style or genre; No music video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta, DV, 1/2". Preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: \$35 (shorts); \$40 (features). Contact: Bruno Derlin, PO Box 280223, Brooklyn, NY 11228; (718) 837-5736; visionfest@aol.com; www.filmfesttoday.com.

WOODS HOLE FILM FESTIVAL, July 26-Aug. 3, MA. Deadline: April 1; May 1 (final). A showcase for independent film w/ special emphasis on regional filmmakers & cinematography. Founded: 1991. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, script. Awards: Best of the Fest, Best feature: drama, comedy, doc; Short: drama, comedy, animation, doc, experimental; Director's Choice Award for Cinematography. Formats: Beta, 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: features: \$40, \$50 (final); shorts (under 40 min.): \$20, \$30 (final). Contact: JC Bouvier, PO Box 624, Woods Hole, MA 02543; (508) 495-3456; woho3@aol.com; www.woodsholefilmfest.com.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July, OR. Deadline: Late May. Young People's Film & Video Festival is an annual juried survey of outstanding work by K-12 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, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Kristin Konsterlie, Northwest Film Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 294-0874; kristin@nwfilm.org; www.nwfilm.org.

INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA IN THE PICTURE, Sept. 3-14, Netherlands. Deadline: April 15. Africa in the picture is one of the oldest African film fests in Europe. Held in Amsterdam & a number of other cities in the Netherlands, featuring works from Africa & the African Diaspora. Founded: 1987. Cats: feature, doc, short. Preview on VHS PAL/NTSC. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Sasha Dees, Notorious Film, 207 W. 102nd Street, #5A, New York, NY

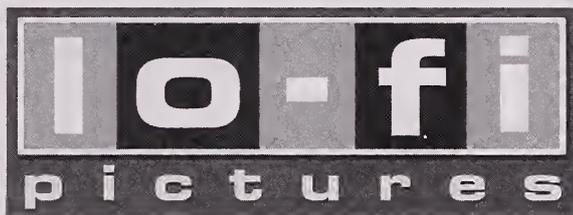
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10025; (212) 864-5921; deessasha@cs.com; www.africainthepicture.nl.

ART FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-28, Slovak Republic. Deadline: April 5. Competitive fest showcasing art films, both features & documentaries. Cats: Art Fiction (art feature films, new technologies, docs), Artefacts (short art films), On the Road (student films on art, experimental & Doc). Cats: feature, short, student, experimental, doc. Awards: Cash & non cash prizes. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Vladimir Stric or Livia Filusova, Konventna 8, Bratislava, Slovakia, Slovak Republic 811 03 ; 011 42 12 5441 9480; fax: 42 12 5441 1679; fest@artfilm.sk; www.artfilm.sk.

AVIGNON FILM FESTIVAL-FRANCE (Rencontres Cinematographiques Euro-Americaines), June 6-13, France. Deadline: May 1. 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. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. 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.

BRISBANE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 29-Aug. 10, Australia. Deadline: April 8. Festival will showcase more than 200 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, GPO Box 909, Brisbane 4001, Australia; 011 61 7 3007-3003; fax: 3007-3030; biff@biff.com.au; www.biff.com.au.

BUDAPEST LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 26-29, Hungary. Deadline: May 1. Non-competitive fest "accepts films & videos by, about & of interest to communities of lesbians, gay men & sexual minorities." Works should be Budapest premieres. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: c/o Rainbow Mission Foundation,

Bezeredi u. 5, Budapest, Hungary 1081; 011 36 1 323 11 2; info@szivarvany-misszio.hu; www.szivarvany-misszio.hu.

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL CINEMA JOVE, June 14-21, 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 Jan. 1, 1965), & Official Nat'l Category for Short Fictions produced on video (open to those born or resident in the Spanish State, born after Jan. 1, 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. No entry fee. Contact: Rafael Maluenda, Calle Jeronimo de Monsoriu, 19, Valencia, Spain 46022 ; 011 34 96 331 10 47; cinema-jove@ivaj.gva.es; www.gva.es/cinemajove.

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL INNSBRUK, June 18-22, Austria. Deadline: April 15. IFFI presents over films from & about Africa, South America & Asia. Submitted films must be Austrian premieres, 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 6020; 011 43 512 57 85 00-14; fax: 57 85 00-13; info@iffi.at; www.iffi.at.

JERUSALEM INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 10-19, 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: None. Contact: Lia van Leer, Box 8561, Derech Hebron, Jerusalem, Israel 91083; 011 9722 565 4333; fax: 565 4333; fest@jer-cin.org.il; www.jff.org.il.

MELBOURNE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, July 23-Aug. 10, Australia. Deadline: March 22 (shorts); April 14 (features). Established in 1952, the Melbourne Int'l Film Festival is the oldest established film festival in the south-

ern hemisphere & one of Australia's oldest running arts events. Screened in some of Melbourne's most celebrated cinemas & theaters, the fest comprises an eclectic mix of outstanding filmmaking from around the world. The fest 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. Founded: 1952. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$40 (shorts only). Contact: Brett Woodward, Box 2206, Fitzroy Mailing Center, Fitzroy, Australia 3065; 011 61 3 417 2011; miff@melbournefilmfest.com.au; www.melbournefilmfest.com.au.

MILANO INT'L GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, May 28-June 3, Italy. Deadline: April 20. The largest event of public screenings of lesbian & gay films in Milan. Founded: 1985. Cats: feature, doc, short, exp. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta (PAL only), U-matic (NTSC/PAL), 1/2" (NTSC/PAL). Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL, or SECAM). No entry fee. Contact: Giampaolo Marzi, C/O MBE 209, Via Del Torchino 12, Milano, Italy 20123; 011 39 023 319 118; marzig@energy.it; www.cinemagaylesbico.com.

REVELATION PERTH INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 19-29, Australia. Deadline: April 11. Australia's major alternative film fest. Fest seeks to bring to Oz the best in maverick spirit & individual filmic style. Founded: 1998. Cats: Doc only for 2001, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Betacam SP, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$33. Contact: Richard Sowada, PO Box 135, Sth Fremantle, WA, Australia 6162; 011 61 8 9335 2991; fax: 61 8 9335 1589; admin@revelationfilmfest.org; www.revelationfilmfest.org.

VILA DO CONDE INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, June 29-July 6, Portugal. Deadline: April 15. Annual fest accepting films under 60 min. produced in the previous 2 years. Founded: 1993. Cats: Short, doc, Animation, any style or genre, experimental. Awards: Cash prize in each category (trophy & diploma). Other awards on nat'l competition. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Mario Micaelo, Auditorio Municipal, Praca da Republica, Vila do Conde, Portugal 4480-715; 011 351 252 646 516; fest@curtasmetragens.pt; www.curtasmetragens.pt.

Films/Tapes Wanted

By Charlie Sweitzer

Noncommercial notices and screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Commercial notices are billed at classified rates. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., May 1 for July issue). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending.

DISTRIBUTION

EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS VIDEOS on guidance issues such as violence, drug prevention, mentoring, children's health & parenting for exclusive distribution. Our marketing gives unequal results! Call Sally Germain at The Bureau for At-Risk Youth: (800) 99-YOUTH x.210.

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS 20+ years as an industry leader! Join more than 100 award-winning film & video producers. Send us your new works on healthcare, mental health, aging, disabilities, and related issues. (800) 937-4113; www.fanlight.com.

NEW DAY FILMS seeks energetic independent film and videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatrical markets. If you want to maximize your profits while working within a remarkable community of committed activist filmmakers, then New Day is the perfect home for your film. New Day is committed to promoting diversity within our membership and within the media we represent. Explore our films at www.newday.com, then contact Heidi Schmidt at (650) 347-5123.

TAPELIST @ DISTRIBUTION. Reach distributors, exhibitors, media and filmgoers on an exciting new distribution platform for independent film. For Filmmakers, Producer's Reps, Distributors, Festivals and IndieTheaters. www.tapelist.com.

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.

YOUR POINT OF VIEW: SEEN BY MILLIONS! Submission deadline for the 2004 season is June 30, 2003! Public television's premiere showcase for independent, non-fiction film and video seeks programs from all perspectives to showcase in annual national PBS series. All subjects, styles and lengths are welcome. Unfinished films and videos may be eligible for completion funds. For guidelines and application visit the P.O.V. interactive website: www.pbs.org/pov or call 1 (800) 756-3300 ext. 318.

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tary & fiction films & videos. Films can be of any length, genre, or style in these categories: war, women filmmakers, race & identity, religion, Cape Cod, masculinity, or grief. Please send work on VHS, DVD, or mini-DV w/ filmmaker bio & category. Also indicate availability to appear w/ your work for Q&A. Send to: Rebecca M. Alvin, Belly Girl Films, Inc., PO Box 1727, Brewster, MA 02631; bellygirl@earthlink.net.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring provocative independent short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. (604) 730-8090; www.CelluloidSocialClub.Com; info@alterentertainment.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society featuring monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: \$20. Entry form & guidelines available at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, P.O. Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

Lesbian Looks Film & Video Series

Arizona Series on the Lookout

The University of Arizona's Lesbian Looks

Series has been programming a diverse assortment of innovative videos and films free and open to the public since 1993. Their 2003 season begins this fall, but it's not too late to submit your own work for consideration. See listing.

Head 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.

MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, the Alternative Screen. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS viewing tape, press kit (any written background materials) & cover letter w/ S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, LA., CA 90028. (323) 466-3456 x115; www.americancinematheque.com.

CAPE COD FILM SOCIETY SCREENING SERIES of Brewster, MA, seeks experimental, documen-

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience. Dialogue must be subtitled. Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental video for our ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845)

485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org;
www.childrensmediaproject.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent doc video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30- to 90-min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts (10 min. or fewer) 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604.

FLICKER encompasses a Super 8 & 16mm showcase held in Ashville, Athens, Chapel Hill, New Orleans, New York, Richmond, and Bordeaux, France. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you. www.flickeraustin.com.

FREEDOM FILM SOCIETY, presenter of the Red Bank Int'l Film Festival, seeks short (45 min. or fewer) & feature-length narrative, documentary, experimental & animated works for monthly screenings in NJ. Send preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry fee: shorts, \$25; features, \$45. Ph/fax: (732) 741-8089; contact@rbff.org; www.rbff.org/entry_form/submit.html.

GIRLSONFILM is a new quarterly screening series in San Francisco seeking short narrative, doc & experimental works under 30 min. by women of color. 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview should be on VHS. No entry fee. (415) 614-1770; girlsonfilmseries@hotmail.com.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in *Urban Mediamakers* magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. (404) 287-7758; www.urbanmediamakers.com; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com.

LESBIAN LOOKS in Tucson, AZ, seeks narrative, doc, experimental & mixed-genre work of all lengths for 2003 season. 16mm and VHS NTSC only. Fee paid for all works screened.

Deadline: June 15. Send VHS preview tape, brief synopsis, artist bio & B/W still to Beverly Seckinger, Media Arts, Harvill 226, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721; <http://w3.arizona.edu/~lgbcom>; bsecking@u.arizona.edu.

MAKOR continues its Reel Jews Film Festival & ongoing screening series showcasing the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs, and/or works in progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration. Program sponsored by Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation. Contact Ken Sherman: (212) 413-8821; ksherman@92ndsty.org.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE seeks short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Submit nonreturnable VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized theater in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following your film's screening. Any length/genere. Connection to New England helpful but not necessary. Send VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

SHIFTING SANDS CINEMA is a quarterly screening series presenting experimental video, film, animation & digital media. Short works (under 20 min.) on nonreturnable VHS (NTSC) are sought. Incl. synopsis of work, artist bio & contract info. Deadline: ongoing. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions & 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.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks shorts throughout the year for its quarterly series of screen-

ings in Los Angeles. The group is a nonprofit organization created to promote short film as a means to itself. For more information & an application form, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a much-needed venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473; (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

VIDEOTHEATRE, New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All kinds. No deadlines. No late fees. Year-round submission. Weekly programming in a 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. Grand opening 6/03. VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com; www.VideoTheatreNYC.com.

GALLERIES

ART IN GENERAL encourages submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.artingeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

RUNNING FREE, a touring collaborative video installation presented by Montreal's View 72, seeks shorts (5 min. or fewer) of a single person running continuously. Format must be mini-DV, but send VHS for preview. Immaculate_conception@view72.com; www.view72.com.

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

US EXPRESS seeks video art re: US culture. Single-channel videos dealing w/ any aspect of our way of life here in the USA: cultural events & phenomena, fashion, language, cars (or other fetishes), culture jamming, any sub-culture, all dates of production. For a funded travelling video exhibit Send description ASAP: "U.S. Express" c/o cityhallpark@earthlink.net; IMP, Inc, 373 Broadway NY, NY 10013. Deadline: May 31.

SHOWCASES

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA features the excitement of an annual film festival w/ a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest & movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films & features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. 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.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, mini-DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. 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.

SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films which 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 5 Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc; ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

THEXPATCAFE TELEVISION SHOW is a screening venue for short independent film/video/new media produced artists, accepting submissions for the 2003 season. Work must be under 20 min. in length. Mini-DV & SVHS only. Submission form is available at www.thexpatcafe.com.

WEBCASTS

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the internet. Seeks works created in Flash & Director as well as traditional animations & videos under 10 min. to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.



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By Charlie Sweitzer

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COMPETITIONS

CYNOSURE SCREENWRITING AWARDS seeks feature screenplays w/ female protagonists & scripts w/ minority protagonists. Works must not have been previously optioned, purchased, or produced & must be registered w/ the WGA or US copyright office. One \$2,000 award issued in each category. Entry fee: \$45 (postmarked by April 5); \$50 (postmarked by May 3). (310) 855-8730; www.BroadMindEnt.com; cynosure@BroadMindEnt.com.

SCRIPTAPALOOZA 5TH ANNUAL SCREEN WRITING COMPETITION awards a 1st prize of \$10,000 & screenwriting software for 3 winners & 10 runners-up. All winners will be considered by Scriptapalooza's 40 participants which include A Band Apart, Samuel Goldwyn Films, Film Colony, Evolution, Phoenix Pictures & many more. Deadline: March 3 (entry fee \$45); late deadline: April 15 (\$50). www.scriptapalooza.com; (323) 654-5809.

SHORT FILM SLAM, NYC's only weekly short film competition, seeks submissions. Competition on Sundays at 2 p.m. Audience votes for a winning film, which receives further screenings at the Pioneer Theater. To enter, must have a film, 30 min. or fewer, in 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD. To submit, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) or call Jim: (212) 254-7107; jim@twoboosts.com; www.twoboosts.com.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

THE DIGITAL ART IN PUBLIC SPACE CONFERENCE, the first national conference on digital & inter-

active public art, will be held at Boston University, April 26 & 27, during the Boston Cyberarts Festival. This conference, conceived in combination w/ Boston University & Harvard University, will focus on art, technology & the expanding meaning of public space in the 21st century. An "emerging leadership" preconference includes a panel. www.bostoncyberarts.org.

THE 49TH ROBERT FLAHERTY SEMINAR will be presented by International Film Seminars June 14-20 at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY. The seminar brings together an assortment of doc, experimental & hybrid approaches to examine a variety of ways contemporary filmmakers have grappled w/ cinema's abilities & frailties in relation to the concept of social responsibility & political struggle. Limited space available. Limited financial aid available; deadline for aid is April 4. International Film Seminars, 198 Broadway, Rm 1206, New York, NY 10038; (212) 608-3224; ifs@flahertyseminar.org; www.flahertyseminar.org.

INTERNATIONAL FILM WORKSHOPS offer 150 summer workshops from March to October, as

ed imagery. Real-time projects that illustrated the process of creating the work through narrated explanations or other informational devices are encouraged. Works in progress accepted if at least 80% complete. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or Beta SP. No entry fee. Deadline: March 12. (310) 314-2800; www.siggraph.org.

WOMAN MAKE MOVIES SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES has begun & will run through June. Upcoming workshops include Finishing Funds (April 8) & Foundation Funders (April 24). Both are from 6:30-8:30 P.M. & held in the WMM offices in Manhattan. \$100 registration (\$80 for WMM Makers & Friends of WMM) covers both April workshops. For more info, visit www.wmm.com/assist/currentschedule.htm, or call (212) 925-0606 x302.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

DIY REVOLUTION is now accepting free listings/classifieds. DIYR is a resource aimed to unite independent filmmakers, artists, activists, musicians, media groups & writers working for a more just, authentic & progressive world. Visit DIYR at www.diyrevolution.com or www.diy.com.



Lewis & Clark at Two Hundred

If Mason and Dixon get both a geographical boundary and an entire Thomas Pynchon novel dedicated to them, these guys deserve something, too. This year marks the two hundredth anniversary of Lewis and Clark's expedition across the wilds of North America. The Montana Committee for the Humanities is looking for a few good projects which deal with the Lewis and Clark expedition and its consequences in interesting ways. See listing.

well as 4-week summer film school & many other programs in Oaxaca, Mexico, Seville, Spain, and Rockport, MA. For more info, visit www.FilmWorkshops.com, or call for their catalog toll-free: (877) 577-7700; internationally, (207) 236-8581.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV center, now offers an ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each month's workshop is held at MNN's studios at 537 W. 59th St. & features a different speaker, screening & focus; past speakers have included Sharon Greytak, Joel Katz & Sam Pollard. (212) 757-2670 x308; www.mnn.org.

SIGGRAPH held July 27-31 in San Diego, CA includes a Computer Animation Festival that seeks animations of all lengths & subjects which incorporate computer-generat-

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundations goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote int'l cooperation & advance human achievement. For more info, visit www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

HARBURG FOUNDATION seeks letters of inquiry for possible future funding for controversial, risky, or innovative projects that use communication systems (radio, computer, television, theater, doc film, books) to educate & inform about serious issues. Preference given to new works. Contact Ernie Harburg. (212) 343-9453; ernie@harburgfoundation.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC artists w/ works

budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The Foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact Robert Byrd, (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); www.jeromefdn.org.

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.

LOCAL INDEPENDENTS COLLABORATING WITH STATIONS (LINC) FUND is a funding initiative from Independent Television Service (ITVS) that provides matching funds (\$10,000-\$75,000) for collaborations between public TV stations & indie producers. Single shows & interstitial pkgs will be considered, as are projects in any genre or stage of development. Programs should stimulate civic discourse & break traditional molds of exploring regional, cultural, political, social, or economic issues. Indie film & video-makers are encouraged to seek collaborations w/ their local public TV stations. Deadline: April 30. For more info, visit www.itvs.org, or call Elizabeth Meyer, (415) 365-8383 x270; elizabeth_meyer@itvs.org.

MONTANA COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES seeks projects illuminating the Lewis & Clark expedition & its historical consequences in honor of this year's 200th anniversary of the expedition. MCH especially encourages projects that address contemporary issues & topics arising from the Lewis & Clark expedition & projects that employ new technologies in reaching the wider public. MCH also still seeks humanities-based projects that don't deal w/ Lewis & Clark. For more info: www.umt.edu/lastbest/default.htm.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES offers consultation grants which provide up to \$10,000 to support the earliest stages of developing a project. Grants enable the director to consult w/ humanities scholars & media professionals who can help define key humanities themes, incorporate significant scholarship & shape the goals & design of the project. Deadline: April 7. Contact: Division of Public Programs, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8269;

www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/media.html; publicpgms@neh.gov.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, along w/ instruction & technical support. Students, media arts center members & unaffiliated independents are encouraged to apply. Commercial projects, music videos & PSAs not considered. Feature-length works discouraged. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 weeks minimum for processing. Tel.: (206) 467-8666; filmgrant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS (PIC) COMPLETION FUNDS are provided for the final preparations of broadcast masters of Pacific Island-themed programs intended for nat'l public television. Categories: doc, performance, children's & cultural affairs programming. PIC is particularly interested in projects that examine Pacific Islander issues. Rough cut must be submitted w/ appl. Awards range from \$20,000 to \$30,000. Appl. fee: \$25. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Annie Moriyasu, Media Fund, PIC, 1221 Kapi'olani Blvd, Ste. 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814; (808) 591-0059; amoriyasu@piccom.org; www.piccom.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.

SUNDANCE DOCUMENTARY FUND, formerly the Soros Documentary Fund, supports int'l doc films & videos on current & significant issues in human rights, freedom of expression, social justice & civil liberties. Development funds for research & preproduction awarded up to \$15,000; works-in progress funds for production or postproduction up to \$50,000 (average award is \$25,000). www.sundance.org.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area & Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must have nonprofit status/fiscal sponsorship. Send cover letter & synopsis to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave., #209, San Francisco, CA 94133; (415) 391-0911.

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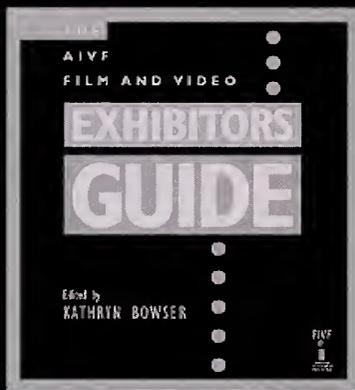
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PRODUCTION TRANSCRIPTS: Verbatim transcripts for documentaries, journalists, etc. Low prices & flat rates based on tape length. Standard 1 hr., 1-on-1 interview is only \$80: www.productiontranscripts.com for details or call: (888) 349-3022

**AIVF members can
search all benefits,
classifieds, and
notices listings with
the AIVF
interactive resource
directory at
www.aivf.org/listings**

aivf

Unless noted, AIVF programs take place at our offices (see below). RSVP is required for all AIVF events: call (212) 807-1400 x301 or www.aivf.org.

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 through a series of candid conversations. The Master Class Series examines how filmmakers have maintained their independent vision 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 their films made and ultimately seen.

All program details, including dates, are subject to change. Please see www.aivf.org for updated information.

I. Scripting

Saturday, April 26: *Thirteen*

Director Catherine Hardwicke discusses the screenwriter as creative entrepreneur in a case study of *Thirteen* (Dramatic Directing Award, Sundance 2003). Learn how Hardwicke called upon her 15 years' experience as a production designer to maintain her creative vision in her feature debut.

II. Shooting

Saturday, May 3: *The Station Agent*

Producer Mary Jane Skalski breaks down the process shooting *The Station Agent* (Dramatic Audience Award, Screenwriting Award, Jury Prize for Outstanding Performance, Sundance

2003), demonstrating how the team made the film they envisioned within the budget they had to work with.

III. Sharing

Saturday, May 31: *Raising Victor Vargas*
IDP Films' R.J. Millard and producer Scott Macauley break down the marketing-and-release strategy for Peter Sollett's dramatic debut, *Raising Victor Vargas* (Cannes, Sundance, Toronto FF).

AIVF COSPONSORS: ASPEN SHORTFEST

when: April 2-6
www.aspenfilm.org



One of North America's preeminent 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.



Meet and Greet: P.O.V.

when: April 3, 6:30-8:30
where: AIVF
cost: \$10 members/\$20 general

P.O.V. is public television's annual award-winning showcase for independent nonfiction films. *P.O.V.* works with selected filmmakers to

craft a strategic broadcast plan which includes a national press campaign, outreach activities through PTV stations, a stand-alone web site and other materials and services geared to providing the most effective springboard for the film possible. Join *P.O.V.* representatives Chris White, director of production, and Yance Ford, coordinating producer, to learn more about *P.O.V.* programming.



Meet and Greet: FESTIVAL PROGRAMMERS

when: April 15, 6:30-8:30
where: AIVF
cost: \$10 members/\$20 general

Just what goes on in the minds of festival programmers as they review

reach AIVF...

Filmmakers' Resource Library
hours: Wednesday 11-9
or 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
Tuesday-Friday 2-5 p.m. EST

By internet:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

countless festival entries? Now is your time to ask! AIVF invites you to join a panel of festival programmers and consultants to discuss the in and outs of festival selection. Panelists include Daryl Chin (Asian American International FF), Bob Hawk (ICI), Marian Masone (Film Society of Lincoln Center), and Nancy Schafer (Tribeca F, SXS'W)



**AIVF PROGRAM
COSPONSORS:
SAN FRANCISCO
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**

when: April 17–May 1
www.sfiff.org/festival

Known for bringing its audience a full showcase of World Cinema, the San Francisco International Film Festival is presented each spring by the San Francisco Film Society. Now in its 46th year, the Festival is dedicated to highlighting current trends in international film and video production. This year's festival will showcase approximately 200 new features, documentaries and shorts.



**IN BRIEF:
FINANCING:
CABLE TELEVISION**

when: Thursday,
April 24, 6:30–8:30
where: AIVF

cost: \$20 members/\$30 general

The AIVF Producers' Legal Series helps answer legal and business questions about structuring and negotiating deals in film and television. It also introduces independents to future legal and business resources.

This session addresses the issues of putting your film or program on cable television and the different financing options including: programs fully financed by cable; co-production arrangements; and acquisitions of independently produced programming.

Series moderator Innes Smolansky is an entertainment attorney with Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard. She specializes in representing independent production companies, writers, and directors in independent film and television projects, including international co-productions.



**AIVF COSPONSORS:
MUSEUM OF TELEVISION & RADIO
TELEVISION DOCUMENTARY
FESTIVAL**

when: April 22–May 2
where: 25 West 52 St., NYC
cost: (per program) \$8 AIVF/MTR members; \$10 general
www.mtr.org

Each year hundreds of documentaries are produced specifically for television, but many of them are seen only once. To give the public a chance to see quality documentaries (this time on a large screen) and to celebrate the work of important documentary makers, The Museum of Television & Radio is hosting its annual Festival that showcases the outstanding documentaries of the past year. The two-week event will consist of a mix of documentaries that have already aired and premieres of unaired programs.

In addition, a sidebar of six to eight programs will highlight the work of a prominent documentarian, specific genre, or series.

**AIVF COSPONSORS:
SPECIAL PREVIEW
"VISIONES: LATINO ART
AND CULTURE"**

when: Friday, May 2 at 6:30 p.m.
where: MT&R (see above)

Visiones is critically acclaimed filmmaker Hector Galán's bold journey into the richness and splendor of the Latino artistic heritage. Creating an evocative tapestry with archival

footage, interviews, and performance, Galán explores the crucial importance of the arts in the Latino experience. This sampler previews segments from the upcoming three-part series on PBS, which encompasses Latino traditions in theater, art, music, and dance. Among the subjects featured are the beauty and social impact of mural painting and the influence of Cuban music. Hip-hop dancer Rockafella, cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz, and performance artist La Bruja are also profiled.



SWISSAMERICAN
FILM FESTIVAL

**AIVF COSPONSORS:
SWISS AMERICAN
FILM FESTIVAL**

when: April 24–27
where: Anthology Film Archives
www.swisscinema.org

The first annual SwissAm will provide an opportunity for filmmakers

**AIVF ON THE
ROAD . . .**



April 3: Las Cruces, NM
Meet board member **PAUL ESPINOSA** at 9th Annual Border Book Festival, where he will screen his documentary *Uneasy Neighbors*.

April 17: San Diego, CA
Meet board member **PAUL ESPINOSA** at Open Screening Night, Media Arts Center, San Diego, 921 25th Street, San Diego, TEL: (619) 230-1938

April 26–27: Boston, MA
Meet board member **LIZ CANNER** at Digital Public Art Conference at Boston University.

April 26: San Francisco, CA
Meet board member **RHADI TAYLOR** at the San Francisco International Film Festival, where she will represent AIVF at the **I CAN DO IT ALL ON MY COMPUTER** panel.

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
 Empire State Development Corporation
 Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
 Home Box Office
 The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation
 John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

The National Endowment for the Arts
 The New York Community Trust
 New York Foundation for the Arts
 New York State Council on the Arts
 Sony Electronics Corporation
 The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

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

Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival; **CA:** Berkeley Documentary Center; Film Arts Foundation; Filmmakers Alliance; Fireside Foundation; International Buddhist Film Festival; LEF Foundation; Media Fund; San Diego Asian Film Festival; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; The Sundance Institute; 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; Valencia Community College; **GA:** Atlanta Black Film Festival, Inc.; Image Film and Video Center; Savannah College of Art and Design; **HI:** Pacific Islanders in Communications; **IL:** Community Television Network; Light Bound; Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Communication; Rock Valley College; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; LEF Foundation; Long Bow Group, Inc.; Lowell Telecommunications Group; Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College; WGBH Education Foundation; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **ME:** Maine Photographic Workshops; **MN:** IFP/MSP; Walker Art Center; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Festival; **NC:** Cocalorus Film Foundation; Duke University, Film and Video; Empowerment Project; UNC Greensboro, Broadcasting and Cinema; **NE:** AIVF Salon/Lincoln; Great Plains Film Festival; Ross Film Theater, UN-Lincoln; **NH:** Telluride Film Festival; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; Freedom Film Society; **NY:** After Dark Productions; American Museum of Natural History; Art21; Center for New American Media; Cinema Arts Center; Children's Media Project; 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.; International Film Seminars; John Jay High School; Listen Up!; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Video Resources; Nina Winthrop and Dancers; New York Film Academy; New York Women in Film and Television; Paper Tiger; POV/The American Documentary; Pratt Institute; Ross Media Center; Standby Program; Stony Brook Film Festival; Syracuse University; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; Upstate Films, Ltd.; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Athens Center for Film and Video; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio University School of Film; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; Northwest Film Center; **PA:** American Poetry Center; Desales University, Department of the Performing Arts; Department of Film and Video, Carnegie Museum of Art; Great Lakes Film Association; Greenworks; Philadelphia Independent Film and Video 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; **TX:** Austin Film Society; Michener Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; UT: Sundance Institute; **VA:** PBS; PBS Midwest; VA Department of Drama; **VT:** The Noodlehead Network; **WI:** UWM Department of Film; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Short Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Business/Industry Members: **AL:** Cypress Moon Productions; **AZ:** Aquinas Productions, Inc.; Duck Soup Productions; **CA:** Action/Cut Directed by Seminars; Blueprint Films; David Keith Company; Eastman Kodak Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; The Hollywood Reporter; MPRM; SJPL Films, Ltd.; Video Arts; **CO:** Makers Muse; Pay Reel; **DC:** 48 Hour Film Project; **FL:** Full Sail Recorders; GeekPower; Vision Films; **IL:** Buzzbait; Roxie Media Corporation; Screen Magazine; **MA:** Glidecam Industries; **MD:** Dig Productions; The Learning Channel; NewsGroup, Inc.; Waltery Insurance; **MI:** 10th Street Productions; Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Michael Kuentz Communications; **MN:** Aquaries Media; **NH:** Kinetic Films; **NJ:** Monkey Rant Productions; **NY:** All In One Productions; American Montage; Analog Digital Int'l, Inc.; ArtMar Productions; Black Bird Post; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cataland Films; Chicks With Flicks Film Festival; Code 16/Radical Avid; Communications Society; Corra Films; Cypress Films; Dekart Video; Docurama; Dr. Reiff and Assoc.; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Forest Creatures Entertainment; Fred Siegel CPA; Gartenberg Media Enterprises; Greenwich Street Productions; HBO; Hello World Communications; Interflix; Jalapeno Media; Karin Bacon Events; Lighthouse Creative; Long Island Film Festival; Lowel Light Manufacturing; Mad Mad Judy; The Means of Production, Inc.; Mercer Media; Metropolis Film Lab, Inc.; Mixed Greens; Moxie Firecracker Films; The Outpost; Outside in July, Inc.; Persona Films, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Prime Technologies; Robin Frank Management; Roja Productions; Studio 4J; Symphony of Chaos Productions; Tribune Pictures; Webcasting Media Productions, Inc.; Wildlight Productions; XEL Media; Zanzibar Productions, Inc.; **OH:** Cleveland Film Society; Independent Pictures; **PA:** Cubist Post and Effects; Janny Montgomery Scott, LLC; Schiff Media/SBS Films; Smithtown Creek Productions; **TX:** The Media Cottage, Inc.; Worldfest

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from the United States and Switzerland to showcase their work as an ensemble. SwissAm will present the emerging talents from both countries offering an open forum for the exchange of ideas and business opportunities. Works to be featured will include experimentals, documentaries, animations, and shorts. SwissAm will be presented within the Swiss Peaks festival

SHORT STUFF

when: Saturday, April 26, 12:30-2:30
where: Anthology Film Archives, NYC

How do you go about getting your short seen? This panel composed of US microcinemas, television programmers and distributors will explore the possibilities of showing foreign films in traditional and alternative venues. For more information, visit www.aivf.org.



HOT DOCS CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

when: April 25-May 4
www.hotdocs.ca

Hot Docs is North America's largest documentary festival. Each year, the festival presents a selection of over one hundred cutting-edge documentaries from Canada and around the globe. Through its industry programs, the festival also provides a full range of professional development, a market, and networking opportunities for documentary professionals.

From April 30-May 1, 2003, Hot Docs will mount its fourth annual Toronto Documentary Forum, a two-day pitching event designed to assist independent producers from Canada and around the world raise cofinancing from the international marketplace.

AIVF COSPONSORS: MIAMI GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL

when: April 25-May 4
cost: \$10 AIVF &
MGLFF members/\$13.25 general
www.miamigaylesbianfilm.com



The Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, is held in the world-renowned historic South Beach neighborhood and features films by, about and of interest to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

AIVF COSPONSORS: NASHVILLE FILM FESTIVAL

when: April 28-May 4
www.nashvillefilm-festival.org



The Nashville Film Festival is a seven-day celebration of independent and international film and video, including narrative features, documentaries, shorts, animation and experimental works, with a special nod to films about music. The festival also includes panels and workshops on filmmaking and music in films, live music showcases, and other special events.

AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT:



where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 west 65th St., NYC
www.filmLinc.com

AIVF members may attend select screening series (listed below) at a discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office!

April 5-10 African Film Festival Tenth Anniversary
April 11-May 1 Middle of the World: Discovering Swiss Cinema

WOMEN MAKEMOVIES MEDIA WORKSHOP SERIES

where: 462 Broadway, Ste. 500, NYC

Women Make Movies is offering a new spring season of media workshops.

FUNDER PANELS

cost: \$120/ \$95 discount rate* Fee includes registration for three nights
when: April 8, 6:30-8:30, Finishing Funds; April 29, 6:30-8:30, Foundation Funder

To register call 212-925-0606 x302 or visit www.wmm.com

New and improved exhibitors listings!

AIVF is proud to announce the update of *The AIVF Film and Video Exhibitors Guide*. Offering profiles of over 1,000 venues friendly to independents, the *Exhibitors Guide* is an essential resource for artists who self-distribute their work. Listings comprise both traditional theaters and nontraditional exhibition spaces, and each profile contains complete facility and contact information.

This update is based on a 2003 survey of all listed venues, supervised by Rania Richardson, who also edited the recent edition of the *AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors*. Many listings have been reworked, and the entire volume has been reconfigured to allow more frequent updating of material through the AIVF print-to-order publications program. A companion online directory that allows customized searches of venues will be launched in fall 2003.

For more info, see our website:
www.aivf.org/resources/aivf_books.html

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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of regional salon 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.net

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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

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

Cleveland, OH:

Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC: Hybrid Films

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Independent Film Project

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm)
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
washingtondc@aivf.org

Birth of a Hybrid Salon



The Columbia, South Carolina, AIVF Salon was started by Hybrid Films as an event to bring together independent filmmakers, writers,

actors, technicians, and those in the community interested in independent filmmaking. February's salon featured Bob Leddy, an award-winning writer/director from Wilmington, NC. Recently gaining admission to the WGA, Bob spoke about his experiences as a writer and read from his current feature project. Previous salons have featured representatives from the SC Film office, SC Arts Commission, as well as local indie filmmakers.

The AIVF salons are main events that surround Hybrid Films' other programs, which include film workshops, local filmmaker fiscal sponsorship, grant programs, independent equipment rentals, and the annual Beg and Grovel Film Festival.

— Wade Sellers

Memorable Moviehouses

By Jason Guerrasio

Today's multiplexes cram so many screens into their buildings that getting to your seat feels more like finding your gate at the airport than the fun-filled adventure movies used to be. But in this era when Hollywood blockbusters open on thousands of screens during a single weekend, there are still a handful of theaters more concerned with turning a trip to the movies into a memorable evening out than with corporate bottom lines. Even though they are as rare as real butter on your popcorn, there's probably one of the gems near you.

Keeping the tradition alive

Shankweiler's Drive-In, Orefield, PA

(www.shankweilers.com)

The longest-running outdoor cinema in America, Shankweiler's Drive-In has been showing films every season since 1934. Shankweiler's was the second drive-in in the US and the first to introduce this classic American experience to Pennsylvania. Keeping the old drive-in tradition alive, Shankweiler moviegoers still have the option to use old-fashioned window speaker to hear the film (most drive-ins use car stereos).

Seventy-five and counting

Millwald Theatre, Wytheville, VA

One of the oldest continually running theaters in the United States, the Millwald has been going strong since 1928. Through bomb scares during the Cold War (where the Millwald's basement was designated a bomb shelter) to the advent of the multiplex that closed down many of the small town theaters for good, the Millwald is a hidden American treasure.

A taste of old Hollywood

Grauman's Chinese Theater, Hollywood, CA

(mann.moviefone.com)

You may also know it as "Mann's Chinese Theater," the most famous movie theater in the world. Its claim to fame is the "Forecourt of Stars' Footprints," but you can go in and see a movie too. Running for over seven decades, the theater is filled with Hollywood tradition. You can even take a tour that brings you to the VIP lounge and balcony where the stars hobnob during premieres.

That homey touch

Terrace Theater, Tinonee, New South Wales

In the Australian village of Manning Valley, Darren Bird has transformed his little, century-old house into a twenty-two seat licensed movie theater that shows everything from summer blockbusters to art-house films. Using his bedroom window as the ticket window, you enter to find all the bells and whistles that you'd expect at any multiplex. You can even hang out after the movie in Bird's kitchen to discuss the film over tea and cookies.

Putting little bottoms in the seats

Angelika Film Center, Dallas, Texas

(www.angelikafilmcenter.com)

The Dallas Angelika Film Center is just one of the art houses around the country offering "Cry Baby Matinees." Every Saturday and Tuesday new moms can catch up on the latest indie hits in a baby-friendly environment. With the baby-changing tables provided, the lights dimmed, and the sound lowered, this popular Texas event is ideal for mothers raising future filmmakers.

One place not to break the ice

The Ice Hotel, Beauport, Quebec

(www.icehotelcanada.com/en/hotel.htm)

Some people escape winter by flying south each year, but in Quebec, instead of turning on the defrost, they've built a hotel out of ice. And during your stay you have the luxury of going to the movies in a theater constructed of ice. Patrons sit on ice benches while enjoying films with winter-related themes. Good thing there's an Absolut vodka bar in the lobby. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



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the Independent

FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

ANNUAL SPOTLIGHT ON
PUBLIC TELEVISION

Public TV and Independents

P.O.V.'s 'Love and Diane'

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Field Report: Puerto Rico

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\$4.95 US \$6.95 CAN



Be more independent

Freedom of expression is nothing without freedom of exposure.

Every week, nearly 90 million Americans tune in to PBS programs.* And your documentary film can be among them. On PBS, you'll have the freedom to tell your story the way you intended it, without commercial interruption. With PBS, you'll cultivate a relationship that encourages your best work - and attract an audience that appreciates it.

Want more information? Check out www.pbs.org/producers.

*Source: NTL weekly cume estimates, persons 2+, avg of 8 survey weeks, one per month in Oct, Nov, 2000; Jan, Feb, Apr, May, July and Aug 2001. Qualifications available upon request.

Be more



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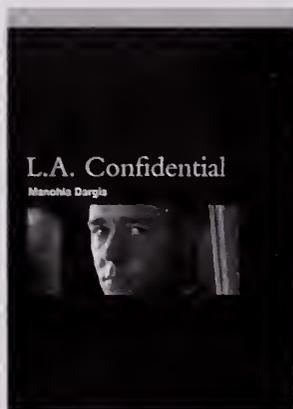
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On the Cover: Public television icon Bill Moyers is an active supporter of independents through his program, *NOW With Bill Moyers*. He is also a vocal advocate of independent filmmakers across the spectrum of public television (Jennifer Huegel/NOW with Bill Moyers).



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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader:
Most of us under forty do not remember a world without PBS. In fact, we were raised on it.

We learned lessons in reading, math, and tolerance at the knees of a giant yellow bird and a guy in a cardigan sweater. In the world of *Mr. Rogers*, *Zoom*, and *Sesame Street*, Latinos, African Americans, whites, Asians, Native Americans, girls, boys, Muppets, and everybody else stood on a level playing field. Children's broadcasting on PBS has spent decades bringing up American children to be "tolerant of the ideas and behaviors of others," the definition of liberal, according to *American Heritage Dictionary*.

Sometimes I think our utopian childhood experience of PBS makes us hypercritical of what we see on the same stations as adults. We complain that the programming is too conservative, but we would stand up and cheer if the same network that airs *The Bachelorette* added a series like *Masterpiece Theatre* or *The News Hour* to their mid-season replacement list. We complain about the corporate sponsors that now seem dangerously close to advertisers, yet the majority of us remain silent when the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's budget is on the federal chopping block. Most of us are part of the grumbling liberal majority. But there are those who have pushed public broadcasting into new and exciting territory both from within PBS and from without.

And as our legal columnist Robert Seigel points out, public broadcasting is much more than just PBS (see pg. 54). It includes any broadcaster that fits into CPB's definition of public broadcasting. This includes college

stations, some religious programming, and public access.

Public access centers hold an important place in the media world. They are one of the last frontiers of completely free speech. These stations can air shows that profit-driven commercial television and politics/ratings-conscience PBS never could or would. But to stay viable, public access centers are having to become even more creative in their financing and their programming, as writer Claiborne Smith illustrates in his article *Survival of the Fittest* (see pg. 49).

For those of you who want to know more about CPB and PBS, journalist Jana Germano examines the complicated relationship that these public broadcasting entities have with independent producers (see page 40). And if you're thinking about becoming one of those producers by submitting a film to one of the PBS strands, you should take a look at Greg Gilpatrick's piece, *Up to Spec for PBS*.

If you're more interested in what you can do to support PBS, take a look at page 44. Charlie Sweitzer has put together a list elected officials in DC that are major players when it comes to public broadcasting. This is by no means a complete list, and remember that every member of the House and Senate votes on legislation effecting public broadcasting. This means you have four votes you can possibly influence: two Senators, one member of the House of Representatives, and the President. These people may not respond to your e-mail or letter, but they certainly count them. To contact your Congressional Representative, log on to www.house.gov. To contact your Senators, log on to www.senate.gov. To contact the White House, see page 45.

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An Adventure of Perception

STAN BRAKHAGE, 1933–2003

By Elizabeth Peters

James Stanley Brakhage died March 9 after a long battle with cancer. According to a statement written by his wife, Marilyn, “Stan spent his final weeks and days scratching on film and drawing pictures of his visions, both internal and external, as he worked through his illness. He expressed much love and kindness and gratitude to others, and said, ‘I’ve had a really good life.’”

Brakhage’s prolific body of work—he authored close to four hundred films over the past fifty years—and his sensitive and accessible writings on

art, artists, and perception earned him a prominent place within American avant garde cinema. His experiments with form have vastly influenced contemporary work in experimental film, music video, and advertising.

Every student who has taken a survey of film course has likely encountered his work. He was a consummate independent, yet chafed at Hollywood’s co-option of the term, preferring to call his work “poetic film.” Whether documentary, fiction, conceptual, or abstract, he intended his films to mine new channels of perception and thus spark new forms of understanding.

The extent of his influence stems to

a great degree from his accessibility. From his early days in New York, where he worked alongside artists such as Maya Deren and Joseph Cornell, to the weekly informal film salons he held in Boulder, Colorado, throughout the nineties, Brakhage was never an esoteric but rather opened himself to communion and experience, and encouraged his audiences and colleagues to do likewise. He influenced countless filmmakers during his tenures at the Chicago Institute of Art and then later the University of Colorado at Boulder, and toured the globe to present numerous screenings of his own and others’ works in person. (The time I met him he was carrying his most recent work in tight little coils in his satchel; at one point he pulled out a bit of film and held it up to the light to make a point, right over his plate of pad thai. I was somewhat taken aback that such great art could be so casual-

Stan Brakhage circa 1970.



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ly transported, and delighted with the tactile intimacy of the gesture.)

The *Chicago Reader* devoted the Winter 2001/Spring 2002 edition to Brakhage. Titled "Stan Brakhage: Correspondences," the journal packages a number of writings by and about Brakhage to illustrate the correspondences between the verbal and visual arts, reminding us that "Although he is rightly known best for the 370-some films he has made, Brakhage is also one of our most articulate aestheticians." His writings on film and perception, from *Metaphors on Vision* to *Film at Wits End* to more recent contributions to journals, conferences, and radio programs, provide intelligent yet informal entree into a body of work that could have seemed profoundly arcane.

This month the Criterion Collection will release a DVD package of twenty-six Brakhage films.

For more information:

www.fredcamper.com/Film/BrakhageL.html

www.canyoncinema.com/B/Brakhage.html

www.zeitgeistfilms.com/current/brakhage/brakhage.html

humanities.uchicago.edu/orgs/review/index_474_481.shtml

www.criterionco.com/asp/release.asp?id=184

Elizabeth Peters is executive director of AIVE and publisher of The Independent.

CPB Faces Possible Budget Cuts

By Charlie Sweitzer

President Bush's proposed budgets for 2004 and 2005 will introduce deep cuts and radical changes for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) if they pass through Congress later this year unaltered. In addition to a tighter budget, CPB would not receive advance appropriations for 2006. Advance appropriations allow CPB and the media entities it funds, such as PBS and NPR, to plan for upcoming seasons in similar manners as commercial networks like ABC or

HBO. These appropriations also protect public broadcasters from being pressured by politicians to some degree. If the current budget is approved, it would be the first time that CPB has been denied this kind of funding since 1976, when advance appropriations were first applied by Congress. "[It] would certainly remove one of the fire walls that protects us from political interference in production and programming decisions," says John Lawson, president and CEO of the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS), an organization which works with CPB, PBS, and NPR on funding and advocacy issues. "And it would inject a major dose of unpredictability into public television and our process of establishing budgets."

As Congress negotiates the President's budget, Lawson encourages people to voice their support of public television by writing their Senators and Representatives, and also by logging on to <http://ptvaction.org>, an advocacy website run up by APTS. Lawson notes that for the past two years the President has made similar efforts to eliminate advance funding, but Congress has overridden him in both cases. "It's like the old saying, 'the President proposes, Congress disposes,'" he jokes.

Though fewer than fifty percent of public broadcasting's income comes from tax-based revenues, CPB appropriations are critical because they provide a secure operating base. The President's proposed budget further erodes CPB's operating budget by earmarking \$100 million in 2004's proposed \$380 million budget for digital conversion. Taking these funds out of CPB's operating budget would be "disastrous," says Lawson. "His budget would cannibalize the funding that goes into production and operations."

APTS estimates that the total cost of converting every PBS station to a completely digital broadcast signal by the FCC deadline of 2006 will be \$1.7 billion. All 357 PBS stations must

convert to at least partially digital broadcast by May 1, 2003. As of press time, 107 stations had met this deadline. One recent station to convert was Pennsylvania's WPSX. Kate Zomico, the station's director of technology, said their own conversion process (which now enables WPSX to broadcast "a limited digital signal") made use of a variety of resources, including state funds, a capital campaign, and a grant from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP), a federal organization which provides matching grants for, among other telecommunications institutions, public television and radio. (President Bush has also recently suggested eliminating funding for the PTFP, but the House and the Senate have agreed to keep it funded in the fiscal year 2003.) "Everyone has been doing their conversion to digital in their own creative ways," says Zomico.

So far, 192 PBS stations have anticipated they won't meet the May 1 deadline and requested waivers from the FCC. "I think by May 1 we'll have a majority of our stations on the air, which is way ahead of where the commercial broadcast industry was on their deadline of May 1, 2002," says Lawson.

But Lawson also emphasizes that "2006, of course, is just a date on a piece of paper. The real transition number is eighty-five, meaning that eighty-five percent of the households in a market have to be capable of receiving a digital signal" before analog broadcast can be discontinued entirely.

"People in public television see the promise in digital," he says. "There is no business model right now that justifies the investment in a commercial sense. But when your orientation is delivering services to communities . . . I believe that the more federal funding is tied to local production and local services, the more success we'll have in not only preserving CPB funding and CPB services, but growing CPB funding over the next several years."

Court of Appeals to Rule on Cable Internet Regulation

The US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (which covers Oregon, California, Nevada, and Washington) is hearing a case this month that, if successful, would reestablish cable internet access under the same laws that govern cable broadcasting. The case is challenging a 2002 action by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) which classified internet access from cable modems as an "information service" rather than a "cable service." This effectively deregulated cable internet services and eliminated the fees due to public access centers from these internet services under franchise agreement. Because the FCC action removed ownership limits for cable internet, it could encourage monopolies and "subtle forms" of discrimination, according to Cheryl A. Leanza, deputy director of the Media Access Project, one of the organizations arguing against the FCC. "[Unlike phone companies] cable companies can choose the content on your system."

Film and video distribution over the internet could also be restricted. Leanza points out that in cable internet's infancy, many providers only allowed consumers to download video clips under ten seconds. A restriction they quickly and quietly rescinded, fearing legal repercussions and public outcry.

Cable providers overwhelmingly have supported the FCC's decision. "The cable companies just said 'trust us,' which makes us very suspicious," Leanza says. "If you would never do anything wrong, why would you be afraid of a rule?"

A decision is expected this fall. If the court rules against the FCC, it is expected the FCC will appeal and take the issue to the Supreme Court.

For more information on the Media Access Project, visit www.mediaaccess.org.

To file a comment with the FCC on this issue, visit <http://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/ecfs/Upload>.

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer and intern for The Independent.

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PBS's Double Bind

PRODUCER APATHY AND POLITICAL ATTACKS

By Cara Mertes

There's a phenomenon afoot that is increasingly evident this year—at Sundance, Real Screen, and beyond. Let's call it producer fatigue; what was formerly indignation with PBS has morphed into simple dismissal. It seems so complicated, the thought goes, why work with public television at all? In a year when public television funding sources brought a majority of the documentaries to Sundance, when the PBS schedule has never seen so much space for independent work, when PBS documentaries once again led Emmy wins, it is ironic that the will to be a public television producer seems to be fading in some quarters.

It is most evident with a younger generation of producers who have never known a world without cable and who have no knowledge about how media systems have been structured in the US. That makes it hard for them to grasp the differences between Showtime, IFC, A&E, HBO/Cinemax, and, say, PBS. Why sweat the details?

Independents are not the only group confused about the opportunities public television can afford them. The government is dismissing the need for a public media system as well, perhaps because they don't care to differentiate commercial offerings from noncommercial ones either. While the world is drawn into America's ill-defined "war on terrorism," the Bush administration continues to deal its budgetary death blows at home, and in February, PBS was once again on the chopping block for 2003 and 2004. John Lawson, head of PBS's national lobbying organization, the Association of Public Television Stations, recent-

ly said in a meeting that PBS has not been under such a threat since Newt Gingrich, as speaker of the House, engineered the "Contract with America." Then there was an all-out effort to defund public television and radio. This time, it's a quiet revolution taking place under the cover of war, tucked into budgets and bills, so far with little public outcry.

In case you think the threat to the



PBS as we know it isn't serious, a February 2003 letter in response to Bush's proposed 2003 budget, signed by executives of the entire system—PBS, NPR, APTS, and CPB—states it bluntly:

"The vast majority of CPB funds go directly to more than 1,000 local public radio and television stations. These cuts would hit them at an already difficult time, when they are eliminating programming and cutting other services due to the weakened economy and deep cuts in state funding. . . . This service is deeply

threatened by this budget proposal, as is CPB's investment in new national programming for TV and radio. In addition, this budget proposal makes no provision for advance funding, ending a twenty-nine-year tradition that has allowed public broadcasters leverage for raising nonfederal funding; adequate lead time to plan, design, create, and support the programs and services we are mandated to provide; and a buffer from the political process."

The 2003 funding was restored after intense lobbying, but 2004 is still up for grabs. Political machinations aside, many newer producers are simply not getting PBS. Presenting recently at the Real Screen Summit this year in Washington, DC, I was struck by the number of producers who had never worked on a public television project. Friday morning, limited informational sessions were filled for Sundance, National Geographic, Discovery, HBO, and Court TV. I was one of four PBS icon series producers presenting in the afternoon closing session, and I wondered whether it, too, would be crowded. No worries there—it was a major panel and the room was full, but the first question was what I'd been hearing from producers from the entire summit: Why try? It was an odd echo of the current administration's return to "why care?"

These trends are linked, I believe, in several ways—a primary one being the lack of an exciting and compelling language that is effectively disseminated in mainstream culture, setting PBS apart as a must-have for producers and politicians alike. The midcentury generation that crafted the inspiring institutionalization of public funding for public culture that so many have benefited from is passing. The language that ensured its vitality is being eroded by a steady drumbeat of commercialization and a political will to retreat from government support from anything but defense,

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commerce, and security. Informed critiques, thoughtful commentary, and good, questioning journalism are under fire, and myths of “liberal media bias” (see footnote below) abound to further discredit all efforts to bring anything like a democratic dialogue to bear on our society’s pressing issues.

Met with apathy from potential content suppliers and antipathy from government funders, it seems like PBS can’t get a break, like many other cultural and educational nonprofits.

sion, which is why the system has to do a better job getting out the opportunities and advantages of working for public television. Congress provides fewer than twenty percent of the total funding for public television, but it is this critical seed money that leverages much of the rest, so the stakes are high. Without a tax-based revenue stream on the horizon (or something similar) to replace straight-out funding from Congress, public television is consigned to walk the tightrope of an increasingly mine-

The language that ensured public television’s vitality is being eroded by a steady drumbeat of commercialization and a political will to retreat from government support of anything but defense, commerce, and security.

Spiraling state and federal deficits, a nasty recession, tax breaks geared for the top percentiles, massive military spending, and a virtual absence of informed debate about national values are conspiring to deprive the country of its hard-won cultural institutions. Disagreements about the quality and direction of public television decisions aside, it is a sure bet that if the PBS system were defunded tomorrow, there would be no way to gain the political traction necessary to create a new public media system as far-reaching as PBS is in this country. So if we want public media, or public anything for that matter, the time is now to make the case for the positive cultural impact, the incredible cost-effectiveness of nonprofit institutions in general—public television alone is only \$1.09 per person per year in taxes—and at the same time, we need to push the PBS system we have to be better, bolder, and more relevant.

Producers are a key constituency for providing vitality to public televi-

filled political landscape to meet Congressional approval.

Let’s not forget the good news mentioned at the outset, though. For producers looking for work, public television’s bureaucracy may seem daunting at first, but the opportunities are growing and the economics are better than they have ever been. Sure, it may be harder to find your way through public television than the one-stop shopping of HBO or A&E, but only if you believe it is just another network or cable outlet. It isn’t, and we should stop inviting the comparison. Of course PBS could be doing more adventurous programming, but in public affairs, history, independent documentary, and nature and science programming, PBS already excels. And it’s true that the economics aren’t always as lucrative as one might hope, but it is also true that acquisition fees and funding possibilities have never been higher systemwide, nor has the emphasis on finding meaningful,

challenging stories instead of cookie-cutter formulas.

Simply put, the nonprofit arena is still the best place to do something you believe in. Commercial efforts do not prioritize values over profits as a matter of course. In general they alternately look for the next "big thing" or the next cheap thing. If we are lucky, they do "quality" on the side, as a reward for bringing in the dollars on most of the other programs. Public television and public culture strive in the opposite direction. There is no other place dedicated to the difficult and often contradictory propositions of democracy and a diversity of information. These concepts need to be nurtured, supported, and made available through our education systems, our libraries, our galleries, our concert halls, and our public television system. And that is the heart of the matter—Who pays for the fostering of a healthy cultural landscape? Because we all pay when it is absent.

This window to put back some of the muscle behind public funding may be brief, though. We have yet to see the worst of the impact from government budgets and policies that are being unveiled every day in the guise of things like homeland defense. Producers, like everyone involved in public television, need to understand the larger issues at play with public media. It's a global question now, and if you want public television to work with you in the future, take some time to figure out the best way you can support it now. It's not just an issue of your next film, it's the future of media that's at stake. □

For more on media bias, see Eric Alterman's recent book, *What Liberal Media? The Truth About Bias and the News* (Basic Books, 2003).

See also: www.whatliberalmedia.com.

Cara Mertes is the executive director of P.O.V., PBS's premiere independent documentary showcase. She has been an advocate for independent media for over a decade.

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Jennifer Dworkin

PHILOSOPHER TURNS DOC FILMMAKER

By Matt Wolf

First-time filmmaker Jennifer Dworkin hasn't pinned down an auteurist philosophy on filmmaking. Still, her two-and-a-half-hour epic documentary debut, *Love and Diane*, sent waves through top film festivals, followed by a theatrical release and upcoming broadcast on PBS's *P.O.V.* Dworkin, a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at Cornell University, put her studies on hold to finish the thirteen-year filmmaking journey with three generations of one family.

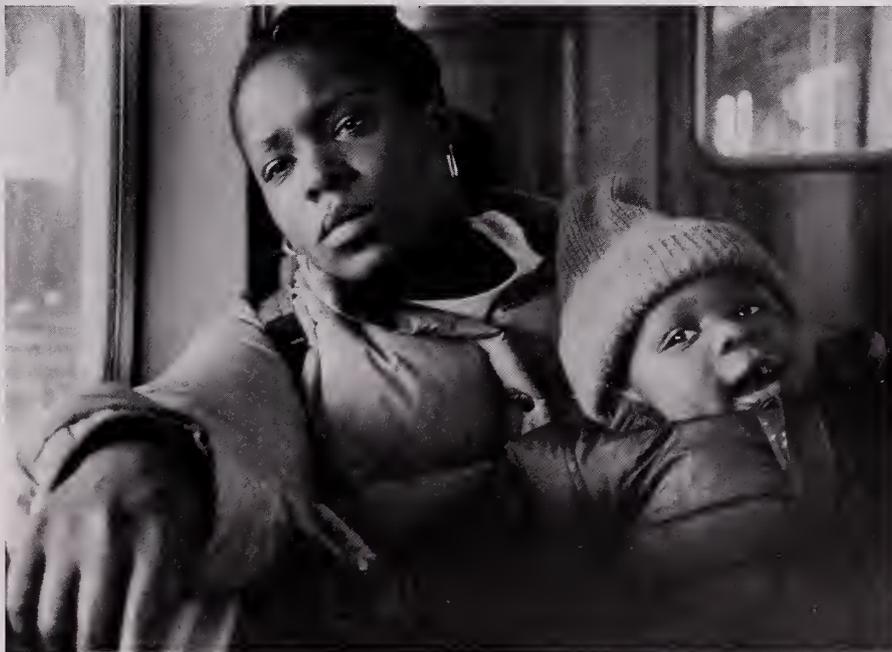
Love and Diane focuses on the turbulent relationship between a mother and daughter. Each struggle against overwhelming odds to reverse destructive cycles. Love Hazzard cannot forget the day she and her siblings were torn away from their drug-addicted mother, Diane, and thrust into the "system." Ten years later, Dworkin's camera follows a reunited family burdened with new obstacles.

Love is now eighteen, HIV positive, with a newborn child named Donyaeh. Diane's son Charles committed suicide only months prior. Consumed by profound guilt but empowered with sobriety, Diane commits herself to rebuilding her family and gaining financial independence. But when Diane confides her fears about Love's volatile temper and alarming depression to a therapist, the police arrive at the family's front door to separate Donyaeh from his mother. Charged with neglect, Love confronts the demons of a family cycle.

Dworkin picked up heavy storytelling responsibilities. She enables the family to explain themselves in the face of institutional suspicion and emo-

tional distress. Without any narration, editor Mona Davis fluidly combines cinema verité conventions with unique interior dialogues. And the family drama quickly unfolds as hurtful memories fuel a present-tense crisis.

Dworkin's strategy of incorporating "self explanation" draws inspiration from erudite philosophical inquiry. Born in New York but raised in England, Dworkin attended a traditional girls prep school and returned to the States for a short-lived college career at Harvard. Between England and New York, Dworkin dabbled in ticket sales at local arthouse movie



theaters before curiously testing the New York University film school experience. Years later, much to her surprise, Dworkin realized she could attend graduate school without an undergraduate degree. She committed herself to studying philosophy of the mind and researching the cognitive sciences of self-knowledge. Dworkin

investigates how we explain and reconcile our own actions.

Unlike many Ph.D. students, Dworkin is not interested in becoming a college professor. She found her inspiration from volunteer work at family shelters in New York City. Dworkin started a photography program for youth that eventually included the production of black-and-white Super 8 films, which appear throughout *Love and Diane*. Committed to facilitating self-representation, Dworkin began to develop a community-based documentary project at the shelter.

Dworkin grew close to a young girl named Selina Hazzard and spent years collecting footage of her family. Her guardian, Victor, an HIV-positive drug addict, became seriously ill, and Selina moved in with her aunt. In the aunt, Diane, Dworkin found the new protagonist for her film. When

Dworkin stopped by the apartment to interview Selina, she initiated a casual interview with Love and Diane. "The beginning was about Selina. Then the two just started to talk partly to me and partly to each other about things that happened in the past," Dworkin explains. Dworkin captured the highly charged conflict between

Love and Donyaeh Hinson are subjects of Jennifer Dworkin's *Love and Diane*.

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Diane and Love, a mixture of conversation and explanation.

Dworkin tried to keep Selina in the film, but the story quickly shifted to Love and Diane. Five years after beginning her film project, Dworkin started over. Still in grad school, she was shooting solo, using radio mics, only occasionally with the assistance of a cinematographer. Without funding, the bare-bones production continued for three years. But when Donyaeh was removed from Love's care, Dworkin left Cornell and committed herself full-time to the film.

Luckily, a string of encouraging developments propelled the seemingly endless production forward. Dworkin cut a trailer and received her first grant from ITVS, stamping the project with serious broadcast validity. One year later, documentary heavyweight Jennifer Fox, creator of the ten-hour *American Love Story* series, came onboard as executive producer.

The miniature crew kept shooting with the family while editor Mona Davis began assembling the epic. Thierry Garrel at the French television company ARTE joined the team as a coproducer. And at the same time, a European pre-sale to BBC funded the film's completion. Dworkin and her editor were flown to Paris to finish postproduction.

But *Love and Diane* did not immediately capture the spotlight. Dworkin received a pile of rejection letters from film festivals around the world. "I feared that the film wouldn't be seen. I became so discouraged that I stopped sending it to festivals." Luckily, Dworkin's French coproducer insisted on submitting *Love and Diane* to the New York Film Festival. Its premiere at Lincoln Center sparked a chain of festival invitations

Jennifer Dworkin, filmmaker and philosopher.

and awards. "The screening at the New York Film Festival was one of the high points of my life. Everyone in the film came, and there was incredible responses from the audience," Dworkin remembers.

Airing on *P.O.V.* is another high point. It answers not only a broadcast dream but a larger one, because the series invests resources in community-based outreach. Dworkin always hoped this film would have a powerful impact in the community it represents. "There are lots of rags-to-riches narratives, and this is not; this story is tough," she explains. Dworkin also hopes the film will be an effective edu-



cational tool for social workers and public defendants by offering an interior view of a family's struggle through the system

Still, Dworkin sees *Love and Diane* more as a complex psychological portrait of a mother and daughter than a politicized documentary about foster care and welfare. "Everyone [in the film] was trying to do what they thought was right, even people who did destructive things," says Dworkin, who refuses to place blame. She may not yet claim a personal filmmaking philosophy, but with this film Dworkin reveals a fascination for the inexplicable choices and mistakes people make which fuel not only human drama but the questions posed by philosophers. □

Matt Wolf is a filmmaker and writer in New York.

Steve Mendelsohn

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

By Mark J. Huisman

Running a public access television station is not what most high-powered corporate VP's would consider a smart career move, much less a dream job. But holding a résumé with Wharton, Harvard, and ten years as vice president for marketing at American Express as highlights, Steve Mendelsohn has moved into the executive director's office at Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), the public access television station for New York City's largest borough.

Mendelsohn rearranged his life goals after losing his fifteen-year life partner to AIDS in 1995. "I felt a need to do something more meaningful," Mendelsohn explains. "I traveled around the world. Upon my return, I no longer felt a connection with the corporate world. I began to think about other areas where I could apply my business skills and management experience, with a goal of finding something that would give me a creative outlet within the business world."

Carving out that place led him to Razorfish, an internet firm. But the restlessness continued until Mendelsohn started exploring opportunities in the arts, including the non-profit sector. MNN, impressed with Mendelsohn's corporate credentials, hired him as executive director on an interim basis. After a successful three-month interlude, Mendelsohn was offered the job permanently. He still marvels at the reality that he finds himself operating in. "Can you imagine, in this day and age, when there are so few outlets for noncommercial, independ-

ent work, having four channels?" Mendelsohn asks with near incredulity.

Mendelsohn is not only bringing an unusual résumé into his new office; he is bringing some unusual ideas too. One of the major ones is to recruit producers and makers from the independent film world to air their work on MNN. This idea may strike some as odd, given the traditional gulf that has

their work. They note that PBS is becoming more and more commercial and less and less local. One-offs are having trouble finding air time as series become the norm, and, after [former New York City Mayor] Giuliani sold WNYC, New York has almost no place where one can see nonmainstream or local work. We want MNN to fill that growing void."

And MNN has a lot to offer. Not only does MNN own its three-story headquarters on Fifty-Ninth Street, which houses three studios and a wealth of production and postproduction equipment, but it also owns four—count them again, four—cable chan-



existed between independent makers and public access organizations like MNN, which are often seen as the gathering place of utterly strange programming, from dancing boys at midnight to badly produced news shows. But Mendelsohn is determined to move beyond such preconceptions. "Historically, public access has been outside of the independent media-making community," Mendelsohn comments. "I continuously meet independent film and videomakers who complain that they have no outlet for

nels. MNN occupies Time Warner Cable channels 34, 56, 57, and 67, and RCN channels 107, 108, 109, and 110.

"While we don't pay people to cablecast their work, we can offer them a free exhibition outlet for that work. We can offer them free use of our equipment, studios, and editing facilities. If you don't know how to use our equipment, we'll train you. For free," Mendelsohn explains. The three on-site studios (there is a fourth cyberstudio located at partner Downtown Community Television, include two

MNN producer and board member Nina Streich interviews State Assembly candidate John Ruiz during the 2002 Voter Guide, produced by MNN.

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very large studios (one with call-in program capabilities) and one smaller express studio set up for a one-person operation with a camera, lights, and pre-set equipment that a single person can use to be on the air almost immediately with no additional crew members. MNN also has seven linear editing stations and eight individual non-linear editing suites. And everything is available completely free of charge.

The staff facilitates the use of the space and equipment but does not provide or act as the crew. Studios can be reserved by anyone who is certified. Experienced producers are required to certify themselves by demonstrating they can operate equipment without supervision. And people not familiar with the equipment can take MNN's free orientation, which includes studio, field production, and editing classes. The Sony PD150 cameras used in these certification classes are also available for field use to produce programming for MNN. People who don't need equipment and have already made work can submit it to MNN for broadcast.

Facilities, equipment, and airtime are available to anyone. MNN does give priority to work produced by individuals or organizations from the borough. Even though much of MNN's airtime is occupied, there is plenty of opportunity. "There's always some time available," Mendelsohn says. "If you're a Manhattan-based filmmaker and you want to show your film, you'll get a prime spot. For example, we reserve Sunday evenings for a special like a documentary or feature-length film. And we show those specials three separate times." Mendelsohn adds that independent producers and artists outside Manhattan should not be discouraged: "You may not get the most desirable time—it may be the middle of the day—but there's time available."

Current programming includes shows like *Democracy Now* (created in partnership with DCTV), *Gay USA* (a

gay and lesbian current events program), *DV Republic* (a recent addition that focuses on minority artists), and other cause-oriented shows about topics such as the environment and religion. "There's nothing that unifies our programming," Mendelsohn says, "other than the diversity of the great city in which we live."

And contrary to what many think, that diversity extends to MNN's audience as well. "We know we have viewers around the country and the world because when the server goes down, New Zealand lets us know about it," he continues. "MNN is one of the only public access stations in the US that streams all of our content live on the internet."

MNN also has something for which most independent filmmakers can only pine: a guaranteed funding stream.

When cable TV was created, community activists lobbied the federal government to ensure public access to this new airspace. The government set aside noncommercial channels dedicated to the public's right to free speech, hence the phrase *public access*. Cable providers were required to fund this enterprise, although local governments were allowed to decide the mechanism that was right for them. New York City established a franchise agreement by which each cable company pays a per-subscriber fee for public access in each borough. The Manhattan fees, coming from hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of the city's cable subscribers, flow into MNN's coffers. It's a delicious irony: The very corporate behemoths against which many independent makers struggle are footing MNN's bill. "We are in the enviable position of

being a stable nonprofit with the resources to foster meaningful artistic and political expression," Mendelsohn says. "I don't spend all my time raising money. We can focus on programming, content, and being proactive in the community."

MNN is currently discussing even more ways to provide opportunities for independent filmmakers, possibly by dedicating one of the four channels to arts programming. The staff is also exploring the idea of airing films and programs from

the collections of museums like MoMA and the American Museum of Folk Art, and is encouraging nonprofits like the Black Filmmakers Foundation and AIVF to tell their members to submit work for broadcast. Last December, MNN started a workshop series in which a filmmaker shows his or her work, followed by a discussion on a particular filmmaking craft. Participants have included Sam Pollard and Joel Katz.

But for all MNN's achievements and the exciting possibilities Mendelsohn is working on, nothing would please him more than to have his phone start ringing with requests from independent film producers who have never booked studio or airtime. "MNN is a public access network for the arts, and the filmmaking center of the world," Mendelsohn says proudly. "Perhaps people in LA would disagree, but our belief is that we have the best artists and cultural institutions in the world. We see ourselves being a showcase for those artists and their work. I'm committed to making MNN a key player within this community." ■

A former contributing editor to The Independent, Mark J. Huisman is a Manhattan-based independent writer and producer.



Steve Mendelsohn, executive director of Manhattan Neighborhood Network.



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Puerto Rico

LIVING AND FILMING IN TECHNICOLOR

By Elisha María Miranda

I did not come here to kill. I came here to die.

— Lolita Lebrón

On March 1, 1954, Lolita Lebrón and three men entered the United States House of Representatives armed with weapons. Her fist held high and wrapped in the flag of Puerto Rico, she fired four shots towards the ceiling in defense of the independence of Puerto Rico. The shots ricocheted off the ceiling and wounded four congressmen. Lebrón was sentenced to fifty-seven years in prison for assault and conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States. She served twenty-five years of her sentence and was granted clemency by President Carter in 1979.

I begin with this description of what would certainly now, and probably in 1954, be considered a terrorist attack against the United States, not to idealize the injuring of government officials, civilians, or anyone, but to provide some context for the experiences of the Puerto Rican diaspora. Nineteen fifty-four was a seminal year. It was the year that the United States Congress decided not to grant Puerto Rico statehood. What resulted was the current nomenclature, “commonwealth,” which would obviate the United States’ obligation to report to the United Nations on its “colony,” Puerto Rico. One cannot discuss Puerto Rican filmmaking without discussing how our colonial status effects our national identity and our very complex human experience. Almost every country in Latin America has had their “golden era” of cinema, but Puerto Rico is still reach-

Historian Vincent Meno is filmed by David Gonzales (left) and Frances Negrón-Muntaner.

ing for its moment. Ironically, our relationship with the United States, being a “film mecca,” has done little for the development of a cinema that truly reflects the diversity of our stories as Puerto Ricans.

Representing la mujer

Dylcia Pagán is a filmmaker, producer, and former Puerto Rican political prisoner. As an activist for the independence of Puerto Rico, she was convicted of seditious conspiracy and spent twenty years in prison. She was grant-



ed clemency by President Clinton in 1999. In 2000, she founded Avanza Productions (AP), a Puerto Rican production company based in San Juan. AP was created to fill a need in Puerto Rico for a production company that is not only professional, but committed to effectively providing the educational and visual tools needed to promote our culture on our own terms. Its goal is to create high-quality audio and visual materials for the Puerto Rican population in Puerto Rico as well as

the US-based diaspora. “We must document our own stories, this is our legacy to our children,” says Pagán.

Pagán is no novice filmmaker. Before going to prison she was a successful television director, writer, and producer of numerous shows and documentaries for ABC and PBS. And while in prison she was the one of the subjects of the 1998 documentary, *The Double Life of Ernesto Gómez Gómez*, by Gary Weimberg and Catherine Ryan, about the son of Puerto Rican revolutionaries who was raised by a Mexican family. This moving and informative documentary follows the teenage Ernesto as he goes on a journey of self-discovery, moving from Mexico to the US to meet Dylcia Pagán, his birth mother, in prison. Weinberg was nominated as Best Director for the 2000 DGA Award. Pagán now serves as

the Puerto Rico and Latin American distributor for the film.

AP’s first project is *Mujeres N’ Women*, a documentary about five illustrious women of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party: Isabel Rosado, Blanca Canales, Doris Torresola, Carmín Pérez, and Lolita Lebrón. “The lives of these five Puerto Rican women, who were members of the Nationalist party, play a very significant role in the history of our homeland, Puerto Rico. Our interest in this project came from

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the fact that there does not exist in the documentary or film narrative format information about these heroic women," Pagán explains. And who better to make this film than Dylcia Pagán, a heroine in her own right.

For more information about Avanza Productions and *Mujeres N' Women*, e-mail: dylcia@tgpr.com.

Expanding the reel

Writer/director/producer Frances Negrón-Muntaner is following a cinema tradition of examining the complex relationship between colonialism and patriarchy for Puerto Rican women that was pioneered by Ana María García with her award-winning film *La Operación* (1982), that broke the silence about the sterilization of Puerto Rican women in the United States and in Puerto Rico. Not only was this was one of the first films directed by a female Puerto Rican filmmaker, but it also dealt with the provocative issue of patriarchy and the taboo subject of colonialism. Negrón-Muntaner continues in this tradition of confronting complex issues by expanding the dialectic to include issues of sexuality.

Puerto Rican-born and raised, Negrón-Muntaner is an artist with both an opinion and a vision. In her groundbreaking film *Brincando El Charco: Portrait of a Puerto Rican* (1994) Negrón-Muntaner created a space for Puerto Rican lesbian subjectivity in cinema. Her first film, *AIDS in the Barrio* (1989), dealt with AIDS in the Philadelphia Latino community. These two films provided a new voice for the Puerto Rican gay and lesbian experience, one that was more complex than the narrative feature simultaneously released by Puerto Rican filmmaker Rose Troches' *Go Fish* (1994). Negrón-Muntaner's body of work pushes forth a picture of a Puerto Rican queerness that is destabilized by many identities (sexuality, gender, class, skin color, national and ethnic identity, urban life, migration, and language); one that is typically absent from "white" US American cinema. "Instead

of making a film about affirmation or national or ethnic identity, I prefer to play with those categories, to question them and raise their complexities," says Negrón-Muntaner.

In 1987 she founded Polymorphous Pictures to produce narrative and documentary films about Latino-oriented subjects. As Negrón-Muntaner grows as a filmmaker, so does the landscape of her work. Polymorphous Pictures is currently producing two documentaries. The first is *State of the Territory* (working title), which is a one-hour documentary about a grassroots movement to oust the US Navy from Vieques, the small island-municipality off the coast of Puerto Rico that was used to train troops and practice bombing runs. The second, *For the Record: The Story of WWII on Guam*, tells the story of the only time in modern American history that a US territory has been occupied by a foreign army. The film focuses on how the Chamorros, the native people of Guam, remained loyal to the Americans during a brutal three-year occupation and later struggled for self-government, citizenship rights, and land. "These two documentaries reflect similar themes: the relationship between war and the acquisition of overseas territories, and the tension between civilian and military needs," explains Negrón-Muntaner.

For more info about Frances Negrón-Muntaner or Polymorphous Pictures
e-mail: bikbaporub@aol.com.

Reeling with the community

The Puerto Rican Public Broadcasting Corporation is initiating a multimedia Special Communication Project which seeks to equip local residents with radio, print, and video tools to document their surroundings and create stories that are important to local residents. Currently, the project is focusing on the towns of Caguas, Cataño, and Salinas, with hopes of expanding the project throughout Puerto Rico, where media access for low-income communities is nonexistent.

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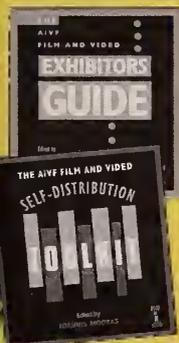


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The only other government initiative in Puerto Rico to provide media literacy and democratic communication was in the 1950's, when the Division of Community Education (DIVEDCO) tried to create a very "pull yourself up by your bootstrap" multimedia project. Launched by the reformist government of Luis Muñoz Marín of the Popular Democratic Party, DIVEDCO employed



many Puerto Rican artists, writers, and activists to mobilize rural communities by creating films about their experiences. Though the United States government was able to exploit the works that had been created, ironically, they employed many radical artists who were able to promote a political education that caused the community to question the motives of the US government. The project was eventually closed as it became increasingly radical.

But the Special Communication Project claims to have a different mission from DIVEDCO, one that seeks not only to work with the residents as subjects, but also as creators. DIVEDCO exploited their films by using them to encourage US foreign aid, development programs, and to sell Puerto Rico to potential US investors. The challenge for the Puerto Rican government will be to avoid the reformist values of DIVEDCO, and to focus on providing sustainable funding that will assist low-income communities in gaining access to the film industry while also giving them the control that will transcend the role of performer and techni-

The people of Cucharillas created *Mi Cucharillas* with the aid of Puerto Rico Public Broadcasting Corporation.

cian to that of a creator and producer.

For more information, e-mail Vanessa Valiente at vvaliente@caribe.net, or Beatriz Santiago at zarpamos@mail.ahora.net.

From technician to creator

"Puerto Rico is a place that needs to evaluate cinema and explore how the digital age can assist us in visualizing ourselves as creators and not just technicians," states filmmaker Vicente Juarbe. After a twenty-five-year career as a director of industrial videos and an assistant director for commercial films such as *Company Man*, *Contact*, *Amistad*, *Assassins*, and *Jacob's Ladder* all shot in Puerto Rico, Juarbe is ready to direct his first feature film. His true passion is to be a filmmaker that brings *Cine Sana (Healing Cinema)* to Puerto Rico. Juarbe wants to be one of those fearless independent filmmakers that not only makes films about the beautiful landscapes of Puerto Rico, but also provides a voice to the legacy of being a people-in-exile.

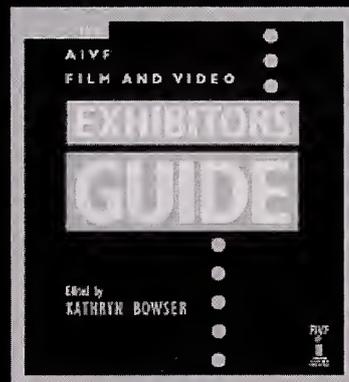
He is convinced that the only true viable way that Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico can turn their filmmaking visions into reality is through the digital medium. "Puerto Rico is a place that needs to reevaluate the way that we make films and enhance the industry here on the island through making digital films. Many filmmakers here have that one project which is never made because they are waiting for someone to give them the money. With digital filmmaking, the cost is less and we can make the stories that we want to tell," explains Juarbe. Practicing what he preaches, Juarbe picked up a Canon XL-1 and directed a ten-minute trailer of his feature script, *Tempest*, a psychological drama set during Hurricane George. Using his experience as film technician, he and other Puerto Ricans have been able to develop lighting techniques for digital film that make it more cinematic. Cine d'Exportación, Juarbe's production company, is now using the *Tempest* trailer to pitch the project to various develop-

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ment agencies in hope of actually making the film.

For more information on Vicente Juarbe or to support Cine d' Exportación, e-mail VicenteJuarbe@yahoo.com.

M&M: seeing Puerto Ricans as creators

Located in Old San Juan, M&M Projects, founded and directed by curator and producer Michelle Marxuach, is committed to creating a framework for artists that nonintrusively documents local stories. M&M features over forty-eight artists and seventeen curators from throughout Puerto Rico. Occupying a multistoried building, M&M provides a studio space, offices, exhibition space, and funded residencies. Artists funded by M&M have managed to garner screenings and exhibitions at lucrative sites throughout the world, like the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Smithsonian, and the Whitney Museum.

For more information, contact Michelle Marxuach at Michy@microjuris.com, or call (787) 722-1287.

People to watch

Resoancia PR/MEX, a new film production company launched by emerging producer Sonetchka Vélez and veteran sound mixer Antonio Betancourt, seeks to create Spanish-language films based in Puerto Rico that will put Puerto Rico on the Latin American film scene. In production on their first feature film, *El Misterio del Trinidad*, they are collaborating with producers and development executives in Mexico and throughout Latin America. "Puerto Ricans must tell our stories about colonialism. We must step up and define who we are without letting the United States stereotype our national identity. Films like these won't be readily supported in the United States—our commonwealth status makes the US and, many times, Puerto Ricans insecure about the truth," says Vélez. True to her word, Vélez did not wait for US fund-

ing, but has instead found backing for the project in Mexico.

For more information about Resoancia PR/MEX, e-mail Iliá Vélez at ijvpr@hotmail.com.

Elisha María Miranda is an unapologetic activist and filmmaker based in New York City. She is a cofounder of Chica Luna Productions.

RESOURCES

In addition to the people and organizations profiled above, there are a growing number of resources about and for Puerto Rican filmmakers in the US and in Puerto Rico:

Alternative Studio Corporation is an independent, Puerto Rican-owned production house in Puerto Rico providing cinematography and production. Company head Victor Marin is an award-winning cinematographer with independent and commercial credits. Contact Victor at (787) 753-2801 or www.alternativepr.com.

Department of Cinema (Puerto Rico) is the Puerto Rican equivalent of US municipal film offices. Contact representative Marvin Crespo at (787) 758-4747 x2254.

National Association of Latino Independent Producers' mission is to promote the advancement, development, and funding of Latino and Latina film and media arts in all genres. See the website: www.nalip.org.

National Hispanic Media Coalition is a coalition of Latino organizations that joined together to address a variety of media-related issues that affect the Latino community across the nation. Visit: www.nhmc.org.

Latino Public Broadcasting is a project of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The organization grants monies once a year for Latino-based projects: www.lpbp.org.

Latino Educational Media Center is an archive of oral histories documented in film and video about the New York Puerto Rican experience. E-mail Lemctr@aol.com.

Center for Puerto Rican Studies has an extensive library with videos and films by and about the Puerto Rican diaspora. See <http://library.hunter.cuny.edu/centro.htm>.

Las Culturamas is a website dedicated to Latino culture. It has a plethora of information about Latino film: www.Lasculturamas.com.

SPANIX is an online network for Latino film. See www.latinfilmnetwork.com.

Subcine is an artist-owned, artist-run collective of Latino-issue films and videos at www.subcine.com.

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Electric Shadows

ITVS GOES ONLINE INTERACTIVE

By Maya Churi

The screen is black. In gray letters the words: *Aftermath*, *Identity*, *Loss*, *FBI Investigation*, and *Fear* fade in and out. And then the voice of a young Muslim American woman can be heard talking about feeling as if she was under house arrest after 9/11. She was too afraid to go outside. When her story is over, the image changes to that of an older Japanese American man telling the story of first hearing about the executive order to move to the internment camps during WWII. This documentary, which connects the experiences of Japanese Americans in the early 1940's with those of Arab Americans today, may sound like an ITVS film, but it's not. It's an ITVS website.

In 2002 ITVS, which funds independently produced films and documentaries for PBS, commissioned its first two new-media projects. Under the banner *Electric Shadows*, this new initiative was launched in an effort to bring independently produced, innovative, interactive projects to the web. *Circle of Stories*, by Jillann Spitzmiller and Hank Rogerson of Philomath Films, and *Face to Face*, by Rob Mikuriya, were the first projects to delve into this new territory for ITVS.

Guided by the theme "Cultural Storytelling" and the ITVS mission to give voice to underserved communities and to foster cross-cultural understanding, the filmmakers each set out to create two different dynamic looks at their subjects. Spitzmiller and Rogerson, whose background is in cinema verité documentaries, took the opportunity to explore the vast history

Circle of Stories captures Corbin Harney, a Western Shoshone, at his healing center in Tecopa, California.

of Native American storytelling. In collaboration with the Cultural Conservancy, their project, *Circle of Stories*, focuses on four storytellers representing tribes from the north, south, east and west. The site evokes the essence of these stories through the combined use of audio, still images, and Flash. "We wanted the site to celebrate the relevancy and diversity of



Native culture," they explain. "The stories told on the site are short chapters of a continuous, ongoing matrix of stories, lessons, and teachings. This site is just a doorway into the continuum of Native experience."

Rob Mikuriya's project, *Face to Face*, takes a personal look at the experience and treatment of Japanese Americans during WWII and the treatment of Muslim and Arab Americans after September 11. The graphic layout of the images and stories encourages the viewers to make parallels between the experiences of both groups. When juxtaposed with one another, the stories

stress the similarities and differences between the two events.

"*Face to Face* was a way to place both of these traumatic events into a context that was meaningful, engaging, and accessible to a wide audience," Mikuriya says. "I felt that the emotional power of the personal stories could be combined with the interactive power of the internet to create a new kind of media experience."

The challenge for these filmmakers was to take all of their experience working in film, combine it with the ideas traditionally supported by ITVS, and apply them to the web. Spitzmiller and Rogerson, who had

never produced an interactive documentary before, found out that it wasn't as easy as they had expected. "This website endeavor was actually much harder for us to create than a film, because we were not familiar with web technology. We had many ideas and were not sure what would be possible in the format until we were into the making of it. We also had ideas that were carried out that required a lot more work than we initially thought. I guess in some ways we thought it might be easier than making a film, but in comparison, it was much more challenging."

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Though there were challenges in creating these interactive documentaries, both projects have successfully shown that when combining interactive formats with a good story, one can produce an experience just as fulfilling as watching a film. Mikuriya points out, though, that there are fundamental differences between producing a documentary for film and producing one for the web: "In the interactive environment, you have to shift your thinking from a 'linear narrative' to more of a 'database narrative.' Now the linear-narrative decisions are being made by the user from a database of material that has been produced, organized, and presented by the producer through an interface."

This difference in approach between linear and dynamic storytelling forced the filmmakers to re-examine the discipline of storytelling. Spitzmiller and Rogerson stress that, "We had to rethink how we tell stories. Instead of having a linear control over your narrative, you have to think in small pieces and how these pieces can all flow together in many different ways. Interactivity is exciting from a storytelling standpoint, and also frustrating if you're used to being able to direct the audience focus."

To bring their projects to fruition, the filmmakers worked with Second Story Interactive Studio in Portland, Oregon. Second Story had to build and design the actual experience for the audience. "Second Story understands design, interactivity, and technology, but their viewpoint is entirely story driven, so every move they make serves the purpose of creating interest in, and emotional connections to, the story being told," Mikuriya says. "It's like having the best DP, the best art director, and the best editor all working together on your film." Spitzmiller and Rogerson second that: "[For *Circle of Stories*], Second Story created the

Khaled Abou El Fadl, a law professor and Islamic scholar at UCLA, is a subject of Rob Mikuriya's *Face to Face*.

beautiful animated wheel that leads the user through the four stories. They also came up with the concept of creating a sort of slide show that plays along with the audio for each story. We



had originally envisioned this as more streaming video, but were limited by bandwidth. Ultimately, what resulted is even better than what we had imagined originally."

But no matter what interactive elements are used to create an engaging experience for the online audiences, it is the organic nature of the web that ultimately makes these projects so wonderful. The online accessibility of these interactive documentaries enables the filmmakers to reach a wide audience and get instant feedback. Mikuriya points out, "The response has been remarkably positive. It's been very encouraging and inspiring to read the comments posted on the site." Spitzmiller and Rogerson add, "The response so far has been extremely gratifying, both from Native people and the general public. We get very favorable responses from teachers who have begun to use the site in the classroom, which was one of our main goals for the site. In the end, it is very gratifying to see it all fit together. It is also very gratifying to know that these narratives are available 24/7 on the web, instead of just once a year on television." □

To view *Circle of Stories* and *Face to Face*, log on to www.itvs.org/electricshadows.

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on an interactive web story about a gated community in Texas.

Ask the Documentary Doctor

WHEN TO FACTOR THE TARGET AUDIENCE INTO YOUR FILM PROJECT

By **Fernanda Rossi**



Dear Doc Doctor:
I have shot almost everything for my documentary. How can I make it suitable for public television, and how can I get it into

their hands?

Working on commission? If not, I would suggest you follow your vision and then find an audience. Besides, making a documentary can take a very long time. By the time you are finished editing, television programming criteria will have changed.

Of course, a healthy level of “broadcast and audience awareness” is something every filmmaker should have to survive in today’s competitive market. If you think your film has a broad appeal, then your instincts about going for public television, which shows more new documentaries each season than any other network or cable outlet, is right on target. Cheryl Jones, senior director of program development and independent film at PBS, tells us, “We want documentaries that are engaging [and] at the same time they are informative and responsible towards the topic discussed or the characters portrayed. We aim for geographic and ethnic diversity as well as a fresh perspective.” It sounds like many documentaries could fit that criteria. So many that PBS receives thirty-three hundred submissions per year. You read it right, 3,300. The chances of any project getting noticed in the crowd are slim . . . to put it mildly.

But don’t despair. The Doc Doctor wouldn’t be giving you bad news with-

out some medicine. There are several ways of increasing your odds. AIVF has a program called “Annual Public Television Mentorship Sessions,” (formerly known as “Pitching to PBS”) now in its fifth consecutive successful year. Members can submit their docs to be considered for a chance to have a one-on-one interview with a PBS programming executive. Rather than competing with thousands of other projects, you

people. In addition, the PBS/CPB Producers Academy offers a series of fellowships, scholarships, and stipends “designed to identify public broadcasting’s next generation of creative talent.” For more information, see the PBS website: www.pbs.org/producers/news/overview.html.

Dear Doc Doctor:

My first documentary did pretty well, but getting my second film off the ground is becoming a real challenge. Shouldn’t it get easier with each film?

Second-time filmmakers are a rare and troubled breed. For better or worse, we all carry the baggage of our previous experiences into the present ones, and filmmaking is no excep-

You can re-edit forever, screen at festival after festival forever, and distribute forever . . . find a way to celebrate the end of each stage and move on to the next phase with renewed energy.

have narrowed the field to just a few hundred. Documentaries that PBS has picked up from these sessions include Stephanie Slewka’s documentary *On This Island* and Nancy Schiesari’s *Hansel Mieth: Vagabond Photographer*. For more details, visit AIVF’s website: www.aivf.org/resources/tips/pbssessions. This same program is offered on the West Coast by Film Arts Foundation.

Another good way to make your project stand out from the crowd is by meeting PBS programmers. Some of the best places to do this are film festivals that have PBS representatives on their panels. Even if you don’t have a doc screening at a festival, it might be worth taking a stroll around Sundance, Hot Docs, or Full Frame (formerly DoubleTake) to check their panels and shake hands with a few

filmmakers if they feel they succeeded with their first film. They often answer in a grave voice, “No, I didn’t do very well. I got into Sundance but didn’t sell for much money,” or, “I sold it internationally but didn’t make it into any major festivals.” My goodness! Sundance, international sale—if these things can’t make a filmmaker happy at least a little bit, how can they look forward to a second round of filmmaking?

As I stated in the December issue, documentary filmmaking is an exercise in Zen meditation. Of course, experience helps, but be sure you are

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letting it help you rather than discourage you. You can only work in the moment, because the variables, production and otherwise, are too vast to speculate about the past or the future. Make sure, then, that you are *done* with your previous film. You can re-edit forever, screen at festival after festival forever, and distribute forever. I

Another good way to make your project stand out is by meeting PBS programmers.

recommend you find a way to celebrate the end of each stage and move on to the next phase with renewed energy. Then choose a point in your timeline that represents the *end*, the absolute *end* of your investing of time and money in the film.

A common pitfall is to attend every single festival your film screens at, which can keep you entertained for two years or more. (Yes, there are that many festivals.) You should ask yourself: What are you getting out of each festival? Contacts for the next doc? Investors? Or the best excuse ever to procrastinate starting or finishing your second film?

Planning the life of your film beyond the cutting room, both time- and money-wise, can secure you time and money for your next film. Use this new film as an opportunity to put into practice the lessons that the previous film taught you and leave behind the sour memories. In the film business you are as wise as your last project and as successful as the project you have in your hands. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

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.

Latino Public Broadcasting

Jason Guerrasio interviews Luca Bentivoglio

What is Latino Public Broadcasting?

Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB) is a nonprofit organization that funds the development, production, postproduction, and acquisition of programming with educational and cultural contexts addressing the Latino voice in the United States. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) funds us, which means the programs we look for are ones that can be broadcast on public television.

When and why did it start?

It started in 1998 to 1999, and it started because there was another organization prior to LPB called National Latino Communication Center (NLCC) that lost their funding. CPB looked for a new group to give the funding to, so they opened it up for various organizations to bid. Edward James Olmos, chairman of LPB, presented his case and got the funding. He put an executive director in place named Marlene Dermer, and that's how the organization started. It's been quite successful in the short time it's been operating.

What's the mission of LPB?

Latino Public Broadcasting supports the representation of Latino people and addresses issues of particular interest to Latino Americans.

How many projects do you fund on average each year?

About ten to fifteen get funded.

The Flores family, from Kartemquin Films' *The New Americans*.

Are there any deadlines producers need to be aware of?

We are going into our fifth open call this year, which is on June 2, 2003. It's always in June.

What is the average size of a grant?

[The total funding] is about \$600,000 for ten to fifteen projects. The cap for each project is \$100,000, and the minimum is

applications each year from all over the nation.

What types of projects do you seek?

Obviously all Latino producers are welcome, but if you're a non-Latino producer that has an idea that is connected to something with a Latino-based theme, we are interested in that project too. We would always suggest to team up with other Latinos, because our mission is to support Latino independent filmmakers and Latino themes.

Take me through the review process.

The proposals go through a first set



\$5,000. In the past two years, we haven't given anything over \$75,000 to one film. Our grant is ideal for a project looking for beginning or finishing funds.

How many submissions do you receive annually?

We get an average of one hundred

of panelists where sixty get eliminated. Then they go through a second panel which reads all the proposals for two days and then they choose who the grants are given to. The panel is made up of programming executives from PBS, local stations, film professors, funder organization

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members—we try to have a good rainbow of people who understand public television. We fund development, we fund production, and we fund completion. We are one of the few organizations where you can get initial funding, and some of our projects have gone on to bigger organizations to get the rest of the money. We have seeded some good projects.

Can applicants re-apply if denied?

Yes. We are good at feedback. I always encourage filmmakers who are denied to come back to us to get the feedback. We keep track of all the panel comments. We actually record everything that was said at the panel. This has been successful. Some [applicants have reapplied and] have eventually gotten funding.

Latino Public Broadcasting

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www.lpbp.org

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Luca Bentivoglio, *executive director*

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The Slate:

Mixed Feelings, producer Phillip Rodriguez, PBS

The New Americans, producer Gita Saedi, PBS this fall

Foto Novelas, producer Carlos Avila, PBS this fall

Matters of Race, producer Orlando Bagwell, PBS this fall

The Blue Diner, producer Natatcha Estebanez, PBS this fall

Colorvision, producer Marc Johnson, PBS this fall

Visiones: Latino Art and Culture, producer Hector Galan, PBS this fall



What types of projects would LPB definitely not fund?

We're pretty open as long as there's a connection to our mission. It has to be driven toward the Latino reality in the United States.

Other than the open call, does LPB have any other calls for projects during the year?

If you're a successful producer with a finished project committed to airing on PBS but you need, for example, money for your outreach campaign, we'll consider that. These are special circumstances for projects that have been pre-approved and already scheduled to go on PBS.

How do you prefer producers submit projects to you?

Through the open call. Filmmakers can find out the specifics on our website, www.lpbp.org.

Are there any restrictions?

No student films; you have to be an American resident; it has to be done by a domestic company; and it has to be

Carlos Avila's *Foto Novelas* is an anthology series that utilizes fantasy, magical realism, and science fiction to tell Latino stories with human and social themes.

within the parameters of what is accepted on public television. You have to watch PBS and understand what they're looking for—social-oriented issues, educational, cultural. We're not talking about *OZ* or *The Sopranos*; that wouldn't work on public television.

What has been the distribution/exhibition path of past projects?

The filmmakers own the rights to the film. For four years the program will run six times on PBS. Of course it has to be accepted by PBS first, but PBS hasn't denied any of our projects yet. If it doesn't get on PBS or any other public television station, then it goes back to the filmmaker and they can do whatever they want with it.

What advice do you have for producers in putting forth a strong application or proposal?

I always hope that the producers aren't just looking for the funds but are actually interested in putting forward a project that they believe in and they have passion in. They should know exactly who their audience is and who they are targeting, because it may not be a national story and we may have to market it geographically. They should always be aware of who they are telling the story to, and it's important to know the PBS world, what they are looking for, and if the story has already been told.

What's the most common mistake producers make when they apply?

One is not knowing the market, coming in with a violent, sexy script—that just doesn't work for public television. Two is not having done your homework properly. You really have to check out our website, read the guidelines, attend the workshops we run, and if all else fails, talk to us. We're here to help producers. ■

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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Rotterdam and Berlin

THE LAUREL AND HARDY OF WINTER EUROPEAN FESTIVALS

By Mark Rabinowitz

Coming hot on the heels of the Sundance Film Festival, the one-two punch of the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) and the Berlin Film Festival denotes the beginning of Europe's annual film festival calendar. As IFFR also overlaps with world-class festivals in Budapest and Göteborg, the four weeks between mid-January and mid-February constitute five major film festivals screening thousands of films, in addition to the CineMart coproduc-

tion market at the IFFR and the European Film Market in Berlin. All of this can make a filmmaker, festival programmer, or journalist quite dizzy in the head, not to mention exhausted, walled, and perpetually hung over. For three out of the past four years I have done the Rotterdam and Berlin double and found them to be two of the most interesting, best run, and mind-bogglingly large film events of the year. Each screens between three and

four hundred titles, including those at the EFM, and sells tickets to hundreds of thousands of locals and international attendees. While there are a number of similarities between these two behemoths, there are a large number of marked differences as well.

Come on in and have some bitterballen, young man

Despite selling over 350,000 tickets this year, the IFFR continues to put forth the image of a quaint regional

that greets those who neglect to make reservations: "I'm sorry. This one is sold out." But festival trip planners take note: Even if a screening is sold out, thirty percent of the tickets are reserved for sale on the day of the screening on a first-come, first-served basis. A novel idea upholding the laws of K.I.S.S. (Keep it Simple, Stupid).

The IFFR is a mix of the old and the new, and while one can always count on the opportunity to see the latest offerings from around the world, Rotterdam also often showcases some of the better American films from the past year, including Paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love*, Miguel Arteta's bittersweet *The Good Girl*, and Todd Haynes' masterful Douglas Sirk homage, *Far From Heaven*. There is also the chance to catch newer films from some of the festival's Filmmakers in Focus—highlighting the works of daring and innovative directors, previous tribute recipients were Stan Brakhage, Goran Markovich, Alexandr Sokurov, and Catherine Breillat—which this year included Indian director Girish Kasaravalli with *Dweepa (The Island)*, Jean-Claude Brisseau of France with *Choses Secrètes*, and Canadian filmmaker Guy Maddin, whose brilliant *Dracula: Pages From a Virgin's Diary* was my personal discovery.

I call the work my personal discovery because honestly, I had no idea what to expect going in and emerged bedazzled, much like I was last year after seeing two and a half hours of Peter Watkins' exceptional 345-minute epic pseudo-documentary *La Commune (Paris, 1871)*. But that's another (longer!) story. *Dracula* was produced for Canadian television in 2001 and is a silent film adaptation of Bram Stoker's legendary novel. The kicker? It's shot in black-and-white (though often tinted) and is performed by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet set to the music of Gustav Mahler. An



event couched in the guise of a major international event. That is to say, it's quite easy to attend Rotterdam and not feel overwhelmed. Festival staff and locals couldn't be nicer or more accommodating to guests, and the ticketing scheme is both advanced and simple—a feat all too infrequently achieved (or attempted) at other fêtes. For both the general public and guests of the festival, the IFFR's website allows one to reserve tickets in advance, thereby avoiding the almost constant refrain

This Page: Girish Kasaravalli's *Dweepa*. Facing Page: Park Chan-Ok's *Jealousy Is My Middle Name*.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE AND FACING, COURTESY OF IFFR



entire cultural feast in one fell swoop. It may in fact come closer in tone to Stoker's novel than any previous effort, addressing many of the themes prevalent in *fin de siècle* English life: the rise in immigration and approaching racial integration, as well as the overt sexuality of the story. Stunningly beautiful and engaging, I strongly advise rushing to see it when Zeitgeist releases it later this year.

As far as distributor activity and acquisitions go, while the new films (twenty-six world premieres) that screen at the festival and the much heralded CineMart attract some attention from distributors, many of the US-based mini-majors have not yet added the IFFR to their schedule, yet—although they would be wise to do so. Distributors that regularly attend the IFFR include Palm Pictures, Attitude Films, Roxie Releasing, Strand Releasing, and Artistic License, but wherefore art thou UA, Sony Pictures Classics, Paramount Classics, IDP, and Miramax? Had they graced the event they might have had the opportunity to snap up festival hit *Nói Albinói*, by Icelandic filmmaker Dagur Kári (Palm closed a deal on this one in Berlin after seeing it in Rotterdam), Park Chan-ok's South Korean international premiere

Jealousy Is My Middle Name, Eliane Caffé's Brazilian/French world premiere *The Story Tellers*, and Larisa Sadilova's international premiere, *With Love, Lilya* (Russia). All received favorable word-of-mouth at the festival, and two (*Jealousy* and *Lilya*) garnered Golden Tiger awards. The third Tiger winner was Santiago Losa's *Extraño*, from Argentina.

Park's *Jealousy* is a subtle and darkly humorous take on delicate subject matter which Park treats with an assured style and the care and attention to detail that many far more experienced directors often lack. Not only is Park a first-time filmmaker, but as a woman, she looks poised to make inroads in what is traditionally a man's world, that of directing in Asian cinema. The film revolves around Weon-sang, a shy journalist who applies for a full-time position at a magazine where he knows that the married man who stole his last girlfriend will be his boss. Strangely, Weon-Sang becomes friendly with this man, known only as The Editor, even when Weon-Sang's new girlfriend, a photographer/veterinary surgeon who shoots for the magazine, falls prey to The Editor's smooth-talking ways. The question that emerges is: Is Weon-Sang really just a doormat after all? The answer comes at the very last moment of the film, and it's one definitely worth waiting for.

Azazel Jacobs's *Nobody Needs to Know* was one of the few US entries to have its world premiere at the IFFR this year. Let me say up front that I went to summer camp with the director, but that didn't color my thinking about the film. I mean, I went to camp with Ben Affleck too, but that doesn't stop me from taking pot shots at him when he deserves it. *Nobody* is an original and ambitious black-and-white DV picture, loosely structured around a portrait of Iris, a young actress at a crossroads in her life. The film is well structured and original, and is a cut above most of the self-referential

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“movies about movies” out there. Tricia Vessey (*Ghost Dog: Way of the Samurai, Trouble Every Day*) plays Iris so well, with an almost preternatural self-awareness, that when she finally decides to chuck acting, it’s as if a fog has lifted from our eyes, as well as her own. Interwoven with Iris’ story are several clips of actresses auditioning for a director by portraying their own death. Matt Borrum as the on-screen director slowly unravels while watching an endless parade of abysmal auditions, and it’s a sadistic treat for the audience. Compounding his frustration is the fact that the actress he wants to cast is Iris, whom he saw briefly before she had her epiphany

and walked out before auditioning.

Nicole, George, and all that jazz

In counterpoint to the IFFR, the Berlinale is often chock-a-block with glamorous European stars and galas showcasing the latest American studio fare, including this year: *Chicago, Solaris, Confessions of a Dangerous Mind, Gangs of New York*, and *25th Hour*. In reality, it is simply unfair to compare the two. Berlin refuses films that have screened in Europe, while Rotterdam concerns itself only with whether or not a film is interesting, thought provoking, and hasn’t played in The Netherlands.

One of Berlin’s great attractions is

the European Film Market (EFM). Basically doubling the amount of films available for viewing (and increasing the number of screenings of some of the films in the festival proper), the EFM is often credited as having more quality films than the overall festival. Whether or not that is a fair judgment, the fact remains that the EFM is a primo place to catch what’s coming down the pike, since many films that do not have distribution outside of their own territories add extra screenings at the EFM. The hottest of these films at this year’s market was Andrew Lau and Alan Mak’s *Infernal Affairs*. While Warner Brothers announced that a Brad Pitt-produced remake is in the works, North American rights were still available at the Berlinale, and distributors were circling. The film is a taught, slick Hong Kong suspense film that had its US premiere at March’s New Directors/New Films series.

Fresh from its world premiere at Sundance was the European bow of Oliver Stone’s HBO documentary biography of Fidel Castro, *Comandante*. An intimate and illuminating portrait of one of the most enigmatic and under-documented leaders of the past half-century, the film is a record of a three-day conversation between Castro and Stone, with Stone taking an active role in the proceedings. At the start of the film, Stone informs his camera crew that both Castro and the director have the power to call “cut” at any time. But even in the face of some rather personal questions, Castro does not exercise this right, instead he uses his masterful speaking abilities to dance around any question he doesn’t feel like answering. In fact, those moments are more rare than one would expect, given Castro’s reputation for playing it close to the vest.

Stone gets close to Castro in a way that has rarely, if ever, been shown on

Jean-Claude Brisseau’s *Choses Secrètes*.

American television. Several filmmakers including Saul Landau (*Fidel*, 1969) and Estela Bravo (*Fidel*, 2002) have made intimate portraits of the leader and, to be honest, if all three films could be edited together, we'd have one fantastic film. While Bravo's film has been accused of glossing over some of the negatives of Castro's regime (the Revolution's treatment of homosexuals, for example) it does go into detail of Cuba's contribution to the end of Apartheid, a fact that is mentioned in Stone's film but almost tangentially. One interesting note is that despite the animosity between the two countries, the United States is omnipresent in Cuba just as it is in other parts of the world. When Castro explains to Stone how he exercises in his office, Stone's camera lets us see that Castro no longer wears combat boots with his fatigues, but instead is wearing Nikes!

A tale of two cities, and one underrepresented country

If the IFFR's rate of acceptance for new American films is anything to go by, young American filmmakers have a lot of work to do. I spoke with a member of the festival's selection committee who indicated that out of the hundreds of submissions received from the US, they regularly accept fewer than four films each year. A quick glance at this year's lineup confirms that estimate. Looking at the Berlinale, the Forum section has quite a few US entries, but as it is described on the Berlinale's website, the Forum is "an independent section of the Berlin International Film Festival dedicated to innovative and experimental cinema." For US narratives, Berlin is as limited as the IFFR, with the Panorama and Competition sections being more open to that style. Unfortunately for Americans, this year's Panorama section, described as being "dedicated primarily to arthouse films and films directed by their authors," contained

a whopping two US fiction films: Brad Silberling's *Moonlight Mile* (released by Touchstone in the US and starring Dustin Hoffman, Susan Sarandon, and Jake Gyllenhaal) and *Party Monster*, Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato's widely reviled Sundance entry.

There are several possible reasons for this paucity of US representation at the IFFR and Berlinale; I suspect it is a combination of all of the following:

First, the US produces more films per year than any country except India, and most of them are pretty much lousy. European festival programmers are, rightly, resisting the hegemony of American films over those from the rest of the world.

And second, the independent film industries outside of the US are producing more and more quality product, giving programmers and distributors a larger slate of exemplary product from which to choose. (For example, in the past ten years, there have been fifty-one films, according to the IMDB, financed fully or partly from within Iceland. In the ten years prior to that, there were only twenty-nine, and in the ten years prior to that, only twelve. In the 1970's—one.)

While Berlin has something of the feel of a high-falutin' glitz-o-rama, Rotterdam is much more welcoming and congenial in attitude. It may well be a cultural difference between the Dutch and the Germans (I'll leave it for you to figure out what I mean by that), but it's as if Berlin is the rather stern but loving uncle who smells of disinfectant and sausage that you like to see but only for a limited time, while Rotterdam is the favorite great aunt who always sneaks you candies when your mother isn't looking and tends to get a bit too deep into the sherry after dinner when she thinks no one is paying attention. ■

Mark Rabinowitz is the cofounder of indieWIRE.com, a freelance journalist, and industry liaison for the Hamptons International Film Festival.

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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Gigantic

Dir. A.J. Schnack
(Cowboy Pictures, May 23)

Since the early 1980's, the Brooklyn-based performance art/music duo John Flansburgh and John Linnell have blazed trails through the music industry with an uncompromising independent style. By becoming masters of low-budget music videos, bizarre live performances, and an

done music for *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, and the opening theme to *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*. Grammy winners and recognized the world over, it was time to tell the story of how the two Johns made it big but stayed small.

A.J. Schnack had just come off a well-received short film, *Might as Well Be Swing*, when over drinks one night he told Flansburgh that he wanted to do a documentary on TMBG. "I think



answering machine (known as Dial-a-song, a phone service that features new songs, updated daily, by the Johns) the two have gradually become cult icons. Better known as They Might Be Giants (TMBG), the two Johns left their comfortable East Village scene for mainstream popularity when they signed on with Electra Records and the duo went global, eventually morphing from duet to quartet then sextet. They have since written and recorded the opening song to TV's *Malcolm in the Middle*,

he thought I was drunk," Schnack remembers. "But then I basically was persistent about it for a couple of weeks and they said yes."

Shot over six months in 2001, the documentary is as funny and unusual as the band itself, with animation, celebrities quoting TMBG lyrics, and concert footage. "We really didn't use anyone as a guide," says Schnack about past rockumentaries, "but used all of them from the cinema verité style of Pennebaker to the comedy elements of *Spinal Tap*."

Spellbound

Dir. Jeffery Blitz
(ThinkFilm, May 30)

This hilarious documentary follows the journey of eight kids to the 1999 National Spelling Bee. If you think watching a doc about a spelling bee isn't the most entertaining way to spend ninety minutes, think again. You'll cringe watching how far some parents will go to prepare their kids, and laugh hysterically at moments you'd never believe were true if you hadn't seen them with your own eyes. The film has taken Best Documentary honors at numerous film festivals, including South by Southwest, and was nominated for an Academy award.

Washington Heights

Dir. Alfredo de Villa
(MCA Releasing, May 9)

Fueled by a desire to leave "the heights," graphic artist Carlos (Manny Perez) works day and night to perfect his illustrations in hopes of one day getting into the comic book business. But after his father (Tomas Milian) is shot during a robbery at his bodega, Carlos must put his dreams on hold to run the bodega. In the process, Carlos becomes closer to his father and realizes the importance of family.

Owning Mahowny

Dir. Richard Kwietniowski
(Sony Pictures Classics, May 2)

In one of the most bewildering tales in casino history, mild-mannered assistant bank manager Dan Mahowny (Philip Seymour Hoffman) briefly had at his beck-and-call casinos in Las Vegas and Atlantic City. In deep to his bookmaker, Mahowny began siphoning bank funds to pay off his debts and feed his gambling addiction. Pulling all-nighters on the bank's dime at the most luxurious casinos, he was treated as a high roller, though in real life he

Above: John Flansburgh (left) and John Linnell of They Might Be Giants. Facing Page: Filmmaker Charles Guggenheim on location in eastern Germany.



didn't even have enough money to fill his gas tank. When he is finally caught after losing \$10.2 million of the bank's money, Mahowny's only reply is: "I'm not a gambling addict."

Dracula: Pages From a Virgin's Diary
Dir. Guy Maddin
(Zeitgeist Films, May 14)

Substituting dialogue for ballet and song, director Guy Maddin creates one of the most aesthetic versions of Bram Stoker's masterpiece. Shot entirely in black-and-white (except for the blood), the film has the look of a 1920's silent film filled with old-fashioned text boxes and an orchestrated score. The night-crawling Transylvanian continues his blood-sucking ways, but with the performances by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, it's done with elegance and grace.

Television

Berga: Soldiers of Another War
Dir. Charles Guggenheim
(PBS; check local listings)

A leg infection made it impossible for Charles Guggenheim to fight with the rest of his comrades at the Battle of the Bulge, though he later realized the injury probably saved his life.

Decades after World War II he decided to look up one of his buddies from the 106th division only to find out he had died as a POW working in a German salt mine. Guggenheim discovered that when US soldiers

captured after the Battle of the Bulge were sent to a POW camp, the Jewish soldiers (and soldiers who had names that sounded Jewish, or soldiers who just looked Jewish) were split from the rest of the POW's. These

men were sent to Berga to dig tunnels in salt mines for the Nazis. "The perspective of World War II was that [Americans] were OK; that this only happened to other people," says Guggenheim's daughter Grace, who produced *Berga*. "Finding out those who were Jews were actually isolated and then sent to the slave labor camp really hit home for [Charles], because he himself was Jewish."

This intense documentary is the final chapter in Charles Guggenheim's honored career. He passed away six weeks after the film was finished, but his career can be summed up by his epilogue at the end of *Berga*: "There are millions of stories that have never been told and deserve to be, we should remember that."

Hansel Meith: Vagabond Photographer

Dir. Nancy Schiesari
(ITVS; Independent Lens, May 27)

Hansel Meith spent her whole life with camera in hand, recording what was going on around her. Meith's photographs of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and Japanese internment camps during World War II show the human condition at its bleakest and its most grand. This documentary records her legacy from being a German immigrant trying to get by to becoming the first female staff photographer for *LIFE* magazine. ■

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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Independents and PBS

FINDING FUNDING AND AIRTIME

By Jana Germano

The storm clouds gathering on public television's fiscal horizon, brought on by President Bush's 2003 proposed budget for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, have passed for the moment. After intense lobbying from public television supporters, Congress cut CPB's 2003 budget by 0.65 percent instead of the expected three percent. But, even though the cuts weren't as extensive as everyone feared, "2004 is still completely up in the air," according to John Wilson, PBS senior vice president and co-chief program executive. Public television also still faces the unprecedented strain of tackling its federal obligation to convert to digital broadcasting by May of this year—which will cost \$1.8 billion. As of press time, one hundred stations have switched over. The threat of tightening federal funds carries with it the fear of shrinking production funds—making matters worse for independents.

PBS, a membership organization of public television stations, relies heavily on the public monies it receives through CPB, which is a private grant-making entity that Congress created in 1967 to finance the development of educational and cultural programs. It remains the largest single source of funds for PBS. This means when CPB's budget gets cut, so does everybody else's.

Public television heavyweight Bill Moyers warned the PBS board last year that "There is a danger in impoverishing independent producers who provide the diverse voices that fill seventy-five percent of public television's broadcast hours." Bill Moyers, long a committed supporter of independents, works with a number of independent producers on *NOW with Bill Moyers* and, therefore, doesn't use a large in-house staff.

Productions with independent involvement make up the majority of the original programming PBS broadcasts. But it is the very definition of the term "independent" that has historically caused conflict between the independent community and the public broadcast entities. Both PBS and CPB often count anyone who is not salaried by the station as an independent, including filmmakers who have coproduc-

tions with local stations or strands, or foreign production involvement. This inflates the number of independent productions that can be claimed. CPB's records indicate that of the forty-five television, web, and digital programming projects it supported in fiscal year 2001, twenty-eight of them (or sixty-two percent) were produced by independents. But many independents prefer to define themselves as producers of their own stand-alone films, not programs where the final creative authority rests with a staff producer who must make the production fit within the tight framework and identity of a PBS strand. The accusation is that working for these strands often becomes more of a work-for-hire situation than an environment where independent views or projects are created. Sally Jo Fifer, executive director of ITVS (Independent Television Service) believes, "It's important to see all types of independents as having important roles in public television. There's room for everybody."

In the 1980's, critics attacked PBS on exactly these grounds, protesting that the broadcaster wasn't fulfilling its mission to sustain diverse and underrepresented voices. Throughout the decade, the independent production community, through a national coalition led by AIVE, rallied advocates to convince Congress that funds for producers working independently of public TV stations were significantly fewer than the fifty percent or so of the programming funds claimed by CPB, which they were legally bound to provide. According to the 1978 Telecommunications Act, CPB was required to allocate a "substantial" amount of their programming funds to independent producers. A committee report eventually defined "substantial" as no fewer than fifty percent. It was from this struggle that Congress, in 1988, created an "independent production service," which eventually became ITVS, as a separate fund to ensure that CPB would financially support independent producers and give them the access to the public television system that they'd been lacking.

Many in the independent community believe that the language in the 1978 act still stands, and that CPB is mandated by Congress to spend at least fifty percent of their

production budget on independents through ITVS. In fact, the 1988 act overrides the previous laws. The wording in the Public Telecommunications Act of 1988 does not use the word “substantial.” Instead it requires CPB to provide “adequate funds” for independent productions. In fact, ITVS received its first significant increase in funding in 2002. In 1992, CPB was further directed to keep Congress “fully apprised” of ITVS’s progress in fulfilling this rather vague requirement, according to the office of one of the champions of independents in Congress, US Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), co-author of the 1992 Telecommunications Act. “I will fully support efforts to secure funding for those independent producers,” says Markey, “who celebrate our rich cultural diversity.”

ITVS remains an essential part of the independent public television landscape. “I think that we’ve done a very good job of showing the system and the programmers and

tendency to “fund things that are pretty marginal in terms of who’s going to watch them. If things are a bit mainstream, there’s a feeling that they’ll get funding somewhere else.”

With as much clout as ITVS now has, and operating with a budget of \$9.5 million in fiscal year 2003, there is still no guarantee of final broadcast of their projects on PBS. ITVS funds fewer than five percent of the proposals it receives, and only about fifteen to eighteen of their projects air each year on NPS and PBS Plus. However, through the program *Independent Lens*, which is now jointly curated by PBS and ITVS, there will be more ITVS programs shown this year.

Outside of ITVS, public television acquisition fees usually don’t come close to covering the production cost—on average, PBS contributes only twenty-four percent of the production cost of a program.

Take, for example, the two steadfast gateways for independents into the PBS world—*P.O.V.* and *Independent Lens*.



CPB that ITVS is important for bringing diverse programming to the public,” says ITVS’s Fifer. But independent producers are only one of the three masters ITVS was created to serve, the other two being the public television system itself and its audience. As demographics change and public television has to compete for new audiences, PBS has become an ally to ITVS. As Wilson says, independent films are “another great avenue for viewers to come to PBS who might not check us out otherwise.”

John De Graaf, an independent affiliated with KCTS in Seattle, has had more than fifteen of his programs broadcast nationally on primetime PBS over the past twenty-five years, including the popular documentary *Affluenza*. He sees a problem in what ITVS ends up funding—believing that there is a

Recently expanded to twenty-nine primetime episodes a year, *Independent Lens*, combined with *P.O.V.*, provide a year-round presence for independents on PBS. Both series remain platforms for truly independent, non-series films. And, unlike films accepted into the *American Masters* and *American Experience* strands, for example, their films do not have to adhere to a tightly bound format.

In keeping with the true spirit of independents—particularly those who take pride in working outside the system—ten of the fourteen shows on *Independent Lens*’s opening slate this spring were either found at festivals or submitted during last year’s call for submissions. “The series is meant to be a service to producers that didn’t get ITVS or public television funding,” says Claire Aguilar, director of programming at ITVS.

However, *Independent Lens* offers only a \$20,000 acquisition fee for films that were produced without ITVS, Minority Consortia, or other public television funding.

Patricia Flynn’s documentary *Discovering Dominga*, which airs this season as part of *P.O.V.*’s Diverse Voices project, charts the journey of Iowan Denese Becker (shown right, with photo of father) back to her family roots in Guatemala.

Films that receive funds through a public broadcasting source (including ITVS) are automatically licensed to PBS for a designated time period and receive no additional fees.

P.O.V. also prides itself on reaching out to filmmakers who haven't accessed public television funding. As Cara Mertes, *P.O.V.*'s executive producer, says, "We're constantly bringing in first-time filmmakers or established filmmakers who haven't worked with or been on PBS before."

Their emerging minority filmmakers' Diverse Voices project is an example of *P.O.V.*'s move towards the coproduction of films. The five projects selected last season each received up to \$80,000 for a show-hour in coproduction funding, which certainly beats *P.O.V.*'s base acquisition rate of about \$30,000 for an hour-long show. Now *P.O.V.* can "invest at a higher level and an earlier stage and offer mentoring and training possibilities," says Mertes. Last year, however, *P.O.V.*, which is produced by American Documentary, a nonprofit organization separate from PBS, had its multi-year funding cut back to single-year funding, which Mertes hopes is a temporary situation.

Not surprisingly, a funding highlight for independents comes from ITVS. Beyond its open call program, which provides completion funds, ITVS has found a successful way for independents to copartner with their local or regional public television stations through its Local Independents Collaborating with Stations (LInCS) program. Through LInCS, producers work directly with the stations, have access to station resources such as production and postproduction services, fundraising and promotion expertise, and learn how the public television system works. Now in its seventh year, LInCS provides the independent with up to \$75,000 cash, which is matched either by station in-kind or other sources such as grant or foundation money. This copartnership is especially important because the majority of CPB funds go directly to the 350 local television stations and, as a membership organization, PBS gets most of its funds from dues paid by its member stations, for which it provides the service of packaging programming. It brings to the public tele-

vision stations, "a diversity of producers who haven't had lots of experience and who get their first entrée into public television," notes Lois Vossen, *Independent Lens* producer and director of broadcast distribution and communications at ITVS. It also provides an opportunity for both parties to produce and present diverse programming.

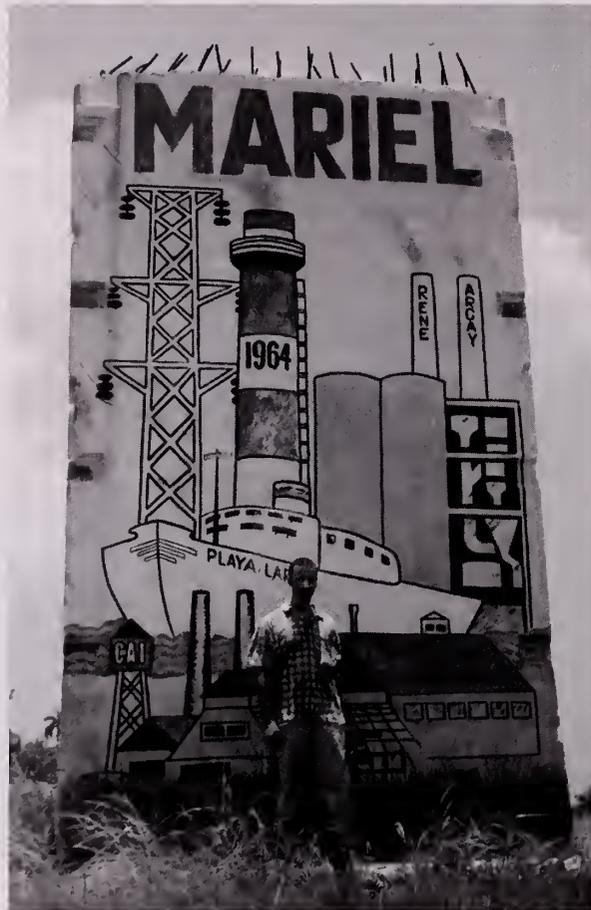
The majority of content on PBS is produced by individual television stations. And even though 171 of all the stations are set up to supply programming to PBS, in 2001,

thirty-seven percent of PBS's total broadcast hours were produced or presented by three stations—WNET in New York, WGBH in Boston, and WETA in Washington, DC. These big producing stations are very important to PBS because of the large amount of revenue they bring in and because they provide "anchor" programming, such as *Frontline*, *Exxon-Mobile Masterpiece Theater*, and *Nature*. Of the remaining licensees, forty-nine produced or presented some programs in 2001, and some have their own local independent showcases.

So what's the solution for independents in search of production funding for projects bound for PBS? "I think that it's terribly hard to get independent funding, and the funding doesn't come from public television. I think that the future for socially engaged

documentary involves partnerships with nonprofits," says professor Pat Aufderheide, director of American University's Center for Social Media. But she also points out that these are difficult times due to shrinking funding sources caused by a recession, the federal government's "hostility to nonprofits," and declining federal funds for film-funding agencies.

With their funding sources dwindling, independents seeking alternative funding also face another challenge—PBS underwriting guidelines that sometimes turn away independent filmmakers whose funding and support comes from restricted sources, such as public-interest and labor groups. "We try to apply this rule even-handedly," says PBS's



Juan Carlos Zaldivar's *90 Miles* is a personal memoir offering a glimpse into Cuba. It will air on *P.O.V.* in July.

John Wilson, “but sometimes it has the unintended consequences of keeping good films off the air. But I think that’s the price we have to pay as a non-commercial public service broadcaster.”

There is a belief that PBS enforces these guidelines more strictly for groups such as unions more than they do for corporations. “PBS guidelines are selectively applied,” says Danny Schechter, an independent television producer and filmmaker whose most recent documentary, *Globalization and Human Rights*, was shown on PBS nationally. “If it’s a show funded by Wall Street, that’s ‘not a conflict.’ If it’s a show about union history and a labor group is involved—that’s a ‘conflict of interest.’ Don’t forget, this is *public* broadcasting—this is supposed to represent, to some degree, what’s excluded from the commercial spectrum, not duplicate it.”

And many of these groups are exactly the ones that have the commitment to support independent films. Although these guidelines have been relaxed over the years, some say they still undermine one of PBS’s stated missions—to “treat complex social issues completely.” As Jerry Starr, executive director of Citizens for Independent Public Broadcasting, sees it, “There is, in our view, a form of de facto censorship of films that address social problems. It has really cut out a lot of filmmakers who would make social films.”

PBS requires full funding disclosure from *P.O.V.*, *Independent Lens*, and ITVS, since many shows come to them with some funding already in place. “Often the people giving money are interested in that content, for some reason,” says ITVS’s Vossen. “But there’s a difference between supporting a media project because you’re interested in content, and having editorial control over that project.”

But regardless of funding sources, finding a slot within the public broadcasting system that allows an independent editorial control over their own project is a challenge. The increase of common carriage hours, most of which are given to major programming strands or limited series, means shrinking airtime for one-offs, or stand-alone films. This also means it will be even harder for many independents to find funding, because funders want to know that the film is going to get on the air.

PBS Strands that Work with Independents

Compiled by Jason Guerrasio

American Experience (accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/amex

American Masters (accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/americanmasters

Egg: The Arts Show (assigns pieces, accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/egg

Frontline and Frontline/World (accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/frontlineworld

Great Performances (accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/gperf

Independent Lens (accepts completed films) www.pbs.org/independentlens

Nature (accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/nature

NOVA (assigns pieces, accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/nova

P.O.V. (accepts completed films) www.pov.org

Wide Angle (assigns pieces, accepts pitches) www.pbs.org/wideangle

For more information, log on to the AIVF website www.aivf.org/independent/pbs_strands.html

Historically, ITVS programs have rarely made it onto the major programming strands. But both Vossen and Aguilar see the ever-increasing common carriage hours as a double-edged sword. “In the early years, the fact that there wasn’t as much common carriage meant that programmers had more mobility in their schedules, which was a lifesaver for us at ITVS,” says Vossen. “We’d work directly with [local] programmers who would take our shows when PBS didn’t. But now that we have a series, we want all these independents to be on common carriage and to get maximum exposure so we can do national public relations for them.”

The flip side of the increase in common carriage and decrease in one-offs is that, according to Aguilar, “it takes away some of the autonomy from programmers and local shows which are produced by independents.”

Not many of the stations are very anxious to fund one-offs either, because it’s hard to attract attention to them, and time-consuming to negotiate when they could simply buy one of the programming packages. “It’s getting harder to get one-offs into even a 10:00 p.m. time slot, and although funders aren’t insistent about being on the core,” says De Graaf, “they do want to know that the film they’re investing in is going to get on the air.”

As technology, media competition, and a tenuous fiscal and political climate all converge to place more pressure on public television, it remains to be seen what kind of funding partnership independents and PBS will continue to forge. Even with the addition of *Independent Lens*, the tension between some in the independent community and PBS will most likely continue. The competition for diminishing funds means that the odds are still against getting an independent film even partially funded by public television. But with all its perceived shortcomings, now, more than ever, public television is vital to independent producers. As the Center for Social Media’s Aufderheide notes, “There’s no other place to either nurture or showcase independent production that doesn’t fall into certain very narrow categories—and that means that it can never do enough.” ■

Jana Germano is a freelance writer covering film and media issues.

Views from the Hill

KEY POLITICIANS ON PUBLIC BROADCASTING

By Charlie Sweitzer

When President Johnson signed the 1967 act that created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and, in effect, public television, he declared that this new broadcasting “will be free, and it will be independent—and it will belong to all of our people.” Over the years, a variety of elected officials have altered the course of CPB. Some, like Alaska’s Senator Ted Stevens, have been instrumental in securing advance funding for CPB and promoting a variety of PBS initiatives. Others, like Newt Gingrich, have argued to eliminate it completely. What follows is a highly selective sampling of today’s politicians who in some way are leaving their marks on public television.

For more info on what your own Congressmen and Congresswomen are doing, visit www.house.gov or www.senate.gov.

Senators

Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY)

Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee; Budget Committee; Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee



As co-chair of the Rural Education Caucus, Sen. Enzi has worked with public broadcasters and rural schools. Sen. Enzi also supported digital transition funding for rural public television stations.

<http://enzi.senate.gov>; senator@enzi.senator.gov

Senator John McCain (R-AZ)

Ranking member, Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee



McCain is one of public television’s most vocal critics, which he has called “boring” and a “black hole,” arguing that cable channels offer better educational programming.

<http://mccain.senate.gov>

To e-mail Sen. McCain, visit:

<http://mccain.senate.gov>

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee; Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee; Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee; Appropriations Committee



Like Sen. Stevens, Sen. Harkin is known for his support of rural initiatives. He was recently instrumental in securing digital conversion funding for public television stations servicing rural communities.

<http://harkin.senate.gov>; tom_harkin@harkin.senate.gov

Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA)

Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee



Sen. Specter serves on the Education Appropriations Subcommittee with Sen. Harkin and shares his support of public television. In 2001, Sen. Specter helped secure funding for a Distance Learning Program, which partnered Philadelphia’s WHYY with the city’s Regional Performing Arts program.

www.senate.gov/~specter; arlen_specter@specter.senate.gov

Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD)

Appropriations Committee and Budget Committee



Sen. Johnson is a strong advocate of South Dakota’s rural public television and an opponent of “privatizing” public television. “[L]et’s be candid,” he wrote in a 1996 *Sioux Falls Argus Leader* article. “All the talk about ‘privatization’ of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is simply a politician’s nice way

of saying ‘pull the plug.’”

<http://johnson.senate.gov>; tim@johnson.senate.gov

Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK)

Ranking member, Senate Appropriations Committee; also on Governmental Affairs Committee and Rules and Administrations Committee.



Sen. Stevens has been a major proponent of public television throughout his thirty-five years in public office. He’s especially supportive of rural initiatives; much of Alaska is only serviced by public television. Sen. Stevens is also a major force for advanced funding for CPB.

<http://stevens.senate.gov>; to e-mail Sen. Stevens, visit:

<http://stevens.senate.gov>

Representatives

Representative Richard Burr (R-NC)

Vice chairman of Energy and Commerce Committee.



Rep. Burr co-signed Rep. Tauzin's letter questioning CPB funding. He's also criticized a recent FCC decision to allow PBS stations to broadcast commercials on their digital spectrum.

www.house.gov/burr; to e-mail Rep. Burr, visit: www.house.gov/writerep

Representative John Dingell (D-MI)

Ranking member, Energy and Commerce Committee



Rep. Dingell fought against 2000's Noncommercial Broadcasting Freedom of Expression act, which would have abolished public television's educational requirement. "Public broadcasting," he said before a 1999 hearing on CPB authorization, "is an essential service that pays dividends many times over the amount we invest as a nation." He has also been steadfast in insisting on total digital conversion by 2006.

www.house.gov/dingell

To e-mail Rep. Dingell, visit: www.house.gov/writerep

Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D-IL)

Appropriations Committee



Rep. Jackson, Jr., is supportive of many public television initiatives, especially the Ready To Learn (which prepares very young children for school) and other early childhood programs.

www.jessejacksonjr.org;

webmaster@jessejackson.org

Representative Edward Markey (D-MA)

Rep. Markey supports the creation of a trust fund—to help fund digital conversion at PBS stations and other public television expenses—from interest off of digital spectrum auctions. Markey supports government funding of public television, arguing on a 1999 episode of *Newshour* that "creeping commercialism ultimately is going to compromise the identity of the PBS system as an electronic oasis for children's tele-



vision, and for other programming that just isn't available on other broadcast stations."

www.house.gov/markey

To e-mail Rep. Markey, visit: www.house.gov/writerep

Representative Michael Oxley (R-OH)

Rep. Oxley supports ending all government funding for public television. "Should the viewing habits of those who watch *Masterpiece Theatre* really be subsidized by those who prefer the World Wrestling Federation?" he said before a 1999 House Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Trade and Consumer Production.



<http://oxley.house.gov>

To e-mail Rep. Oxley, visit: <http://oxley.house.gov/contact.asp>

Representative W.J. "Billy" Tauzin (R-LA)

Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee



Though Tauzin has supported public television (his 1998 Public Broadcasting Reform Act increased CPB's budget almost sixty percent and included funds specifically for PBS stations to convert to digital broadcast), he has recently called for a review of CPB's funding programs in an open letter to the comptroller general. Rep. Tauzin is also critical of what he perceives as public television's "liberal bias."

<http://www.house.gov/tauzin/welcome-english.htm>

To e-mail Rep. Tauzin, visit: www.house.gov/writerep

Chief Executive Officer

George W. Bush

President of the United States



The President's CPB budget for fiscal year 2004 did not secure advanced funds past FY 2005; typically, funding is allocated two years in advance. Additionally, Bush has called for \$100 million of CPB's \$380 million budget for the next fiscal year to go to digital conversion, effectively cutting CPB's operating budget by nearly a quarter. □

www.whitehouse.gov/president

president@whitehouse.gov

Up to Spec for PBS

MEETING THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING

By Greg Gilpatrick



Heather Courtney began shooting video of migrant day laborers in Texas as a graduate school thesis project, with few ideas about distribution. *Los Trabajadores/The Workers* eventually screened at over fifty different venues over the past year. As the film journeyed through the festival circuit and aired on PBS affiliates in Texas, Courtney never heard there was anything technically wrong with her film. But when the film was selected to air nationally on PBS, she was informed that her master tape did not fit PBS's technical standards and that she would need to re-edit a portion of it before it could air. After the re-edit and two rounds of color correction, the film finally passed PBS's technical screening and aired on *Independent Lens* on March 25.

Though not all producers will need to re-edit their projects as Courtney did, independent producers with plans for PBS should prepare to meet what are widely considered to be the strictest technical standards of any broadcast network in the country. According to Robby Fahey, production coordinator at ITVS, a producer is doing well if PBS finds only one or two problems with his or her master tape.

Among on-line editors and broadcast engineers, PBS is legendary for being the ultimate test of a master tape. Patrick

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE AND FACING, COURTESY OF ITVS

Wickham, vice president of policy and digital initiatives at ITVS, says, “[PBS] cares deeply about their signal; they want to have the best looking, cleanest signal out there.” The result is that a program that has been accepted to air on local PBS affiliates, cable networks, and even other broadcast networks is often still rejected by PBS technical staff.

Some filmmakers have suggested that PBS’s tough technical standards are directly at odds with independent producers. While there is no evidence that PBS is targeting independents, they do pay a heavier price for these standards than producers working for stations within the public television system. “Stations have their editing suites standing by to make any changes,” Wickham says, “but independents have to book time and pay a post house to make their changes.”

There are practical reasons why independent filmmakers are affected by PBS’s high standards. An obvious yet important point is that PBS is a broadcast television network. PBS and its audience expect material that fits with the general aesthetic guidelines of most television. But most independent filmmakers produce their material with a more cinematic aesthetic in mind. “The whisper followed by a huge crash that you’ll hear in a theater won’t work on PBS. They expect a consistent audio level that will sound good through a TV speaker,” Fahey explains. Similarly, certain looks favored by some auteurs can put programs on the wrong side of the PBS standards. “The ‘crushed blacks’ and over-saturated colors that filmmakers like,” Fahey continues, “create the type of levels that PBS will reject.”

The most common reasons for a project being rejected are actually invisible to the naked eye and remain unseen without the aid of professional video scopes. “The number-one issue our programs have is that the blacks are too black,” Wickham says. This cryptic statement refers to the level of luminance signal of the picture. PBS requires that the black levels be no lower than 7.5 IRE—something that can only reliably be seen with a waveform monitor. Other common problems, such as luminance and chroma levels that are too high, can also only be seen with professional equipment.

Facing Page: Heather Courtney, producer, director, and editor of *Los Trabajadores/The Workers*. Above: Ramon Castillo, one of the subjects of Courtney’s film.

Though many nonlinear editing programs now include waveform tools, they do not do as good of a job finding these details as the hardware scopes found in a post house on-line room. “Final Cut Pro is a great editing tool,” says Wickham, “but its built-in scopes [and Broadcast Safe filter] do not provide a level of quality that is suitable for PBS.”

One of the problems PBS had with *Los Trabajadores/The Workers* was signal dropout that could be directly attributed to a problem with a DV camera. The bad signal was



traced all the way back to the original master tapes, and the only solution was to re-edit the portion of the show that used the affected shots. Camera-related problems like Courtney’s, that can’t be fixed in post, are rare, though.

Editing is the all-important time for making sure that a program will meet PBS standards. A producer who plans their post process to meet the guidelines will have a much easier time than a producer who doesn’t think about it until the project gets picked up by PBS. “Postproduction provides a number of opportunities to make or break the standards that PBS cares the most about,” Wickham says.

More than anything, a producer should plan and budget to do a professional on-line. Planning and budgeting means hiring somebody who knows what he or she is doing, and doing the research to make sure he or she is meeting PBS standards. Just calling up a local post house and scheduling an on-line is not enough. “If the on-line editor says they’ve done stuff for broadcast, even for PBS,” says Fahey, “you can’t just trust that they’ll get it right. Get a copy of the PBS technical specs and give it to them. Make sure they know what specs they need to meet.”

PBS Technical Services publishes their *Technical*

Operating Specifications Manual (TOS) separately from the “Red Book” that most producers are familiar with. The Red Book may seem technical, but the TOS is what you need to give an editor. Though the Red Book is available online, the TOS is only available by calling PBS Technical Services ((703) 739-5201; this number is also in the Red Book). PBS does not offer the TOS on the web, but, according to PBS Technical Services staff, they have an electronic PDF version of it in the works. But the PDF will be so large that they will probably still mail it on CD-ROM instead of over the internet.

Striving to meet such strict technical standards may seem like a drag on the creative part of the filmmaking process, but people who regularly work with PBS begin to view them the same way they do rights, clearances, and insurance—a necessary evil that gets easier to handle with experience but is never completely painless. On the positive side, planning to meet the PBS specs will ensure that your project will meet the most rigorous broadcast standards around the world—technically speaking, of course. ■

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

Getting it Right

Independents can learn to lessen their chance of rejection on technical grounds by following some basic rules.

Balancing act

White balance your camera for every environment you shoot in. People may choose to leave fiddling with the color for postproduction, but white balancing your camera is still an important part of the production process because it ensures consistent color levels throughout your shots. More color adjustments made to the image in post open the door for aesthetic and technical issues.

Change the channel

Many filmmakers use a separate microphone in addition to the one built into the camera and record the sound on the second channel of the tape. Using a second mic is fine, but recording onto the second channel of the tape along with the camera's audio on the first channel sometimes creates a problem stemming from the slightly different audio being together on the same tape. Instead, record your second audio source onto separate media—such as a Nagra, DAT, MiniDisk, or even another DV camera—and sync up the sound later during post.

Line up the on-line

Resign yourself to the fact that you are most likely going to require the services of an experienced on-line editor. An on-line edit (sometimes also called “finishing”) is a high-quality edit that ensures that the highest quality media is mastered to tape. Many on-lines are still done with linear editing equipment, but high-end “finishing” systems like Avid Symphony, Avid D|S, and Discreet Smoke are also common. Contact post-houses in your vicinity and find out their experience, facilities, and rates. There is no simple guideline for what equipment they should have, but calibrated professional equipment



that can measure video levels well enough to meet the PBS specs is an important requirement. The on-line editor's experience is also an important element. If you can hire somebody that has experience preparing content for PBS, that's probably the best way to go, but someone without PBS experience who can understand and meet the PBS specs will probably work just as well. Also make sure that you log and organize your off-line edit to make it easily transferable to an on-line system—before you start cutting.

Fix the mix

Sound level is another area that PBS looks at. It's important to mix your sound with the PBS specs in mind, too.

A Beta by any other name

The de facto videotape standard for most broadcast facilities, not just PBS, is Digital Beta. Virtually every professional on-line facility has Digital Beta decks, but some people may still choose to use Beta SP. Don't. Beta SP tapes will most likely need to be dubbed to Digital Beta for broadcast, and there may be technical issues that result from that transfer. Instead, plan to master directly onto Digital Beta, which will be higher quality and will lower the chances of technical problems with your program.

Don't forget the rest

In your rush to meet PBS's stringent technical guidelines, don't forget about the other guidelines you have to meet—PBS's Red Book of deliverables that covers various rules on credit placement, captions, lower-thirds, and promo styles. Many people confuse the Red Book and the TOS, but they are not the same—make sure you get both. The Red Book is available to read on the web at: www.pbs.org/insidepbs/redbook and at AIVF's resource library in New York.

Survival of the Fittest

PUBLIC ACCESS CENTERS TIGHTEN BELTS AND STRATEGIZE TO STAY ALIVE

By Claiborne Smith

If you had been in Honolulu on a recent Sunday afternoon and had casually flipped through the channels on your TV, you might have come across video of one of the committee hearings from either the House or Senate of Hawaii. If you had been in Bloomington, Indiana, you might have caught *Pets Without Partners*. In Durango, Colorado, *After the Fire*, which teaches viewers how to live safely in the aftermath of Colorado's rash of forest fires, was on. Like other public cable access centers across the nation, Durango Community Access Television allows its residents to "communicate their activities, opinions, and ideas freely without interference and without undue charge." And if you had stayed up until midnight in Seattle, you could have watched *Irregular TV Review*, which features "rarely televised subjects of interest and obscurity, including historical, musical, artistic, and political topics that mainstream corporate media rejects," as Seattle Community Access Network's citizen producers, who describe their own shows for SCAN's program guide, put it.

The opportunity for any Jack or Jill off the street to have democratic access to the powerful medium of television is noble, vital, and even radical, given television's overwhelmingly corporate nature. In many areas of the country, the local broadcast news affiliates provide negligible coverage of the community, opting instead for cursory local news fleshed out with cute, chirpy segments provided by PR firms that entertain but don't really engage viewers. Perhaps not all executive directors of public access centers across the nation think of themselves as media activists, but they do passionately insist that their open approach to television production can provide a vibrant alternative to the stultifying onslaught of TV-as-usual. "Public access fills this tremendous void on television because it's just not part of the commercial broadcast media model," says

Barbara Popovic, the executive director of Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV). Public access television can provide an opportunity for a community "to see itself reflected, discussed, engaged," says Popovic.

But that potential is not always realized. Public access shows have long been the butt of jokes positing them as



CAN TV Community Partners Coordinator Chris Wilkinson (bottom right; clockwise) with Jennifer Asidao, Lizelle Din, and Michael Barin of the League of Filipino Students.

uncool or just plain boring. One reason *Saturday Night Live's* "Wayne's World" was funny was its conceit that famous rock stars would, in fact, make an appearance on a public access TV show. A democratic approach to television may be a wonderful alternative in a prohibitively expensive medium that harbors dauntingly imperious gatekeepers, but making a television show isn't easy; it often seems as if only the most determined citizens who unceasingly believe in their cause make the effort to disseminate their beliefs on public access. Those of us who espouse the promise of public access television sometimes find ourselves zoning out from the sectarian fulminations of political ideologues or the fervent admonitions of religious proselytizers.

Public access has operated under the optimistic notion that if you give citizens unfettered access to the means of television production, the community will automatically benefit. The most common operating model for public access centers across the nation is to loan their video cameras and other necessary equipment to local residents who become members or producers of the center and have their programs broadcast over one of the center's channels (small public access centers tend to have one channel while larger ones have multiple outlets). They tend to be funded by an agreement hammered out between the city government and the local cable franchise, which agrees to allocate a percentage of its revenues to the city in exchange for profiting from the use of the city's public right-of-way cable lines. Then the city government has to decide to dedicate those funds for the purpose of public access television. Some public access centers require that citizens wanting to become members pay for classes in technical instruction before having access to the center's equipment. But one of the cardinal tenets of the agreement between a

public access center and its members is the understanding that the center provides equipment and technical assistance, but doesn't advise members on what the content of a pro-



gram should be. Public access centers justifiably pride themselves on their uncensorious policies, but public access is currently changing in incremental but crucial ways.

Kari Peterson is the executive director of Davis Community Television (DCTV), an organization of 250 members located near downtown Davis, a northern California college town of sixty thousand residents. Peterson is at the forefront of an ongoing debate in the national public access community because although she believes that public access centers shouldn't neglect their role as neutral providers of equipment, she is also convinced that public access centers have an obligation to promote dialogue or debate in the community by ensuring that all sides of an issue are aired.

Peterson's stance is more complicated than it might seem. It's one thing for a public access center to invite the community to use its equipment and then broadcast its citizens' productions, but quite another to use some of its six full-time employees to go out into the city to tape events; staff-initiated programming requires a traditionally neutral organization to define what issues are crucial to the community. But Peterson is determined to simultaneously provide a place for Davis residents to produce television and "not influence content in any way," as DCTV policy explicitly states, and also to ensure that Davis residents go to DCTV when they want to know what is really going on in their community.

The "proactive" programming that Peterson is now openly advocating at DCTV after "dabbling in this unofficially for several years," is, as she acknowledges, "pretty radical," even though she remembers the idea being discussed at an annual conference of public access centers as long ago as



PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, LEFT, COURTESY OF CAN TV; RIGHT, CCTV; FACING PAGE, DCTV

1991. Public access centers do not employ journalists, who, after all, actively decide which issues are going to receive coverage and what kind of coverage. “People are scared because it’s a pretty slippery slope,” Peterson says, from a policy of “no opinion” to a decision to initiate in-house programming about issues in Davis. “I think we have attempted at DCTV to implement proactive programming that honors the public access mission, that gives back to the community—we’re giving you information and food for thought that helps to build a stronger community,” she says. “It’s essential that we not censor voices because certainly the pure and wonderful principles of public access encourage diverse voices to come forward, but we also are proactive about keeping our finger on the pulse of what’s happening.”

To ensure that the issues DCTV staffers and board members cover reflect all the various constituencies in Davis, the programming committee at DCTV meets quarterly to determine two relatively broad issues to cover and then makes certain that all sides of the issue are conveyed to the community. “In our town, many months of civil unrest hit a fever pitch last week with allegations of racism and bullying in our schools,” Peterson says, “and some really charged issues had been suppressed by people in power.” Racism, or the state of Davis’ public schools, might be appropriate focus issues for this quarter. Peterson’s assessment of the Davis school system administration sounds like it might be coming from a discontented liberal activist, but it’s important to note that Peterson reserves her anger not for school administrators but for the paucity of full coverage in her town. She says that *The Davis Enterprise*, the local newspaper, covers local issues well, but she repeatedly stresses her conviction that “it’s important that all sides have an opportunity to share their viewpoints.”

Peterson is aware that her twofold mission—to not censor citizens while initiating proactive community television—may be easier said than accomplished. Regardless of how open the process is at DCTV to decide which of the city’s issues are going to receive coverage, someone (or some people) must make the decision, and that has traditionally been a cardinal sin in public access. DCTV is about to begin renewing its franchise contract with the local cable operator, Comcast, and part of that process has involved an extensive community needs analysis. Much to their delight, DCTV staffers discovered during the various focus groups and surveys conducted for the franchise renewal that Davis residents wanted to see local news (the closest TV affiliate is in Sacramento, fifteen miles away), and coverage of local and UC-Davis sports.

Peterson devised a proposal approved by the DCTV board of nine members on March 10 in which she suggested that DCTV increase what it calls its Community Partnership Projects (CPP)—programs DCTV staffers and interns produce by taping events in Davis—from the ten that have been produced in the past eighteen months to twenty per year. The DCTV website offers details to local residents about how they can apply through a proposal process to win the two CPP’s per quarter the DCTV staff tapes, free of charge, for local nonprofits or individuals. Seventy percent of DCTV’s resources are still allocated for public access, but the other thirty percent are for identifying “critical community content.” “Our responsibility as a community media center is to make sure that those issues are discussed,” Peterson explains. “If we’re not proactive, maybe only one side of those issues will come up.” Public access advo-



cates have been saying all along that public input is vital, but Peterson is taking the model a step further by insisting that public access centers capture public input rather than wait for it to end up on one of their channels.

But Peterson is hardly alone in pushing the traditional public access model forward into new territory. Barbara Popovic of CAN TV got a relatively slow start in public access because cable was about five years behind the national trend in arriving to Wheaton, Illinois, whose first public access center she helped establish in the mid-eighties. From that small-town setting, though, she has moved on to propel CAN TV into one of the nation’s most successful public access centers with five channels and 22,000 square feet of office and studio space.

As with Peterson’s proactive programming initiative, the reason behind Popovic’s success was her sense early in her tenure at CAN TV that a public access center that merely provides excellent equipment and facilities is only doing part of its job. CAN TV has become known among public access centers across the nation for engaging its viewers in

Facing page, Left: CAN TV Community Partners Coordinator Alphonso Soto trains a representative of Erie Neighborhood House: Right: A CCTV studio coordinator “on” the new equipment: Above: DCTV former staffer Aaron Vinck assists a volunteer with postproduction in one of DCTV’s two edit bays.

notably effective ways, and the secret, Popovic says, was the realization that only providing good service to the “speakers,” the people who host and produce access shows, “would be forgetting a very large constituent group that we need to think about too,” namely that large swath of unresearched humanity called public access viewers. “I’m not saying that we’ve been vulnerable to criticisms about amateur content to the point that we’ve said, ‘Okay, let’s just cut all that out and do something that looks good,’ but that we realized that viewers have particular needs that need to be addressed,” Popovic says.

One way she reached out to viewers was by championing an idea she says was “brewing” when she arrived at CAN TV—the notion that both CAN TV’s viewers and Chicago’s nonprofits would be well-served if the nonprofits were encouraged to advertise themselves, as it were, through



CAN TV. When Popovic called up local nonprofits to find out why they hadn’t already been using CAN TV, they told her they didn’t have any time or resources. So Popovic and the CAN TV staff made it easy for them by borrowing from one of the hallowed tenets of commercial advertising: repetition, repetition, repetition. CAN TV gambled on the supposition that if a representative from a local nonprofit could do a weekly, live call-in show (a format pioneered at CAN TV), with a specific message for viewers, that nonprofit would be able to increase the number of people it served. “People have this notion,” Popovic says, “that to sell an idea to commercial media you have to be marvelously creative and innovative and break through the clutter and do something great. Except commercial advertisers like Coca-Cola understand that repetition is the key.” Most nonprofits, though, can’t afford to “repeat the message,” or even disseminate it once, on commercial television. “But we got very excited about the idea that because we don’t have the commercial restraints, we really could help these groups get their message out,” Popovic says, “and that there would be people to hear it. And it’s proven out again and again with our work.” Three hundred and fifty of CAN TV’s one thousand members are nonprofit organizations.

One day Popovic watched an administrator from

Chicago Commons, a nonprofit that offers job training services, conduct a live call-in show. The administrator was laying out the details of Chicago Commons’ tool-and-die training classes. “And if an entertainment critic from the press watched this they’d go, ‘Gee, why would anyone ever put something like that on TV?’” Popovic says. After she had talked about the class, the administrator got a call asking her to explain it again, and then another call asking her to explain it again—in short, for twenty-five minutes, viewers called in asking her to start over. “So I called my program director,” Popovic recalls, “and I said, ‘I’m just blown away by this show! She couldn’t even finish describing the course once before the next person wanted her to start over.’ And he said, ‘Barbara, that’s the thirteenth show!’ This group for thirteen weeks did the same thing.” The point, of course, is that what some critics refer to as lackluster, repetitive television is also the very same thing that viewers sometimes need.

And television has benefited some of Chicago’s nonprofits in entirely unexpected ways. The Chicago Project for Violence Prevention, for example, sends project representatives out onto the street to conduct person-to-person outreach. One gang member who had been wary of speaking to anyone from the project in his neighborhood happened to see the project’s program on CAN TV and called in; it was clearly more anonymous and safe to make a phone call. “It’s the classic marketing strategy: Say it three different ways,” Popovic says.

If reaching out to local nonprofits has been so successful for CAN TV, why haven’t other public access centers adopted the innovation as successfully? Popovic says the nonprofit component of CAN TV has worked so well because CAN TV never lost sight of the fact that it’s a “no-frills” outfit. “When you’re in a technical field such as ours,” she points out, “it’s very tempting to confuse your goals, and to think, We need to focus on looking like our colleagues in broadcast television.” Some public access centers seem to have taken the position that viewers won’t watch unless they know they’ll be dazzled. It’s an understandable reaction; the stakes for capturing viewers are frenetically raised every season on commercial television. But CAN TV “is not about creating a television station,” Popovic says. “It’s about facilitating communication.”

Public access centers benefit from a relatively unique proposition in American life whereby private companies are required to donate a portion of their funds to the public. More often we hear about corporations getting tax breaks. Nonetheless, federal laws are not so strong that they have ensured a consistently reliable funding source for public access centers. That’s something the formerly ten-member staff and six-hundred-member Cambridge Community Television (CCTV), in the bustling Central Square of Cambridge, Massachusetts, knows all too well.



Last April, the 7.2 million American households that were subscribing to high-speed cable modem broadband service through their cable service began to see a decrease of as much as \$3 on their monthly statements. That's because on March 14, 2002, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) made a declaratory ruling that cable modem broadband is an "information" rather than a "telecommunications" or "cable" service, which meant that cable companies weren't required to collect the franchise fees of up to five percent that municipal governments had been allowed to levy on them. Cable companies characterized the decision as a chance to pass on savings to their customers, but the ruling had grave consequences for a number of public access centers, including CCTV, whose budget was suddenly slashed by a whopping eighteen percent.

CCTV had prided itself on its successful campaign to transform itself into a public access center that offered a roster of services that went far beyond loaning equipment out to producers. Susan Fleischmann, CCTV's executive director, refers to the 5,000-square-foot facility as a "community media center," replete with a computer lab for classes and general use by Cambridge residents; an active art gallery called the Drive-By Gallery that features six-week exhibitions of Cambridge artists' work; and CCTV-produced radio plays over one of the center's three channels. "We have been trying to recognize that people need access to all kinds of media in our democracy," Fleischmann says, and the healthy pile of awards CCTV has garnered in its fifteen-year existence are testimony to its organizational creativity and vibrancy. Three times in nine years, for example, CCTV has received first place in the Overall Excellence in Public Access Programming category of the annual Hometown Video Festival, sponsored by the Alliance for Community

Facing Page: CCTV member Laura Montgomery and staff member David Zermeno on the set of *BeLive*. Above: Summer Media Institute 2002 students gather in the studios of CCTV in Cambridge after screening their video projects.

Media, the national umbrella organization of America's public access centers.

Several months after the FCC made its decision, which Fleischmann says caught her completely off guard, the Massachusetts Cultural Council lost sixty-two percent of its budget, which meant an additional \$20,000 loss for CCTV. The consequences were dire: The ten-member staff was downsized to eight, the quality of the remaining employees' health insurance decreased, CCTV closed on Saturdays, and the classes in computer literacy for linguistic minorities, which had served sixty families annually, were called off. "I feel like [FCC Chairman Michael] Powell's interests do not lie in assisting the public interest in any way," Fleischmann says. "I think he's definitely out for corporate instead of common good."

As she and her staff embark on a quest to unearth new revenues in a depressed economy, Fleischmann advises other public access centers to make certain they diversify their funding sources. "That's something we let slip in the last few years," she says, since CCTV had handsomely benefited from the cable modem fees that were later cut off by the FCC's ruling. "CCTV is incredibly resilient," she asserts, "and we still, with our small staff, are able to do creative things."

Resilience, in fact, is one quality Peterson, Popovic, and Fleischmann have in common. Stabilizing a nonprofit like CCTV during its sudden loss of funds, making the crucial decision to initiate proactive programming at DCTV, or reaching out to Chicago's nonprofits, as CAN TV has successfully done, requires more than innovative resilience, though. The public access centers they direct may benefit from the contracts cable companies have been required to adopt, but national policy stipulating that all Americans have access to public television is nonexistent. Being politically plugged in is one of their job requirements.

And harboring a sense of mission seems to spur them on. Like her colleagues in Chicago and Davis, Fleischmann bristles at the status quo. "We can't get complacent," she says, perhaps more to herself than to the reporter asking impertinent questions about how she's going to rescue CCTV from its financial woes. And as if she were also speaking for her colleagues, she says, "It's probably not good for an organization like ours to get complacent." ▣

For more information on these programs, see the following websites:

Chicago—www.cantv.org

Cambridge—www.cctvcambridge.org

DCTV—www.dctv.davis.ca.us

Alliance for Community Media—www.alliancecm.org

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Music Licenses for Public Television

GIVING MEDIAMAKERS A FINANCIAL BREAK

By Robert L. Seigel

For mediamakers producing projects for public television, or those who have the rights to their projects licensed for public television, there is a tidy financial reprieve from the minefield of securing licenses for pre-existing musical compositions and sound recordings. But it is an oasis that must be approached cautiously.

The term "public television" is not

radio stations.

In general, most mediamakers have become savvy to the fact that they have to secure one, and often two different licenses to use music on a project's soundtrack: 1) a synchronization license to secure permission to use a musical composition in "sync" with the project's visual images from the people or entities that either own or control the rights to musical com-

beyond public television will be required to negotiate a master-use license for other media and territories. Once a mediamaker starts approaching music publishing companies and record companies, he or she may realize that thousands, tens of thousands of dollars, and in some cases even more must be budgeted for obtaining the rights to musical compositions and sound recordings on a project's soundtrack beyond the scope of public television.

Unlike master-use license payments, there is no public television exemption from synchronization rights payments. However, PBS has entered into several agreements with those that control the rights to a musical composition so that PBS pays



These discounted licenses apply not only to PBS, but also to other noncommercial broadcasting services such as television and radio stations that offer religious programming, community television stations, and noncommercial educational broadcasting entities . . . including student television or radio stations.

just PBS. It is a generic term for any television or radio programming service or station that qualifies for such status under the rules of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). PBS pays these music licenses with funds that it receives from CPB. PBS itself deals with whoever owns the rights to a musical composition or a master sound recording. These discounted licenses apply not only to PBS, but also to other noncommercial broadcasting services such as television and radio stations that offer religious programming, community television stations, and noncommercial educational broadcasting entities unaffiliated with PBS including student television or

positions, such as the songwriters or music publishers; and 2) A master-use license to secure the rights to use the specific recording of a performance from the owners of a master recording, such as the recording performers or record company.

Under the current US copyright law, mediamakers working on projects to be aired on public television do not have to pay for the master-use rights for any recording. But before you start dusting off your Rolling Stones albums, you should realize that this royalty-free master-use license only applies to US public television and other noncommercial broadcasting. A mediamaker wishing to take a project

a very low fee for such rights. PBS has this type of agreement with many of the companies that represent music publishers and owners, including the Harry Fox Agency, Bug Music, AMRA, and MCS Music America. These voluntary rate agreements keep the rates for synchronization rights relatively low for PBS projects.

Mediamakers with projects that are scheduled to air on public television can invoke these voluntary rate agreements. But when the musical composition is not administered under one of the voluntary rate agreements, there are fixed synchronization license royalties under federal law, and therefore not negotiable. For a PBS-distrib-

uted program, the current rates are: (a) for use as a featured presentation on a program's soundtrack: \$112.40; (b) for use in a feature that is a concert: \$33.75 (per minute); (c) as background music: \$56.81. There also are synchronization license rates for ongoing series or single programs. These rates apply for a period of three years from the date when the piece of music first airs on public television. There are also provisions in the statute for extensions of synchronization licenses in exchange for additional payments. A one-year extension requires a fee of twenty-five percent of the initial three-year fee, and a second three-year period may be purchased for fifty percent of the initial fee.

Just as with master-use rights, once a project is taken beyond public television, the special licensing deals for synchronization rights are no longer valid. New contracts will have to be negotiated with music publishers and songwriters to secure the synchronization licenses for other media and markets.

There is still one more type of clearance to be obtained for any piece of music used in a public television project, Performance Rights. Since a television broadcast constitutes a *public performance* of any musical composition, television services, stations, and other broadcasters have to pay for *performance rights* to a musical compositions. Mediamakers whose works air on television do not generally have to pay a fee for performance rights since it is the broadcaster or television service, whether it is ABC, HBO, Discovery, or PBS, that is responsible for these rights payments. Most public and for-profit broadcasters and television services, including PBS and individual broadcasting stations, have a "blanket license" with the performance rights organizations such as ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC, that collect these fees. These performance rights organizations represent most music publishers and a wide roster of songwriters. If the owner of a musical composition is not

an ASCAP, BMI, or SESAC member, there are fixed rates under federal law that solely apply to public or noncommercial television services and stations, permitting them to pay low fees to license the performance rights. Performance rights fees are lower for regional or local broadcasts than those for nationally broadcasted programs. When a program's public television broadcast goes from local to national, there is a "bump-up" in the performance rights fees. Under federal law, the performance rights royalties for a performance of a musical composition: (a) in a PBS-featured presentation is \$224.22; (b) as background music or theme music in a PBS program is \$56.81; (c) in a feature presentation of a PBS station is \$19.16; and (d) as background or theme music in a program of a PBS station \$4.04.

No performance rights royalties are required in US movie theaters, but other forms of distribution permit performance rights to be negotiated with synchronization rights or require a separate rights agreement for this material.

Although all these statutory rates for music clearance on public television are intended for not-for-profit television services and nonprofit producers, for-profit producers and licensors do receive the same benefit when their projects are licensed for a public television airing. Music clearance is a time-consuming and labor-intensive task that is filled with pitfalls for the mediamaker. Even with this general overview, the mediamaker who understands the benefits and drawbacks to these public broadcasting exemptions can begin the process of successfully navigating the music rights hurdles. ■

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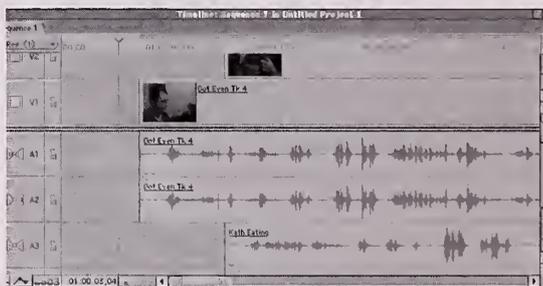
TIPS WITH FINAL CUT PRO

By Bryant Falk

Once sound came to the moving picture, a new type of theater experience was born that has stayed with us ever since. To some directors, sound with picture is like being broke and owning a classic Porsche—it always needs special attention and you never have enough time to give it. You entered the business, after all, to direct film, moving images, not Foley effects and music hits!

Thanks to computer-based editing systems, specifically Final Cut Pro, this task has been brought into a new world of convenience. In this article I will try and cover a number of audio editing features and effects available in Final Cut that help make cutting audio a bit less daunting.

Final Cut allows you to input audio into your project in many ways. From video footage, CD's, or directly in with a microphone, once loaded, there are almost endless things you can do with



the powerful audio feature set.

One of the first and most important functions in the sequence window is the audio waveform, which is accessed by Command (apple key)-option-W. This is extremely useful as it allows you to see exactly where your transients are in relation to your video footage. (Transients are the spikes you see in the waveform drawing. Some obvious ones would be a snare hit or

someone clapping). Lining up tight hit points for complicated or multiple video edits is as simple as rolling or ripple editing to your visual audio cue. One may ask, "If it's so convenient, why doesn't Final Cut leave the waveform up all the time?" The reason is simple: With the waveform up, your scrolling and zooming speed slows down. This can be annoying when you're busy chopping and splicing your video edits. So when it's time to really line things up or edit to a very exact point in your audio, you can engage and disengage this function with the same three keystrokes. Also, note that you can edit a waveform in the "edit window" usually located at the top left, but you won't have your video footage right above for reference.

When it comes to editing audio, all the tools you use in video remain the same. The razor blade will cut audio just as it does video. Each end of an audio file can be pulled open or pushed closed if there is additional material you need to get to. One difference is the volume function. In your audio tracks the "rubber band," which adjusts opacity in video, controls volume. Another difference is that in audio playback you're mixing the tracks in your sequence. If you have a track of music and a track of sound effects, they are both heard simultaneously, unlike video, which gives dominance to the top track. (Unless, of course, you adjust the opacity). This mixing can be annoying if you're trying to focus on just one track. The mute button (a green light to the far left of the track you're working on) is a great tool because it lets

you shut down certain tracks temporarily without losing their placement.

A confusing thing for filmmakers when editing audio, as opposed to video, is the idea of a "stereo track." Unlike video, what you see is not always what you get. At the moment, most audio systems are built using a two-speaker format. Having two speakers (left and right) allows you to



spread your audio into a stereo field. For music this would mean hearing a piano off to the left, some the guitar to the right. Music tracks are usually already built with the stereo image in mind. This means when you import music, both left and right tracks are ready to be played back and are panned correctly. When bringing in a mono track, you will need to check the panning to make sure it's not hard to one side or the other. This is done by simply double-clicking the audio in your bin area and looking at the panning in the edit window above. Hard-panning can be a problem on some playback systems that may only have mono. You can even end up losing the sound altogether on a mono system. To be safe, if panning is desired—such as a helicopter fly-by or a bird tweeting off in a corner—try using what I like to call a soft pan, where there is always some signal in both speakers but the thrust of the sound is on one side.

There is also something called surround mixes, or five-to-one mixes. This is when you have five speakers:

Left: Editing the audio waveform. Right: part of the Final Cut Pro ensemble.



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center, front left, front right, back left, back right, and a sub-woofer for bass and rumble sounds. It is a much more complex mix, and I would recommend bringing in a professional facility if that is the level you wish to work at.

When importing a video clip to the sequence window, usually the two sound tracks are chained or locked to the video. This means any edit you do to one will effect all three. There are two ways to break this. One is the unlink command found either in the menu bar or the little link icon on the top right of the sequence window. This will separate your audio from your video. But let's say you need to edit the stereo track separately. Command-L allows you to link and unlink your stereo tracks. This linking can make editing in the edit window a lot easier, as it combines both audio tracks into one stereo edit. If they are not linked, then what you do to one track will have to be repeated for the other stereo track.

There is an entire host of effects and processing which can be done to your audio clips. These are found in the audio folder inside the effects tab. Though I haven't the room to review them, they all apply to audio the same way you would apply a video effect. Once dropped onto an audio clip, double-clicking that clip will bring up all the properties in the edit window (usually the top left window).

For all you independent filmmakers, I highly recommend taking the time to make your audio the best it can be. While poor or strange video can sometimes be passed off as an effect, poor audio simply fatigues your viewer and turns him or her off faster than you can say "Next short, please!" A good sound person can save you time by both recording significant amounts of audio on location and coordinating your audio production once you've hit the studio. ■

Bryant Falk runs Abacus Sound in New York City. His e-mail is Bry3cpo@aol.com.



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Festivals

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 (e.g., July 1st for Sept. issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.**

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

AFI FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-16, CA. Deadline: June 6 (early); July 3 (final: shorts); July 18 (final: features). Festival combines film programming w/ special events, capturing cultural diversity of LA while providing new film-

2021 N. Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90027-1657; (886) AFI-FEST; fax: (323) 462-4049; afifest@afi.com; www.afi.com.

ANNAPOLIS FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 31-Nov. 3, MD. Deadline: May 31. A three-day fest showcasing independent films & documentaries produced by local & nat'l filmmakers. Its mission is to "celebrate the capacity of independent film to move us, teach us & entertain us." Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: shorts \$25 (under 30 min.); features \$35. Contact: Festival, PO Box 591, Annapolis, MD 21401; (410) 263-2388; fax: 263-2629; info@annapolisfilmfest.com; www.annapolisfilmfest.com.

AUSTIN GAY & LESBIAN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 21-Sept. 1, TX. Deadline: June 2. 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 communities. Founded: 1986. Cats: Feature, Short, Children, Doc, Experimental, Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact:

Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, 1001 Watertown Street, West Newton, MA 02465; (617) 244-9899; fax: 244-9894; programming@bjff.org; www.bjff.org.

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 27-Sept. 2, 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 throughout the year. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short, Animation. Awards: Cash prizes; choice awards for narrative feature, narrative short, doc, experimental, animation, music video, audience choice & "made in Chicago." Formats: 16mm, 35mm, S-8, Super 8, DVD, Video, Beta SP, Mini DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30; \$35 (late). Contact: CUFF, c/o Bryan Wendorf, 2545 West Altgeld #1, Chicago, IL 60647; (773) 327-FILM; fax: 327-3464; info@cuff.org; www.cuff.org.

CHICKS WITH FLICKS FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Aug. 21, NY. Deadline: May 23. Chicks With Flicks is a one-day film event in NYC that showcases the works of independent women filmmakers. The goal of the fest is to encourage, support & foster indie filmmaking as well as generate an audience & supportive following for women filmmakers. Founded: 1999. Cats: Films must be under 30 min., any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: Yhane Washington, 188 Norfolk St., #6G, New York, NY 10002; (212) 533-7491; yhane@chicksw/flicks.com; www.chicksw/flicks.org.

CINE LATINO! FESTIVAL, Sept. 17-21, CA. Deadline: May 31. Organized by San Francisco-based Cine Acción, fest seeks film & video works that reflect the experiences & 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 Caribbean encouraged for submission. Founded: 1992. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (incls. membership to organization). Contact: Festival, PO Box 192747, San Francisco, CA 94119; (415) 553-8135; fax: 338-0937; info@cineaccion.com; www.cineaccion.com.

CINEMATEXAS INT'L SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 16-21, TX.



I Went Back to Ohio . . .

The Ohio Independent Film Festival is celebrating its tenth year of screening over one hundred short and feature-length independent films from around the globe. Once again, the fest will launch with the Annual Director of Photography Workshop, an all-day event that features three local DP's invited to create a short film in the course of three hours. Also again this year, the festival will present Script Mill, an unstaged reading of one of the award-winning screenplays from their Ohio Independent Screenplay Awards. See listing.

makers 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 LA 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. Awards: Juried Competition Prizes & Audience Awards in each category. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video, digiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: features (over 30 mins.) \$40, shorts \$30. Final: features \$50, shorts \$40. Contact: AFI Fest,

Scott Dinger, 1216 E 51st, Austin, TX 78723; (512) 458-1515; fax: 302-1088; film@agliff.org; www.agliff.org.

BOSTON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-16, MA. Deadline: May 15. Fest is a non competitive event. Fest screens 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 Massachusetts. Founded: 1989. Cats: feature, experimental, animation, doc. Formats: Beta SP, 35mm, 16mm, DVD.

Deadline: May 15. Annual fest continues tradition of exploring the short film as a laboratory for cinema. Emerging as one of the premiere short film fests in the world, fest features multimedia performances by musicians & artists. Retrospectives have included a program of favorite shorts introduced by Jim Jarmusch, as well as the short films of Robert Frank, Abbas Kiarostami & a tribute to contemporary female avant garde filmmakers. Sidebars incl. Terra Cognita, a moving image installation series; Parallax View, a weekend-long culture jamming symposium; Eye+Ear, programs that explore the relationship between sound & image & Cinemakids, screenings of youth-made films. Founded: 1996. Cats: Short, Experimental, animation, youth media, installation. Awards: Finalists compete regardless of format, genre or category for the prestigious Gecko awards. Up to \$25,000 in cash, services & in-kind prizes, incl. the Barbara Latham Memorial Award for an emerging experimental videomaker. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, Super 8, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30 (early); \$35 (final). Contact: Laurel Row, Dept. of Radio/TV/Film, CMA 6.118, Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX 78712-1091; (512) 471-6497; fax: 471-4077; cinematexas@cinematexas.org; www.cinematexas.org.

CONVERGENCE FILM/VIDEO/ANIMATION FESTIVAL, Sept. 18-21, RI. Deadline: May 1; June 1 (late). Fest is presented as part of the Convergence Int'l Arts Festival & 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, DVD. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$10; \$15 (late). Contact: Festival, 65 Weybosset St., #39, Providence, RI 02903; (401) 621-1992; lynne@caparts.org; www.caparts.org.

FILM FEST NEW HAVEN, Sept. 19-21, CT. Deadline: May 1; June 16 (final). Film Fest New Haven is committed to supporting the creativity of independent filmmakers. A year-round presence in New Haven, this fest showcases the finest independent films to film-loving & film-literate audiences. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Jury, Audience & Cinematography awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta,

DVD, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25/\$30; \$30/\$40 (final). Contact: Nina Adams, Artistic Director, Box 9644, New Haven, CT 06536; (203) 776-6789; fax: 776-4260; info@filmfest.org; www.filmfest.org.

FLYING POPCORN FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 28, RI. Deadline: June 1. Presented by Kid Filmmakers, a year-round traveling filmmaking academy based in Rhode Island. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Entry Fee: \$30, no fees for youth entries. Contact: Festival, PO Box 12, Newport, RI 02840; (401) 846-9884; kidfilmmakers@yahoo.com; www.kidfilmmakers.com.

GREAT PLAINS FILM FESTIVAL, July 12-29, NE. Deadline: May 30. Fest is a biennial regional venue for indie film & video artists working in the US & Canada. Open to film & videomakers either from the Great Plains region, or those whose film/video relates in content or in narrative to the Great Plains. Fest provides a forum of the diversity of life on the Great Plains through panel discussions, special appearances & tributes. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media. Awards: 12 cash prizes ranging from \$500-\$5,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 or \$30. Contact: Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Box 880302, Lincoln, NE 68588-0302; (402) 472-9100; fax: 472-2576; dladelly1@unl.edu; www.greatplainsfilmfest.org.

HAMPTONS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-26, NY. Deadline: May 23 (shorts); June 13 (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 US. 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.



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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.

HARDACRE FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 1-2, 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. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (shorts under 60 min.); \$25 (features). Contact: Festival, 417 E. 4th St., Tipton, IA 52772; (563) 886-2175; director@hardacrefilmfest.com; www.hardacrfilmfest.com.

HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-24, 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, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS or DVD. 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.

IFP MARKET, Sept. 21-26, NY. Deadline: May 16 (emerging narrative script & No Borders); June 2 (shorts, docs, WIP narrative). Annual event is the longest-running U.S. market devoted to new, emerging film talent. Large focus on narr/doc. works-in-progress, doc./narr. shorts (under 40 min.), doc. features & feature-length scripts. Works compete for acceptance into the following sections: Emerging Narrative, No Borders Int'l Co-Production Market & Spotlight on Documentaries. Cats: feature, doc, work-in-progress, short, script. Awards: More than \$100,000 in cash & prizes awarded to emerging artists, incl. two \$10,000 Gordon Parks Awards for Emerging African-American filmmakers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$50, application fee; Registration fees (paid on acceptance only): \$200 - \$450. Contact: Festival, 104 West 29 St., 12 fl., New York, NY 10001; (212) 465-8200 x. 107 (Market), x. 216 (No Borders); fax: 465-8525; marketinfo@ifp.org; www.ifp.org.

JACKSON HOLE WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 22-27, WY. Deadline: June 1. Fest seeks films dealing w/ natural history, wildlife, conservation & related topics. Entries must have been completed w/in the past two years. Cats: natural history programming, doc. Awards: Awards are given in 17 cats. Formats: HD, DigiBeta, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$80. Contact: Laura Johnson, Box 3940, 125 E. Pearl St., Jackson Hole, WY 83001; (307) 733-7016; fax: 733-7376; info@jhfest.org; www.jhfest.org.

LESBIAN LOOKS, Sept./Oct., AZ. Deadline: May 15. Fest seeks work of all lengths. Fee paid for all works screened. Incl. synopsis, brief artist bio & B/W still(s) w/ entry. Founded: 1993. Cats: short, doc, feature, experimental, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: \$10. Contact: Beverly Seckinger, Media Arts, Harvill 226, U. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721; (520) 621-1239; fax: 621-9662; bseckinger@u.arizona.edu; www.arizona.edu/~lgbcom/.

LOUISIANA VIDEO SHORTS FESTIVAL, Aug. 23, 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 incl. a special Youth category for ages 13-18. Founded: 1989. Cats: 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 4; June 4 (final). 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. 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; info@madcatfilmfest.org; www.madcatfilmfest.org.

MILL VALLEY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-12, 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. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 18 months. 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: 383-8606; info@finc.org; www.mvff.com.

NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-16, LA. Deadline: May 9; June 13 (final). 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: Animation, Doc, Experimental, Short, Feature, Student, Music Video, Any style or genre. Awards: Awards based on jury selection. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", 35mm (by invitation only), Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35; \$45 (final). 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.

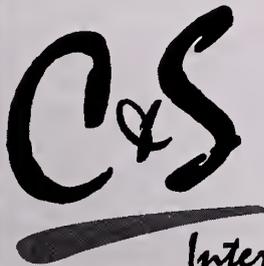
NEW YORK EXPO OF SHORT FILM AND VIDEO, Dec., NY. Deadline: July 1. The fest is the nation's longest-running short film fest and seeks fiction, animation, doc & experimental film & video. Films/videos should be under 60 min. & completed in the previous 2 years. Student & international entries welcome. 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, Silver, Bronze and Best Debut awards are granted in each category, plus cash, filmstock and class instruction awards. Formats: 35mm, Super 8 (shown in video projection), 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on

VHS. Entry Fee: \$45, for return of preview tape incl. \$5. Contact: Karen Treanor, 224 Centre St., New York, NY 10033; (212) 505-7742; fax: 586-6391; nyexpo@aol.com; www.nyexpo.org.

NEXTFRAME: UFVA'S Touring Festival of International Student Film & Video, Oct., PA. Deadline: March 31 (early); May 31 (Late). Fest was founded in 1993 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. 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: 204-6740; nextfest@temple.edu; www.temple.edu/nextframe.

OHIO INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-9, 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, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (shorts under 15 min.); \$35 (15 min. & over); late fees are doubled; screenplays: \$40; \$60 (late). Contact: Annetta Marion & Bernadette Gillota, 1392 West 65th Street, Cleveland, OH 44102; (216) 651-7315; fax: 651-7317; ohioindiefilmfest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com.

OJAI FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 23-26, CA. Deadline: June 15 (early); July 15 (final). Theme: "Enriching the Human Spirit Through Film." Films & videos on all subjects in any



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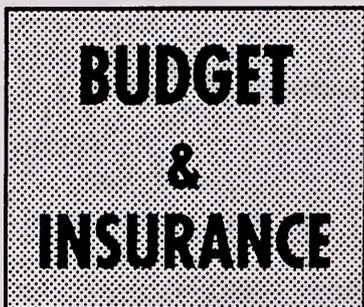
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genre are welcomed. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, student, any style or genre. Awards: Best narrative feature; narrative short; Doc feature; Doc short; Animated film; Student film; Best exemplifying film. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$35 (35mm); \$25 (all other formats); \$20 (student, any format); add \$10 for final deadline. Contact: Steve Grumette, 10942 Encino Dr., Oak View, CA 93022; (805) 649-4000; filmfest@ojainet.net; www.ojaifilmfest.com.

REHOBOTH BEACH INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 5-9, DE. Deadline: June 20; July 25 (final). Fourth annual fest celebrates independent & foreign cinema in a picturesque coastal resort setting. Approx. 100 entries will be selected (55 features & 45 shorts shown in 2000) for diverse programming in nine theaters. No repeat entries. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, children, short, gay & lesbian. Awards: Audience Awards for Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc & Best Debut Film. Formats: 35mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL). Entry Fee: \$25; \$20 (students), \$5 early discount. Contact: Joe Bilancio, 102 Midway Village, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971; (302) 645-9095; fax: 645-9460; joe@rebothfilm.com; www.rebothfilm.com.

RHODE ISLAND INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 5-10, RI. Deadline: May 15, June 1. Fest takes place in historic Providence, RI & has become a showcase for int'l independent filmmakers & their work. In previous years the fest has screened more than 23 world premieres & over 12 US premieres. Fest programs over 175 films & provides high-end industry workshops. Fest accepts shorts, features & videos produced in last 2 years. Fest is a qualifying fest in the Short Film category w/ the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. Founded: 1997. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student, youth media, family, children. Awards: All films will be eligible for Audience Choice 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.filmfest.org.

RURAL ROUTE FILM FESTIVAL, July (dates TBA), NY. Deadline: May 25. Festival has been created to highlight works that deal w/ rural people & places. Works that incl. alter-

native country, country western & folk music are encouraged. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, mini-DV, DVD. preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$15 shorts; \$35 features. Contact: Alan Webber, PO Box 3900, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; (718) 389-4367; filmfest@ruralroutefilms.com; www.ruralroutefilms.com.

SAN DIEGO ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-5, CA. Deadline: April 15, May 30 (late). Annual competitive fest presented by the Asian American Journalists Association of San Diego seeks short to feature-length narratives, docs, experimental, animation & mixedgenre works made by or about Asian & Pacific Americans. Entry form avail. from website. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, animation, mixed genre works, short. Awards: Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc, Best Experimental, Best Animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: \$15; \$25 (late). Contact: Entry Coordinator, c/o Steve Lukas, 10084 Kaufman Way, San Diego, CA 92126; (858) 699-2722; info@sdaff.org; www.sdaff.org.

SAN DIEGO FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 17-21, CA. Deadline: June 1; July 1 (final). 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 final); \$35 (shorts final). Contact: San Diego Film Foundation, 7974 Mission Bonita Drive, San Diego, CA 92120; (619) 582-2368; fax: 286-8324; info@sdff.org; www.sdff.org.

SEATTLE LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-23, WA. Deadline: June 1; 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-\$1,000). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10; \$15 (final). Contact: Jason Plourde,

1122 E. Pike St., #1313, Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 323-4274; fax: 323-4275; programming@seattlequeerfilm.com; www.seattlequeerfilm.com.

SIDEWALK MOVING PICTURE FESTIVAL, Sept. 18-21, AL. Deadline: June 1. Program of over 60 films in three days, plus seminars & panel discussions. Fest's motto is "new films for a new audience." 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: \$25-\$45. Contact: Erik Jambor, PO Box 590125, Birmingham, AL 35259; (205) 324-0888; info@sidewalkfest.com; www.sidewalkfest.com.

TELLURIDE INDIEFEST, Aug. 29-Sept. 1, CO. Deadline: May 31. Fest dubs itself as "an int'l event showcasing the world's best indie films & screenplays, high in the mountains." All genres. Screenplays should not exceed 120 pgs. Cats: feature, doc, any style or genre, script, short. Formats: Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$55 (61-120 min./pgs), \$50 (31-60 min./pgs), \$45 (11-30 min./pgs), \$40 (1-10 min./pgs). Contact: Michael Carr, Box 860, Telluride, CO 81435; (970) 745-8101; fax: 292-4178; fest@tellurideindiefest.com; www.tellurideindiefest.com.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-26, CA. Deadline: June 10. Int'l film fest held at Stanford University, showcases doc films & videos dealing w/ UN-related issues: human rights, women's issues, 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.

VISIONFEST, July 25-29, NY. Deadline: May 15. Formally Guerilla Film & Video Festival. Founded: 2001. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, any style or genre; no music

videos. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta, DV, 1/2". Preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: \$35 (shorts); \$40 (features). Contact: Bruno Derlin, PO Box 280223, Brooklyn, NY 11228; (718) 837-5736; visionfest@aol.com; www.filmfesttoday.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, Albuquerque, NM 87106; (505) 346-0660 ext. 230; fax: 256-9651; devin@alibi.com; www.alibi.com/alibi/filmfest.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July, OR. Deadline: Late May. Young People's Film & Video Festival is an annual juried survey of outstanding work by K-12 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, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival Coordinator, Northwest Film Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 294-0874; kristin@nwfilm.org; www.nwfilm.org.

YOUNG VIDEOMAKERS PROGRAM AT THE HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct., NY. Deadline: June 16. Presented by Children's Media Project, seeking outstanding original video & film work produced by young people across the country & the world. Selected shorts will be integrated into other fest programs as preview shorts. Submissions must have been completed since June 1st of the prior year. Young videomakers must be 19 years or younger at time of video completion. Cats: youth media, student, short, doc, experimental, animation, PSA, narrative. Awards: Golden Starfish Award for Best Young Videomaker; best in each category. Formats: mini-DV, Hi8, 16mm, super 8, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Children's Media Project, 358 Main Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601; (845) 485-4480;

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BIENNIAL OF MOVING IMAGES, Nov. 7-15, 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: U-matic, Beta SP, DVD, 16mm, 35mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. 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, Oct. 10-13, Canada. Deadline: June 15. Open to professional & non professional productions, competitive fest, holds showings in several cities in Canada. Entrants incl. amateur & independent filmmakers & pre professional Film students. About 30 works 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 in several cats. 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, PO Box 1010, STN. Main, Barrie, Ontario, Canada L4M 5E1; (905) 662-4406; fax: 733-8232; ciaff@canada.com; www.CIAFF.org.

CINEMANILA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 7-24, Philippines. Deadline: June 15. Fest screens over 75 critically acclaimed films from all over the world will be screened in four main sections: Philippine Cinema, Asian Cinema, World Cinema & Digital Cinema. Six to ten films from each category will be chosen to participate in the competition. Aside from parallel competitions for the films, there will also be distinct exhibitions, tributes, marathon showings, conferences & other special events. Seminars & workshops will also be held during the fest & will cover subjects & issues on independent filmmaking. Directors, producers, critics & actors throughout Asia, Europe & North America will be invited to attend the film event. The fest is culminating w/ the presentation of prizes, including the top prize, the Lino Brocka Award. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Competitive awards for full-length, short, & doc

films. Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, PO Box 2877, Ouezon City Central Post Office, Ouezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines; 011 63 2 371-8821; fax: 63 2 412-7686; miff@cinemania.com.ph; www.cinemania.com.ph.

FEMINALE INT'L WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-6, Germany. Deadline: June 1. 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: None. Contact: Jennifer Jones, Maybachstr. 111, 1. Floor, Koln/Cologne, Germany 50670; 0221 13 00 225; fax: 0221 13 00 281; info@feminale.de; www.feminale.de/english.htm.

GIFFONI FILM FESTIVAL, July 19-26, 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: None. 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, Oct. 3-5, 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: \$10. Contact: Joan M. Ozanne, La Geniesse, Forest, Guernsey, United Kingdom GY8 OAO; 011 44 1481-238-147; fax: 011 44 1481-235-989; landjoz@guernsey.net; www.guernseylily.net.

IMPAKT FESTIVAL, Jan. 1, Netherlands. Deadline: June 3. Fest is an int'l platform for innovative, new film, video, music, installations & new media. Each yr. there are thematic programs & an expanded Panorama program. Each of the thematic programs will focus on a current social or artistic development. The Panorama program present a broad overview of the best new audiovisual productions from the past year. Founded: 1988. Cats: short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, U-matic, CD-ROM, Web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Aron Dunnewind, Box 735, 3500 AS, Utrecht, The Netherlands; 011 310 30 294 4493; fax: 310 30 294 4163; panorama@impakt.nl; www.impakt.nl.

INVIDEO, Nov. 5-9, Italy. Deadline: June 13. Entry Fee: None. Contact: A.I.A.C.E./INVIDEO, Via Piolti de Bianchi 19, Milano, Italy 201 29; 011 39 2 761 153 94; fax: 011 39 2 75280119; info@mostrainvideo.com; www.mostrainvideo.com.

MENIGOUTE INT'L FESTIVAL OF ORNITHOLOGICAL FILMS, Oct. 29-Nov. 3, France. Deadline: June 1. Annual fest shows about 40 films concerning ornithological subjects, as well as all wildlife (wild mammals, reptiles or swimming creatures). Associations & orgs concerned w/ environmental issues invited to present activities in various forums. Regional tours organized each day specifically in bird watching areas. Children's activities around ornithological subjects are also held. 15-20 artists present photographs, paintings & sculpture. Entries must be French premieres. Founded: 1985. Cats: wildlife/environmental, doc, short. Awards: Cash awards. Formats: Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Marie Christine Brouard, B.P. 5, 79340 Menigoute, France; 011 33 5 49 69 90 09; fax: 33 5 49 69 97 25; mainate@menigoute-festival.org; www.menigoute-festival.org.

MONTREAL INT'L FESTIVAL OF NEW CINEMA & NEW MEDIA, Oct. 9-19, 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, Bureau 304, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2V1; (514) 847-9272; fax: 847-0732; montrealfest@fcm.com; www.fcm.com.

MONTREAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL/IMAGE & NATION, Sept. 25-Oct. 5, Canada. Deadline: June 15. The Festival stands as a premiere event for showcasing gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgendered films & videos. Cats: feature, short, doc. Contact: Katharine Setzer, 4067 Boulevard St-Laurent #404, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1Y7; (514) 285-9466; fax: 285-1562; info@image-nation.org; www.image-nation.org.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 27-Sept. 7, Canada. Deadline: June 25 (shorts); July 25 (features). Only competitive fest in N. America recognized by FIAPF. Large & int'lly known fest boasts audiences of over 700,000 & programs hundreds of films. Features in competition must be 70mm or 35mm, DVD or Video 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. 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, 70mm, DVD, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Serge Losique, 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.

MOVING PICTURES FESTIVAL OF DANCE ON FILM & VIDEO, Oct., Canada. Deadline: May 30. Fest invites filmmakers, choreographers & dance artists to submit film & video. This event is dedicated to exploring the intersections of dance & the camera. They seek "innovative work that goes beyond a simple

document of choreography. Work that demonstrates the kinetic possibilities of movement recorded for the screen." Two rough cuts will be considered if accompanied by a detailed description & schedule for completion. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation, TV, installation. Awards: Grand Prize for Best Filmmaker for Canadian Films Premiered at Moving Pictures. Prizes also in the choreography, performance & doc cats. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, 1/2", Super 8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 CDN; \$30 US. Contact: Kathleen Smith, 253 College St., #102, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R5; (416) 961-5424; fax: 961-5624; info@movingpicturesfest.com; www.movingpicturesfest.com.

SAO PAULO INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 28-Sept. 6, Brazil. Deadline: June 6 (int'l); June 15 (Latin Am. Showcase). 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, Associacao Cultural Kinoforum, Rua Simao Alvares, 784/2, Sao Paulo-SP, Brazil 05417020; 011 55 11 3034-5538; fax: 011 55 11 33815-9474; spshort@kinoforum.org; www.kinoforum.org.

SHEFFIELD INT'L DOC FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-19, UK. Deadline: June 1. The Sheffield Int'l Doc Festival is firmly established as one of the premier int'l events for docs. Combining a packed program of sessions & masterclasses covering all issues pertinent to doc, the fest highlights some of the finest doc film & video from home & abroad. Founded: 1994. Cats: doc, short, student, TV, feature. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (PAL only). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Helen Dugdale, The Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield, England S1 2BX; 011 44 114 276 5141; fax: 44 114 272 1849; info@sidf.co.uk; www.sidf.co.uk.

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SEEKING INDEPENDENT GENRE FEATURE FILMS (horror, sci-fi) and erotic shorts 10-15 minutes in length. Upfront buyout fees available. Send screeners to: Distribution c/o Scorpio Pictures, P.O. Box 1161, Brooklandville, MD 21022.

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CAPE COD FILM SOCIETY SCREENING SERIES of Brewster, MA, seeks experimental, documentary & fiction films & videos. Films can be any length, genre, or style, but should fit into one of these 7 categories: war, women filmmakers, race & identity, religion, Cape Cod, masculinity, or grief. Please send work on VHS, DVD, or mini-DV w/ filmmaker bio & suggested category. Also indicate your availability to appear with your work for Q&A. Send to: Rebecca M. Alvin, Belly Girl Films, Inc., PO Box 1727, Brewster, MA; 02631-7727; bellygirl@earthlink.net.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3



GIRLS ON FILM - WOMEN OF COLOR SCREENING SERIES

Girls On (and for) Film

Founded in May 2002 at San Francisco's Artists' Television Access (which has been supporting independent film and videomakers since the early eighties), each installment of the Girls on Film screening series provides a venue for women of color to screen their works and meet other mediamakers. Each screening is also followed by a discussion with the filmmakers. Past

screenings have included work by Myra Velasquez and Machiko Saito. Submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis. See listing.

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West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. For more info call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society featuring monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: \$20. Entry form & guidelines available at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, PO Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience (dialogue must be subtitled). Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental video for our ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS

screeener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

FLICKER encompasses a Super 8 & 16mm showcase held Asheville, Athens, Chapel Hill, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Richmond & Bordeaux, France. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you; see the website for a list of local Flickers: www.flickeraustin.com.

FREEDOM FILM SOCIETY, presenter of the Red Bank Int'l Film Festival, seeks short (45 min. or fewer) & feature-length narrative, documentary, experimental & animated works for monthly screenings in NJ. Send preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry fee: shorts, \$25; features, \$45. Ph./fax: (732) 741-8089; contact@rbff.org; www.rbff.org/entry_form/submit.html.

GIRLS ON FILM is a quarterly screening series in San Francisco that seeks short narrative, doc & experimental works of 30 min. or fewer by women of color. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. No entry fee. Send preview (clearly labeled with name, title, length, phone & email) to: Jennifer Jajeh, Girls On Film, 1566 Grove Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include S.A.S.E. if you'd like your work returned. For more info, email: girlsonfilmseries@hotmail.com; www.atasite.org.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in *Urban Mediamakers* magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. Tel (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

LESBIAN LOOKS in Tucson, AZ, seeks narrative, doc, experimental & mixed-genre work of all lengths for 2003 season. 16mm & VHS NTSC only. Fee paid for all works screened. Deadline: June 15, 2003. Send VHS preview tape, brief synopsis, artist bio & B/W still to Beverly Seckinger, Media Arts, Harvill 226, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, bseckinger@u.arizona.edu; <http://w3.arizona.edu/~lgbcom>.

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MAKOR continues its Reel Jews Film Festival & ongoing screening series showcasing the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs, and/or works in progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration. Program sponsored by Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation. Contact Ken Sherman: (212) 413-8821; ksherman@92ndst.org.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE seeks short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive 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 & int'l venues for additional screenings. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

OCULARIS provides a forum for film & video makers to exhibit their work at Brooklyn's Galapagos Art & Performance Space. All works are considered for programming in the weekly series, travelling programs & other special projects. Local film/video makers can submit works under 15 min. to Open Zone, a quarterly open screening. Nat'l/int'l works & medium length works (15-45 min.) will be considered for curated group shows. For submission guidelines & other info, visit www.ocularis.net; shortfilms@ocularis.net.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following your film's screening. Any length/genre. Connection to New England, whether through subject matter, filming locations, or hometown of filmmakers, helpful but not necessary. Send

VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

ROOFTOP FILMS seeks submissions for its 7th season of films screened on a Brooklyn rooftop. Series runs every Friday night from June 13 to Sep. 12. Seeks work in any genre; especially seeks work by women or people of color. Submissions accepted on an ongoing basis, but features considered for summer 2003 screening must be in by April 13; shorts, May 13. Curators encouraged to send entire programs. For more info, visit www.rooftopfilms.com, or email Dan Nuxtoll, director of submissions: dan@rooftopfilms.com.

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 bio & contract info. Deadline: ongoing. Tapes are not returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions & 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.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks 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 info & an application form, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave., #12H, New York, NY 10473. For info call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

VIDEOTHEATRE, New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All gen-

res. No deadlines or fees. Weekly programming in 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. Grand opening 6/03. VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com; www.VideoTheatreNYC.com.

GALLERIES

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single-channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.ArtInGeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E. to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

US EXPRESS seeks video art about US culture. Single-channel videos dealing w/ any aspect of way of life in the US: cultural events & phenomena, fashion, language, cars (or other fetishes), culture jamming, any sub-culture; all dates of production. For a funded travelling video exhibit. Send description ASAP: U.S. Express, c/o cityhallpark@earthlink.net; IMP, Inc., 373 Broadway, New York, NY 10013; fax (212) 431-8603. Deadline: May 31.

SHOWCASES

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA features the excitement of an annual film festival w/ a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest & movie showcase. On the first Tues-day of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films & features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin w/ a cocktail reception. 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.

FREIGHT FILM SALON seeks submissions for its Monday Night Shorts showcase series.

Work can be any genre, 20 min. or fewer; & on VHS or DVD. Will screen on 6-foot large screen, 2 plasma screens & 4 monitors. Please email FreightFilmSalon@yahoo.com for additional info; www.FreightNYC.com.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. 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.

INDIE FILM SHOWCASE, the award-winning Twin Cities cable showcase, accepts ongoing submissions. Programs run 7-8 pm every Saturday & Sunday for a month. No fees. Send your work in any format & a S.A.S.E. to: Indie Film Showcase, 2134 Roth Pl., White Bear Lake, MN 55110. For a release form & more info, visit www.proletariatpictures.com.

SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films which 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 5 Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266; ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

THEXPATCAFE TELEVISION SHOW is a screening venue for short independent film/video/new media produced artists, accepting submissions for the 2003 season. Work must be fewer than 20 min. in length. Mini-DV & SVHS format only. Submission form is available at www.thexpatcafe.com.

WEBCASTS

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine that is a showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the web. Seeks works created in Flash and Director as well as traditional animations & videos fewer than 10 min. in length to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

LOG ON TO WWW.AIVF.ORG FOR MORE NOTICES AND FILMS/TAPES WANTED LISTINGS!

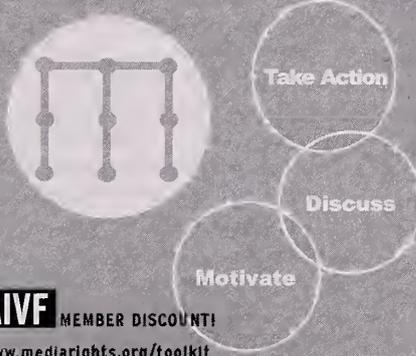
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Notices

By Charlie Sweitzer

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., July 1 for Sept. issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

COLUMBUS SCREENPLAY DISCOVERY AWARDS bridge the gap between writers & entertainment industry. One screenplay accepted monthly to receive rewrite notes from script consultant. Awards: 1st

475-0193; awards@HollywoodAwards.com; www.HollywoodAwards.com.

OHIO INDEPENDENT SCREENPLAY AWARDS 2003 seeks entries. All genres accepted. Winners receive \$500 cash, submission to feature film producers & representation, display, promotion by www.WritersScriptNetwork.com & more. Regular deadline: postmarked by June 1; late entry, postmarked by July 1. For more info & entry form, contact: Ohio Independent Screenplay Awards, (216) 651-7315; OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com.

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, you must have a film, 30 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) during operating hours, or get in touch w/ Jim at (212) 254-7107; jim@twoboots.com.

THE ANNUAL IDA AWARDS COMPETITION, sponsored by Eastman Kodak, recognizes

IDA at (213) 534-3600 x7446; idaawards@documentary.org.

VIDEO CONTEST FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS, sponsored by the Christophers, is now in its 16th year & seeks films & videos relating to the theme "One Person Can Make a Difference." Entries must be 5 min. or fewer & submitted on VHS (NTSC). Deadline: June 13. 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

INTERNATIONAL FILM WORKSHOPS offer 150 summer workshops from March to October, as well as 4-week summer film school & many other programs in Oxaca, Mexico, Seville, Spain & Rockport, MA. For more info, visit www.FilmWorkshops.com, or call for their catalog toll-free: (877) 577-7700; internationally, (207) 236-8581.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV administrator, now offers ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each month's workshop is held at MNN & features a different speaker, screening & focus; past speakers have included Sharon Greytak, Joel Katz & Sam Pollard. For more info, visit www.mnn.org or call (212) 757-2670.

NORTHEAST HISTORIC FILM'S SUMMER FILM SYMPOSIUM will be held August 8-9, 2003, in Bucksport, ME. This year's theme is "Barriers to Access, Barriers to Understanding/Crashing, Leaping & Running Around." Presenters thus far include Chad Hunter from George Eastman House (small gauge); Janna Jones, Univ of South Florida (follow-up on contemporaneous vs. compilation-retrospective documentaries); Snowden Becker, Getty (medical use of home movies); Dwight Swanson, Northeast Historic Film (Irving Forbes family 28mm preservation). For more info, visit www.oldfilm.org.

PBS'S ANNUAL MEETING will be held June 6-9, in Miami, FL. Targeted to producers, general managers & professionals in programming, promotions & education, the



Hone Your Skills at MNN

New York's independent video and filmmakers have a new opportunity to hone their technical and creative skills. Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), Manhattan's public access television administrator, recently began hosting a new series of free monthly workshops taught by local professionals. "The independent film scene is based here [in New York]," says Tracie Holder, independent filmmaker and MNN's visibility and outreach director. "And it seems almost criminal not to be linking up with the larger independent film community." Recent workshops have included "Structuring a Dramatic Narrative," taught by Joel Katz, director of the award-winning documentary *Strange Fruit* (pictured); "The Art and Craft of Editing," taught by editor and frequent Spike Lee collaborator Sam Pollard; and "How to Make a Powerful Social Issue Documentary," taught by *Losing It* director Sharon Greytak. See listing for more info.

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

distinguished achievement in nonfiction film & video. Winners honored at the Awards Gala on Dec. 12, 2003 & screened on December 13 at DocuFest. Early deadline: May 16 (\$55 for IDA members, \$75 nonmembers); final deadline: June 13 (\$75, \$125). Entry forms available at www.documentary.org, or contact

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

agenda will include big-picture strategy, upcoming TV/web content priorities & many concurrent sessions such as tips for optimizing PVR's like TiVo, preparation for the digital classroom & furthering the local/national model based on the Adaptive Path work. If you plan to attend, please contact Amanda Hirsch at ahirsch@pbs.org to arrange an informal get-together in addition to the overall meeting agenda. Additional details for this conference & others will be posted at <http://conferences.pbs.org>.

ROBERT FLAHERTY FILM SEMINAR will be held June 14-20 at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY. The 49th Robert Flaherty Film Seminar brings together a fertile assortment of documentary, experimental & hybrid approaches to examine a variety of ways contemporary filmmakers have grappled w/ cinema's abilities & frailties in relation to the concept of social responsibility & political struggle. Limited space available. Limited financial aid also available; deadline for funding applications is April 4. For more info, visit www.flahertyseminar.org. Contact: International Film Seminars, 198 Broadway, Rm 1206, New York, NY 10038; (212) 608-3224; fax: 608-3242; ifs@flahertyseminar.org.

SCRIBE'S SPRING 2003 WORKSHOPS offer a variety of opportunities for both emerging and experienced medi makers in Philadelphia, PA. Upcoming master classes will be taught by Lourdes Portillo (June 7) and Thomas Allen Harris (June 14). For more info, call (215) 735-3758; fax: 735-4710; inquiry@scribe.org; www.scribe.org.

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES' SPRING MEDIA WORKSHOP SERIES has begun & will run through June. Upcoming programs include a distribution & marketing clinic (May 6 & 8) & a workshop on legal issues (May 20). Next month will feature a cable television clinic (June 3). Programs begin at 6:30 p.m. & are held in the WMM offices in Manhattan. Discounted rates for WMM Makers & Friends of WMM. For more info & a registration form, visit www.wmm.com, or call (212) 925-0606 x302.

PUBLICATIONS

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To send work or for info, contact Rosely Torres,

LAVA, 124 Washington Pl., NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108; imre@igc.org.

FELIX is a journal of media arts & communication. The next issue will be edited by Kathy High w/ guest editors Ximena Cuevas, Roberto Lopez & Jesse Lerner. Entitled RISK/RIESGO, it will be the magazine's first bilingual issue (in Spanish & English) & will ask: What makes work/life/art risky business? What is the gamble? Where is the dare, the hazard, the danger? Felix is published by the Standby Program, Inc. Order by phone: (212) 219-0951; www.e-felix.org.

GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FILMS SHOT IN NY STATE avail. for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numerous tax exemptions avail. in NY state for film, TV & commercial production. Put together by Empire State Development Corp. & NY State Dept. of Taxation & Finance, 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & TV Development, 633 3rd Ave., 33rd fl., New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

OTHERZINE, the e-zine of Craig Baldwin's Othercinema.com, seeks written works fewer than 1,000 words in length, including interviews, filmographies, alternative histories of obscure or marginalized work, criticism & theory. Previously published work welcome, though work previously published on the internet is not eligible. Text formats: MS Word, ASCII text & HTML. Submit to: noellawrence@sprintmail.com; www.othercinema.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's 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 & communities. Funding for research and preproduction is rarely supported. Recent production grants range 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

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DIY REVOLUTION is now accepting free listings/classifieds on an indie media network. DIYR is resource aimed to unite independent filmmakers, artists, activists, musicians, media groups & writers working for a more just, authentic & progressive world working outside of a corporate paradigm. Visit www.diyrevolution.com or www.diy.com.

EMEDIALOFT.ORG CREATIVE PROJECTS GRANT

provides ongoing fee support for 8 artists a year w/ creative/fictional narrative projects who will work 50 hours to produce/postproduce digital video w/ an editor/videographer. Documentaries, political & promotional tapes are not covered by this grant, but low rates & discounts for all work are available. Send 250-200 word project description, resume & S.A.S.E. to Bill Creston & Barbara Rosenthal, eMediaLoft, 55 Bethune St. #A-628, NY, NY 10014-2035.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS

fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundation's goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote int'l cooperation & advance human achievement. www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

HARBURG FOUNDATION

seeks letters of inquiry for possible future funding for controversial, risky, or innovative projects that use communication systems (radio, computer, television, theater, documentary film, books) to educate & inform about serious issues. Preference given to new works. Contact Ernie Harburg; (212) 343-9453; ernie@harburgfoundation.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM

offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC

artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The Foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd. Tel.: (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: (651) 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

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.

OPEN CALL FOR PRODUCTION & COMPLETION FUNDS

are available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants w/ public TV projects in production & postproduction phases. Awards average from \$20,000-\$50,000 per project. Open Call Production Fund deadlines: Feb. 28. & Aug. 29 2003. Review process for the Open Call takes approximately 3-6 months. Open Door Completion Fund deadline: none, but full-length rough cut must be submitted. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 145 Ninth St, Suite 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814 x122; fax: 863-7428; mediafund@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA

provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, along w/ instruction & technical support. Students, media arts center members & unaffiliated independents are encouraged to apply. Commercial projects, music videos & PSA's not considered. Feature-length works also discouraged. Provides camera on year-round basis. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 weeks minimum for processing. Tel.: (206) 467-8666; fax: (212) 467-9165; filmgrant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS (PIC) COMPLETION FUNDS

are provided for the final preparations of broadcast masters of Pacific Island-themed programs intended for nat'l public television. Cats: documentary, per-

formance, children's & cultural affairs programming. PIC is particularly interested in projects that examine & illuminate realities of Pacific Islander issues such as diversity, identity & spirituality. Full-length rough cut must be submitted w/ application. Must be PBS standard lengths. Awards range from \$20,000 to \$30,000. Application fee: \$25. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Annie Moriyasu, Media Fund, PIC, 1221 Kapi'olani Blvd, Ste. 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814; tel.: (808) 591-0059; fax: 591-1114; amoriyasu@piccom.org; www.piccom.org.

PANAVISION'S NEW FILMMAKER PROGRAM

donates 16mm camera packages to film projects, incl. graduate student thesis films, of any genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

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.

SUNDANCE DOCUMENTARY FUND

, formerly the Soros Documentary Fund, supports int'l doc films & videos on current & significant issues in human rights, freedom of expression, social justice & civil liberties. Development funds for research & preproduction awarded up to \$15,000; works-in-progress funds for production or postproduction up to \$50,000 (average award is \$25,000). See www.sundance.org.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION

supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area & Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must have nonprofit status/fiscal sponsorship. Send letter of inquiry and synopsis to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave., #209, San Francisco, CA 94133-3930; (415) 391-0911.

Classifieds

Deadline: First of each month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., July 1st for September issue). **Contact:** (212) 807-1400, x221; fax: (212) 463-8519; classifieds@aivf.org.

PER ISSUE COST: 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, x241.

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Ads exceeding the specified length will be edited. Place ad via www.aivf.org/independent/classifieds or type copy and mail with the check or money order 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 include card #, name on card and expiration date.

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PRODUCTION JUNCTION RENTALS: Cameras, decks, lights, mics, etc. Gladly answer technical questions. Rates available at www.ProductionJunction.com, phone (212) 769-8927 or email info@ProductionJunction.com.

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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

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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; <http://www.reddiaper.com>; or Geri Thomas (212) 779.7059; <http://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.

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; www.edwardsfilms.com.

MUSIC SUPERVISOR/CLEARANCE: 20 yrs experience in music business, former ESPN MD, wks on tons of docs & indies, Amandla, Mule Skinner Blues, Sounds Sacred; Billboard award winning sdtrk producer. brooke@rightsworkshop.com; (415) 771-2069.

PRODUCING YOUR OWN SCRIPT? A schedule & budget are more than just lists & numbers. Your schedule & budget should be done with the same creativity as your writing & directing. Experienced Production Mgr/Line Prod. filmguy13@mindspring.com.

RICHARD CHISOLM, Documentary DP; National EMMY winner; International experience; Personal style; Hand-held expertise. (410) 467-2997. www.richardchisolm.com.

STORYBOARD ARTIST: With independent film experience. Loves boarding action sequences and complicated shots. Save money by having shots worked out before cameras roll. Call Kathryn Roake. (718) 788-2755.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

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experience. Health care experience a plus. Send resumes and reels to Crosskeys Media, 2060 Alameda Padre Serra, Santa Barbara, CA 93103.

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AUDIO POST PRODUCTION: Full service audio post-production services for the independent filmmaker. Mix-to-pic, ADR, voice-over, sound design and editing. Pro Tools 5.1 environment. Contact Andrew: (718) 349-7037; brooksy647@aol.com.

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FINAL CUT PRO INSTRUCTOR. Editor & author of best-selling manual "Final Cut Pro and the Art of Filmmaking" available for one-on-one tutoring sessions in New York City. Good rates, beginners welcome. Contact David, belmondo@mindspring.com.

FLAT RATE SOUND: Edit/Design/Mix: Protocols HD, 5.1, M&E. AVID & FCP equipped. Downtown Location 10 Years Experience. Dozens of Features. Shorts, TV, Docs, Trailers, Spots. Credit Cards OK. Frank, Mark (212) 340-4770. SoundDesignMix@aol.com.

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.

**AIVF members can
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aivf

Unless noted, AIVF programs take place at our offices (see below). RSVP is required for all AIVF events: call (212) 807-1400 x301 or www.aivf.org.



**AIVF COSPONSORS:
2003 TELEVISION
DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL
SPECIAL PREVIEW: "VISIONES:
LATINO ART AND CULTURE"**

when: May 2 at 6:30 p.m.
where: 25 West 52 St., NYC
cost: \$8 AIVF/MTR members;
\$10 general (per program)
www.mtr.org

The Museum of Television & Radio is hosting its annual festival that showcases the outstanding documentaries of the past year. In addition, the museum and AIVF are presenting a special preview of *Visiones*, critically acclaimed filmmaker Hector Galán's bold journey into the richness and splendor of the Latino artistic heritage.

Creating an evocative tapestry with archival footage, interviews, and performance, Galán explores the crucial importance of the arts in the Latino experience. This sampler previews segments from the upcoming three-part series on PBS, which encompasses Latino traditions in theater, art, music, and dance.

Among the subjects featured are the beauty and social impact of mural painting and the influence of Cuban music. Hip-hop dancer Rockafella, cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz, and performance artist La Bruja are also profiled.



**ACCESS FOR ALL:
MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD
NETWORK**

Getting Involved in Public Access

when: May 13, 7-8:30 p.m.
R.S.V.P.: (212) 807-1400 x301
where: MNN, 537 W. 59th St.
(between 10th and 11th Aves.)

If you are you a filmmaker who would like to get involved in community service, or would like absolutely free access to video equipment, or have an already completed production you would like to show on cable TV in Manhattan, then this is an evening you should not miss. Find out about Manhattan Neighborhood Network, Manhattan's Public Access center, and the city's most underutilized production resource and cable outlet.

Tracie Holder, MNN's Director of Outreach, and Cyrille Phipps, the Director of Production Services, will join Public Access founder George Stoney to speak about the exciting changes that are going on at MNN.

MNN has built a three-story studio, which is open to any resident of Manhattan or any nonprofit group based in Manhattan. MNN provides free training in video production, including how to use studio cameras, field production with their PD150 cameras, lighting, and editing on their Final Cut Pro equipment.

Also learn about how MNN is reaching out to experienced filmmakers, whom they hope to partner with nonprofit groups to create innovative and meaningful collaborative productions.

**DOCUMENTARY DIALOGUES:
THE SHOOTERS' PALETTE:
STYLES IN DOCUMENTARY
FILMMAKING**

when: May 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
(wine reception until 9:30 p.m.)
where: AIVF
cost: \$5 members/\$20 general

It's been said that documentaries are done in the cutting room, but editors wouldn't have much to do if a shooter didn't provide the raw material. The way footage is shot can predetermine the style of your film. Do you want MTV or PBS, intimate or loud? Can you do it yourself or shall you hire someone? Discover your voice and vision with your peers at this month's Documentary Dialogues. Hosted by filmmaker and script/documentary doctor Fernanda Rossi.

reach AIVF...

Filmmakers' Resource Library

hours: Wednesday 11-9

or 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 Tuesday-Friday 2-5 p.m. EST

By internet:

www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org



ANNUAL AIVF MEMBERSHIP MEETING

when: May 16, 3-5 p.m.;

followed by reception

where: Location T.B.A.

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.

Board members will present current plans and answer questions regarding our corporate restructuring. Member participation is encouraged.

The meeting will be followed by a membership mixer. 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!



MEET AND GREET: SENIOR PROGRAMMING STAFF AT PBS

when: May 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$10 members/\$20 general

Don't miss this opportunity to find out how PBS works with independent producers and what they look for in terms of film content. Here is your chance to get your questions about public television answered in person!

Meet with Cheryl Jones, Senior Director of Development and Independent Films, Alyce Myatt, VP of Programming, and Gustavo Sagastume, VP of Programming.



ANNUAL PUBLIC TELEVISION MENTORSHIP SESSIONS

On Thursday, May 22, twelve producing teams will meet with members of the greenlighting staff from

the national PBS office 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 to establish relationships with each other.

Public Television Mentorship Sessions are offered every spring to AIVF members. For future submissions information and details on producing for PBS, visit www.aivf.org/resources/tips/pbssessions.

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

through a series of candid conversations. The Master Class Series examines how filmmakers have maintained their independent vision 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 their films made and ultimately seen.

All program details, including dates, are subject to change. Please see www.aivf.org for updated information.

SCRIPTING

Saturday, April 26: *Thirteen*

Director Catherine Hardwicke discusses the screenwriter as creative entrepreneur in a case study of *Thirteen* (Dramatic Directing Award, Sundance 2003; shown above right). Learn how Hardwicke called upon her fifteen years' experience as a pro-



duction designer to maintain her creative vision in her feature debut.

SHOOTING

Saturday, May 3: *The Station Agent*

Producer Mary Jane Skalski breaks down the shooting process for *The Station Agent* (Dramatic Audience Award, Screenwriting Award, Jury Prize for Outstanding Performance, Sundance 2003), demonstrating how the team made the film they envisioned within the budget they had to work with.

SHARING

Saturday, May 31: *Raising Victor Vargas*
IDP Films' R.J. Millard breaks down the marketing-and-release strategy for Peter Sollett's dramatic debut, *Raising Victor Vargas* (Cannes, Sundance, Toronto FF).



AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT:

FILMS AT THE LINCOLN CENTER

where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC
www.filmlinc.com

AIVF members may attend select series (listed below) at a discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office!

May 2-29, 2003

Films From Along the Silk Road
Cinema from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, and Turkmenistan

May 30-June 12, 2003

Open Roads: New Italian Cinema

**AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT:
WOMEN MAKE MOVIES
SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES**

where: 462 Broadway, Ste. 500, NYC

To register call
(212) 925-0606 x302, or
visit www.wmm.com.



Distribution and Marketing Clinic

cost: \$100/ \$80 discount rate for WMM, AIVF & FVA (fee includes registration for both evenings)
when: May 6, 6:30-8:30, Theatrical Releases; May 8, 6:30-9:30, Distribution Overview

Dreaming of seeing your film on the big screen? Come and discuss the practical issues involved in a theatrical release and what to expect in terms of a box office return

Legal Issues

cost: \$80/ \$65 discount rate for WMM, AIVF & FVA
when: Tuesday, May 20, 6:30-9:30

From securing and protecting your rights to dealing with the rights and funds of others, these lawyers and industry insiders will address the group and be available for questions.

DOCFEST/DOCSHOP

The New York Documentary Center programming continues year round with two monthly screening and filmmaker discussion series: docshop and docfest monthly.

May 8: *500 Dunam On the Moon: The Story of Three Villages in One* at The JCC in Manhattan, 334 Amsterdam Ave. at 76th St. Screening at 7:30 p.m. followed by a Q&A with the director

May 20: *Ruthie and Connie: Every Room in the House* at The Pioneer Theater, 155 E 3rd St. at Avenue A Reception at 7:00 PM; Screening and Discussion with the Filmmaker at 8:00 p.m.

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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 Caliban Foundation
Empire State Development Corporation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
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The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
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New York State Council on the Arts
Sony Electronics Corporation

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Visit www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon programs.

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

**Albany/Troy, NY:
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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.net

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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,
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When: Last Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Charleston County Library
68 Calhoun Street
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Cleveland, OH:

Ohio Independent Film Festival
Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Independent Film Project

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm)
Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: W. Keith McManus
(716) 256-3871; rochester@aivf.org

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Contact: Ethan van Thillo
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San Francisco, CA:

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hosts@seattleindienetwork.com

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,
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seattle indie network

Seattle Salon

The Seattle AIVF Salon has a new look: www.seattleindienetwork.com. The recently launched site offers member news, festival deadlines, a calendar of events, and soon, a showcase of local AIVF member works. The Salon has hosted panels and screenings with local filmmakers and organizations such as 911 Media Arts Center and Wiggly World Studios.

In April, the Salon cohosted Satellites 2003, an orbiting alternative and experimental film and video festival highlighting area organizations, venues, and artists, and presented a panel discussion on alternative distribution. The Salon is cohosting a Filmmakers Saloon with Wiggly World on May 14 at 7:30 p.m. The evening's events will include networking and a panel discussion.

— Heather Ayres

PBS Moments Remembered

By Jason Guerrasio

For over three decades, PBS has meant different things to different people. Whether as an educational tool or as a venue for the diverse voices of the world, it's been a pronounced feature of the media landscape. Here, an assortment of media professionals reflect on moments of cultural, historical, and personal importance in PBS's history.

"The most significant moment in PBS history for me is the roots of its formation. Public television's emergence as an antidote to commercial media was based on the findings of the Kerner Commission on civil strife in the United States. Stating that the voice of the 'minorities' must be heard and that our images must be represented in a national venue, the commission called for reforms in media representation. Many people don't recognize that PBS's genesis comes from African Americans and Puerto Ricans rising up [in] urban areas during 1967. The images that we now take for granted on public television came from deep protracted civil rights struggle. PBS should better reflect that historical reality."

— Lillian Jiménez, producer/director (*Adriendo Camino*); executive director, Latino Educational Media Center

"PBS stories and independent filmmaking have spiritually empowered my soul and being to participate in some small way to a greater whole of what we call democracy."

— Connie M. Florez, producer (*Constructions*)

"What PBS does best is experimentation. When Jacques Cousteau came to them in the sixties and said people want to see life underwater, though he wasn't taken seriously at the time, PBS took a chance, and it's one of the most memorable programs. People say PBS doesn't take risks, but PBS was the first to have a nature program, and now there's a cable station dedicated to it. PBS did biography programs; now there's a biography channel."

— Cynthia Lopez, director of communications, *P.O.V.*

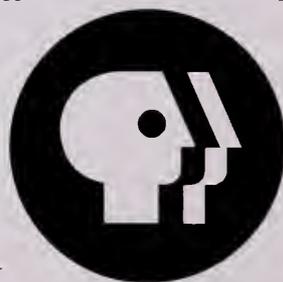
"I would have to say my greatest moment on PBS was seeing Buffy Sainte-Marie on *Sesame Street* when I was a child. She was always witty, creative, and reminiscent of all the

Native women in my life. Today, I still wait for that regular appearance of someone Native on television."

— N. Bird Runningwater, Native American Initiatives programmer, Sundance Institute

"The most significant moment in PBS history predated PBS—it was the signing of the 1967 Public Broadcasting Act. This banned CPB from interconnection and forced stations to band together to create a membership organization instead."

— Pat Aufderheide, filmmaker and professor, American University's School of Communication



PBS

"The 1968 *Black Journal* series, the first and only national black public affairs series on the air, was an important step in making American public television more democratic. Initially established in 1968, when urban rebellions erupted throughout the country, *Black Journal* was created to provide media access for black issues so that the lack of African American presence, and negative distortion, in the media could be addressed."

— St. Clair Bourne, filmmaker, and an original producer of *Black Journal*

"The launch of the Public Broadcasting Laboratory as the first live interconnect for the system; the series, *The History of the American Circus*, one of the first independently produced series financed by the original National Educational Television; and, of course, *Women Alive!* which commissioned documentaries by independent feminist producer/directors for the first national series for, by, and about women."

— Joan Shigekawa, associate director, Creativity & Culture division of the Rockefeller Foundation ■

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



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To make ends meet, independent filmmakers do everything from teaching to juggling.
[by Andrea Meyer]

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Tips on balancing work, life, and films.
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Keeping a career on track while raising a baby takes patience and a strong resolve.
[by Katie Cokinos]

Photos: Filmmaker Charlene Gilbert's grandfather, Fred H. Mathis, Sr., displays farm goods at a county fair, part of Gilbert's documentary *Homecoming* (Gilbert family); busy indies can be dogged by time and dizzying responsibilities (anonymous); Katie Cokinos and daughter Lula collaborate on Katie's latest screenplay (Katie Cokinos).

Page 5 photos: Guy Maddin preparing the set for *Dracula: Pages From a Virgin's Diary* (Bruce Monk); Doug Houghton and Oscar Williams, subjects of Johnny Symmon's *Daddy & Papa* (Doug Houghton); Emmy Rossum as Vicky Amonte and Sofia Milos as Celia Amonte in Dan Ireland's *Passionada* (Samuel Goldwyn Films/Fireworks); Tara Neal takes on the system in Diane Zander's *Girl Wrestler* (Diane Zander); Julia Frey and Pete Bosniak from Maya Churi's *Letters From Homeroom* (Erika Latta).

On the Cover: Suki Hawley and Michael Galinski, creators of *Horns and Halos*, are serious about filmmaking and family life.



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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,
I am just as cynical as the next person, so it is not always easy for me admit that I believe

what filmmaker and creativity guru Julia Cameron recently told me during an interview, "Creativity is an act of faith" (see page 51). But I do believe it, down to the core of my being. I also believe that it does not make much difference what that faith is in. It can be the hellfire-and-brimstone Southern Baptist god of my Grandmother, or George Lucas's Force, or just the feeling that if you throw yourself off the cliff of creativity your subconscious will be there to catch you.

Being an independent mediamaker is one of the higher and rockier creative cliffs to make the leap from. And while there are countless sources of information about the mechanics of making independent films, there is not a lot of support or manuals for how to live life as an independent mediamaker. There is the wonderful high of having creative control over your own project, but also the sinking responsibility of having creative control over your own project. This month we are trying to give you a little help in this department by focusing on living life as an independent.

To give you as many windows into this subject as possible, we have looked at it from several different vantage points in the feature section of the magazine. Andrea Meyer interviewed a handful of mediamakers about how they make ends meet in a profession that rarely pays all the bills consistently (see page 40). She discovered that while there are a certainly a number of mediamakers waiting tables, many are making ends meet

with jobs that are somehow connected to the media field as teachers, writers, or even jugglers.

Time management consultant and executive coach Susan Sexton gives us some practical pointers on how to keep all the balls in the air: career, personal life, day job (see page 45). And Katie Cokinos tells us what it is like when these things collide, in her piece about learning to write a screenplay again after having a baby (see page 48).

This month our Site Seeing columnist, Maya Churi, takes us through her own experiences as an online storyteller by exposing the process of her website, *Letters from Homeroom*, and her current project, *Forest Grove* (see page 21). We have also profiled two people who have been living the indie life in very different ways for a very long time: filmmaker Guy Maddin (see page 15) and the executive director of Film Arts in San Francisco, Gail Silva (see page 15).

You will also find an article from our legal columnist Robert L. Seigel about the usefulness, and lack thereof, of contracts that protect your ideas, such as non-disclosure agreements and non-circumvention agreements (see page 52).

The word "balance" has been repeated over and over again throughout the planning and creation of this issue, from the features to Robb Moss's First Person column that examines the need for pluralism in the US today. And balance is probably one of the most difficult things to attain in our lives today, both as citizens and creative professionals. But hopefully this issue will help you find a little of that precious balance in your life.

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“EGG” Expands

AWARD-WINNING ARTS SHOW CONTINUES TO GROW DESPITE PBS CUTS

By Charlie Sweitzer

Even though no new episodes will be produced past the current season, the production unit behind PBS's *EGG: The Arts Show* is going strong. Not only has the show recently picked up a 2002 Peabody Award (the third for the production unit, which also received Peabodys in 1997 for *City Arts* and in 2000 for *City Life*), but the cable network Trio recently bought syndication rights for the series, which it will air on a regular basis. “This is just the beginning for

Thirteen/WNET's *EGG: The Arts Show* airs its season finale, *Broadway Workshop*, the making of the musical *Traps*, on PBS this summer.

EGG,” says executive producer Jeff Folmsbee.

“PBS has some really, really incredible shows, and, frankly, they underexpose them,” says Trio's vice president of acquisitions and program planning, Kris Slava. “PBS is set up in such a way that it's very difficult to give *EGG* the showcase it really needs. We can put it in a place where people can always find it.”

Trio will only be airing past shows and not producing any new episodes of the series. “It's a shame that we don't have the money to continue *EGG* in production,” Slava says. “The issue [is] money, number one. Number two—and this is going to be a

dumb TV programmer thing to say, because I'm going to use some buzzwords—but it's also about branding. *EGG* is very, very associated with PBS, and I couldn't love it more, but at the same time our work here, especially in the early years of [a] network, is to create a unique identity, or a unique brand.”

EGG is trying to expand its presence outside of PBS. The group has received a grant from the Marilyn M. Simpson Trust to develop the *EGG* Educational Toolkit, which will repackage the show's individual segments for use in the classroom. “It's a way to trick arts education into the schools that don't even have art classes,” Folmsbee says.

In addition the *EGG* production unit is “incubating” a variety of new programs, according to Folmsbee, including a feature-length project called *Traps* (which was reworked as a recent episode of *EGG*) and what he hopes will be a new series called

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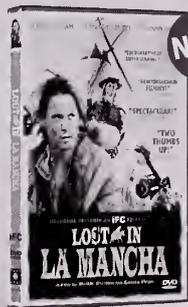
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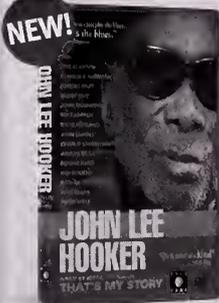
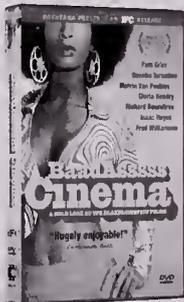
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Second-Hand Stories. The series, which recently had its pilot greenlighted by PBS, is the creation of *The Target Shoots First* director Chris Wilcha and will feature Wilcha traveling around the country in a used ambulance and "exploring American through the second-hand markets."

"[It's] *This American Life* meets *Antiques Roadshow*," Folmsbee says. "It relates to the EGG sensibility, but it's got a wider mass appeal."

Arts Groups Explore Manhattan Cohabitation

MONIES GIVEN TO EXAMINE FEASIBILITY OF ARTS CENTERS

Two different grants were doled out recently to study the feasibility of arts centers based in lower Manhattan that someday might house an array of film and media companies. New York's Film/Video Arts (F/VA) and the Independent Feature Project (IFP) received funding from New York's Empire State Development Corporation to explore the possibility of a major media arts center that would house both nonprofit and for-profit film- and video-related institutions. And Deutsche Bank granted the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) funding to examine the possibility of an overall arts center based on what Deutsche Bank calls "place-based strategies."

NYFA, working with several other arts groups, will receive \$150,000 over the next two years for the project called New York Creates. They will explore, among other things, the feasibility of creating "a space that could be used both by working artists and artisans," according to NYFA executive director Ted Berger. "Part of what NYFA is trying to look at is, What kinds of collaborations are needed? I believe this is a time for collaboration, both within the disciplines and across the disciplines. . . . In tight times, the idea of a collaborative-space project might be very

appealing to donors."

F/VA and IFP's ideal center would be a place where people "can have conversations about their work, they can work on their work, they can screen their work, they can potentially talk to distributors," says F/VA Executive Director Eileen Newman. "We want it to be a place where if you're involved in the film community in New York, you have some reason at some point to come to this place."

The IFP-F/VA partnership received a \$100,000 grant to conduct their study, which they expect to complete in six to eight months. The money is part of \$1 million in state funds earmarked by the Empire State specifically "to formulate a redevelopment strategy in response to the terrorist attack," explained the fund's spokeswoman, Glynis Gotwald.

One model for a media arts cohabitating coalition is San Francisco's



Ninth Street Media Consortium, which houses a number of organizations including the Films Arts Foundation, which spearheaded the project (see related article, pg. 17). "The space in San Francisco was a source of inspiration," says IFP New York Executive Director Michelle Byrd, "in terms of the power of organizations in a noncompany town to pool their resources and realize

NYFA executive director Ted Berger.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NYFA

something for their community that felt collegial, and felt like people were working in a coherent and comprehensive fashion.”

Many New York arts organizations already share office space. AIVF shares its office space with *Cineaste* and True I Films. F/VA has been sub-letting from (and sharing a conference room with) Women Make Movies. Asian CineVision shares its offices with a design firm, a producer, and Woo Art International, a production company which occasionally cosponsors Asian CineVision events.

But New York also boasts several similar models of collaborative, shared spaces, more along the lines of the Ninth Street Media Consortium, though none are strictly centered around film and video. The Alliance of Resident Theaters/New York (ART/New York) owns a five-story building in Brooklyn and leases a floor of a Manhattan building, both of which operate along similar lines as the Ninth Street Media Consortium. The Brooklyn building, called the South Oxford Space, houses twenty small theater groups which share a kitchen, fax machine, copier, and gallery.

80 Arts, a project of the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Local Development Corporation, plans to have a similar space up and running by December. Their building will be the home of small, nonprofit arts and arts service groups who will share two conference rooms, a rehearsal space, and a ground-floor visitor's center. “[The building] will be a microcosm for the whole cultural district,” says project coordinator James Lennon.

“People really need to get together and not be as isolated,” says Newman, who believes that her project's effects may reach beyond the creative community. “I think there's something fascinating about having this opportunity to define a part of the city, and I think that's very,

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rare. I've lived in New York my whole life, and it's sort of stunning to think about who we're having conversations with, and that the arts are looked at as a moving force."

Charlie Sweitzer is a Brooklyn-based writer and an intern with The Independent.

Kodak Recommits to 16mm film with Vision2

By Maud Kersnowski

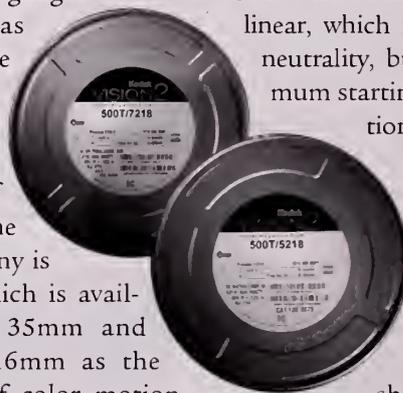
Only a few years ago, the independent film community feared that film stock companies such as Kodak might abandon low-gauge stock altogether as old standbys were discontinued, but this seems to have changed with the introduction of Kodak's Vision2 line of film. The company is hailing Vision2, which is available in not only 35mm and 65mm, but also 16mm as the "next generation of color motion picture films.

The new stock has reduced grain and improved ability to record nuances. This is so true for the Super 16mm version, Vision2 may help 16mm to become an even more viable commercial choice for independent filmmakers. In the next year Kodak will roll out new Vision2 products, which will continue to include 16mm formats. "The evolution of film and hybrid motion imaging technologies are on a fast track," says Eric Rodli, president of Kodak's Entertainment Imaging Division. "Speed of innovation is accelerating. We are committed to investing in a future where the possibilities for further advances in motion imaging technology are practically unlimited."

Super 16 in general has been enjoying a resurgence. Several of the films which were bought during Sundance

2003 were shot on Super 16, including Tom McCarthy's *The Station Agent*, which was picked up by Miramax, Peter Sollett's *Raising Victor Vargas*, now distributed by Samuel Goldwyn Films, and Catherine Hardwicke's *thirteen*, which will soon be in the theaters under the Fox Searchlight banner.

The technology used to create Vision2 not only reduces the grain but improves the film's light capture ability and increases the depth and richness of the midtones, making it a film that not only looks good in its original format, but converts to high-definition video extremely well. "The mid-section of the tone scale has been made more linear, which not only improves the neutrality, but also offers an optimum starting point for both traditional optical and newer, digital-based postproduction processes," explains Mike Ryan, project manager for the Kodak Vision2 500T film. "Cleaner, more linear curve shapes make a telecine or digital scanning application more efficient. Changes were also made in the toe section of the tone scale in order to open shadow details while maintaining deep rich blacks." □



For more information see www.kodak.com/US/en/motion/products/negative/5218.

Maud Kersnowski is editor-in-chief of The Independent.

Corrections:

In the April's article *The Specialty of the Arthouse*, we incorrectly cited Aviva Kempner's, *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg* as *The Hank Greenberg Story*. And in May's article *Independents and PBS*, we referred to *Globalization and Human Rights* as Danny Schechter's most recent film, when in fact his most recent film was *Counting on Democracy*.

Duty to Country

FINDING BALANCE IN UNBALANCED TIMES

By Robb Moss

Since 9/11, I have been thinking about what it means to be an American, and particularly what it means to be an American independent filmmaker. While this introspection has been magnified by the recent events in Iraq, it was induced by the feeling many of us shared, that the attack on the World Trade Center was

who have dedicated ourselves to working as independent medi makers? How can I express support *and affection* for my country when I disagree with many of the actions we are taking? Isn't patriotism something beyond politics?

During this time, I found a few clues in Louis Menand's *The Metaphysical Club*. The book explores the roots of

shape a way of thinking that he hoped would lead away from the horrors of war. And each felt the Civil War was largely incited by ideology. While still condemning slavery, the book suggests that it was the extremism of both the slave-holding South and the abolitionist movement that made the Civil War inevitable. Reading this I thought that, yes, this certainly must be true: The enemy of America is not our clashing differences, it is ideological absolutism.

The work of independent filmmakers has the ability to take a stand against this enemy. One of the very few luxuries afforded independent filmmakers is that our work is not presided over by corporate interests; economic independence (generally gained through low wages) frees us to make work that can maintain complex, controversial points of view. Our work can be multi-voiced, explorative, nuanced. Such work militates against the same absolutism that those nineteenth-century thinkers feared—the same absolutism that led us to war in Iraq, an absolutism that I fear is damaging the basis of this country. The genius of America, the notion that no belief system can dominate another, was built into our institutions. No one of us can be the single bearer of the truth. This belief underlies the separation of church and state, the right of free speech, and the work of organizations such as the ACLU. I subscribe to this belief.

So, the question emerges: Can I, as an independent filmmaker with leftist



an attack on me, and that I was being attacked for being American. It was also the result of my reaction to our president telling us that we could demonstrate our patriotism by continuing to consume. With three children and mounting expenses, I am as interested as the next guy or gal in the economy succeeding, but this conflation of consumerism with patriotism struck me as odd. Isn't patriotism more than purchasing power? Doesn't being an American confer added responsibility upon those of us

contemporary American notions of education, democracy, jurisprudence, and tolerance by tracing the nineteenth-century careers of Oliver

The enemy of America is not our clashing differences, it is ideological absolutism.
The work of independent filmmakers has the ability to take a stand against this enemy.

Wendall Holmes, William James, Charles S. Pierce, and John Dewey. Each of these thinkers was traumatized by the Civil War. Each helped to

politics who believes pluralism is necessary for our country, expand my own notion of our community to include work from right-wing film-

Robb Moss, from Berkeley to Harvard.

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makers? I don't know. I would like to believe that I could, but I have a hard time even reading op-ed articles by writers from the political right. I start them, but rarely can I bring myself to finish them. What would happen to us if there were more stories, independently made, from this part of the thinking world? I am not speaking about work that is essentially right wing propaganda masquerading as film, but work imbedded in other ways of thinking. I am struck that even our traditional commitment to diversity is destabilizing, as, for example, the Latino community increasingly moves rightward into the ranks of the Republican Party.

If we accept the proposition that democracy's enemy is not differences but absolutism, must not that be equally true for the left as for the right? Doesn't pluralism mean divergent political opinion? As Menand writes in the epilogue to *The Metaphysical Club*, "For in the post-Cold War world, where there are many competing belief systems, not just two, skepticism about the finality of any particular set of beliefs has begun to seem to some people an important value again. And so has the political theory this skepticism helps to underwrite: the theory that democracy is the value that validates all other values."

Ours is a community defined by the work it makes. Diverse forms, topics, and approaches often mark that work. In our multiplicity we represent that part of America that I value most: invention, authorship, and pluralism. It seems that our job as patriotic American independents is to make work that searches for the truth—and does not claim to be the sole possessor of it. □

The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America, by Louis Menand (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001; www.fsgbooks.com)

Robb Moss is an independent, nonfiction filmmaker and past board chair and president of AIVE. He teaches filmmaking at Harvard.

Guy Maddin

ECLECTIC FILMMAKER WEDS BALLET AND DRACULA

By Charlie Sweitzer

Though he just directed a ballet movie, Guy Maddin will be the first to admit that he knows absolutely nothing about dance. “I refused the first few times I was offered the job [to shoot the Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s production of *Dracula*],” he says, “just because I thought, ‘This producer’s a nice person, and I’m going to totally screw her over because I don’t know what I’m doing with dance.’”

It’s actually surprising that there are parts of the cultural landscape which remain unmapped by Maddin. Since his 1986 debut, a silent short called *The Dead Father*, Maddin, a Winnipeg native and former house-painter, has been quietly and prolifically leaving his mark on an unclassifiable little corner of international cinema, one that’s all too often lumped into the “cult” or “midnight movies” sections of video stores.

But Maddin’s eclecticism runs closer to cinema’s fusty arcana than Russ Meyer movies. If it’s in any way antiquated, or involves explanatory title cards, chances are it would excite and inspire Maddin. *Tales from the Gimli Hospital*, which played at the Quad Cinema in New York for over a year, looks like it could have been made in the twenties or thirties; *Heart of the World*, which recently won a bevy of awards (including the National Society of Film Critics Award for best experimental short), is a five-minute sprint through Soviet montage, silent cinema, passion plays, geological crises, and no more trivial an issue than the importance of cinema to humanity.

But ballet and *Dracula*? Not until now, with *Dracula: Pages from a Virgin’s*

Diary, currently in nationwide theatrical release. (It’s also worth noting that this is Maddin’s first entirely silent feature, but since so many of his films heavily incorporate silent film aesthetics, it’s almost unnoticeable.)

Despite his inexperience, Maddin ultimately accepted the project (“I needed the money”) and began adapting choreographer Mark Godden’s



piece for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which Maddin calls Canada’s “televised version of NPR.”

But compromises had to be made. The ballet itself was shortened from over three hours to seventy-five minutes, which meant significant cuts to the Mahler score. And Maddin’s self-described “claustrophobic” production design had to be scaled back. “Dancers take up a lot more room,” he says. “When they want to express that it’s a beautiful morning, they start running in post patterns, and deep down-and-outs, and cross patterns.”

One element that called for little compromise was acting. Another hallmark of Maddin’s films is an exagger-

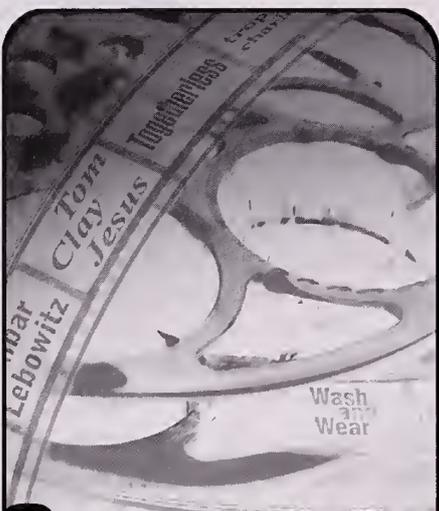
ated, almost theatrical style of expressing emotions. The ballet troupe’s training lent itself remarkably well to his aesthetic. “It’s not method acting,” says Maddin. “It’s all on the surface and it’s beautiful. And unlike a lot of ‘straight’ actors, they know how to walk with poetry as well. So it keeps things musical, even when they’re not dancing.”

Maddin also asked the dancers about their own favorite dance movies. “And they said they didn’t have any!” he says, laughing. “None of the dance films they’d seen had captured what dance was for them.

And that was being right up on the dance floor, and hearing the sweat drop off the foreheads and hit the floor, hearing Achilles tendons tearing, and hearing tutus ripping. And while I didn’t dub in the sound effects, I was at least able to get the rawness, the fact that no one is in perfect synchronization. . . .

“It’s more like Busby Berkeley,” he adds, “whose sexiness lay, in part, in the fact that he could never get these huge numbers . . . into perfect synchronization. And so you got the sense that these women were a little bit loose, that they were a little bit more available to you because they couldn’t keep in sync, and that maybe

Guy Maddin and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet shooting *Dracula: Pages From a Virgin’s Diary*.



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you could just dive into one of them—the one in worst synchronization could be yours!”

Sexual promiscuity, or at least the constant, sweaty suspicion of sexual promiscuity, lurks in the foreground of many of Maddin’s works, and *Dracula* is no exception. Much of the film’s action is dedicated not to Jonathan Harker’s experiences in Transylvania, but to Lucy (Tara Birtwhistle), and her suitors’ resentment and aggression as she succumbs to the wealthy foreign Count (Zhang Wei-Qiang). Later the men, incited by Professor van Helsing (David Moroni), lead a lynching expedition to Dracula’s castle.

“Bram Stoker depicted what seems to me an enduring dynamic in the way men feel about their romantic and financial rivals,” Maddin says. “There’s this feeling when you read Stoker from this point of the compass that Dracula’s been created by the men, and that he’s just got to be routed out—much the way a lot of people suspect Bush of inventing all sorts of perils that have to be routed out just to cause a distraction from his own personal problems.”

Elements of *Dracula*’s “otherness” (his cape, his eyes, his blood) are literally underlined in red. These, along with some bright handfuls of money, are the only swatches of color amid Maddin’s distinctive black-and-white Super 8 and 16mm photography (parts were shot on a favorite Bolex with a noticeable light leak).

These colors mark Maddin’s first steps into the world of computer-generated graphics. Up to this point, the most elaborate special effects in a Maddin movie relied mostly on in-camera tricks as old as Edison. “I wanted it to feel sort of like a hand-painted color, like Erich von Stroheim’s gold [in *Greed*]. We made sure the CG was done pretty poorly [and] sloppily. It was a matter of riding the CG artists who took a lot of pride in their artistry to just be a little

more sloppy, to treat it like a kindergarten coloring book exercise.”

Still, Maddin doesn’t anticipate more CG special effects anytime soon. He says he had a chance to use it in his current project (*The Saddest Music in the World*, based on a story by *Remains of the Day* novelist Kazuo Ishiguro), “but I’ve decided to eschew it completely. . . . In a low-budget movie, you’re not going to impress anyone with blowing up the budget on CGI.”

And by and large, audiences have been impressed with *Dracula*, enough to warrant its current stateside theatrical run and a recent International Emmy. Maddin says the only heated criticism he’s received has been from some dancers who say the choreography feels dated, and that Maddin gives away the dancer’s preparations. “I haven’t even heard of these preparations before,” he says. He’s since learned that dancers, like stage magicians, expect their performances to be seen from a certain angle. Shoot it from any other, and the move—like the trick—is, for some, ruined. “But the fact is, I reveal *my own* preparations when I make a movie. Quite often I’m happy to show the fact that it’s a movie. I leave boom mics in, or the papier mâché quality of the whole spit-and-thumbtack, jerry-build nature of my productions is certainly betrayed, so why not betray the dancers as well and keep consistent?”

And that spit-and-thumbtack aesthetic is sure to be prominent in the proudly CG-less *The Saddest Music in the World*, in which Isabella Rossellini plays a legless beer baroness in what Maddin describes as “sort of a Lon Chaney turn for her.”

“We’re going to go with magician’s tricks to depict leglessness in actors that actually have legs,” says an excited Maddin. “I want to use mothbally prestidigitations to get these things across. I think it’s more charming.” □

Charlie Sweitzer is a Brooklyn-based writer and an intern at The Independent.

Gail Silva

HEART AND SOUL OF THE FILM ARTS FOUNDATION

By Caitlin Roper

Gail Silva, executive director of San Francisco's powerhouse media arts organization, Film Arts Foundation, was raised on a 22,000-acre hay and grain farm in southern Sonoma County. As a child, she rarely went to movies; the nearest theaters were just too far away. "If we did go," Silva says, "it was a big fat deal."

Since leaving the farm, not only movie-going but advocating for alternative media has become as normal as breathing for Silva. "Gail is the heart of the Film Arts Foundation. She is the energy that drives the organization," says filmmaker Rick Tejada-Flores, who sits on the foundation's board of directors and has known Silva for more than twenty years. The foundation provides a host of resources to independent media artists, from training and equipment to help securing finishing funds. The foundation has more than 3,400 members working in film, video, and multimedia, and is recognized nationally as an important model for arts nonprofits. New York's Museum of Modern Art held a month-long tribute to Film Arts, and the MacArthur Foundation has recognized Film Arts as one of seven media arts centers of "national significance" in the country. Silva has an unusually hands-on approach to running the organization, now in its twenty-fifth year. Tejada-Flores says, "She plays a key role in mentoring young filmmakers. It's pretty unusual for an organization's executive director to spend time with individual members."

Silva began working part-time for Film Arts in 1979 when it was a two-year-old artist's collective, formed to provide shared access to equipment. At the time, the organization needed to pay off a number of debts. To gen-

erate income, Silva and a co-worker organized works-in-progress screenings, conversations with equipment and lab specialists, and screenings followed by discussions. By the end of her first year, Silva had helped secure Film Arts' first foundation grant, for \$7,500, and put the organization on firmer financial ground.

Before she began working for Film Arts, Silva spent nine years in publishing, working for 101 Productions. When she started working as their bookkeeper, the company had just one title, *101 Nights in California*, and Silva was responsible for packing orders into boxes. By the end of her tenure, Silva had become their business manager, and the company had more than sixty titles. When she left the publishing business, she was living with an experimental filmmaker and seeing a lot of films, so it was natural to begin working as a freelance bookkeeper on film projects.

"I could actually read a film budget," says Silva of her qualifications when she started at Film Arts. "They liked that I could balance a checkbook." In those days, the office was run out of one of the collective's founders' lofts. The staff had only one table that they would take turns sitting at. But Film Arts soon moved to an office in the Mission District, where they stayed for nineteen years, until their lease ran out.

In September 2002, the Film Arts Foundation moved in to its shared 21,600-square-foot home in the

South-of-Market (SOMA) area of San Francisco. They share the space with other members of the Ninth Street Media Consortium (Canyon Cinema, Frameline, National Asian American Telecommunications Association, National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, San Francisco Cinematheque, and the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival). Four of the organizations, along with a real estate developer, jointly own the building as part of an

unusual partnership between a developer and nonprofits. The foundation is in the middle of a capital campaign to raise the funds necessary to buy out their developer partner, part of a long-term goal of the nonprofits to own their own building.

Silva speaks with as much enthusiasm and conviction about Film Arts'

project-funding programs as she does about the real estate coup. The Fund for Independent Cinema provides financial support for media artists in areas that are the most difficult to raise money, such as development and completion. Support, Training, and Access for New Directors (STAND) takes first-time filmmakers from underserved communities through every step of the filmmaking process, with the help of experienced mentors. These programs further the foundation's goal of "providing comprehensive training, equipment, information, consultations, and exhibition opportunities to independent filmmakers."

"What's exciting to me is talking to a filmmaker about an idea for a film, and then a year later (maybe twelve), seeing it on the screen," raves Silva. "That's the best, bar none." Silva remembers when a Department of Social Services caseworker walked





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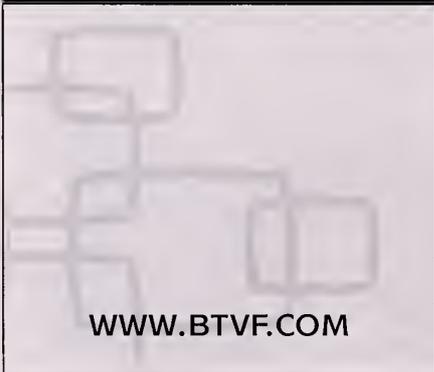
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into her office. It was 1981. Though he had no experience, he told her that he wanted to make a film. That case-worker was Terry Zwigoff (*Ghost World*, *Crumb*, and the upcoming *Bad Santa*.)

The effects of Silva's continued commitment to independent film and video are spread from individual filmmakers to major institutions supporting independents. "She is an incredible force in the Bay Area and nationally as well," says ITVS (Independent Television Service) director Sally Fifer, who met Silva twenty years ago, when Fifer applied for a job at Film Arts. "She was generous in her advice. I ended up working in the media arts community and have for twenty years."

"She is one hundred percent committed and a tireless spokesperson for the artist. She has shaped the organization around that focus," says Fifer. In fact, ITVS began in Silva's offices, shepherded by Silva herself. Fifer attributes much of the vitality and cohesiveness of the independent film community in the Bay Area to Silva's continued efforts: "She's the glue that has held this community together."

"I believe that making media and understanding it is empowering," says Silva. She laments the consolidation and homogenization of media: "We've got to support and find and promote independent voices. Media is so pervasive, it washes over people. We've got to keep showing different views."

Erica Marcus, who is now a filmmaker herself, was working in Hong Kong when she first heard about Gail Silva. Friends at the Hong Kong Film Festival told Marcus when she was visiting the States she should look up an "amazing woman who has a passion for film and supporting film."

Marcus and Silva have remained friends since that original introduction twenty years ago. "There are a lot

of people who talk the talk about supporting filmmakers, and there are some people who just live it and are so genuine in their caring and their belief in the power and importance of believing in filmmakers," says Marcus. "No matter what type of film you want to make, Gail will be there and be supportive of you."



A fish-eye-lens view of the Film Arts Foundation in San Francisco.

According to Marcus, Silva's dedication is just short of too intense. She watches members' films at home many nights a week. She is constantly fund-raising, planning, organizing, and acting as a resource to countless artists. Silva does not have a job that is easily left at the office. "I'm quite gregarious in social situations, but I'm a pretty private person," says Silva.

Even with all her passion and drive for independent media, Silva does have a life away from the office. She and her sister, Sharon, a freelance book editor, live together in a comfortable home in San Francisco. They are both travel fanatics. They've recently traveled to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. The two even journeyed overland from Katmandu to Lhasa, Tibet. Silva loves exceptional food, and flowers. She tends to a fig tree, an olive tree, a Meyer lemon tree, and a dwarf tangerine in her back yard, along with several banana plants, and an abundance of herbs and flowers. "I love flowers, my solace away from a fairly public life. I love being able to come home." □

Originally from Berkeley, California, Caitlin Roper currently lives in NYC, where she is a freelance writer, editor, and filmmaker.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF FILM ARTS; FACING, TANJA RETCHISKY

Ask the Documentary Doctor

By Fernanda Rossi



Dear Doc Doctor:
As an independent filmmaker, I always thought that having the freedom to shoot any story I wanted was a great thing. Not

this time. Too many choices! How can I know if the story I want to pursue is the right one?

Whenever there is choice, responsibility follows. And with responsibility comes pressure. The more choices you personally have, the more stress you are likely to experience. In a network production, ideas and stories are tested many times, leaving the producer/director with precise parameters to follow. Some might find this constraining, but boundaries can be quite liberating.

Often independent filmmakers try, consciously or not, to create this same structure for themselves by guessing what others, such as the audience or distributors, want to see. Unfortunately, trying to second-guess trends or pick timely topics rarely pays off. The three minutes of applause at the end of a screening can hardly make up for the years of effort. And don't forget that trendy today will probably be tired three years from now. But most importantly, external motivators like these are not strong enough to keep you productive over time. Eventually you will need more and more external motivation to deliver the same amount of work.

The only motivation that you can rely on is the one that comes from within yourself. To check whether the story you intend to pursue is right for you, ask yourself:

Can I live with this character or topic

on the viewfinder and the screen every day for the next two years? Why is it important to me to make this film?

Honest answers to these questions can reveal the true motivation behind your desire to make a film and give you the needed push to get started or move on to a project closer to your heart. The stronger your commitment, the easier it is to pick up the camera.

Once you've found a topic you really care about and can be committed to for a long time, you need to assess whether or not the documentary format is the right one for this project. To make sure your story can become a documentary, try these two other questions: Has my character or topic potential for "movement"? Can my story be translated into images and sound?

A good story has natural dramatic movement (i.e. characters or circumstances change). Something happens and we stay tuned to find out why or

**A good story has natural dramatic movement (i.e. characters or circumstances change).
Something happens and we stay tuned to find out why or how or what the outcome will be.**

how or what the outcome will be.

If you have a static character or topic, don't despair. These too can be fodder for a documentary if your topic or character has enough facets that they can continue to be revealed throughout your film. One example of this technique is Andee Kinzy's *What Is It About Hats*. Hats do not evolve dramatically, but she had plenty to explore: hat makers, hat wearers, hats that represent power, hats and self-esteem, hats and fashion. The list was endless.

Fortunately, her documentary is not. She knew when to stop pondering.

Regardless of topic, the best way to decide if a film will be a compelling doc is testing its audio-visual potential. Can you "see" your film in your mind? Can you make a list of possible interviewees, events, situations, graphics, archival footage, photographs, and even animation? If your list grows every day, you've got a film that will also grow every day.

Dear Doc Doctor:
I'm filling all the roles in production and post of my film, plus a I'm a new mom. Making a film is way more complicated than I thought. I'm not sure I'm talented enough to finish it. Any suggestions before I give up?

Yes, do not give up. Or give up knowing that it will be as hard to deal with the consequences of that decision as it is to go on with the film. The difference between a productive, sometimes successful, artist and a budding one is not talent, but anxiety management. In the case of filmmakers, it's management, period.

It's understandable that with a film

baby in one arm and a human baby in the other, you are burnt out. Therefore, I would suggest you don't question your talent when your mind is too tired to be on your side. In my consultations, talent is never a topic of conversation. I don't allow it. Who is to say who is talented? Not you, at this point. Who then? Time? History? Your parents? Critics? A thousand strangers, a.k.a. the audience? Since this is clearly an impossible question to answer, let's move on to one we can answer: management.

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Management is the backbone of filmmaking. You have to learn how to manage time, people, resources, and, maybe most importantly, yourself, meaning the anxieties, doubts, and fears created by your mischievous mind.

As an independent filmmaker, you might think you are alone in the world. Not true. Independent is not synonymous with hermit. Isolation is one of the leading causes of your mind playing tricks on you. To avoid this painful situation, join forces with fellow filmmakers. Knowing what others are going through and how they deal with it can be an endless source of encouragement and inspiration. Join an organization or create your own group at home. There are also online groups like www.d-word.com. Without leaving the comfort of your home or your baby, you can chat with hundreds of filmmakers from all over the world.

You can also decrease the burden by not carrying the film all by yourself. Even when shooting on a tight budget you can find people to help you, and not just friends and family. Students and recent graduates often just want an opportunity to work on a film. Try checking in with your local schools and media arts centers for likely prospects. Once you've found a few willing souls, you'll have to learn a new skill: how to delegate. When you've been doing it all yourself, sometimes it's hard to believe somebody else could log a tape or do some of the research. But sometimes even a single, willing, excited student can help you not only to get the work done, but also to see yourself as the filmmaker you already are. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She also leads the bimonthly Documentary Dialogues discussion group offered by AIVE. For more info, visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

From High School to Gated Community

LESSONS LEARNED FROM ONLINE FILMMAKING

By Maya Churi

While cleaning out my attic in 1998 I had an idea for a short film. I found a box of notes I had passed back and forth with my high school friends. Aside from bringing back a flood of memories, I found many to be extremely intimate, present-day windows into the lives of adolescent girls, and began plans to stitch them into a film. The story would be told through the voice-over of two girls reading the letters they write to each other during class. The visuals would emphasize the everyday and the mundane of the high school experience. But after I wrote the script, I realized that the structural limitations of film prevented me from exploring some of the most interesting aspects of this particular story, primarily the juxtaposition of these two characters writing back and forth to each other. I also realized that the teen audience the project was geared toward wouldn't see this film, as most shorts are limited to exhibition at film festivals. Then, one day, I attended a

panel discussion about online storytelling and distribution, and the project, *Letters from Homeroom* took a 180 degree turn, towards the web.

I started visiting a lot of personal websites where teens were posting the goings-on of their daily routine. The similarities between these journal entries and the letters I was basing my film on were so striking that I

knew then that my audience was online, and the only thing left to do was build the site. Since this was my first website, it had to be simple. Starting with a framework of seventeen one-minute videos, I collaborated with an information architect and a graphic designer to create a site that offered multiple ways to view the story for slow and fast connections via video, audio, and text versions. The site also incorporated



message boards, background information, and online journals for the characters that continued where the videos left off. In an effort to reach the widest audience we could in 1999, we opted not to use any Flash and make our QuickTime video files as small as possible. After addressing all the limitations that become apparent when exhibiting video online, we started thinking about how the site would look and work.

When you shoot a film, the story exists within the frame. Online, the story exists within the frame and also outside the frame. Everything surrounding the video, including where the scenes are viewed within the layout, needed to be a part of the story. And so, designing the site was as intensive as shooting the video. After six months of web production, and with the generous support of the Creative Capital Foundation, we completed the project. The site garnered as many as five thousand unique hits a day, and after all was said and done we found that the nature of the story—two girls writing back and forth to each other—truly lent itself to the dynamic storytelling possibilities of the web.

My next and current project was inspired by a stressful flight over Texas. In a pocket of calm air, I looked out the window to see a new housing development being built. The winding road moving through the landscape looked like a snake in the grass, and each new home had its own private pool. On that same trip, I visited one of these gated communities and became fascinated with it. The residents all seemed so pleased under

Maya Churi, writer and online storyteller.

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their heavy security umbrella, sanitized lawns, and picture-perfect, cookie-cutter homes. I remembered the short story by John Cheever, *The Swimmer*. Inspired, I started thinking about a story of a boy who swims across all the pools in his gated community before it is time for him to go to bed that evening. The community would be at once an escape from and a mirror of his own troubles.

Tentatively titled *Forest Grove*, the project will explore the architecture of manufactured communities by aligning them with the architecture of dynamic storytelling. Like *Letters from Homeroom*, the story will be told using moving images inside a specifically structured website. This time, to emphasize the spatial experience of living in this environment, the “set” for the story will be an actual architect’s scale model of the Forest Grove Gated Community: thirty-six houses, twelve swimming pools, a community center, and security guard station assembled on streets and culverts. Borrowing a page from Todd Haynes’ classic underground short, *The Karen Carpenter Story*, still photographs will be taken of miniature people enacting the scenes and then given motion with Flash-based animation.

As with any narrative project, the first step was to write the story. In this case I wrote it in screenplay format, adapted to include many of the elements that will be part of the website. Next, I hired an architect to work with me on designing the houses and community layout. After months of testing with different surfaces and figurines, we settled on a combination best suited not only for lighting and scale, but also for the story’s dynamic motion. Here, the visual concept began to materialize—to

draw the audience, like the residents of Forest Grove, into a false sense of security by focusing on patterns, rules, and laws designed to contribute to their “quality of life,” but which, in reality, take it away. The unadorned balsa wood homes and fluffy green trees and shrubs are placed under specific community guidelines to look as “natural” as can be. Our cast of char-



acters, made by a German figurine company specializing in railroad modeling, have an incredible range of emotions when looked at in extreme close-ups. Yet from a distance, the 12’ x 8’ platform resembles a minimum-security prison compound.

Once all scenic and cast elements are in place, then comes the photography, which I expect will take two weeks to storyboard and shoot. After editing and manipulating the images, I will work closely with a graphic designer, Flash animator, and production person. But that is looking ahead. I am still deep in the model-making process, and as the project requires multiple disciplines (model-making, photography, web/graphic design), I am approaching it one step at a time. Tackling this project in steps has allowed flexibility in dealing with the ever-changing technology but also gives me more opportunity to apply new technologies to the story itself. And since online storytelling is baby-stepping its way to the future, there’s lots to explore. □

Scaled balsa sets are modeled after large, suburban Texas homes.

Maya Churi is a writer and filmmaker based in Manhattan.

Samuel Goldwyn Films

Jason Guerrasio interviews Tom Quinn

What is Samuel Goldwyn Films?

It's the oldest American independent producer/distributor.

When and why was Samuel Goldwyn Films created?

In the late 1970's, Samuel Goldwyn, Jr. created the Samuel Goldwyn Company,

To produce and acquire films for the US market.

How do you differ from MGM?

We have nothing to do with them. At one time, MGM created a specialty division called Goldwyn Film that had nothing to do with us. The only other

think the majority of film that I look for, and Sam is looking for, can pretty much be traced back to his entire slate of films since the early eighties. That encompasses films as far ranging as *Sid & Nancy* to *The Madness of King George*. I think our slate now pretty much shows the scope of what we can do, between stuff like *The Man from Elysian Fields* to Ingmar Bergman's *Faithless* to *Raising Victor Vargas*. We have not done a documentary in some time, but we are certainly looking to find something [we can market theatrically]. Everything that we buy is



which then later became Samuel Goldwyn Films. He and our president, Meyer Gottlieb, [have] been working together since they created the first incarnation of the Samuel Goldwyn Company. We're looking to produce films anywhere between \$5-10 million, and the flip side to that is, we're also acquiring films that range from foreign language to English language. Those can be films that we produce, much like *Tortilla Soup*, or they can be acquisitions, much like *Raising Victor Vargas*.

The mission of Samuel Goldwyn Films is . . .

Ramola Garai (left and far right) as Cassandra, and Henry Thomas as Simon, in Tim Fywell's *Capture the Castle*.

relationship is that Sam's father was the first president, so the "G" in MGM is actually related to the family.

What is your affiliation with Fireworks Pictures and Stratosphere Entertainment?

We created a distribution partnership, IDP Distribution, with Fireworks and Stratosphere, two other companies that acquire films. We all acquire and fill the pipeline of IDP [and] sometimes we acquire together. It was basically a much more economical way to have a competitive distribution arm.

What types of films do you seek?

A whole variety. What I'm looking for pretty much runs the gamut of what you will find in specialized film. I

theatrical. We do not buy for straight-to-video, and we only buy for the US.

Explain what you mean by specialized film.

There are a lot of different types of films that I think qualify as specialized films. One common denominator of what I call specialized film is any release that is six hundred prints or under. That's really the only common denominator.

Where and how do you find them?

We track the world quite competitively. We will do Cannes, Sundance, Toronto. We'll also do London screenings when they happen. But on top of that, I will also go to Paris, Guadalajara, Hong Kong. It's a lot of travel during the year.

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If you can't necessarily have a staff to cover the entire world by virtue of pure labor, I think you will have to go out and make relationships that matter so that you are fairly considered with the other distributors. That's what we try to do. We try to build strong relationships because we are definitely an aggressive buyer, but we're not a volume buyer. On the flip side, the one thing I'm most proud of is that per film, IDP has had an incredible average, and has done far better than other specialized distributors at some of the major [studios].

How many films do you acquire each year?

About eight films per year, but that number could go up. Honestly, it's not a quota, and the beauty is if we see something we like, we want to buy it.

How do you work with the filmmakers when preparing their films for release?

It's an open-door policy. You have so many people you can call to get something done. You can call me. You can call our head of distribution. You can call our head of publicity. You can call Sam. You can call our president, Meyer. It may be too open-door policy,

but I feel that's the kind of place Sam wants to provide to the filmmakers. We want them to be happy with the release. We want them to be involved. Honestly, we don't want to buy movies where the filmmaker is not going to be involved, because we feel they know the film as well as we do, if not better.

How should filmmakers approach you with their projects?

At any level. If it's the right project, we'll pull the trigger. But since we don't have a quota to fill, it's very much in line with our taste, and we will not compromise that.

What advice can you give filmmakers seeking distribution?

There are certain signs that spell success: It's being at the right festival, being in the right section, having the right materials, having the right word-of-mouth before the movie ever gets screened. Making the movie is, unfortunately, half the process. The other half is marketing it. [In] marketing [a film] to an audience, you have to be just as precise, just as passionate, and just as involved. Don't think that you

Emmy Rossum as Vickey Amonte in Dan Ireland's *Passionada*.

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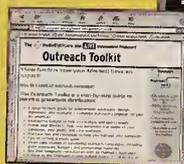


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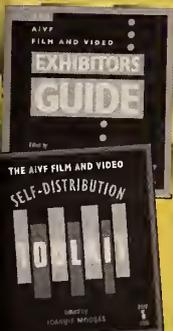
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He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not, dir. Laetitia Colombani (February 2003)

Poolhall Junkies, dir. Mars Callahan (February 2003)

Raising Victor Vargas, dir. Peter Sollett (March 2003)

Cowboy Bebop, dir. Shinichiro Watanabe (April 2003)

I Capture the Castle, dir. Tim Fywell (May 2003)

Passionada, dir. Dan Ireland (August 2003)

can turn it over to any random producer rep or a sales agent and just sit back and go on to your next movie. You've really got to pay attention, because there's a lot you can do.

What are some issues Samuel Goldwyn Films faces as an independent distributor at the present time?

Twenty-five plus [specialized] films released in December, all high-quality films from studios. *About Schmidt*, one of greatest specialized films ever, is really a \$5 million indie film, and that is competition. *Punch-Drunk Love*, one of the most expensive art films I've ever seen, is amazing. You've just got to be very smart, you have to be very aggressive, and you've got to make the right choices. And I would say that so far we have been pretty successful. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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Spotlight on Salons

REGIONAL GROUPS FUEL FILMMAKING SPIRIT

From potlucks in Portland to workshops in Washington, AIVF Regional Salons offer diverse models of community building that help our readers imagine ways to cultivate their own local resources. Salons are peer-to-peer programs run by members that offer the opportunity to structure a response to the most pressing concerns of local independents, through a format that is individualized to match the personality and needs of a particular locale. In turn, these regional groups allow AIVF to stay in touch with the concerns and achievements of varied makers who represent a vibrant cross section of our membership.

Begun in 1994, there are now hundreds of people of who participate in Salons in twenty-four communities across the country. Our annual spotlight on Salons this year offers insight from Tucson, Arizona; Edison, New Jersey; and Los Angeles, California. These Salon leaders share some of their best practices and lessons learned. For more insight, be sure to visit www.aivf.org/regional.

— Elizabeth Peters, AIVF director

Tucson, Arizona

By Jana Segal

Tucson, Arizona, has a long history of filmmaking, dating back to the good old days when Old Tucson Studios was built, in 1940, for the epic western *Arizona*. There is a clique of skilled filmmakers that still try to eke out a living making feature films in Tucson, and some of them, looking for word of paying gigs, occasionally show up at AIVF Salon meetings. And then there's the rest of us—film lovers who are tired of waiting around for Hollywood productions to come to town and just want to make movies. We make up the core group of the AIVF Salon.

The Tucson Salon meets once each month at a local media hub, Access Tucson, to network, support independent film productions, and screen local filmmakers' short films. The majority of our members make "no budget" videos, either by using their own equipment or borrowing it from friends or from Access Tucson. As a

Jana Segal handles the camera at the Tucson Salon director's workshop hosted by Jim Pasternak.

dynamic collective, we support members' projects by critiquing scripts, giving advice and encouragement, loaning equipment, and crewing for each other.

But our organization, like any other arts group, has its share of difficulties. We have to face the question of how to create a sense of unity in a group of "independent" filmmakers who, by the very definition, are individualistic and dedicated to producing their own projects. But the group has made a real effort of late to help with each other's projects as much as time and finances allow. Unfortunately, these "gigs" don't pay, so members have to balance their day jobs with their volunteer crew work. As a result, AIVF Tucson also struggles with fluctuating attendance, as its core members become immersed in making movies. In the past few months four films have been shot here that used members and taxed their free time.

One way we keep the group engaged is through the AIVF listserv. Salon events, members' accomplishments, screenings, and other events are posted on the listserv. Another way to keep

members active is working together to be prepared when more filmmaking business comes to Tucson. We are doing that by educating our members and the filmmaking community in various aspects of filmmaking so we have a qualified pool of crew members for our own, as well as larger, productions.

Our members seem most interested in lectures that develop our skills as filmmakers or pertain to the financial aspects independent production. To that end, we have brought in guest lecturers to conduct short workshops during our regular monthly meetings. But the most successful workshop to date has been an intensive directing workshop with filmmaker and master teacher Jim Pasternak. Pasternak has directed feature films, television, documentaries, dramatic shorts, and coached Christine Lahti on her Oscar-winning short, *Lieberman in Love*. For our workshop, twenty-five directors and fifty actors spent a three-day weekend in lectures, improv exercises, writing a dramatic workbook, storyboarding, and blocking and rehearsing actors in preparation to direct a two- to three-minute master scene under the tutelage of Pasternak.

As the principal organizer, I tried to keep the fees low while limiting the



enrollment of directors to assure that everyone would have individual time with Pasternak. It wasn't a money-making exercise; the workshop just covered Pasternak's fees and workshop expenses. We produced it the same way we produce our independent productions: with no money, a lot

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of phone calls, and hard work by dedicated volunteers.

Participants were found by calling every person who had attended a Salon meeting in the last five years and by posting news of the event on the list-serv. I got fifty actors by calling everyone I knew, putting an ad in the paper, calling theater groups and agents, and posting the event on various listservs. Everyone had to pay in advance, to make sure they would show and to assure that expenses would be covered.

AIVF members volunteered at registration and then participated in the workshop. One member acted as a runner, helping Pasternak locate the various "shoots" throughout the building. Participants brought their own cameras and lunches. We also charged actors \$10 to help defray costs. The actors got to attend all of the lectures as observers, practice in front of the camera, and be seen by twenty-five independent filmmakers. After the workshop, the taped scenes were compiled for AIVF members to check out when casting future projects.

The workshop was so successful we put together a one day "Directing Bootcamp." This time, directors had the option of directing their own three-minute scripts for feedback from Pasternak in advance of the workshop.

In addition, the Salon continues to promote Tucson as a great place to make films by getting the word out that there are skilled crew members here. AIVF has had a positive influence on the Tucson Film community by teaching and encouraging its members to actually go out there and make movies—money be damned!

Jana Segal is an award-winning screenwriter, a filmmaker, and the coordinator of Tucson's Writer/Director group.

Edison, New Jersey

By Lizbeth Finn-Arnold

Over the past six years, the New Jersey Salon has been hosting networking events and screening works from local

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Eight Steps to Forming a Vibrant AIVF Salon

by Priscilla Grim

STEP 1: GENERATE SUPPORT

Talk to friends and acquaintances who share your thirst to support and make the local independent film and video projects. Seek media artists within the community. You'll find them buying tickets at the local art-house theaters, renting movies at video stores, and grousing over the latest releases at coffee shops. Post flyers at these and other artist hangouts—and don't forget film programs at local schools! Look for film festivals or film societies in your area. These events typically attract filmmakers who know each other and are familiar with each other's work. Contact the membership director at AIVF and ask for the Salon application package. This is a kit that is designed to aid Salon upstarts and help you articulate your thoughts about the new Salon.

STEP 2: BRAINSTORM Gather the group for an initial meeting to discuss the realities of making independent media in your area, and particularly, how your Salon could best meet the needs of the community. Let each person express his or her interests, and figure out what resources in your community foster the group goal of supporting independent work. Salons often support film festivals, production, and exhibition, and they encourage education through panels and lecture series. Evaluate the viability of your intentions. Are you serving the community in a broad sense? Are you creating a unique resource? During this brainstorming session, you should be consulting the Salon application, which will help you

form a mission statement, establish contacts, and construct a decision-making process.

STEP 3: STRATEGIZE Good leadership is the cornerstone of every active Salon. Set up a structure: Talk about out what others would like to do within the Salon and how they would like it to be organized. Next, find a good place to meet. Your group will need an informal place to gather. A Salon can start in your living room, a coffee shop or bar, and later relocate to a larger venue. These often include public access television stations, media centers, and libraries. Consider organizations that also might be able to donate equipment, refreshments, or even ideas. Then set up a regular meeting date.

STEP 4: NAME YOUR GROUP

This will make things easier in the long run. Be creative, catchy, and fun, or be ironic, sarcastic, and cantankerous. Either way, your name should be one that people can easily remember. This is an opportunity to build long-term relationships with your community, as well as a way to solidify the community that exists around media-makers in your region. Let your name speak to that ideal of unification.

STEP 5: STAY IN TOUCH WITH AIVF

Call, write, or e-mail the membership director in the AIVF office in New York. Almost the entire staff is from outside of NYC and will understand your needs. Through AIVF, you'll find that Salons present the means to connect with fellow filmmakers not only locally, but all across



the country! AIVF can help you spread the word by assisting you with mailings, materials, and a listing in *The Independent Film and Video Monthly*.

STEP 6: MAKE A GAME PLAN

Organize a few events that would be realistic to produce and would benefit filmmakers in your area. Consult your notes from your initial meeting: What does your community need? Think broadly. You can plan for the entire year, or you can plan from meeting-to-meeting. Regardless of your structure, it is important to delegate the responsibilities to a coordinating group, and it helps to involve as many people as possible. To keep everyone informed, create a listserv, phone tree, or voice mailbox that everyone can access.

STEP 7: SPREAD THE WORD

Send the membership director your completed Salon application. AIVF will call you up enthusiastically and tell you what a great job you are doing. The membership director will confirm your goals and make sure you have sufficient resources to represent the AIVF community in your area. Once AIVF has given you the green light, we'll put your information on the web and in the magazine.

STEP 8: DO YOUR THING

Now that your Salon has been planted, have fun and watch it grow. □

For more info, see www.aivf.org/regional.

Priscilla Grim lives in Brooklyn and is a filmmaker, activist, membership director for AIVF, and recently, mother of Sophia Araya.

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filmmakers. In the first couple of years, it was difficult for the Salon to gel, as it bounced around local coffee shops before finding a permanent home three years ago in the offices of Salon leader Allen Chou's Passion River Productions, in Edison. And while turnout hasn't always been great, there have been enough new faces and continued interest to keep the Salon moving forward. With the New Jersey Salon's proximity to New York City, many of its members are already working in some aspect of the entertainment business. And despite these demanding day jobs, members come out to the Salon meetings with a desire to make their own movies and to talk to other filmmakers.

Still, talking about movies has never been a huge draw for the Salon. It has been difficult to live in the shadow of New York City and try to compete with all it has to offer. Through the years it has become obvious that what is unique about New Jersey's filmmakers is their frustration at the lack of film production in their home state. It also became clear that Salon members possessed talent and experience, and craved more hands-on production opportunities.

With the creation of Exit 131 Productions last fall, the New Jersey Salon began shifting its primary focus from talking about movies to making them. The filmmaking collaborative is made up of Salon members and was created to give form and identity to the interests of production-oriented members. Now, the Salon is able to actively create both artistic and professional opportunities for its members.

Exit 131 Productions was founded as a cooperative in the truest sense of the word. It is an organization run by and for its members, who all share in its benefits. And members are proud, although challenged, by budgets that remain at zero. Each member helps keep production costs extremely low by donating their services, equipment,

time, food, props, and other resources.

This production collaboration brings together both veteran and rookie filmmakers, and it serves the New Jersey Salon's goal of providing educational workshops for new, emerging artists as well. In fact, mentoring rookie filmmakers is the only membership requirement at this time.



And there aren't any membership fees for the New Jersey AIVF Salon or Exit 131 Productions.

In under a year's time, the buzz around Exit 131 has drawn New Jersey filmmakers out into the open. Starting with half a dozen Salon members at a brainstorming brunch, the group now boasts over forty active participants. Suddenly, busy filmmakers are finding time to attend multiple production meetings a month, as well as organizational, planning, and general Salon meetings.

The New Jersey Salon has been more active in the last six months than it was in its first six years of existence. Members are currently discussing ways to clarify the Salon's mission and goals, and there is talk of establishing oversight, fundraising, membership, and publicity committees. After years of being a casually-run Salon with semi-consistent monthly meetings, the group is suddenly looking at long-range planning. A core group of members keep coming back to Salon meetings now because they are excited and they have already invested so much of them-

New Jersey's Exit 131 production team is fired up to make films.

selves into the organization that it makes sense that they want to continue being involved.

It is easy to see concrete results from the combined volunteer efforts over this past year. The New Jersey Salon now boasts its own website, an active Yahoo discussion group, a casting database, a new logo, and other publicity materials. And on top of all of that, Exit 131 Productions has three DV shorts under its belt and shows no signs of slowing down production anytime soon. If all goes as planned, by the end of the year, the Salon will have a compilation DVD available and will host a screening.

As it has been in the past, the New Jersey Salon remains open to the public and committed to fostering a supportive artistic community. While actively promoting production in their home state, Exit 131 is by no means exclusive. In fact, the group is open to collaborating with writers from AIVF Salons across the country. For more information, go to www.Passionriver.Com/aivfnj.Html.

Lizbeth Finn-Arnold is a longtime member of AIVF. She produced Exit 131's first two shorts, A Taste of Days and The Interview.

Los Angeles, California

By Michael Masucci

Independent producers in Los Angeles are finding more ways of getting their work produced, critiqued, and distributed. Still, there is a need for a local group that can address the concerns shared by all independents. The active members of the LA Salon represent as diverse a cross section of the media community as one could imagine. We have installation-based video artists, digital animators, retired cinematographers, and working actors. Whereas most of the Southern California AIVF members tend to focus on documentary and narrative feature work, the core Salon members are largely interested in producing and seeing work

that is often under-represented by most media organizations and festivals. The objective of our group, therefore, has been to focus our attention on more than one area or genre of media, and to try to cultivate an interest in the many forms of independent experience. In addition, core salon members try to recognize the contributions of media pioneers who have helped pave the way for the current generation of artists.

The Salon's long-term goal is to build a local home for independent talent and to join forces with artists in a variety of media, including dance, theater, music, and the digital arts. The creation of an alternative distribution network has been one of the most difficult, but potentially the most important, projects the Salon has undertaken. This network would strengthen relationships with mediamakers and distributors locally and in other parts of the nation. For example, through its participation in New York's Global Entertainment & Media Summit over the last two years, the Los Angeles Salon has created relationships with producers and exhibitors nationwide which will help facilitate the exchange and promotion of valuable work.

The most successful series of projects that our group has produced so far have been the screenings, panel discussions, and exhibitions at leading professional conferences, including DV Expo and ShowBiz Expo. These conferences have given our group a forum, and the playback and projection equipment we need to present our work, without any cost to our Salon. As a result, we are able to present compelling new independently produced media work, and also exchange technical knowledge, without the necessity of fundraising.

By piggy-backing some of our programs onto other large-scale events, we capitalize on their publicity machinery and the shared audiences. So in essence, we have been able to create zero-budget events with exposure

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to larger audiences than we could produce alone. This has drawn potential new members to more specialized Salon events, thus spreading the word about our work and encouraging participation in the Salon and AIVF.

Other events have included a screening and lecture by award-winning animated documentary producer Sheila M. Sofian, a lecture by author and distributor Chris Gore, and an outrageous presentation by B-movie king Lloyd Kaufman of Troma (complete with live appearances by the Toxic Avenger and other Troma stars). These kinds of gatherings are intended to reflect the extent of creative diversity that independent cinema embraces. We feel that that if we set aside our creative differences as independents and seek to celebrate the range of independent voices, then we are more likely to see our collective strength as a movement for artistic freedom, as well as an important economic force.

The biggest problem that the LA Salon faces is the fact that this creative diversity creates a number of separate audiences that are not always interested in works outside of their particular set of tastes and interests. This means that each special event we produce generates a unique audience, with very little overlap from event to event. We have realized, however, that this is actually a strength rather than a weakness, as each audience learns about AIVF through event sponsors, and thus our network of people is increased.

The Salon has decided not to attempt any fundraising as yet. We offer all the events free to the public by recruiting core volunteer groups who donate their own money for refreshments and help with any publicity needed to get the word out. EZTV, one of LA's few surviving artist-friendly media centers, continues to serve as

our home base, and in October 2002, it moved to a larger space within the 18th Street Arts Complex, an interna-



tionally recognized artist residency and performance/exhibition organization in Santa Monica. This kind of support has enabled us to operate without having to charge admission to events and meetings. Our executive committee members, who include David Katz, Kate Johnson, Nina Rota, and myself, oversee the operation of the Salon and also serve as community-builders and representatives of the Salon in our respective spheres of independent film, further extending the network base.

Our administrative functions are typical of any organization: We try to face our problems as they come up, solve those that we have solutions for, and manage those that we determine must be resolved at another time.

In the long term, though, we are primarily interested in finding creative ways for indies to navigate their careers using strategies that make them more viable and more self-sufficient. We look forward to our continued evolution and to working with innovative people in all areas of the production chain, from writers on through distributors, and we encourage input from all AIVF members, both here and elsewhere, who can share their insights into how we as a group and as individuals can collaborate, expand, and improve our work. □

Michael Masucci serves as director of EZTV and as jury chair for digital video for SIGGRAPH 2003.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF MICHAEL MASUCCI; FACING, MILE END FILMS

The Eyes are Upon Texas

A LOOK AT SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST

By Jacque Lynn Schiller

Let's face it, a journalist's objective at a film festival is entirely different than a filmmaker's. While the scribes are interested in industry scuttlebutt, photo-ops, and free meals, the artists are introducing their babies to the world. So, rather than give one somewhat subjective opinion on South by Southwest (SXSW) this year, we asked some of the people with projects there to discuss their experiences at the festival. After all, the value of any festival can only truly be measured in what the filmmakers get out of it—and not just in dollars.

Alex Holdridge (dir. *Sexless*): I had a terrific experience at SXSW that not only opened distribution possibilities, but has also led to very interesting opportunities at other film festivals. I couldn't be happier that we premiered there. The screening locations were phenomenal; the rustic, 1,200-seat Paramount theater downtown is a gem; and the audiences are smart, young, and full of interest in independent film. Filmmakers who want to screen in packed theaters to film-loving audiences should not miss this festival.

Amy Sommer (prod. *MAMA/M.A.M.A.*): I enjoyed the fact that the festival and the city were well integrated. The venues were within walking distance, and the people on the music-filled streets were friendly—a big help for my directionally challenged self. It was a working vacation. I attended several of the panels—they were terrific both in terms of information offered and access to decision-makers and innovators.

Demolition derby champion Ed "Speedo" Jager is the subject of Jesse Moss's film *Speedo*, which showed at SXSW.

Name Witheld: I think the festival lacks focus and is a little impersonal. As a filmmaker, it's an important stop on the circuit, but not as enjoyable as some other regional festivals. It still feels like a convention, and the stepchild to the music festival.

Diane Zander (dir. *Girl Wrestler*): It definitely produced some contacts for distributors, although nothing con-



crete in terms of a deal yet. This may sound silly, but the results that were important to me were not the hobnobbing business side of it, but the emotional satisfaction of showing something and realizing that people were affected by it. The best response I got was not from a distributor, but from a former wrestler who attended a screening and said to me that the documentary changed the way he thought about girls in the sport of wrestling, that this had changed and opened his mind.

Greg Pak (dir. *Robot Stories*): I'm very happy with the press hits we got from the festival. The office did a great job

of providing me, upon request, with a comprehensive list of press that had registered with the festival. I sent out e-mails and press releases, and we ended up with a great blurb in *The Austin Chronicle*, a rave review at Austin360.com, and a mention in *indieWIRE*, as well as a radio interview, a local Fox morning show guest spot, and an interview with Chris Gore for his Starz cable show.

SXSW isn't quite like a Sundance or Toronto, with packs of distributors coming with the explicit intention of buying films, but we made a few more industry friends at the festival and continue to get e-mails and calls from folks who have heard good things

about the film and are interested in seeing it.

Name Witheld: I think they need to improve their filmmaker relations—filmmaker liaisons, etc.

Jesse Scolaro (dir. *Deprivation*): It's a great festival; what film festivals are all about. They program what they believe in and what they feel represents the current independent climate. The documentaries were phenomenal. The screenings were packed with anxious crowds, and the facilities are top-notch. It's a very pleasant environment, where you can meet a lot of people, watch many films, and talk



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about politics. The after-parties are tons of fun and set up so it's easy to socialize. The festival coordinators and volunteers are so friendly and will do whatever they can to make your festival experience more enjoyable.

Obviously, I only have good things to say. When you think of an idyllic festival—this is it!

As far as industry stuff is concerned . . . not very many industry people attend, in terms of acquisitions, but there were quite a lot for the panels (which are great, too). However, I did get a lot of e-mails and phone calls from people who were not able to attend but wanted a screener sent to them. It's actually quite pleasant not to have to worry about networking. Most people were there to watch, enjoy, and talk about cinema.

John O'Brien (dir. *Nosey Parker*): The most fruitful contacts I made were with film festival programmers and other filmmakers. The all-star distribution panel I attended reinforced my suspicion that the gap between the independent haves and have-nots is only getting wider. These distributors were not tracking the films. They were not looking for new product. They were searching for perfect migas.

I wish the festival would pick up some of the tab to attend (I've never been to a festival where filmmakers were completely on their own to find transportation and room and board.), but Austin is an inimitable destination. I would go back in two shakes of a lamb's tail.

Jesse Moss (dir. *Speedo*): As the producer/director, I was there to promote the film and bring it to the attention of distributors. I was present for two enthusiastic screenings at the Hideout, an intimate theater on South Congress. On both occasions, I had a full house, which was great because at my second screening, reps from HBO, VH1, and Docurama (DVD distributor) were in attendance.

I found the fest worthwhile, but, because of its size and the number of docs screening, it was difficult to know whether the film was getting any traction. (I wasn't in competition, so press and industry were all the more important for me.) Reviews from *Film Threat*, the *Austin Chronicle*, and the *Statesman* were all helpful, and generally positive.

Michael Blieden (writer, *Melvin Goes to Dinner*): My experience at SXSW was phenomenal. Their technical staff put together the most brilliant projection that our movie has ever seen. This may sound like a small thing, but it's the only festival I've been to that insists on doing a sound check before screening every film. Although this should be standard practice, I've had to beg some festivals to do a sound check, and I've even been flat out denied.

There's simply nothing better for the momentum of a film than to be exhibited in this way.

Louis Alvarez (dir. *Sex: Female*, coproduced with Andrew Kolker): We had sellout crowds, and the staff was very supportive (we had shown in 2002 as well, but not a premiere). On the basis of the screening, we got some interest from other festivals, as well as some internet articles and newspaper reviews. The general feeling I have about SXSW is that it is fairly low-key (I've never been to Sundance, so I can't compare). It's nice and manageable if you're a viewer—not too many things going on at once—and the audiences are *very* supportive of your work. Plus, as a documentary filmmaker, I feel that docs are very much central to the mission and not relegated to lesser status, which is something I think is very important in a festival that mixes fiction films with docs. ■

Jacque Lynn Schiller is a writer and Festival Circuit editor for The Independent. To reach her, write to jacque@ainf.org.

Urban Visionaries Youth Film Festival

YOUTH MEDIA COMES OF AGE

By Jeremy Robins

“I don’t like the term ‘youth media,’” says Kellon Innocent, a youth producer at the Educational Video Center in New York. “People try to use it to explain why the camera looks shaky. To me, a movie is just a movie.” It sounds like bold talk, until you see his piece *Tough on Crime, Tough on Our Kind*, a thirty-minute documentary about minority youth in the criminal justice system, which played at the Urban Visionaries Youth Film Festival. In the documentary, a nineteen-year-old named Sarah recounts how she was arrested the day after her

and interviews with lawyers, judges, social activists, and health workers. If it weren’t for the credits and the heart-on-their-sleeves tone of the narrators, you wouldn’t know it was a youth-produced documentary.

The complexity of Innocent’s film was not the only thing breaking stereotypes. Contrary to the common wisdom of the advertising industry, that teens only want to see fast cuts and visual over-stimulation, *Tough on Crime* had no shortage of statistics and talking heads. Yet it held the packed, teen audience in rapt atten-

Marking its sixth year, the Urban Visionaries (UV) Youth Film Festival has become part showcase, part teach-in, and part think tank for the best practices in the field. Housed for its second year at the stately Museum of Television and Radio, the fest now consists of three screening programs, a “Video Slam,” youth performances, and a hopping after-party. From its humble beginnings as a ninety-minute VHS clip-tape that traveled from school to school, the festival has become a major presence in the youth media world, a fact reflected this year in substantial grants from the Open Society Institute and New York State Commission on the Arts.

The festival, which defines a “youth” as anyone under nineteen, was also youth-run. A committee of twelve young people met for several months to handle everything from



miscarriage, when she was too depressed to refuse her friends’ urging to help them rob a taxi. She then describes the humiliation of being constantly strip-searched by prison guards. A twenty-year-old named James describes how his criminal record follows him, sabotaging his attempts to continue his education and provide for his new family. Their stories are carefully reinforced by historical analysis

tion. And despite the assumption that today’s generation of youth can never be motivated to care about social issues, the audience was fired up after the screening. “That was messed up!” said a junior from the High School of the Humanities. “TV is not telling the truth. It only tells one perspective.” “You don’t see youth perspectives in the media,” her friend broke in. “From TV you wouldn’t think that teens were into educational things like that!” By the day’s end, it was clear that youth media is finally coming of age.

curation, promotion, and outreach, to emceeding the screenings. By opening day, the youth clearly owned the event. Before the screenings, teen coordinators were pacing the museum’s marble hallways, hashing out details and rehearsing their intros. Inside the theater, the hundreds of high school students seemed on the verge of goofing off but couldn’t help following the mature tone set by the thirteen- and fourteen-year-old coordinators who were setting up sound equipment and handing out audience surveys. When

Helen Cho’s *Under Pressure* screened at Urban Visionaries Youth Film Festival.

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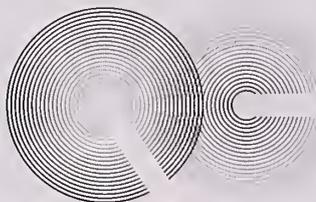
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the lights dimmed, no filmmaker could have asked for a more engaged audience than the teens, whose waves of moans, cheers, tsk's, and "What's her problem?" provided instant and honest feedback.

The field of youth media evolved out of a number of media movements and ideas in the past thirty years, including the call for more diverse viewpoints in media, the need for more hands-on pedagogy, and the desire to arm youth with "media literacy"—or the ability to analyze and decode video, print, and advertising. But, mostly due to the digital revolution, the last few years has seen an explosion in quality, funding, and the sophistication of the curriculum.

Films made by youth often have their own genres, reflecting the developmental mind-frames of the adolescent producers. Many films at UV fell into the "peer-to-peer education" genre, where teens break down social issues for their fellow teens. This year these ranged from a rather blunt public service announcement on gun control (child finds gun in cupboard; child shoots himself in face), to a number of complex and well-researched inquiries into sexual harassment, youth violence, and teen pregnancy. A definite highlight was Global Action Project's *Got Ghetto?* which features a group of teenage girls conducting a clever and nuanced

analysis of the word "ghetto" in the American mainstream, culminating in a sitcom/satire *Ghetto Friends*.

The other main genre—perhaps truest to the heart of youth media—is the "Who am I?" section. The best of these, such as Robert Yulfo's *Clay Life*, and Helen Cho's *Under Pressure*, sustain themselves as polished self-portraits while still bursting with angst, yearning, and a mythical quest for the director's own identity. Among the strongest this year was *The Amazing*



Life of Scott Tsang. Produced through the Reel Stories program, Tsang's piece is a raw and seething autobiography recounting his parents' immigration from China, his brain tumor at age six, and the death of both parents by the time he turned thirteen. The images are bizarre at times, from interviews with his teachers (about "What you like about Scott Tsang") to slow-motion shots of Tsang doing karate kicks. By the end you realize that he is using the camera less to

communicate with any audience than to wrest meaning and coherency from the chaos of his experiences.

Each year a few pieces manage to both defy categorization and take youth media to new levels, and this year's offerings were impressive. *Eyes on Us*, by South Asian Youth Action, follows a politically apathetic Indian teen who is trying to tell her boyfriend that she's pregnant. Searching through a New York that looks anxious and hostile on camera, the girl is forced to confront the new realities for Muslims in post-9/11 American life. The final scene is played out with the actors planted in the crowd of a real demonstration outside an INS detention center in Brooklyn. In fifteen minutes, the piece pulls off an edgy docu-drama hybrid in the tradition of Haskell Wexler's *Medium Cool*.

Other standouts included *One Family*, a powerful collaboration of refugee youth from the Global Action Project, and *Quest to Express*, by the Educational Video Center, a documentary showcasing teens who channel the rawness and frustration of their lives into spoken-word poetry, graffiti, and hip-hop.

But the talk of the festival was *The First Stone*, by nineteen-year-old South Bronx native Abe Velasquez. Shot using a combination of friends and professional actors (who were recruited from a casting website then convinced to work for free), *The First Stone* is a highly stylized piece that is part mystery, part thriller, and part commentary on the psychology of rape. "There's so much mis-education out there about rape," explained Velasquez, who is a student of the Ghetto Film School. "The message from MTV is that to be successful you

have to degrade women." What's most striking about the film is its storytelling structure, which Velasquez



claims was influenced by *Memento*. Unfolding like a riddle, the piece effortlessly lures in the audience's interest, throws them into confusion, then brings all the pieces together in a devastating final shot.

During the Q&A sessions, the audience jumped at the chance to give feedback, including a number of women who expressed surprise that a film about rape was made by a young male. But mainly the Q&A was a chance for the audience to express their enthusiasm, and to find out how to get involved. "Tons of kids came up to us after each show asking, 'How can I do this?'" said festival coordinator Rhea Vedro. "Teachers and program directors wanted to know how they could start video programs in their schools."

Networks are beginning to buy youth work, and more and more festivals are adding a youth component. The days when "youth media" denotes corny plots and shaky cameras may be nearing an end. Tim Sutton of Global Action Project isn't surprised. "If you listen to directors like Truffaut or Hal Ashby, they're always talking about trying to get in touch with their inner child," he points out. "Youth have an incredibly powerful perspective about life, art, society. It's a much stronger and more secure voice than people think." ■

For more info, log on to www.global-action.org.

Jeremy Robins is a producer and editor living in Brooklyn. He also teaches at TRUCE, a youth media program in Harlem.

Left page top: Rubin Polizzi (with mic) hosts festival favorite Video Slam. A high school group from Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, accepts a prize. Left bottom: Abe Velasquez addresses issues of rape in *First Stone*. This page: Scott Tsang, subject of his own film, *The Amazing Life of Scott Tsang*.

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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

On_Line

Dir. Jed Weintrob

(Indican Pictures, June 6)

Capturing the underground world of cybersex in the film *On_Line* wasn't a stretch for director Jed Weintrob—he knows a lot about the habits of internet junkies from his involvement in an internet entertainment company in the mid-nineties. “I started meeting a lot of people whose lives had



been changed by the amount of time they'd be on the internet, both for the better and the worse,” he says. His time with the internet company spawned the idea to tell a story about sex, lies, and webcams.

On_Line follows the lives of six people and their differing involvement with cybersex. From two guys (Josh Hamilton and Harold Perrineau) who own an erotic website to an internet fantasy girl (Vanessa Ferlito) to a Midwesterner looking for acceptance (Eric Millegan), the film is a twenty-first century voyeuristic journey.

Weintrob's biggest challenge was to devise a way to make people sitting in front of their computers sexy and intriguing to watch. Inspired by how people multi-task on the computer, Weintrob filmed on digital video and

webcams to get the look he wanted, and then, taking the popular seventies style of shooting in split screen, made the film look almost like the viewer was jockeying between reality and cyberspace. “We played around a lot with the cameras and the different settings on them,” Weintrob explains. “The digital world, the world where people are online, it's supersaturated, it looks very super real. And when they go out on the street, it's all filtered so it feels much more like film.”

Weintrob even used the technology that played such a big part in the film to get out of a jam. When he needed more footage of Angel (Liz Owens), the webcam girl of everyone's affection, it wasn't a problem, even though she lived in Ohio and he was in New York. “I needed something simple of her, like her brushing her hair,” he explains. “So I called her up and got her to brush her hair in front of her webcam. She e-mailed it to me and it was in the film the next day.”

Cinemanía

Dir. Angela Christlieb and

Stephen Kijak

(Wellspring, May 23, and
Cinema Village, May 16)

Losing yourself in a movie can be therapeutic, but when done constantly, it can lead to an addiction that's hard to break. *Cinemanía* uncovers this obsession as it follows five New York City film buffs struggling to feed their appetite for the silver screen. Whether it's watching a thousand films in one month, or knowing the running time to every film ever made, these Cinemaniacs take watching films so seriously that they will resort to violence if they don't get their way. This funny-yet-tragic doc won the Best Documentary Award at the 2002 Hamptons Film Festival, and was

shown at the Rotterdam and Tribeca Film Festivals.

The Heart of Me

Dir. Thaddeus O'Sullivan

(ThinkFilm, June 13)

Based on the novel by Rosamond Lehmann's *The Echoing Grove*, this story of love, loss, and redemption surrounds two daughters (Helena Bonham Carter, Olicia Williams) who are in love with the same man (Paul Bettany). After the death of Rickie (Bettany), the two sisters try to conciliate, but not before dealing with the past.

Oscar Nominated Shorts Showcase

In its third consecutive year, Apollo Cinema, a company that exclusively distributes short films, will showcase the live-action and animated shorts nominated for the 2002 Academy Awards. Currently being shown in theaters across the country, the shorts featured are:

Live Action:

Gridlock (Dir. Dirk Belien), *I'll Wait For the Next One* (Dir. Philippe Orrenidy), *Inja* (Dir. Steve Pasvolsky) *This Charming Man* (Oscar winner; Dir. Martin Strange-Hansen)

Animated:

The Cathedral (Dir. Tomek Baginski), *The ChubbChubbs!* (Oscar winner; Dir. Eric Armstrong), *Das Rad* (Dir. Chris Stenner), *Mike's New Car* (Dir. Roger Gould), *Mt. Head* (Dir. Koji Yamamura)

To find out more about the Oscar shorts showcase, including showtimes, log on to www.oscarshorts.com.

Television

Daddy & Papa

Dir. Johnny Symons

(Independent Lens, June 3)

Daddy & Papa examines the ever-growing number of gay men who are becoming parents. In this honest and humorous documentary, filmmaker Johnny Symons puts himself, along with his partner William and four

other gay male families, under a microscope to show a new kind of



American family. "I wanted it to dispel some myths," says Symons about his initial interest in making the documentary. "I wanted people to see whether you're gay or straight you still have to make a lunch in the morning and change diapers." Along with showing his and William's process to adopt a child, which included getting their fingerprints taken and taking a CPR class, *Daddy & Papa* also profiles three other gay families dealing with the demands of being parents. "There was something about each of the other families that grabbed me," says Symons. "They were each dealing with their own set of issues and I wanted to show a range of types of families."

Adopting a baby named Zachary (now three and a half years old) while filming the doc, Symons feels including the adoption made the film even better, though there were difficult times. "It was challenging because essentially I was kind of divided," he explains. "Part of me was being a filmmaker, and part of me had to be a parent, and I couldn't do all of those things at the same time."

While the film played at festivals across the country, Symons was overwhelmed by how much audiences

liked the film. Some gay couples had even told him they finally adopted a child because of the film. "Gay families are really new in a lot of ways," says Symons. "A lot of us need role models, and one of the things that the film does is give people a vision of how this can be done and what some of the tough sides, but also the really positive sides, are."

Georgie Girl

Dir. Annie Goldson and Peter Wells
(P.O.V., June 20)

Georgie Girl chronicles transsexual Georgina Beyer's extraordinary journey from cabaret diva to New Zealand Parliament member. One-time prostitute George Beyer spent most of his young-adult life struggling with his sexuality, but after becoming Georgina, the world has been her oyster. In addition to attaining a seat in Parliament, she's made numerous appearances on stage and screen as a singer.

Pandemic: Facing AIDS

Dir. Rory Kennedy
(HBO, June 15)

This five-part documentary highlights the areas of the world hit hardest by AIDS, which kills one person every ten seconds. From Russia, where many in the country know very little about the disease, to Uganda, where there's a generation of orphans due to AIDS, the documentary—narrated by long-time AIDS activist Elton John—spotlights people who are affected by the disease and discusses how they live with it. *Pandemic* is as touching as it is terrifying. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for
The Independent.

Left page: Isabel Gillies in *On Line*. This page: Ray, Jesse, and Kelly Wallace in Johnny Symons' *Daddy & Papa*.

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Living the Indie Life

MEDIAMAKERS DISCUSS HOW THEY KEEP THEIR CAREERS ON TRACK

By Andrea Meyer

The notion of the starving artist is a romantic one. Sepia-toned images float through our collective minds of creative geniuses scraping together enough pennies to drink a pastis in a Boulevard Saint Germain cafe, tummies growling while masterpieces bubble up in their brains. But the reality of life in the twenty-first century requires serious cash—and it's the rare artist who agrees to go hungry. While determined creatives might be willing to make sacrifices for their art, paying the rent requires a lot more than talent, good intentions, and scraped-together pennies. It's hard to find a studio in Manhattan, San Francisco, or Seattle for under \$1,000 a month. Even those fortunate enough to have cheap dream holes-in-the-walls have to juggle ever-increasing basic living costs that have expanded to include such indispensable items as cable TV, a high-speed internet connection, and a cell phone, in addition to the usual food, clothes, and electricity. When your calling is film, throw in the shrieking costs of camera equipment, crew, and post production, to name just a few, and the numbers become intimidating enough to drive away even the noblest of artistic ambitions.



The ways that filmmakers earn a living while working on their independent projects are as diverse as filmmakers themselves. While there are surely still writers and directors waiting tables and tending bar to support their filmmaking habit, it's clear that independent filmmakers in 2003 are smart, entrepreneurial, and multitalented, and they know how to parley their skills and creativity into both money and art.

Working it

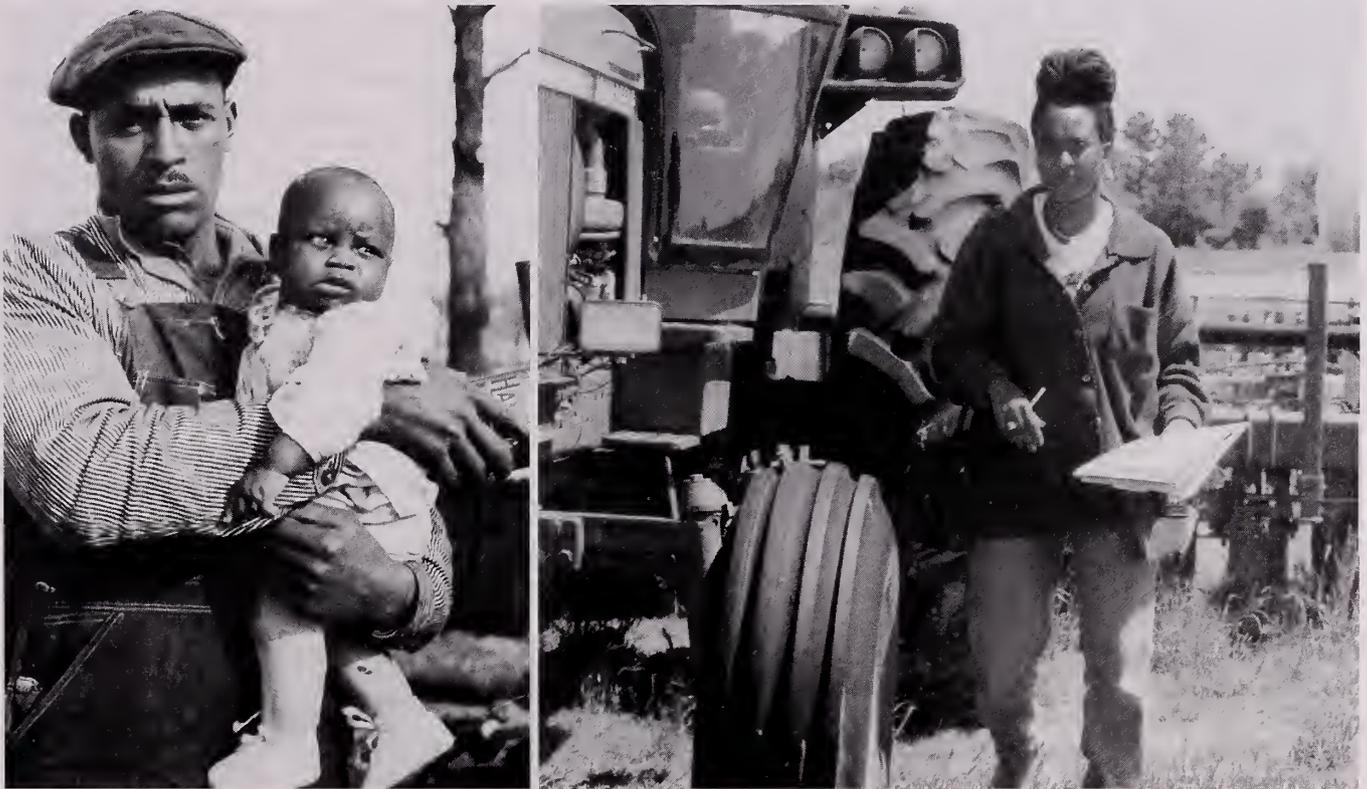
Charlene Gilbert, director of the PBS documentary *Homecoming: Sometimes I'm haunted by red dirt and clay*, has loads of advice for would-be filmmakers. She believes that the key to making a living while making movies is finding the part of the craft at which they excel—be it writing, editing, or cinematography—and using that skill to support themselves while pursuing independent projects. Gilbert cites Orinne J.T. Takagi, a doc-maker who makes a living as “one of the best sound recordists in the business,” she says. “I think it's important to find that one thing that can compete with your passion for filmmaking and try to attain a good deal of skill at it so that you have something that can provide supplemental support that doesn't

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF THATCHER KEATS; FACING PAGE, LEFT, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, RIGHT, CHARLENE GILBERT

take you too far astray from your filmmaking.”

Filmmaker Gabriel Judet-Weinshel graduated from Sarah Lawrence College in December 2001 and moved to New York, apprehensive about using his editing and camera skills to find work. “We had just started bombing Afghanistan. The economy was falling apart,” he remembers. “I was filled with dread about having a grown-up life and getting work, and suddenly I landed a job shooting a documentary about street musicians in the subway system.” Judet-Weinshel was paid “very well” to shoot, direct, and cut a trailer for the film, which was sent out to VH1, MTV, and other possible funding sources. At the same time, he was hired to edit a docu-drama for the Center for

common way for filmmakers to pay the rent. During the production of the recent release, *Horns and Halos*, about publisher Sander Hicks’ drive to publish J.H. Hatfield’s controversial George Bush biography *Fortunate Son*, Suki Hawley, who codirected with Michael Galinsky, was also shooting and editing content for music-related websites. “I’d do interstitials or band interviews,” she says. “The best part is the freelance aspect. That’s what allows us to do film.” While making the film, Hawley and Galinsky were also hired to collaborate with Peter Bogdonovich’s daughter, Sashy, on the making of an electronic press kit about Bogdonovich’s movie *The Cat’s Meow*, a job that had additional perks. “The sound quality for our film increased



Disease Control, cut a couple of independent shorts, and shoot another. And to top it off, his short, *The Broken Wings of Elijah Footfalls*, made it into the Newport Beach Film Festival, the Silverlake Film Festival, the IFP market, and was among four finalists for the Sundance Channel’s Buzzcuts Award. With money steadily coming in, he was able to finish writing a feature script of his own and still had the time to write songs for his band, Brand New Beggars. “I had a really good string of luck,” he says.

Editing and shooting other people’s projects is a fairly

because we were able to buy a radio mike to mike Peter. Then we were able to mike Sander,” Hawley says.

In line with Gilbert’s advice, Michael and Mark Polish, the identical twin filmmaking team responsible for *Twin Falls*, *Idaho*, *Jackpot*, and, most recently, *Northfork*, work as Hollywood screenwriters. (Mark also acts in their own films, as well as such projects as *The Good Thief*, by R.T. Herwig, and Mary McGuckian’s upcoming *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*.) This plum gig allows the Polishes to earn a nice living practicing their craft, and the stakes are not as high as with their own, more personal work. “When you are a hired writer, you surrender the fate of the project,” Michael says. “We would like to see the screenplays produced, but there are many chains of command that a project must go

Left page: Michael Galinsky and Suki Hawley. Above, left: Archival photo of an African American farmer and child, part of the documentary *Homecoming*, by Charlene Gilbert (shown at right).

through before it can be greenlighted. Hollywood is littered with projects that will never make it to the screen.”

Oh, the academic life

In addition to skills, filmmakers have a wealth of knowledge that many institutions are willing to pay them to impart to hungry would-be filmmakers. “I was living in a



farmhouse with my crew in this small, rural town in Georgia, and the chair of the Media Studies department at SUNY [the State University of New York] Buffalo tracked me down,” recalls Gilbert, who currently teaches production and theory in the American University School of Communications. “It took another phone conversation to convince me that working independent filmmakers had something to offer students in the academy. He convinced me, and I began my first job as assistant professor there.”

Jamie Yerkes, director of *Spin the Bottle*, is a tenure-track professor at Long Island University and director of summer programs at Manhattan School of Cinema, which he founded with other working filmmakers. He teaches courses in directing, editing, sound, cinematography, screenwriting, and film history. “I love teaching film because it’s a subject that most of my students are already excited about,” Yerkes says. “It’s not like teaching calculus, where you have to do stand-up comedy in between equations to keep your class interested. I’ll be watching a film at home and I’ll be blown away by the director’s, say, shot construction in a particular sequence. I’ll bring the scene in the next day and we’ll spend a whole class talking about it.”

Teaching offers myriad advantages to people with artistic aspirations. Most obviously, a teaching schedule tends to leave the summer months available for other projects, something that both Gilbert and Yerkes have found helpful. Yerkes admits, however, that it’s difficult to balance any kind of job, even teaching, with a pro-

duction schedule. “We shot *Pagans*, one of the films I have in the works, in March, and I’d be shooting all night and sleeping in the pass[enger] van in the parking lot,” he says. “You only have to teach two days a week, and they’re great to you.”

Yerkes points out that a lot of the freedom he is given stems from the fact that professors in any field are supposed to publish. In his case, that means that the university expects him to make movies and attend film festivals. “They want professors to make movies,” he says. “They’ll give you grants. They want professors keeping up in their field, going to conferences. Sundance is considered a conference.”

Because he teaches production as well as cinema history, Yerkes is also expected to stay up to date on film technology, equipment, and software, which is helpful in his filmmaking. “I have to know Final Cut Pro 3 and Pro Tools and the full range of DV and hi-def cameras,” he says.

Gilbert also benefits professionally from her classes. “It’s the life of the mind,” she says. “I like to be in a place where I can think critically about how media impacts people and where I can have those conversations and make those kinds of connections, because I’m interested in my own films working on many levels.”

Academia provides the kind of lifestyle that can be ideal for people trying to balance creative and financial needs. Both Yerkes and Gilbert have children, and teaching affords them a welcome level of stability. “Before I had my daughter, if someone called me up and said, ‘Hey, can you come to Costa Rica for six months and do this documentary in this mountain village?’ I’d be like, ‘Yeah, that



sounds great. I’ll be on a plane tomorrow,” says Gilbert. “But now I have a lot more things I have to take into consideration. And given that this is where my life is now, this is actually the best place for me to be.”

It's just my day job

While filmmakers like Yerkes and Gilbert are fortunate enough to develop dual passions, others prefer to compartmentalize, separating the money job from filmmaking aspirations. Tim Kirkman, director of *Dear Jesse* and *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*, teaches film appreciation at Hunter College and also works as a graphic designer and marketing consultant for Miramax from September to March every year, focusing primarily on their awards campaigns. While Kirkman enjoys the work he does for Miramax, he considers it his day job and imposes a rigid structure on himself for making his own films. "I have an office, and I go there and write from 6:00 to 9:00 a.m., and then I go to work," he says. "This year I'd go to the office in the morning before work and in the evening. My eyes were practically bleeding, but I set deadlines for myself and I made them. I finished my script."

Galinsky has a profession completely separate from his film work as well: He is a freelance photographer who shoots musicians, for magazines like *Jazz Times*, and the occasional wedding. "I love doing weddings," he says. "It's the most intense day of people's lives, and you're involved in it. And I actually like doing stuff for magazines. I do a lot of it for no money, just because I like doing it. I enjoy the opportunity to shoot interesting jazz musicians."

While Galinsky would keep taking pictures of jazz players and bridesmaids even if he didn't need the money, Kirkman would like to reach a point where he doesn't have to do his consulting work at all. "It's advertising, and in many ways it goes against everything my graphic design education taught me, but it's for movies and I love movies. And I'm always interested in marketing the film in a way that keeps the integrity." While he envisions a day when he'll be able to earn a living solely writing scripts—for his own or other people's projects—and directing, for the moment Kirkman sees the benefit in having a job that has little to do with his creative work. "In the eleven years I've worked at Miramax, it's never done anything for my film career," he says. "They don't see me as a filmmaker; they see me as a graphic designer. For a while that bothered me, but

now I'm glad because I'm able to keep separate what I do for a living and what I want my life to be."

Double the pleasure

Wouldn't it be great if a filmmaker had the ability to magically divide in two, with one part doing the money work while the other performs the labors of love? That's where the Polish brothers are luckier than most. As writing part-



ners, they have completed a script called *New Mexico* for New Line, another called *Teargarden* for Disney, and they have since been hired to write two more. The Polishes have the luxury of being able to divide their time between two projects at once. "Depending on the material, Mark or I will take the first draft of a hired screenplay, while the other writes our own project," Michael explains. "We don't write together, so this allows us to tackle different screenplays."

The Polishes believe that their work on other people's movies has advantages in terms of their work and their lives. "You only get better the more you practice your craft," Mark says. "Even when you are in disagreement with the studio's notes, it is just another challenge. It is helpful to see every facet of the industry. All the contacts that I have made are good, but not necessarily for the independent pictures. They all admire what we do, but don't really want to do it. They do feed you well."

Unfortunately, even when filmmakers work as a team, money work can get in the way of creative work. When Galinsky and Hawley began *Horns and Halos*, Galinsky was working full time at the music website in sound, and it interfered with their production schedule. "He was shooting and I was editing, but I ended up doing a lot of the shooting, and he would break away from time to time," Hawley says. "It was hard, and since then neither of us have done the full-time thing."

Left page, top: Jeff Cohen and Jamie Yerkes on the set of *Pagan*. Bottom: Tim Kirkland, teacher, graphic designer, marketing consultant, and filmmaker. Above: Director Michael Polish, James Woods (as Walter O'Brien), and Mark Polish (as Willis O'Brien) on the set of *Northfork*.

Juggling

For Judet-Weinshel, the college grad who had a dream first year in the big city, the work dried up for him as suddenly as it had initially materialized. "I was down to like twenty bucks," he recalls. "And it was February. When things are going well, people want to kill themselves in February." So, he did something he thought he would never have to do: get a job waiting tables. As soon as the snow began to thaw, he also took to the streets to earn his keep the way he has since he was thirteen: juggling. Like shooting and editing film, juggling for crowds is a skill that is always good to



bring in a few bucks, albeit one that's less common among filmmakers. "Juggling is something that I love, and it taps into a part of myself that's very vital," Judet-Weinshel says.

Compared to tossing balls, clubs, and machetes into the air, waiting tables didn't have a chance. Judet-Weinshel recalls a day when he performed at the Met for two and half hours and made \$200 and then raced downtown and waited tables for eight hours. "I got yelled at by the cook, yelled at by the boss. I felt humiliated. I was carrying huge trays, my back was hurting. . . . I made \$150 bucks." Needless to say, he quit immediately. "I have so much fun when I street perform. And it's the biggest rush. It's not dark. I tend to be dark in my art and my life, and street performing brings out this different side of me," he says. "You're just throwing shit up in the air and catching it and making stupid jokes, and people throw money at you."

While juggling might seem to be as far from filmmaking as possible, Judet-Weinshel's day job actually feeds his art while it's feeding him. His short, *The Broken Wings of Elijah Footfalls*, is about a juggler, and one of his early works is called *The Clown*, so he has managed to integrate his occu-

pations. Naturally his experience as a street performer was instrumental in landing his first New York job making a documentary about subway musicians.

For a month every summer, the juggling filmmaker also teaches at a performing arts camp in California called Camp Winnarainbow, and he is now hoping to add video production to the curriculum, potentially making a music video with his students. "The camp has boiled down everything that was good about the sixties and taken out the drugs and the debauchery and created this amazing thing to give to the next generation," he says. "That juices me for the whole year. I'll do it for three weeks and feel good about the world again."

To each his/her own

Finding a working balance is key. Gilbert believes she has achieved it with a teaching schedule that leaves her summers open and offers enough holidays to focus on her own filmmaking projects. Judet-Weinshel makes enough in seven or eight hours to cover weekly expenses, and spends the rest of the time writing and pounding the pavement for film work. However, his work is weather-dependent. When New Yorkers recently got a brief, faux taste of spring and Judet-Weinshel left his job, he ended up suffering for it. "I quit the waiting job, and then it started to snow, so I was back to trying to live on six bucks a day. But once the weather turns, you can live like a king."

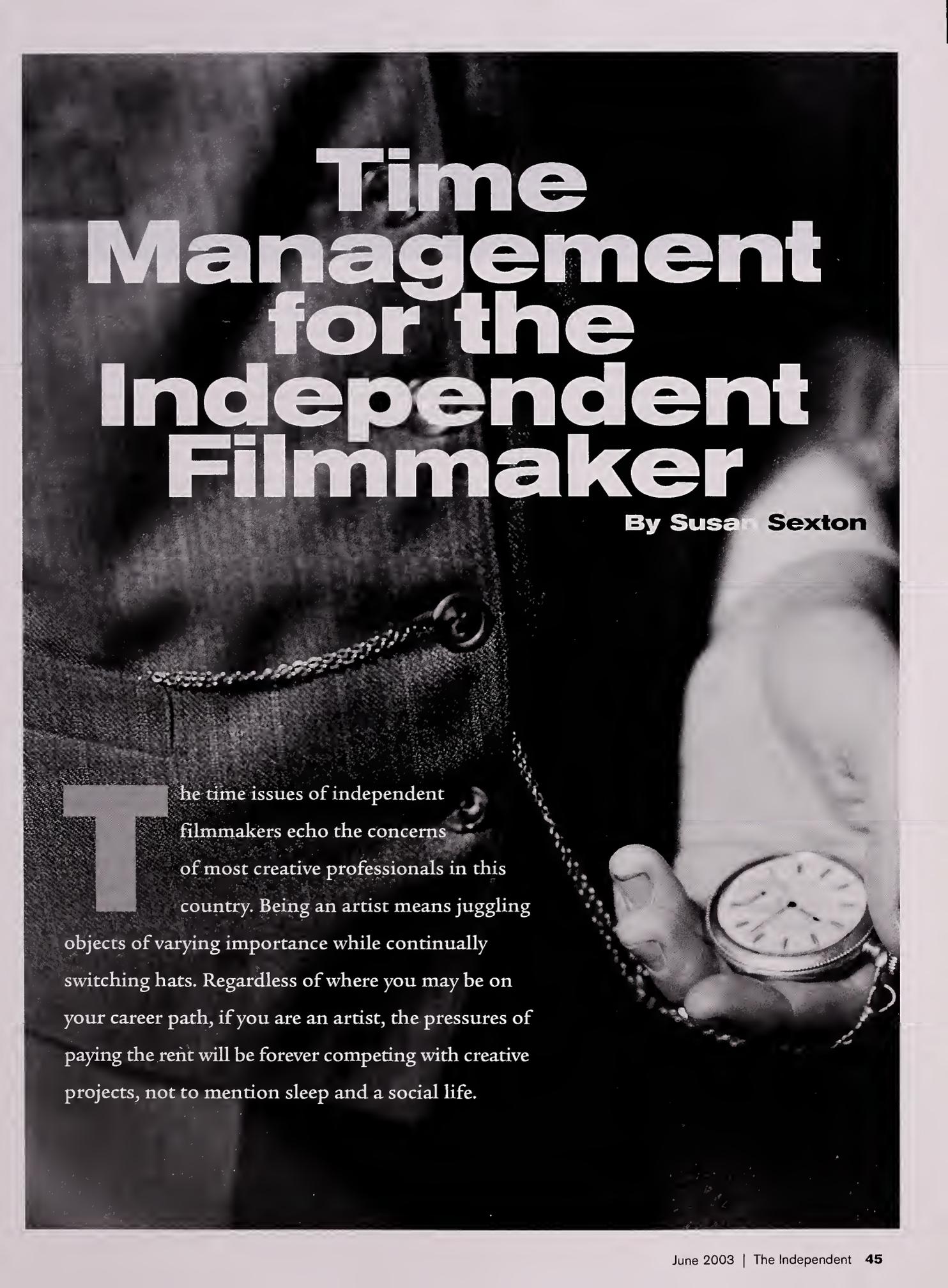
Galinsky can remember a time when he didn't have to worry about money. "I was most creative when I was working as a messenger," he says. "But that was a different time in New York. My rent was \$150. I didn't have to worry about making money, so I could spend my days drinking coffee and writing. I want to try and do some more of that."

Galinsky and Hawley are considering doing just that. They have a one-year-old daughter and are considering making the ultimate move to secure happiness, financial stability, and more time for creative endeavors: leaving New York. They recently took their film to a festival in Buenos Aires, a town they have visited and enjoyed in the past, and are now considering moving there for at least six months. "Everything was cheap, and we felt connected to a filmmaking community there," Hawley says. "Because the dollar is so strong, a really nice meal with wine and everything is like four dollars," Galinsky adds. "We're told you can rent a nice house with a full-time nanny for \$500."

"Fiona actually said, 'Hola,'" Hawley says. "We thought, Oh my God, she could learn Spanish." ■

On the set of the experimental short *The Broken Wings of Elijah Footfalls*, by Gabriel Judet-Weinshel (right).

Andrea Meyer covers film for Interview, Time Out New York, indieWIRE, and the New York Post. She also reports on relationships and celebrities for Glamour.



Time Management for the Independent Filmmaker

By Susan Sexton

The time issues of independent filmmakers echo the concerns of most creative professionals in this country. Being an artist means juggling objects of varying importance while continually switching hats. Regardless of where you may be on your career path, if you are an artist, the pressures of paying the rent will be forever competing with creative projects, not to mention sleep and a social life.



The pressure on independent filmmakers is often even greater, since the financial realities of being an independent require that most walk a tightrope between their own creative work and the work they do for others, whether that work is film-related or not. Writer/director Perry Passos notes his struggles with the conflicts between “money-making scripts I write for Hollywood, and the more personal and rewarding yet no-money scripts I write.” In addition, he and his wife would like to start a family soon, and his wife is even busier than he is.

Other filmmakers bounce between creative projects and “straight jobs.” As a former actor and director, I know the feeling of being pinched between those two worlds well. I also know that if I knew then what I have learned about time management and goal-setting, I would have been far more successful than I was. I had talent; what I lacked was a plan.

As a business trainer and executive coach, the first thing that I ask clients to do is change the way they think about *time* and *management*. Time management is really life management. There are twenty-four hours in a day, every day, in everyone’s day. Subtract the number of hours you need to sleep, and the remaining hours are yours to fill. Sleeping less may equal more hours to fill, but I never advocate sleep deprivation, especially to those who create, because you always end up paying for stealing those few hours. What I do advocate is an inside-out approach to time and life management that is simple but not always easy. It is not a perfect system, but it works. It works for CEO’s, real estate brokers, and actors, and it works for independent filmmakers.

Finding time

How many times have you heard yourself say, “When I get more time, I am going to finish that script, start shooting that project, research that documentary, apply for a grant. . . .” Or perhaps you say, “As we soon as we both have more time, we are going to start a family, go on vacation, paint the apartment, go to the gym. . . . As soon as I get a few extra hours I’ll . . .” The bad news is that next week, next month, and five years from now, you will still have only twenty-four hours in a day. There is no time-Santa handing out thirty-hour days as a reward for good behavior. There is no bank where we can deposit time for future use.

The good news is that we all have the ability to control how we spend a large percentage of our time. The life you are liv-

ing, the goals that you attain, and how much you are accomplishing as a filmmaker reflect how you spend your time.

Time is a commodity, just like money. The same rules apply. Some decisions about how we spend either have already been made for us. Eat, sleep, and work to pay the rent, buy the food, pay the electric bill: You have to do all these. But just as we have some discretionary money, we also have some discretionary time. I built my business during lunch hours, after work, and on weekends, while working as an executive on Wall Street doing the work of two and a half people. A woman I coached produced her off-Broadway play while working a forty-hour week as a legal secretary. Another client built a website during his commute time. Each minute can contribute to your success or your frustration. Decide to watch TV for an hour and you have just decided not to write for an hour, not to log a tape for an hour, not to prep for an interview for an hour. Mindlessly surfing the net for an hour is an hour not spent on your relationship, at the gym, or with your friends.

Now, using the inside-out approach, take a look at your daily activities and see if they reflect your highest priorities. Priorities are the things most important to you. Importance adds value to your life. Write down responses to the following questions:

- ⊙ What are your priorities? (Make a list. Put them in order.)
- ⊙ What did you spend your time on? (Take a hard look at last week and the week before that. Be brutal.)
- ⊙ What got in the way of you attaining your goals?
- ⊙ How much time did you spend on what is not important?
- ⊙ How do you decide what is important?

The game plan

A goal is a dream with a deadline and a plan. Your goals are the specific things you want to achieve. These goals can be financial, creative, critical—anything—and only you can know what they truly are. Being an independent filmmaker often means performing a balancing act between personal success and financial success. You need to decide what combination of these centers you. To get the life you want, your vision must be based on your own personal and professional values. The more specific your goals are, the more likely you are to realize them. Be as clear as possible. “I want to be

a successful filmmaker” is not clear because “successful” can be winning the Oscar for best picture or having a film screened at the Whitney Museum. Paint a picture in your mind of the life you desire and let that picture guide your decisions about time.

Once you have created a vision of what you want, you can begin to draft a plan. The first thing you need are the right tools. Throw away your “to do” lists, and get the vague goals out of your head and into a planner. A planner is a calendar book or a palm pilot—a planner is not Post-it notes or scraps of paper that can be easy to lose.

Making a plan

- ☺ Write down your long-term goals.
- ☺ What do you want to accomplish in the next year? (Be specific.)
- ☺ Break down your goals for the year into monthly and weekly action plans.
- ☺ Spend fifteen minutes at the beginning of each week planning out the rest of the week. (Planning is what you intend to do.)
- ☺ Each morning, take ten minutes to schedule your day. (Scheduling is when you will do it.)

Schedule everything, especially if you are working a “day job” and advancing your career as a filmmaker at the same time, or are working several different jobs at a time. When you plan your week, ask yourself, “What do I need to accomplish this week to feel really good about myself as a filmmaker?” Write it down and keep that appointment with your career.

Three magic hours

Everybody has approximately three hours a day when they are at their peak. It may take some experimenting to find out when your “magic hours” are. Just being aware of your daily peaks and valleys will help you to identify these hours. Once you figure out your most creative time of day, schedule around it. Use your creative time for your creative work. To maximize your creative times, figure out where you are most productive. Some people need to be alone and surrounded by silence, while others will find noise and the energy of other people invigorating. One of my clients writes in the snack bar of his gym.

Your day job is not your career

Working a straight job and then cranking up the energy and creativity to write that screenplay or edit the movie in your off hours is never easy, but just as you need to find where you work best, you need to make your job work for you and your career. Is your job complementing your career for time and energy? Are you making contacts, for example? Does the schedule allow you to create during your magic three hours? I wrote earlier about evaluating activi-

11 time management tips

1. Maximize your discretionary time by using your commute time to work on your projects.
2. Handle interruptions to your creative time by screening phone calls and telling friends and family that you are working.
3. Try organizing your day using a “geographical schedule.” Map your trips so that you run errands on your way to or from work.
4. Each new piece of software or equipment demands time in both setup and maintenance. Does this add value to your day?
5. Why open a bill unless you intend to pay it? Aren't there things that you would rather be doing?
6. What can you delegate in your life? For example, doing laundry versus the price of having it done for you, or the time spent cleaning versus the money a cleaning person would charge.
7. Have all your tools ready before you sit down to create. Time you spend reorganizing yourself is time you do not spend creating.
8. Practice what you change in your life for three to four weeks, and it will become a habit.
9. Find the cause of your procrastination. Is it fear? Fear of success or fear of failure? Do you procrastinate because you don't know how to get started? Find the cause. Feel the fear, but do it anyway.
10. Break large projects down into manageable tasks. Commit to a friend not only to the finish date, but a start date.
11. You are the Golden Goose. You are the source of the creativity. Take care of yourself by eating right, exercising, getting the right amount of sleep, and learning to say no.

ties by asking yourself if they add importance to your day. Clearly, earning the money to pay rent and eat adds value, but if you are so burned out at the end of the day that you end up on the couch channel surfing with the remote control, it could be that some changes are in order.

Think about each moment of time as a precious commodity. You have the power to control some of that time. Step by step, you can build the life you want. It is a process, and it takes commitment and a plan. Having talent is the first step towards your success. Knowing what you want your life to look like creates the path for your success. Don't worry if you fall down; pick yourself up, take another look at your plan, and put one foot in front of the other. ■

Susan Sexton is a professional development trainer and coach with twenty years experience guiding business and creative clients to success. You can contact her at smssms1999@aol.com.

Writing with Baby

CREATING A LIFE THAT INCLUDES PARENTHOOD AND FILMMAKING

By Katie Cokinos

When I got pregnant three years ago, my first thought was, “I’ll never make another movie.” I know it sounds terrible, but I had just gone through four years where I spent almost every minute in service to my recently completed film. I couldn’t imagine being able to work on a film and take care of a baby at the same time. When I told people with children that I was pregnant, they would exclaim, “Wow! It’s the greatest thing in the world!” “Sure,” I thought, “but have you ever made a film?” My *films* were my babies. That feeling plagued me like my morning sickness. I couldn’t envision a life that allowed me to make films *and* be a mom.

And then I met a close friend’s mom who is a successful Hollywood production designer, producer, screenwriter, and mother of two. “This is Katie,” my friend said. “She’s due in November, and she’s scared that she’ll never make another film.” Mom smiled, “Of course you will if you want to. I think my kids were around three months old before I could think about reading a book.” We met after a screening of a documentary film about the screenwriter Frances Marion, who was also a mother of two children. Even though she was a renowned screenwriter, Marion still considered her kids priority number one and her writing second. Her method was to rise at four a.m. and write until her kids got up. I considered this work schedule, but I find a good night’s sleep, complete with dreams, to be potent aids to my creative survival. Marion is out of my league.

I got pregnant the night I premiered my first feature film, *Portrait of a Girl as a Young Cat*, and when my daughter Lula was about three months old, the film finished on the festival circuit. At screenings, audiences would ask what my

next project would be, and I would hold up Lula. I couldn’t have felt further away from moviemaking. I had seen no films, read no books—not even a film review. During question and answer sessions I felt like a press agent talking about my client’s film. Mommyhood had taken over and I was in it all the way. I wanted to forget about my past life. Did making my film compare to this? I couldn’t remember. My *Independent* magazines piled up as I read and reread *What to Expect the First Year*. Yet I did make a film that first year of Lula’s life—what I like to call a “head film.” My baby daughter would scream inconsolably with colic and I would hold her and walk around the apartment. In my



mind I would create images that would try to explain all the intense emotions—the consuming love, the overwhelming responsibility, the painful vulnerability, and the exhaustion which I was experiencing at the hands of my baby. I have found head films to be very helpful in getting through difficult times.

I’ve heard that it takes about a year for the parenthood adjustment to be complete, and I believe it, because around

Lula's first birthday I began wondering what happened to the thoughts that used to light up my day and give me energy. The *Sesame Street* song (courtesy of the Carpenters) started speaking to me: "Sing. Sing a song. Make it simple, to last your whole life long." And then a not too distant film idea started swimming around my head. During nap-time I began to write, but all that came out was disowned, frustrated, existential shadow stuff, similar to the feelings I felt after I had spent a year in the editing room with *Portrait*. They seem to be my usual response when I have forgotten myself over a long period of time. And how can I write when I don't have a self to write from?

Before diving whole-being back into a script, I had to *re-introduce myself to myself*:

"Katie," I said, "I'd like you to meet Katie."

"Hi. Haven't we met before?" said me.

"Yes, I vaguely remember you," said I.

"Let's hang out!" replied me.

And we did.

Around eighteen months, my film idea still swung (and you know, "it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing"). So I hired a babysitter a couple of times a week and set off to the library to see if there was anything vital hiding behind my idea. I also took a writing class, started talking to friends about my story, and slowly began feeling that maybe this could be done.

Clark Walker, a screenwriter who just directed his first film, *Levelland* (produced by his wife, Anne Walker McBay) with two kids under five, told me, "The same rules that govern productivity without kiddos apply. Set regular hours, keep them religiously, and don't procrastinate. One good note, however, is that paying a sitter by the hour is good motivation to be productive. Forty dollars a page is a bad rate for spec scripts, you know."

The story for *Portrait* was created by giving the characters center stage in my thoughts from morning to night, but now my daily world is dominated by a very talkative and very active toddler. So, the never-ending challenge is *how to keep story thoughts alive*. It's sort of like another pregnancy. My script has become a part of me *all the time*, not something I just think about when I'm alone. I have notepads all over the house because I never know when a thought is going to strike me. A notepad is essential in the diaper bag, too. I also utilize bulletin boards: I tack up images, thoughts, and quotes from other filmmakers that apply to what I am now creating. Even if I am knee-deep in Legos, I can look up at an image that reminds me of the work that I am trying to resurrect/create.

I also created a daily routine that goes like this: wake up an hour before Lula and drink coffee (a must) while I write down dreams and any random script thoughts. Then, once she is awake, I try to keep a specific story idea alive in my head throughout our day. During her nap, which is usually two to three hours long, I leave mom work and get to film work. And when she goes to sleep for the night, I reread my day's writing and transcribe it into the computer.

"Keeping everything current in your head is often the hardest thing," Walker says. "One way to fight distraction is to just never stop talking about what is on your mind. Try pitching your plot to your kid. It sounds ridiculous to try to explain a complex character or dramatic situation to a four-year-old, but believe me, it goes over better with toddlers than it does with studio executives most of the time."

So, after re-recognizing myself and then creating a day-to-day schedule which includes my script, I started experiencing an unexpected sharp craving to stop everything and do nothing. My old friend filmmaker Gregg Araki would always talk about this do-nothing, lazy time as being vital to his work—or better yet, fueling his work. There are times when I can't *do* any more about anything. That is the time I empty out. I sit on the stoop and watch people walk by, or watch the Weather Channel—whatever. This downtime has nothing to *do* with being a *parent*, or *making films*, but it ultimately

helps me with both.

Lula is almost two and a half years old now, and with each stage I think it can't get much better, but of course it does. Her favorite word is "mine" as she grabs a toy, and I take that as a cue with my work too—*mine*. My script isn't finished yet, but I feel assured it will be, because I can get into writing mode more quickly, and I find I'm better organized than my pre-baby days. A different part of my brain must have been tapped in the last few years, because it is now able to switch between two different thoughts in the blink of Barney's eye: "What is my daughter doing?" and, "What to do with my character?" This mental pinball game is practiced, of course, between (and sometimes during) Wiggles songs, playgrounds, naps, macaroni and cheese, and "play with me, Mommy."

Recently I was exchanging labor stories with another mom, and I suddenly remembered that hours before my water broke I had read an article in *The New Yorker* about Jean Luc Godard. The interviewer asked him why he had never had children, and he said, in essence, that filmmaking and babies don't mix. So for those who have the inclination—let's prove Papa Godard wrong. ▣

Katie Cokinos is a filmmaker and former director of the Austin Film Society.

Left page: Katie Cokinos in *Portrait of a Young Girl as a Cat*. Above: Cokinos with her daughter, Lula.



THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ART IN OUR SCHOOLS.

NO WONDER PEOPLE THINK
MARTHA GRAHAM
IS A SNACK CRACKER.

Hardly a fitting legacy for the woman who, despite getting a late start at the positively elderly age of 17, became



A misconception. Not to mention an overlooked marketing opportunity

the mother of American interpretive dance.

With verve and nearly single-handedly, Martha Graham brought her dance style into the 20th century.

She did nothing less than create an entirely new genre of dance, while

shattering the expectations of audiences and critics alike with her percussive, angular movement style. She was one of the first dancers to collaborate with contemporary composers instead of using the 18th- and 19th-century compositions her predecessors favored. Her dances have been called "motion pictures for the sophisticated"; her theories on movement and kinesthetics are still vital today; and there is scarcely a dancer alive who doesn't



Ms. Graham told stories using movement. Here, she tells us how sad it is that kids aren't getting enough art

owe a huge debt to her sharp creative mind and fierce perfectionism.

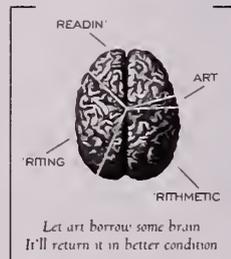
And to think she could have made it her entire life without experiencing the arts. Just like so many kids today.

Each day, more and more of the arts are being completely drained from our children's schools. Yet studies show parents believe dance and music and art and drama make their kids better students and better people. So what

can you do to reverse this trend?

Speak up now. Demand your child's fair share of the arts. To find out how to help, or for more information about the benefits of arts education, please visit us

at AmericansForTheArts.org. Otherwise, even a legacy as rich as Martha Graham's can crumble to nothing.



ART. ASK FOR MORE.



For more information about the importance of arts education, contact www.AmericansForTheArts.org.



©Barbara Morgan, from "Martha Graham: Sixteen Dances in Photographs" by Barbara Morgan.



Creativity Books

THOUGHTS ON A TALK WITH JULIA CAMERON

By Maud Kersnowski

About ten years ago I met a passionate, joyful woman in Taos, New Mexico, who, after a short but intense conversation, gave me a copy of her newly published book. Now, I am a person who owns *two copies* of Steven Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and has never read beyond page fifty-five in either of them. I cannot completely explain why I read *The Artist's Way*, nor why I committed to following the twelve-week program of "artistic recovery." What I do know is that for the last ten years I have watched Julia Cameron's books change not only my life but those of many people around me.

When I started thinking about writing a column on books and creativity, I found myself repeating "Julia Cameron says . . ." and "In *The Artist's Way*. . ." So, it quickly became clear that I needed to talk to Cameron, who in the ten years since I met her has published over twenty books, plus audio recordings, and has become *the* creativity guru.

First let me say that while Cameron's writings deeply influenced my life, she had absolutely no memory of our meeting. What she did have were a few suggestions about books on writing and the thought that they can be applied beyond writing to general creativity.

Viki King's *How to Write a Movie in 21 Days: The Inner Movie Method* made Cameron's short list of books with sug-

The Artist's Way, by Julia Cameron.

gestions that go far beyond the business of writing a script. Without much effort they can be applied to almost any creative endeavor. Both King and Cameron are big fans of using music to fuel your creativity, for example. "Music is a powerful catalyst. I wrote an entire movie to an early Bruce Springsteen album," recalls Cameron.

In *How to Write a Movie in 21 Days*, King gives you the rules of the three-act structure but also gives you the tools to break them. If you are willing to let it, this book will teach you that structure (in any media) is your friend, not some evil plot to squash your creativity. And like Cameron's, this book pushes you to get it, whatever *it* is, out. "It's a come-on-just-do-it book," Cameron explains. "The paint-by-numbers aspect of a lot of the screenwriting books is very destructive."

Other books on Cameron's list include the classic *Becoming a Writer*, by Dorothea Brande and John Gardner, the out-of-print 1934 *Creative Ideas*, by Ernest Holmes, and Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones*. Goldberg's book is another one that has sat on my bookshelf for years that I have yet to finish, but unlike *Seven Habits*, I cannot tell you where I stopped and started. It is a book I dip into when I am stuck, when the well is feeling a little dry. And while the subtitle is "Freeing the writer within," much of the advice translates to any media. "Push yourself beyond when you think you are done with what you

have to say. Go a little further. Sometimes when you think you are done, it is just the edge of the beginning," she writes.

Goldberg's book, which blends Buddhist philosophy with the practice of creativity, does not sit on the same shelf as my dictionary and thesaurus because, like the rest of these books, it is not about the mechanics of writing. It is about the act of creating. So, its shelf-mates are an eclectic collection of writings I return to when I need help: *The Wisdom of No Escape*, by Buddhist nun Pema Chodron, A. A. Milne's *Winnie-The-Pooh*, Virginia Woolfe's *A Room of One's Own*, Ernest Hemingway's *A Movable Feast*, and other odds and ends, including a short article by Gregory Curtis, the former editor-in-chief of *Texas Monthly*. It's not easy to explain why these books are grouped together. The rest of Woolf's novels and diaries are sensibly alphabetized on a different shelf. But these are the writings I go back to over and over again to clear my head, to inspire me, and remind me.

Ultimately, Cameron does not read most self-help books. She finds her help in art, music, and fiction. "Good writing can catalyze writing," she explains. Art begets art. ▣

Maud Kersnowski is the editor-in-chief of *The Independent*.



The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity, 10th edition, by Julia Cameron (\$15.95, J.P. Tarcher, 2002)

Becoming a Writer, by Dorothea Brande and John Gardner (\$9.95, J.P. Tarcher, 1981)

Creative Ideas, by Ernest Holmes, 1934 (out of print)

How to Write a Movie in 21 Days: The Inner Movie Method, by Viki King (\$15.00, HarperCollins, 1988.)

Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within, by Natalie Goldberg (\$12.95, Shambhala Publications, 1986)

Protecting ideas with contracts

BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS OF NON-DISCLOSURE AND NON-CIRCUMVENTION AGREEMENTS

By Robert L. Seigel

Non-disclosure and non-circumvention agreements are both contracts that protect work when a third party is somehow brought into a project. These contracts are used by mediamakers, producers, and other business entities with varying degrees of effectiveness. As with any agreement, you should understand the full

any other person or entity, either directly or indirectly, information which has been deemed as “confidential.” The signing parties can discuss this information with their advisors and other persons or entities on a “need to know” basis. Therefore, it is permissible for a party that signs an NDA to disclose and discuss the protected information with an attorney,

Sometimes these persons and companies inform the mediamaker that if he or she has such concerns and issues of trust, they should submit the project somewhere else, if at all.

Non-circumvention (NC) agreements are much more common and practical for media work. In these, a party promises that it will not go behind another party’s back, or “circumvent” another person or entity, and approach or do business with a person or entity introduced to the project by the other party.

Prior to contacting certain money sources, strategic partners and distributors, on behalf of a mediamaker, potential money finders, and producers, often insist that a mediamaker sign an NC. Mediamakers should make

The non-disclosure agreement (NDA) . . . can be problematic for businesses such as media, which trade in ideas. But some mediamakers have begun to use such agreements because of the difficulty in proving that a third party has stolen an idea or concept.

implications before you sign these types of agreements or ask someone else to do so. If one refuses to sign such agreements it does not always mean he or she is untrustworthy; sometimes it means that an agreement is too broad to be signed or enforced.

The non-disclosure agreement (NDA), which is extremely useful when submitting ideas and concepts for ventures such as an internet service that has technology, trade secrets and other proprietary information to be safeguarded, can be problematic for businesses such as media, which trade in ideas. But some mediamakers have begun to use such agreements because of the difficulty in proving that a third party has stolen an idea or concept. Ideas and concepts are generally not copyrightable. It is the expression of ideas and concepts that can receive copyright protection.

An NDA generally states that the party which signs cannot disclose to

accountant, or even employees and agents. But the attorney, accountant, employee, or agent is also bound by the terms of the NDA.

While NDA’s may seem like an easy answer to protecting mediamakers’ work, there are some practical concerns and problems connected to approaching third parties with an NDA. For example, once certain information becomes public, the effectiveness of the NDA is compromised severely.

Even more problematic is that most bona fide production companies and studios would rather not deal with an NDA and will generally decline to sign them for a number of very valid reasons. They do not want to be compelled to decide which aspects of the information presented to them are confidential. Also, these companies may be developing or may want to develop somewhat similar projects, and by signing the NDA, the likelihood of a lawsuit increases.

sure that the term of the NC agreement is reasonable. To protect confidential funding sources, a potential money finder should insist that a mediamaker not approach a finder’s funding contacts for a certain period of time during and after the NC agreement’s term without the finder’s permission and/or compensation. The NC term generally ranges from a few months to five or more years and is negotiable by the parties. Although finders have a legitimate interest and right to safeguard their funding sources, mediamakers have a reasonable expectation that after a certain period of time, they have developed their own relationship with the funding sources independent of the finder’s. Mediamakers can contend that it is unreasonable for a finder to be compensated every time a mediamaker works with that funding source. One method in addressing this issue is a “sunset” provision, which acknowledges that a finder will receive the same

compensation or a reduced compensation for a limited period of time after the NC agreement's termination.

Those who submit a project on behalf of a mediamaker may also require that the mediamaker sign an NC agreement. This type of provision is common when producers agree to "shop" a project to certain production companies, financing sources, and distributors on behalf of a mediamaker. For a certain period of time during and after the shopping period, a mediamaker is prevented from approaching these sources and entering into an agreement without the producer's consent and/or compensation of the producer. Such NC's should be for a reasonable period of time after their termination or expiration of the contract, such as one to two years.

Mediamakers should make sure that the NC agreement does not cover "cold call" submissions. In other words, the party insisting on the NC cannot submit a mediamaker's project in a "scattershot" fashion to every company in *The Hollywood Creative Directory* and then claim that the mediamaker cannot approach any of these "cold call" submissions. To limit possible uncertainty about who was or was not a submission during the term of the NC agreement, mediamakers should insist that the party requesting the NC agreement submit a list of contacts which have been approached personally (even if by letter or telephone) and the status of such submissions.

A "changed or new element" provision in the NC should also be considered by the mediamaker. This means that if, after the expiration of the NC agreement's term, a mediamaker "attaches" a well-known actor or director to the project and there is interest from one of the sources that had been approached during the NC term, the mediamaker may argue that the submission has changed and that the party with that contact should not benefit from the mediamaker's ability

to further develop the project.

Another form of the NC agreement is one in which a party would be prevented from developing or producing a project that is "directly competitive" with that of the other party. It is important that such provisions not be drafted too broadly. For example, if a mediamaker is developing a documentary about children who wish to become astronauts, then an NC agreement should not prohibit the signing party from developing and producing a documentary concerning outer space in general. Parties that sign such NC agreements may request that the non-competition provision be limited. If the mediamaker does not produce a project on a specific subject within a certain period of time, then the signing party is free to develop and produce a substantially similar project independently of the mediamaker.

In addition to signing these types of contracts, mediamakers must be vigilant in keeping track of new projects that are in the process of being developed or produced, to notice if these agreements have been breached. Ultimately, you will have to evaluate the trustworthiness and reputation of those who sign such contracts, since disreputable people or entities may breach these agreements and compel the disclosing party to seek the appropriate legal relief. But there is still no guaranteed way to completely protect your ideas, contacts, or sources except to never reveal them to anyone, which is obviously counterproductive. One has to find a balance between not protecting a project and becoming paralyzed by distrust in order for these agreements to be effective as a deterrent and a means for a disclosing party to seek the appropriate and fair remedy if the agreements are violated. □

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a partner in the law firm of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard LLP. He specializes in the representation of clients in the entertainment and media areas. To reach him, write to Rlsentlaw@aol.com.

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Great Gadgets

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD THEM ALL

By Greg Gilpatrick

One of the best things about making motion pictures is the number of the gadgets that we get to play, er, work with. There are glitzy gizmos for nearly every step of production, from writing all the way through delivering your own DVD's. The truth is, few of these toys are truly necessary, but there's no denying the allure of the latest tools.

Techno-fads can convert seemingly mundane and boring tools into glamorous jet-set tools for the cutting-

edge producer. For example, computer hard disk drives: Media storage, the issue at the heart of digital non-linear editing, is one of the richest fields around for new toys. In the past, edi-

technology make it a relatively trivial task to store many hours of video at full resolution and quality on a standard hard drive. But advances in hard-disk technology continue unabated and have turned out at least a few cool tools. At the high end of the spectrum is a product from Apple awkwardly named the Xserve RAID (www.apple.com; \$6K-\$11K, depending on configuration). A RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks) stores computer data across

several hard drives at once. RAID systems have for years been *de rigueur* in high-end media production, where their speed and high capacity is necessary. But the price was high-end too, with systems often reaching into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Xserve RAID, Apple's first foray into high-end media storage, costs much less than similarly equipped RAID systems because it uses low-cost IDE hard drives instead of the more common SCSI. Xserve RAID's speed comes from its use of the Fibre Channel connection standard. Apple's Xserve computers come with Fibre Channel built in, but people with desktop computers will need to add Apple's Fibre Channel card (\$599). Most intriguing is Apple's promise that the Xserve RAID can deliver real-time capture and editing of high-definition video. Though the cost of the Xserve RAID is expensive, the combination of it with Final Cut Pro and a

HD-resolution capture card is one of the first complete HD editing solutions even close to being within range for independents. Of course, these HD editing tools are a tantalizing fantasy for most independents, whose reality is firmly rooted in standard-definition DV. For those, there are also some hard drive-related gadgets that can make the heart beat a little faster. Such as LaCie's Big Disk (www.lacie.com, \$869) hard drive. This external Firewire hard drive holds up to five hundred gigabytes of data, which is almost two days' worth of DV video and twice the capacity of other solutions. The Big Disk's big attraction is for people who need to easily transfer a huge amount of media between computers—such as people who edit

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tors needed to digitize their media with levels of high compression and low resolution so that they would fit on hard drives of just a few hundred megabytes. Now, recent advances in video compression and hard-disk

with a laptop in different offices, or those that need to take large amounts of media between facilities. For moving smaller amounts of digitized media between places, there is LaCie's petite Data Bank (\$299), a pocket-sized hard drive that connects via Firewire and USB 2 and stores up to twenty gigabytes. The Data Bank uses a tiny hard drive similar to the one used in Apple's iPod and SmartDisk's Firelight. This type of hard drive is not suitable for capturing and editing video files but is just the thing for transferring media files between computers, such as moving a video file between a computer used for editing and one used for titles and effects. And for filmmakers who love miniature Oreos and bite-sized eclairs, there is the tiny DiskOnKey (www.diskonkey.com; \$20-\$280, depending on capacity). This little keychain contains a disk that plugs

with a laptop in different offices, or those that need to take large amounts of media between facilities.

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And for filmmakers who love miniature Oreos and bite-sized eclairs, there is the tiny DiskOnKey (www.diskonkey.com; \$20-\$280, depending on capacity). This little keychain contains a disk that plugs

into the USB port of a computer and provides enough space to store a script file, still images, or a project file from an editing program. This micro gizmo makes it easy to carry around an important file with you wherever you go. And besides, it's fun.

Hard-drive technology also influences the world of cameras. There are several options for external hard drives that capture directly from a camera, but none of them are as intriguing as JVC's combination of the DR-DV5000U DV Disk Recording Module with the GY-DV5000U DV camera (www.gvc.com; recording module, \$1,595; camera \$4,995). This hard disk was built specifically for the camera and allows a high amount of portability between the two. The coolest thing about this hard-disk recorder is that it can be programmed to record in the specific format of several non-linear editing systems. Video files on the DR-DV5000U can be saved as QuickTime files for Final Cut Pro, OMFI for Avid systems, and AVI for PC-based systems. The system can even record video directly in the hip new MPEG 4 format. Best of all, the recorder is designed to fit on the back of the camera, making it an easily portable system.

And instead of converting analog and professional digital video formats to DV to edit in Final Cut Pro, a brand new product from AJA allows for uncompressed video and high-resolution audio to be captured and sent to the computer via a simple firewire cable. The Io (www.aja.com, \$2,299) relies upon an innovative feature in the forthcoming Final Cut Pro 4 that allows for the shuttling of all sorts of video and audio data via firewire without having to convert it to DV-



Left: DiskOnKey. Right: LaCie's Big Disk.

format video. In effect, the Io provides all the features of a PCI video capture card in a completely external case. (Hopefully, enterprising rental houses will rent the Io along with high-end decks so that there is no longer a need to purchase a video capture card just to capture a day's worth of video from a professional deck.) The most exciting thing about the Io is that it is designed to work with Apple Powerbook computers—meaning that, in theory at least, uncompressed video from a Digital Betacam deck can be captured and edited on a portable computer.

Portability, of course, is a big part of what turns a simple tool into a gadget. Gadget lovers looking for a super portable item should take a look at the Sony Clie PEG-NZ90 (www.sony.com, \$800). This Palm OS-based PDA with integrated camera is designed not only to take digital still images but capture up to forty minutes of digital video in MPEG 4 format. Since the camera uses the removable Memory Stick media format, it can record as long as there's a supply of memory media.

Speaking of portability, DVD's now make it much easier to carry around high-quality copies of films. Yet, there is no simple route for making an attractive looking disk. For those looking to print professional-looking disks is Primera's Bravo Disc Publisher (www.primera.com, \$2,495 with DVD option). The Bravo is an integrated DVD recorder and printer that automatically burns a movie onto a blank DVD and then prints high-quality images on the front of the disk. What makes the Bravo an exemplary gadget is its use of a robotic disk transport arm that shuttles the blank media through the steps of burning and printing. The Bravo works with Macs and Windows PC's to create disks and beats the pants

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off writing the name of a movie on the front of a disk with a marker.

DV-format cameras and editing systems are common among independents, but DV tapes are usually not a suitable delivery format for distribution. For those needing to record their DV-format project onto another format like Digital Betacam directly from their DV editing system, Pro-max Technologies' DA-MAX+ (www.promax.com, \$1,795) media converter should fit the bill. Going several steps beyond the simple DV firewire to S-video converters on the market, the DA-Max+ features professional features like XLR audio, SDI video, and RS-422 serial deck control. The deck control feature is especially impressive because the deck control is converted through the firewire port as well, instead of requiring a separate serial connection to the computer.



Gadgets won't make you a better filmmaker, but they can make it easier to accomplish certain tasks on your own, such as printing professional-looking DVD's and editing high-definition video. However, be careful about being too susceptible to gadget-lust. While all these tools can be useful, they can also do nothing more than suck time away from your making your film. Don't buy something before you have a need for it, because in the long run, the only use you may have for your new toy is as a prop in a sci-fi epic. □

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To reach him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

Sony Clie PEG-NZ90.



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, media advocacy information, web-original material, 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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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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Festivals

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 (e.g., July 1st for Sept. issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.**

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

AFI FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-16, CA. Deadline: June 6; July 3 (final: shorts); July 18 (final: features). Festival combines film programming w/ special events, capturing cultural diversity of LA while providing new filmmakers w/

\$40, shorts \$30. Final: features \$50, shorts \$40. Contact: AFI Fest, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027-1657; (886) AFI-FEST; fax: (323) 462-4049; afifest@afi.com; www.afi.com.

ANGELUS AWARDS STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 25, CA. Deadline: July 1. College/Film School competition takes place at the DGA in California. Fest 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, DVD. Preview on 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.

BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 5-14, MA. Deadline: July 1. The fest is non-competitive & all entries are made avail. for reviews by the local press before their fest showings. The fest will showcase approx. 50 feature length films/ documentaries & 30 short subjects. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short. Formats: 35mm,

16mm, Super 8, video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25; \$30 (final). Contact: Josh Koury; (718) 789-7465; info@brooklynunderground.org; www.brooklynunderground.org.

CHICAGO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-16, IL. Deadline: July 25. 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. Chicago is the first US fest to award the FIPRESCI prize for 1st & 2nd-time directors. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 70mm, 3/4", 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: 425-0944; info@chicagofilmfest.com; www.chicagofilmfest.com.



Beyond the Red Mud

Tucked in the belly of Birmingham, Alabama's, historic theater district, this unique up-and-coming fest continues to wow Southern audiences eager to devour new independent cinema. Low-price day and weekend passes provide easy access to sidewalk venues within a two-block area of the newly-restored Alabama Theatre, a 2,200-seat movie palace built by Paramount in 1927, and the Carver Theatre, home of

the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame. The 2002 edition of the fest included the premiere of Amber Benson's (from *Buffy* fame) directorial debut, *Chance*, which went on to win the Audience Award for Best Feature. See listing.

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 LA 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. Awards: Juried Competition Prizes & Audience Awards in each category. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video, digiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: features (over 30 mins.)

16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$60 features (60+ min.); \$45 30-59 min.; \$30 shorts (under 29 min). Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 516, Hull, MA 02045; (781) 925-1373; fax: 925 3132; gemsad@aol.com; www.bostonfilmfest.org.

BROOKLYN UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 8-12, NY. Deadline: May 20; July 15 (final). Fest's mission is to create a fresh arena for discussion between filmmakers, artists & audiences in an explorative & inspirational environment. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, ani-

COLUMBUS INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, mid-November, OH. Deadline: July 1. Competitive fest w/ screenings of selected winners, 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). 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.

DC ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-18, DC. Deadline: May 15 (shorts); June 15 (features); July 1 (final). Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DV, Video. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$10 (shorts & features); \$20 (final). Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 18405, Washington, DC 20036; tad@apafilm.org; www.apafilm.org.

DENVER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-19, 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: Lifetime achievement award; John Cassavetes Award, Krzysztof Kieslowski Award for best European film; People's Choice Awards (feature & doc). 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.

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA, Oct. 30-Nov. 2, CA. Deadline: May 30; June 20 (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 30 min., as long as he/she is a member of Film Arts Foundation. Works must have been completed after May of previous year. Cats: Feature, Doc, Experimental, Short. Formats: Super 8, 16mm, 35mm, DV, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (preferred); Super 8, 3/4", 16mm accepted. Entry Fee: \$15; \$20 (final). Contact: Film Arts Foundation, 145 9th St., #101, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: 552-0882; fest@filmarts.org; www.filmarts.org.

FILM FEST NEW HAVEN, Sept. 19-21, CT. Deadline: May 1; June 16 (final). Film Fest New Haven is committed to supporting the creativity of independent filmmakers. A year-round presence in New Haven, this fest showcases the finest independent films to film-loving & film-literate audiences. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Jury, Audience & Cinematography awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVD, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25/\$30; \$30/\$40 (final). Contact: Nina Adams, Box 9644, New Haven, CT 06536; (203) 776-6789; fax: 776-4260; info@filmfest.org; www.filmfest.org.

FINGER LAKES ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, October 3-9, NY. Deadline: July 1. Formerly the Cornell Environmental Film Fest, the fest is a week-long, non competitive program of 30+ screenings. Films must be environmentally themed. All screenings incl. discussions either w/ the filmmaker or topical expert. Festival is by invitation, but submis-

sions are encouraged. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS NTSC or DVD. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Christopher Riley, 104 Willard Straight Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; (607) 255-3522; fax: 255-9910; cjr20@cornell.edu; cinema.cornell.edu/fleff.

FIRELIGHT SHOCKS FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 26-28, CA. Deadline: July 18; Aug. 15. Genre specific to the Horror, Fantasy & Sci-Fi genres, fest accepts all lengths & styles of film w/in these genres. All films are prescreened & judged prior to public exhibition. The event is sponsored by the Fireside Foundation, a California non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation, promotion & perpetuation of independent film & video. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, animation, experimental. Awards: Shocker Awards in each category & for each length as set forth on the entry form; overall Audience Award. Formats: 35mm, DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: Feature: \$45, \$55(late); Short: \$35; Script: \$35. Contact: George Baker, Fireside Foundation/Firelight Shocks Film Festival, P.O. Box 580450, Modesto, CA 95358; (866) 988-2886; fax: (209) 531-0233; director@firelightshocks.com; www.firelightshocks.com.

FIRSTGLANCE: LOS ANGELES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-9, CA. Deadline: June 15; July 1 (final). 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, short. Awards: Prize packages totaling over \$10,000. 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.firstglancefilms.com.

GEORGETOWN INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 18-21, DC. Deadline: June 30. Georgetown Independent FilmFest is a celebration of creativity & a forum for exploring experimental image manipulations, new thinking & fresh abstractions of "thought nar-

ative" on the moving image. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Formats: Super 8, 16mm, Hi 8, Beta SP, 35mm, 1/2". Entry Fee: \$5 (students); \$10. Contact: Festival, 3128 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20007; (202) 338-4300; info@georgetownfilmfest.com; www.georgetownfilmfest.com.

GREAT LAKES INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 11-14, PA. Deadline: May 15; 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. Fest's goal is showcasing new independent films, recognizing outstanding filmmakers, conducting screenplay competitions & hosting public workshops. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. Entry Fee: \$35 short, \$45 feature; Final: \$45 shorts, \$55 feature. Contact: Steve Opsanic, 6851 RT. 6N West, Edinboro, PA 16412; (814) 834-5069; fax: 734-5402; fest@greatlakesfilmfest.com; www.greatlakesfilmfest.com.

GREAT PLAINS FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 1-14, NE. Deadline: June. Fest is a biennial regional venue for indie film & video artists working in the US & Canada. Open to film & videomakers either from the Great Plains region, or those whose film/video realates in content or in narrative to the Great Plains. Fest provides a forum of the diversity of life on the Great Plains through panel discussions, special appearances & tributes. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media. Awards: 12 cash prizes ranging from \$500-\$5,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, U-matic, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 or \$30. Contact: Mary Riepma, Ross Film Theater, Box 880302, Lincoln, NE 68588-0302; (402) 472-9100; fax: 472-2576; dladely1@unl.edu; www.greatplainsfilmfest.org.

HAMPTONS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-26, NY. Deadline: May 23 (shorts); June 13 (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 US. Note: Entries accepted for Golden Starfish Award Features, Documen-

taries & 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. 16-24, 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, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS or DVD. 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.

INDIAN SUMMER-DELTAVISION FILM & VIDEO IMAGE AWARDS, Sept. 6, WI. Deadline: July 15. Created by Indian Summer Festival (North America's largest Native American arts & cultural fest) & DeltaVision Entertainment to increase awareness of American Indian history & culture by recognizing filmmakers who explore these topics. Films from outside the US should be subtitled. Cats: animation, doc, short, feature, music video, educational, PSA, corporate. Awards: Awards in each category. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$50; \$25 (student). Contact: Festival, 10809 W. Lincoln Ave, Ste. 101, West Allis, WI 53227; (414) 604-1000; fax: 774-6810; indiansummer@wi.rr.com; www.indiansummer.org.

INT'L DOC ASSOCIATION AWARDS (IDA AWARDS), Dec. 12, CA. Deadline: May 16; June 30 (final). Established in 1984, the IDA awards reward distinguished achievement in nonfiction film & video production. All films entered into the IDA awards competition will be considered for invitation to DOCTober. (call (310)284-8422 ext. 68 for info on DOCTober (October 15-21), participation in

which qualifies feature films for Academy Award consideration.) Cats: Doc. Awards: cash awards & services. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 35mm, Entry formats incl. 16mm, 3/4", & 1/2" video, pal or secam. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$55 Features & Shorts (IDA Members); \$250 Limited Series, Strand Program & TV Magazine segment. Non members pay \$75/\$350. Members & non members pay \$25 for entry in ABC News Video Source & the Pare Lorentz awards. Contact: Festival, 1201 West 5th Street, Ste. M320, Los Angeles, CA 90017; (213) 534-3600; fax: 534-3610; idaawards@documnetary.org; www.documentary.org.

MANHATTAN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 28, NY. Deadline: July 31, Aug. 14 (final). The top short films in the world are simultaneously broadcast on multiple screens inside Union Square Park, NYC, on a digital Beta format for the public of New York's viewing pleasure. The Fest also plays in Dublin, London, Paris, Milan, Berlin, Sydney & Melbourne on the same evening. Founded: 1988. Cats: short, any style or genre, animation, experimental, student. Awards: A feature film package awarded to the best short film; best doc, best student film, best animation, best screenplay. Formats: DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL). Entry Fee: \$35. Contact: Nicholas Mason, 853 Broadway, Ste. 1516, New York, NY 10003; (201) 333-4322; msfilmfest@aol.com; www.msfilmfest.com.

MICROCINEFEST, Oct. 31-Nov. 4, MD. Deadline: July 31. Annual fest turns audiences onto 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. Awards: Audience Choice, Low Budget Award to the coolest video made for under \$100; & film made for under \$1,000; grand jury prize for each category; special recognition 'Way Cool' Awards. 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, multiply number of min. by \$2. Contact: Skizz Cyzyk, Box 50098, Baltimore, MD, US 21211; (410) 243-5307; bfink@bcpl.net; www.microcinefest.org.

MILL VALLEY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-12, CA. Deadline: May 31 (early); June 30 (final). Invitational, noncompetitive fest screens films of all genres & lengths & has

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NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-16, LA. Deadline: May 9; June 13 (final). 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: Awards based on jury selection. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", 35mm (by invitation only), Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35; \$45 (final). 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, Dec., NY. Deadline: July 1. 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, Silver, 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: Karen Treanor, 224 Centre St., New York, NY 10033; (212) 505-7742; fax: 586-6391; nyexpo@aol.com; www.nyexpo.org.

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OHIO INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-9, 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, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (shorts under 15 min.); \$35 (15 min. & over); late fees are doubled; screenplays: \$40; \$60 (late). Contact: Annetta Marion & Bernadette Gillota, 1392 West 65th Street, Cleveland, OH 44102; (216) 651-7315; fax: 651-7317; ohioindiefilmfest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com.

OJAI FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 23-26, CA. Deadline: June 15 (early); July 15 (final). Theme: "Enriching the Human Spirit Through Film." Films & videos on all subjects in any genre 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 exemplifying film. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 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, 10942 Encino Dr., Oak View, CA 93022; (805) 649-4000; filmfest@ojai.net; www.ojaifilmfest.com.

ONION CITY EXPERIMENTAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 12-14, IL. Deadline: June 13; June 27 (final). 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", 16mm, 35mm, 8mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS or film. Entry Fee: Early: \$25; Late: \$35. Contact: c/o Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 N. Clark Street, 2nd Fl, Chicago, IL 60640; (773) 293-1447; fax: 293-0575; programming@chicagofilmakers.org; www.chicagofilmakers.org.

PITTSBURGH INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, October 17-26, PA. Deadline: July 15. 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, youth

media, family. Awards: \$500 Best of Fest Short Film (under 30 min.); \$500 Best Doc Film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: PILGFF, 322 Mall Blvd., #400, Pittsburgh, PA 15146-2229; (412) 232-3277; fax: 422-5829; pilgff@aol.com; www.pilgff.org.

REHOBOTH BEACH INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 5-9, DE. Deadline: June 20; July 25 (final). Fourth annual fest celebrates independent & foreign cinema in a picturesque coastal resort setting. Approx. 100 entries will be selected (55 features & 45 shorts shown in 2000) for diverse programming in nine theaters. No repeat entries. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, children, short, gay & lesbian. Awards: Audience Awards for Best Feature, Best Short, Best Doc & Best Debut Film. Formats: 35mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL). Entry Fee: \$25; \$20 (students), \$5 early discount. Contact: Joe Bilancio, 102 Midway Village, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971; (302) 645-9095; fax: 645-9460; joe@rebothfilm.com; www.rebothfilm.com.

RESFEST DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept-Dec., CA, WA, IL, NY. Deadline: May 2 (early); June 6 (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), DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL), Beta SP (NTSC), Mini-DV (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$20 (early), \$25 (final). Contact: Festival, 11693 San Vicente Blvd., #271, Los Angeles, CA 90049; filmmaker@resfest.com; www.resfest.com.

ROUTE 66 FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 26-28, IL. Deadline: July 15. Fest seeks works that "involve some kind of journey." Cats: feature, short, experimental. Awards: Awards in different cats. Formats: 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (features); \$10 (shorts, under 20 min.). Contact: Linda McElroy, 207 N. Lincoln, Springfield, IL 62702; linmcelroy@aol.com; www.route66filmfest.com.

SAN DIEGO FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 17-21, CA. Deadline: June 1; July 1 (final). 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. Awards: Best feature, best short, best doc, best actor & actress, best up & coming actor & actress, best screenplay, best cinematography, Achievement in Acting Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC), DVD. Entry Fee: \$35 (features/docs); \$25 (shorts); \$45 (features final); \$35 (shorts final). Contact: San Diego Film Foundation, 5060 Shoreham Pl., Ste. 200, San Diego, CA 92122; (619) 582-2368; fax: 286-8324; info@sdf.org; www.sdf.org.

SEATTLE LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-23, WA. Deadline: June 1; 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-\$1,000). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10; \$15 (final). Contact: Jason Flourde, 1122 E. Pike St., #1313, Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 323-4274; fax: 323-4275; programming@seattlequeerfilm.com; www.seattlequeerfilm.com.

SIDEWALK MOVING PICTURE FESTIVAL, Sept. 18-21, AL. Deadline: June 1, June 15 (final). Program of over 60 films in three days, plus seminars & panel discussions. Fest's motto is "new films for a new audience." 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: \$25-\$45. Contact: Erik Jambor, PO Box 590125, Birmingham, AL 35259; (205) 324-0888; fax: 324-2488; info@sidewalkfest.com; www.sidewalkfest.com.

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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: None. Contact: Matthew Seig, Two Boots Pioneer Theater, 155 E. 3rd Street, New York, NY 10009; pioneertheater@twoboosts.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 aficionados 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, Hi-8, 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.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-26, CA. Deadline: June 10. Int'l film fest, held at Stanford University, showcases doc films & videos dealing w/ UN-related issues: human rights, women's issues, 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.

VERMONT INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-20, VT. Deadline: July 10. Fest devoted to presenting images & issues for social change. Categories: War & Peace, Justice/Human Rights & the Environment. Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Formats: Digital, 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Hi-8, 8mm, DV, Hi-8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (shorts, under 30 min.); \$45 (feature). 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. 23-26, 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, P.O. Box 400128, 109 Culbreth Rd., Charlottesville, VA 22904; 800-UVA-FEST or (434) 982-5277; fax: (804) 924-1447; filmfest@virginia.edu; www.vafilm.com.

WOODSTOCK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 17-21, NY. Deadline: April 15; June 15. 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: Best feature, doc, short, animation. 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@woodstockfilmfest.com; www.woodstockfilmfest.com.

YOUNG VIDEOMAKERS PROGRAM at the Hamptons International Film Festival, Oct., NY. Deadline: June 16. Presented by Children's Media Project, seeking outstanding original video & film work produced by young people across the country & the world. Selected shorts will be integrated into other fest programs as preview shorts. Submissions must have been completed since June 1st of the prior year. Young videomakers must be 19 years or younger at time of video completion. Cats: youth media, student, short, doc, experimental, animation, PSA, narrative. Awards: Golden Starfish Award for Best Young Videomaker; best in each category. Formats: mini-DV, Hi-8, 16mm, Super 8, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Children's Media Project, 358 Main Street, Poughkeepsie,

NY 12601; (845) 485-4480; fax: 485-7310; info@children'smediaproject.org; www.children'smediaproject.org.

INTERNATIONAL

ANTIMATTER: FESTIVAL OF UNDERGROUND SHORT FILM & VIDEO, Sept. 19-27, Canada. Deadline: May 2; June 6 (final). 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, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10; \$15 (final). Contact: Todd Eacrett, 1322 Broad St., Studio F, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W-2A9; (250) 385-3327; fax: 385-3327; rogueart@islandnet.com; www.antimatter.ws.

BAHIA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 11-18, Brazil. Deadline: June 30 (Competition); July 15 (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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (max length: 60 min.). Entry Fee: \$50. Contact: BFF, Predio da Ceplac, 40.080-002, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil; 011 55 71 235-4392; fax: 55 71 336-1680; jornada@ufba.br; www.jornadabahia.cjb.net.

BIENNIAL OF MOVING IMAGES, Nov. 7-15, 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: U-matic, Beta SP, DVD, 16mm, 35mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Centre for Contemporary Images, 5 rue du Temple, Geneva, Switzerland

CH-1201; 011 41 22 908 2000; fax: 908 2001; cic@sgg.ch; www.centreimage.ch/bim.

CANADIAN INT'L ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 10-13, Canada. Deadline: June 15. Open to professional & non professional productions, competitive fest holds showings in several cities in Canada. Entrants incl. amateur & independent filmmakers & pre-professional film students. About 30 works 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 in several cats. Formats: 16mm, 8mm, 1/2", Super 8, Beta SP, 35mm, S-VHS, DVD, Hi-8. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20-\$50. Contact: CIAFF Ben Andrews FSCCA, Festival Director, P.O. Box 1010, STN. Main, Barrie, Ontario, Canada L4M 5E1; (905) 662-4406; fax: 733-8232; ciaff@canada.com; www.CIAFF.org.

CINEMANILA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 7-24, Philippines. Deadline: June 15. Fest screens over 75 critically acclaimed films from all over the world. Fest will have four main sections: Philippine Cinema, Asian Cinema, World Cinema & Digital Cinema. Six to ten films from each category will be chosen to participate in the competition. Aside from parallel competitions for the films, there will also be distinct exhibitions, tributes, marathon showings, conferences & other special events. Seminars & workshops will also be held during the fest & will cover subjects & issues on independent filmmaking. Directors, producers, critics & actors throughout Asia, Europe & North America will be invited to attend the film event. The fest is culminating w/ the presentation of prizes, among which is the topmost plum called the Lino Brocka Award. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: There will be a competition level for full-length, short, & doc films. Preview on VHS. Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 2877, Quezon City Central Post Office, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines; 011 63 2 371-8821; fax: 63 2 412-7686; miff@cinemania.com.ph; www.cinemania.com.ph.

CORK FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12-19, Ireland. Deadline: July 4. Founded in 1956, aim is to "bring Irish audiences the best in world cinema in all its variety." Fest's program is eclectic, bringing together new int'l films w/ other forms of film art, incl. doc, short, animation & exp. film. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 2 yrs to be eligible for compe-

tion sections & must not have screened previously in Ireland in theaters or on TV. Competitive for films under 30 min. Founded: 1956. Cats: short, feature, doc, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Awards for best int'l, European & Irish shorts; also for shorts in B&W. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Gillian O Connor, 10 Washington St., Cork, Ireland; 011 353 21 427 17 11; fax: 353 21 427 59 45; info@corkfilmfest.org; www.corkfilmfest.org.

EURO UNDERGROUND, Nov. 14-Dec. 22, Euro Tour: Poland, France, Germany. Deadline: July 19. Festival seeks Underground, Experimental Media Arts/Doc/Short Films for their fall European exhibition. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation, performance video, installation. 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 60647; (312) 399-4531; info@eurounderground.org; www.eurounderground.org.

FANTASTISK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 19-28, Sweden. Deadline: July 28. The only int'l film fest in Scandinavia totally devoted to the cinema of the fantastic: science-fiction, fantasy, horror & thriller. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Melies d'Argent/Best European Fantastic Film (feature, short), Audience Prize (feature, live-action short, animation short). Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DV (PAL), Beta SP (PAL). Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee: None (shorts have to pay their own freight). Contact: Magnus Paulsson, Stora Varvsgatan 11K:1, Malmö, Sweden 211 19; 011 46 40 12 4666; fax: 011 46 40 12 2264; info@fff.se; www.fff.se.

FILMFEST HAMBURG, Sept. 19-26, Germany. Deadline: July 25. 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, Steintorweg 4, Hamburg, Germany

20099; 011 49 399 19 00 0; fax: 49 40 399 19 00 10; office@filmfesthamburg.de; www.filmfesthamburg.de.

GIFFONI FILM FESTIVAL, July 19-26, 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: None. 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.

HELSINKI FILM FESTIVAL: Love And Anarchy, Sept. 18-28, Finland. Deadline: June 30. Non competitive fest transforms Helsinki into a moviegoer's paradise, aiming to promote artistry of filmmaking; inventive, visually stunning, controversial films & highlighting the talents of tomorrow. The fest is a combination of different strands: Best of Young European Cinema, American Independents, Gay & Lesbian, Fantasy films, Experimental Vision, & Modern Doc & Animation. Under the flag of "Love & Anarchy" fest also harbors the "strange & the offensive", as a responsibility to promote groundbreaking films & the diversity of modern filmmaking to Finnish audiences, industry & professionals. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Pekka Lanerva, P.O. Box 889, Helsinki, Finland 001001; 011 358 9 684 35 230; 358 40 532 6204; fax: 358 9 684 35 232; office@hiff.fi; www.hiff.fi.

IMPAKT FESTIVAL, Jan. 1, Netherlands. Deadline: June 3-9. Fest is an int'l platform for innovative, new film, video, music, installations & new media. Each yr. there are thematic programs & an expanded Panorama program. Each of the thematic programs will focus on a current social or artistic development. The Panorama program present a broad overview of the best new audiovisual productions from the past year. Founded: 1988. Cats: short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, U-matic, CD-ROM, web. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Aron Dunnewind, Box 735, 3500 AS, Utrecht, The Netherlands; 011 310 30 294 4493; fax: 310 30 294 4163; panorama@impakt.nl; www.impakt.nl.

INTERFILM BERLIN-INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL BERLIN, Nov. 4-9, Germany. Deadline: July 18. 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: 15 prizes in various cats. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (PAL/SECAM/NTSC). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Heinz Hermanns, Tempelhofer Ufer 1A, Berlin, Germany D 10961; 011 49 30 693 29 59; fax: 49 30 25 29 13 22; interfilm@interfilmberlin.de; www.interfilmberlin.de.

INT'L MOUNTAIN & ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL GRAZ, Nov. 13-15, 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: DVC Pro, 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. 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.

INVIDEO, Nov. 5-9, Italy. Deadline: June 13. Entry Fee: None. Contact: A.I.A.C.E./INVIDEO, Via Piolti de Bianchi 19, Milano, Italy 20129; 011 39 2 761 153 94; fax: 011 39 2 75280119; info@mostrainvideo.com; www.mostrainvideo.com.

KINOFILM/MANCHESTER INT'L SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 20-26, England. Deadline: June 16. Entry is open to anyone in the filmmaking community incl. first-time filmmakers. 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, S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, Super 8, DV. Preview on VHS.



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KYIV INT'L FILM FESTIVAL MOLODIST, Oct. 25-Nov. 2, 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: None. Contact: Dom Kino, 6 Saksagansky St. Suite 115, Kyiv, Ukraine 01033; 011 380 44 461 9803; fax: 011 380 44 227 4557; info@molodist.com; www.molodist.com.

LES ECRANS DE L'AVEVENTURE (INT'L FESTIVAL OF ADVENTURE FILM), Oct. 16-19, France. Deadline: July 15. 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: None. 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.

LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, August 6-16, 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. Program, in addition to competition & Piazza Grande screenings, incl. video competition, Filmmakers of the Present, retrospective section, sidebar sections, new Swiss cinema & film market. Competition is reserved for full-length features in general, from those directed by new directors to those realised by more experienced filmmakers from all over the world. Founded: 1948. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Golden Leopard; Grand Prix of the City of Locarno. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. 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.

MILANO FILM FESTIVAL, September 12-21, Italy. Deadline: June 30 (shorts); July 31 (features). Annual fest invites features films and shorts (under 45 min.) from anyone who'd like to "invent, build, and 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: none. Contact: Festival, via Paladini, 8, Milano, Italy 20133; 011 39 02 713 613; info@milanofilmfestival.it; www.milanofilmfestival.it.

MONTREAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL/IMAGE & NATION, Sept 25- Oct. 5, Canada. Deadline: June 15. the fest stands as a premiere event for showcasing gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgendered films & videos. Cats: feature, short, doc. Contact: Katharine Setzer, 4067 Boulevard St-Laurent #404, Montreal, Ouebec, Canada H2W 1Y7; (514) 285-9466; fax: 285-1562; info@image-nation.org; www.image-nation.org.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 27-Sept. 7, Canada. Deadline: June 25 (shorts); July 25 (features). Formats: 35mm, 70mm, DVD, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Serge Losique, 1432 de Bleury St., Montreal, Ouebec, Canada H3A 2J1; (514) 848-3883; 848-9933; fax: 848-3886; info@ffm-montreal.org; www.ffm-montreal.org.

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 O&A's 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, DV, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Joanne Huber, Workman Theatre Project, 1001 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6J 1H4; (416) 583-4339; fax: 583 4354; info@rendezvouswithmadness.com; www.rendezvouswithmadness.com.

SAO PAULO INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 28-Sept. 6, Brazil. Deadline: June 6 (int'l); June 15 (Latin Am. Showcase). 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, Associacao Cultural Kinoforum, Rua Simao Alvares, 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.

SOUTH ASIAN DOC FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 25-28, Nepal. Deadline: June 30. Fest, located in Kathmandu, offers both competitive & non competitive cats for docs on South Asian subjects made after Jan. 1 of previous year. Full-length docs given preference. Selected films may tour South Asia & the world. Cats: doc. Awards: Cash awards given. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, 3/4", DVD, mini-DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Film South Asia, P.O. Box 166, Kathmandu, Nepal; 011 977 1 542 544; fax: 977 1 541 196; fsa@himalassociation.org; www.himalassociation.org/fsa.

VOLADERO INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Aug. 21-24, Mexico. Deadline: June 14. Festival is calling upon int'l film & video makers to submit their short films & videos under 30 min. in length to participate in the initial selection for the fest. The films must have been completed after January 1st of previous year. Cats: animation, experimental, short, any style or genre. Awards: Awards will be given for each category. Formats: Beta SP, 1/2", 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Juan Gonzalez, Padre Mier 1099 Ote., Barrio Antiguo, Monterrey, N.L., Mexico C.P. 64000; 011 52 81 8343 0252; fax: 52 81 8343 3501; voladero@voladero.com; www.voladero.com.



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MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, The Alternative Screen: A Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS, press kit, cover letter w/ contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, L.A., CA 90028. Tel.: (323) 466-3456 x115; fax: 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

CAPE COD FILM SOCIETY SCREENING SERIES of Brewster, MA, seeks experimental, documentary & fiction films & videos. Films can be any length, genre, or style, but should fit into one of these 7 categories: war, women filmmakers, race & identity, religion, Cape Cod, masculinity, or grief. Please send work on VHS, DVD, or mini-DV w/ filmmaker bio & suggested category. Also indicate your

availability to appear with your work for O&A. Send to: Rebecca M. Alvin, Belly Girl Films, Inc., PO Box 1727, Brewster, MA 02631-7727; bellygirl@earthlink.net.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. For more info call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society featuring monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta-SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry fee: \$20. Entry form & guidelines available at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, P.O. Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

CLUB DIY is a new monthly screening series in Hollywood, CA, showcasing the best work from the DIY Film Festival. Premieres April 3 at the Derby nightclub. Each screening will also feature discussion panels and cocktail party. For more info, call (323) 665-8080; DIYConvention@aol.com; www.DIYReporter.com.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience (dialogue must be subtitled). Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental video for biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. for videos to be returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen,

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in Urban Mediamakers magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. Tel.: (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

LESBIAN LOOKS of Tucson, AZ, seeks narrative, doc, experimental & mixed-genre work of all lengths for 2003 season. 16mm & VHS NTSC only. Fee paid for all works screened. Deadline: June 15, 2003. Send VHS preview tape, brief synopsis, artist bio & B/W still to Beverly Seckinger, Media



"FilmFinds" Founded, Now Finding Films

FilmFinds, a new weekly show from Minneapolis/St. Paul's KSC-TV, seeks features for broadcast in the Twin Cities; later this year they'll be syndicated across the Midwest. Every Monday night, host Todd Hansen (a former programmer of the Los Angeles Film Festival and current director of programming at the Central

Standard Film Festival) will introduce a new, undistributed film. Submissions must have shown in at least two juried film festivals and cannot have had a wide release. For more info, see listing.

programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

FREEDOM FILM SOCIETY, presenter of the Red Bank Int'l Film Festival, seeks short (45 min. or fewer) & feature-length narrative, documentary, experimental & animated works for monthly screenings in New Jersey. Send preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry fee: shorts, \$25; features, \$45. Ph./fax: (732) 741-8089; contact@rbff.org; www.rbff.org/entry_form/submit.html.

GIRLS ON FILM is a quarterly screening series in San Francisco that seeks short narrative, doc & experimental works of 30 min. or fewer by women of color. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. No entry fee. Send preview (clearly labeled with name, title, length, phone & e-mail) to: Jennifer Jajeh, Girls On Film, 1566 Grove Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include S.A.S.E. if you'd like your work returned. For more info, e-mail girlsonfilseries@hotmail.com; www.atasite.org.

Arts, Harvill 226, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, bsecking@u.arizona.edu; http://w3.arizona.edu/~lgbcom.

MAKOR continues its Reel Jews Film Festival & ongoing screening series showcasing the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs, and/or works in progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration. Program sponsored by Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation. Contact Ken Sherman: (212) 413-8821; ksherman@92ndsty.org.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE seeks short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive 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 & int'l venues for additional screenings. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/

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films/tapes wanted

name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St, San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS at New York's Anthology Film Archives seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. No entry fee or form. Send a VHS copy of your film or video w/ a brief synopsis to David Maquiling, New Filmmakers, Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10009. For more info, visit www.newfilmmakers.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS LOS ANGELES seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. Films can be any length/year of production. Films without distribution only. No entry fee. Keep press kit to a minimum: synopsis, director's bio, 1 production photo. Submissions preferred on DVD; VHS (NTSC) & Mini DV also accepted. Send submissions to New Filmmakers, P.O. Box 48469, Los Angeles, CA 90048. For more info, e-mail newfilmmakersla@yahoo.com; www.newfilmmakers.com.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length, for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following your film's screening. Any length/genre. Connection to New England, whether through subject matter, filming locations, or hometown of filmmakers, helpful but not necessary. Send VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

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 bio & contract info. Deadline: ongoing. Tapes are not returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions & 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.

STAGECOACH RESTAURANT seeks independent & student shorts & features for a screening series it plans to host. Venue is part of Race Brook Lodge in Sheffield, MA, about 2.5 hours from Manhattan. Work should be on VHS or DVD; for more info, contact Anne Watlington, annabel@bcn.net; www.rblodge.com.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

VIDEOTHEATRE, New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All kinds. No deadlines. No late fees. Year-round submission. Weekly programming in a 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. Grand opening 6/03. VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com; www.VideoTheatreNYC.com.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.ArtInGeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

RUNNING FREE, a touring collaborative video installation presented by Montreal's View 72, seeks shorts (5 min. or fewer) of a single person running continuously. Format must be mini-DV, but send VHS for preview. See the website for details: www.view72.com.

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan U. reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E. to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is one of the largest multidisciplinary contemporary arts centers in the Midwest invites proposals for solo, group & curated visual arts exhibitions for the 2003/2004 season. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact UICA Race St. Gallery, 41 Sheldon Blvd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; (616) 454-7000; fax: 459-9395; www.uica.org.

SHOWCASES

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA. The excitement of an annual film festival w/ a monthly networking fest & movie showcase. First Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films & features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry pros. Evenings begin w/ cocktail reception to showcase local organizations & provide a 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.

FREIGHT FILM SALON seeks submissions for its Monday Night Shorts showcase series. Work can be any genre, 20 min. or fewer; must be on VHS or DVD. Will screen on 6' screen, 2 plasma screens & 4 monitors. Please e-mail FreightFilmSalon@yahoo.com for additional info, or visit www.FreightNYC.com.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. 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.

FILMFINDS, KSC-TV's new showcase of independent films, now seeks work for broadcast in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Only feature-length narrative films considered. Work must have played in at least 2 juried film festivals & cannot have had a wide release or previously been broadcast on network TV. Chosen films will receive an initial payment for 2 airings within a 1-year timeframe & additional payments for syndication. For

more info & a downloadable appl., visit www.mnfilm.org; filmfinds@mnfilm.org.

INDIE FILM SHOWCASE, the award-winning Twin Cities cable showcase, accepts ongoing submissions. Programs run 7-8 p.m. every Saturday & Sunday for a month. No fees. Send your work in any format & a S.A.S.E. to: Indie Film Showcase, 2134 Roth Pl., White Bear Lake, MN 55110. For a release form & more info, visit www.proletariatpictures.com.

MIND IGNITE seeks short films for Australian anthology TV show. Work must be 28 min. or fewer, any genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, mini-DV, SP, Super 8 or 8mm. Along with film, the filmmaker must also submit a press kit, clearance for all music & sound, artistic release & signed nonexclusive licensing agreement, which can be found on www.mindignite.com. For more info visit site, or call Anne Maryfield, +618 9324 4455.

SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films which 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 5 Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266; ShortList@mail.sdsu.edu.

THEXPATCAFE TELEVISION SHOW is a screening venue for short independent film/video/new media produced artists, accepting submissions for the 2003 season. Work must be fewer than 20 min. in length. Mini-DV & SVHS format only. Submission form is available at www.thexpatcafe.com.

VIDEOHYPE TV is producing a cable public access 13-week show to highlight indie films in a video-bio format. Show up to 15 min of your work w/ your contact info. Show will be seen in Chicago IL, CA & NY. For submission application and more info, e-mail: daproducer2003@yahoo.com.

WEBCAST

ATOM FILMS seeks quality films & animations for worldwide commercial distribution to a network of television, airline, home entertainment & new media outlets, including the award-winning AtomFilms website. Live-action & animation submissions running times must be fewer than 30 min. For more info & a submission form, visit www.atomshockwave.com.

Notices

By Charlie Sweitzer

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., July 1 for Sept. issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

KODAK FILM SCHOOL COMPETITION seeks submissions for its fourth annual cinematography competitions for students and recent graduates in the Latin America and Asian-Pacific regions of the world. Entries must be 20 min. or fewer & entirely produced by a student crew in either 16 or 35mm. For more info, contact the Kodak representative nearest you, or visit www.kodak.com/go/filmschoolcompetition.

OHIO INDEPENDENT SCREENPLAY AWARDS 2003 seeks entries. All genres accepted. Especially seeking scripts by people of color for separate Best Voice of Color Screenplay Awards. Winners receive cash, submission to feature film producers & representation, display, promotion by WritersScriptNetwork.com & more. Deadline: postmarked by June 1; late entry, postmarked by July 1. For more info & entry form, contact: Ohio Independent Screenplay Awards, (216) 651-7315; OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com; www.ohiofilms.com.

ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY COMPETITION promotes the positive portrayal of gays & lesbians in film. The competition is open to all writers and offers cash awards & industry contacts to winners. Deadline: Sept. 1, 2003. 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.

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, you must have a film, 30 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) during operating hours, or call Jim: (212) 254-7107; jim@twoboots.com.

SLAMDANCE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION 2003 seeks original short & feature screenplays that must not have been previously optioned, purchased, or produced (see entry form for other rules). Prizes incl. cash, passes to next year's Slamdance, plus exposure to a major literary agency & major studio. This year there's also a competition for sci-fi features, shorts & short stories, judged by a panel of award-winning writers and filmmakers. Entry fee: \$70, features; \$60, shorts & stu-

now in its 16th year & seeks films & videos relating to the theme "One Person Can Make a Difference." Entries must be 5 min. or fewer & submitted on VHS (NTSC). Deadline: June 13. 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

INTERNATIONAL FILM WORKSHOPS offers 150 summer workshops from March to October, as well as 4-week summer film school & many other programs in Oaxaca, Mexico; Seville, Spain & Rockport, ME. For more info, visit www.FilmWorkshops.com, or call for their catalog toll-free: (877) 577-7700; internationally, (207) 236-8581.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV administrator,

One in Ten is One of a Kind

Now entering its fifth year, the One in Ten Screenplay Competition has the distinction of being perhaps the only gay and lesbian screenplay contest in the world. Contest coordinator Mike Dean explains that the contest was founded to promote a positive portrayal of gays and lesbians on film, adding: "Hollywood is recognizing this contest more and more as years progress, with interest from rather large studios, producers, and production companies as well." See listing for submission details.

dents. Final deadline: June 20. For more info, call (323) 466-1786; screenplay@slamdance.com; (slamfi@xeolux.com for sci-fi entry questions); www.slamdance.com.

THE ANNUAL IDA AWARDS COMPETITION, sponsored by Eastman Kodak, recognizes & honors distinguished achievement in nonfiction film & video. Winners honored at the Awards Gala on Dec. 12, 2003 & screened on Dec. 13 at DocuFest. Early deadline: May 16 (\$55 for IDA members, \$75 nonmembers); final deadline: June 13 (\$75, \$125). Entry forms avail.: www.documentary.org, or contact IDA at (213) 534-3600 x7446; idaawards@documentary.org.

VIDEO CONTEST FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS, sponsored by the Christophers, is

now offers an ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each month's workshop is held at MNN & features a different speaker, screening & focus; past speakers have included Sharon Greytak, Joel Katz & Sam Pollard. For more info visit www.mnn.org or call (212) 757-2670.

NORTHEAST HISTORIC FILM'S SUMMER FILM SYMPOSIUM will be held August 8-9, 2003, in Bucksport, ME. This year's theme is "Barriers to Access, Barriers to Understanding/Crashing, Leaping & Running Around." Presenters thus far include Chad Hunter from George Eastman House (small gauge); Janna Jones, Univ. of South Florida (follow-up on contemporaneous vs. compilation-retrospective documentaries); Snowden Becker, Getty (medical use of home movies);

Dwight Swanson, Northeast Historic Film (Irving Forbes family 28mm preservation). For more info, visit www.oldfilm.org.

PBS'S ANNUAL MEETING will be held June 6-9, in Miami, FL. Targeted to producers, general managers & professionals in programming, promotions & education, the agenda will include big-picture strategy, upcoming TV/web content priorities & many concurrent sessions such as tips for optimizing PVR's like TiVo, preparation for the digital classroom & furthering our local/national model based on the Adaptive Path work. If you plan to attend, please contact Amanda Hirsch at ahirsch@pbs.org to arrange an informal get-together in addition to the overall meeting agenda. Additional details for this conference & others will be posted at <http://conferences.pbs.org>.

ROBERT FLAHERTY FILM SEMINAR will be held June 14-20 at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY. The 49th Robert Flaherty Film Seminar brings together a fertile assortment of documentary, experimental & hybrid approaches to examine a variety of ways contemporary filmmakers have grappled w/ cinema's abilities & frailties in relation to the concept of social responsibility & political struggle. Limited space available. Limited financial aid also available; deadline for funding applications is April 4. For more info, visit www.flahertysemina.org. Contact: International Film Seminars, 198 Broadway, Rm 1206, New York, NY 10038; (212) 608-3224; fax: 608-3242; ifs@flahertyseminar.org.

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES' SPRING MEDIA WORKSHOP SERIES concludes June with a cable TV clinic (June 3) featuring panelists from Court TV & Oxygen Media. Discounted rates for WMM Makers & Friends of WMM. For more info & a registration form, visit www.wmm.com/assist/currentschedule.htm.

PUBLICATIONS

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To send work or for info, contact Roselly Torres, LAVA, 124 Washington Pl., NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108; imre@igc.org.

FELIX is a journal of media arts & communication. The next issue will be edited by Kathy High w/ guest editors Ximena Cuevas,

Roberto Lopez & Jesse Lerner. Entitled RISK/RIESGO, it will be the magazine's first bilingual issue (in Spanish & English) & will ask: What makes work/life/art risky business? What is the gamble? Where is the dare, the hazard, the danger? Felix is published by the Standby Program, Inc. Order by phone: (212) 219-0951; www.e-felix.org.

GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FILMS SHOT IN NY STATE avail. for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numerous tax exemptions avail. in NY state for film, TV & commercial production. Put together by Empire State Development Corp. & NY State Dept. of Taxation & Finance, 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & TV Development, 633 3rd Ave., 33rd fl., New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's 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 & 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.

BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS, Television, and New Media Coproductions, provides in-kind investments & scholarships in return for equity investments (which vary according to the nature & scale of the project). Applicants must be mid-career or senior professionals w/ professional development needs. Deadlines: Feb. 28, June 30, Oct. 31. For more info, contact Sara Diamond, (403) 762-6696; fax: 762-6665; sara_diamond@banffcentre.ca; www.banffcentre.ca.

CABLE POSITIVE, the cable & telecommunications industry's national nonprofit AIDS action organization, provides funding for AIDS organizations & local cable systems to

work together in community outreach efforts, or to produce & distribute new, locally-focused HIV/AIDS-related programs & PSA's through the Tony Cox Community Fund. Grants up to \$5,000. Contact: Jesse Giuliani, tel.: (212) 459-1547; jesse@cablepositive.org; www.cablepositive.org. Next deadline: Sept 12.

DIY REVOLUTION is now accepting free listings/classifieds on an indy media network. DIYR is a resource aimed to unite independent filmmakers, artists, activists, musicians, media groups & writers working for a more just, authentic & progressive world working outside of a corporate paradigm. Visit us at www.diyrevolution.com or www.diy.com for your free membership.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER PRESENTATION FUNDS award up to \$1,000 each year to nonprofit media arts organizations in New York State. Funds must go to fees to artists for in-person presentations of film, electronic media, sonic art, and art using new technologies and the internet. Electronic music & work that's primarily commercial, instructional, educational, or promotional not considered. For more info, call program director Sherry Miller Hocking, (607) 687-4341; etc@experimentaltvcenter.org; www.experimentaltvcenter.org.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundations goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote intl cooperation & advance human achievement. www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

GLOBAL CENTER, a nonprofit, IRS-certified 501(c)(3) educational foundation, seeks filmmakers seeking fiscal sponsors. For more info, call (212) 246-0202, or e-mail roc@globalvision.org; www.globalvision.org.

HARBURG FOUNDATION seeks letters of inquiry for possible future funding for controversial, risky, or innovative projects that use communication systems (radio, computer, television, theater, documentary film, books) to educate & inform about serious issues. Contact Ernie Harburg, (212) 343-9453; ernie@harburgfoundation.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC

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notices

artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd. Tel: (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

COMMUNITY MEDIA GRANT: The Community Media Grant funds nonprofit 501(c)(3) community based, media, grassroots and other organizations providing services and/or cultural opportunities based in and for the Borough of Manhattan. Deadline is July 7, 2003. For more information about the grant, application seminars, and materials, check the MNN website, www.mnn.org/cm/grant.

OPEN CALL FOR PRODUCTION & COMPLETION FUNDS

are available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants w/ public TV projects in production & postproduction phases. Awards average from \$20K-\$50K per project. Open call production fund deadlines: Feb. 28 & Aug. 29, 2003. Review process for the open call takes approximately 3-6 months. Open door completion fund deadline: none, but full-length rough cut must be submitted. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 145 Ninth St., Suite 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814 x122; fax: 863-7428; mediafund@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, along w/ instruction & technical support. Students, media arts center members & unaffiliated independents are encouraged to apply. Commercial projects, music videos, features & PSA's not considered. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 weeks minimum for processing. Tel: (206) 467-8666; fax: (212) 467-9165; filmgrant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS (PIC) COMPLETION FUNDS are provided for the final preparations of broadcast masters of Pacific Island-themed programs intended for national public television. Categories: doc, performance, children's & cultural affairs programming. PIC is

particularly interested in projects that examine & illuminate realities of Pacific Islander issues such as diversity, identity, & spirituality. Full-length rough cut must be submitted w/ application. Awards up to \$50,000. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Gus Cobb-Adams, Media Fund, PIC, 1221 Kapi'olani Blvd. 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814; Tel: (808) 591-0059 x 16; fax: 591-1114; gcobb-adams@piccom.org; applications available at www.piccom.org.

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SUNDANCE DOCUMENTARY FUND

, formerly the Soros Documentary Fund, supports int'l doc films & videos on current & significant issues in human rights, freedom of expression, social justice & civil liberties. Development funds for research & preproduction awarded up to \$15,000; works-in-progress funds for production or postproduction up to \$50,000 (average award is \$25,000). www.sundance.org.

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 \$10,000 for regionally produced projects for any genre. In Sept. the fund will award \$65,000 in grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Deadline: July 1. Appl. avail. at Texas Filmmakers' Production Funds, 1901 East 51st St., Austin, TX 78723; Tel: (512) 322-0145, or you can download it at www.austinfilm.org.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION

supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area & Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must have nonprofit status/fiscal sponsorship. Send letter of inquiry and synopsis to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave., #209, San Francisco, CA 94133-3930; (415) 391-0911.

Classifieds

Deadline: First of each month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., July 1st for September issue).

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MUSIC SUPERVISOR/CLEARANCE: 20 yrs experience in music business, former ESPN MD, wks on tons of docs & indies, Weather Underground, Mule Skinner Blues, Sounds Sacred; Billboard award-winning sdtrk producer. brooke@rightsworkshop.com; (415) 771-2069.

PRODUCING YOUR OWN SCRIPT? A schedule & budget are more than just lists & numbers. Your schedule & budget should be done with the same creativity as your writing & directing. Experienced Production Mgr/Line Prod. filmguy13@mindspring.com.

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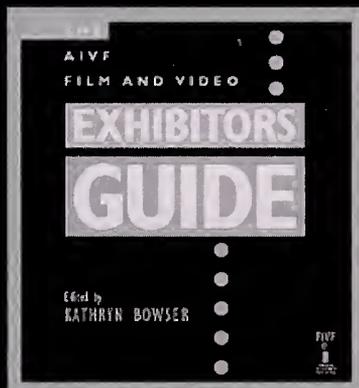
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WRITER'S RETREAT GRANT: Flyingark Films is sponsoring a 3 week writer's retreat at mountaintop cabin located in the heart of California wine country. Deadline: Aug. 1. www.questforturtleisland.com. Click "contact us" & request guidelines.

aivf

Unless otherwise noted, AIVF programs take place at our offices. R.S.V.P. is required for all AIVF events: call (212) 807-1400 x301, or visit www.aivf.org.

IN BRIEF: MUSIC RIGHTS

when: June 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$30/\$20 members



The AIVF Producers' Legal Series helps answer legal and business questions about structuring and negotiating deals in film and television. It also introduces independents to future legal and business resources.

This session addresses issues of music rights as applicable to television, film, and audio/video mediums. Topics concerning structuring and negotiating deals for the creation of original music will be addressed, as well as how to license for pre-existing and recorded music.

Series moderator Innes Smolansky is an experienced entertainment attorney specializing in representing producers, writers, authors, directors and animators in independent motion picture production, documentaries, television, theater, and book publishing.

AIVF COSPONSORS: ATLANTA FILM FESTIVAL

when: June 6-14
where: Atlanta, GA



The twenty-seventh annual Atlanta Film Festival will feature premiere screenings of independent film and video, informative seminars, panel discussions, and guest appearances by filmmakers, video artists, and media professionals from around the world.

The festival is the largest annual event produced by IMAGE Film & Video Center, the Southeast's premier media arts organization. Dedicated to fostering the artistic endeavors of media-makers throughout the region, IMAGE continues to promote the production, exhibition, and public awareness of film and video as unique forms of artistic expression.

SCREENING: "STATE OF DENIAL"

when: June 11, 7:30 p.m.

where: The Carter Center, Atlanta

Informative and thoughtful, *State of Denial* takes an unflinching look at how the citizens of South Africa are living with the AIDS epidemic in the current climate of confusion and neglect perpetuated by President Mbeki's administration. Producer/director Elaine Epstein, a native South African who has worked extensively in AIDS and public health, offers a unique insider's look at the complex issues affecting the nearly five million South Africans living with HIV and AIDS today.

For more information, visit www.imagefv.org/fest2003.

AIVF COSPONSORS: BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL

when: June 8-13

where: Banff, Alberta

Banff Television Festival is an annual international event for broadcasters, television writers, producers, and directors. The festival has a comprehensive seminar program during the course of the event, including master classes and pitching sessions where it is possible to win development funding for a project.

In celebration of the outstanding contribution to world television by US program-makers and broadcasters, the twenty-fourth international Banff Television Festival will present a special *Tribute to US Television* as part of its week long festivities, beginning June 8.

For more information, visit www.banfftvfest.com.

AIVF COSPONSORS: LOS ANGELES FILM FESTIVAL

when: June 11-21

where: Los Angeles, CA

cost: AIVF members receive a \$1 discount on screenings before 6:00 p.m.



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Our Filmmakers' Resource Library houses hundreds of print and electronic resources, from essential directories & trade magazines to sample proposals & budgets.

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Recorded information available 24/7; operator on duty Tues.-Fri. 2-5 p.m. EST

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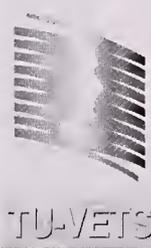
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**AIVF COSPONSORS:
HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**

when: June 11-21

where: Walter Reade Theater, NYC

cost: \$5 per screening

Through the eyes of committed and courageous filmmakers, the HRWIFF showcases the heroic stories of activists and survivors from all over the world. The works featured put a human face on threats to individual freedom and dignity, and celebrate the power of the human spirit and intellect to prevail.

**AMERICAN DISSENT:
A Special Program of
Third World Newsreel
on their 35th Anniversary**

when: June 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: Walter Reade Theater, NYC

cost: \$5

In celebration of Third World Newsreel's thirtieth anniversary, the HRWIFF will screen a sampling of seminal films produced by the collective. Focusing mainly on the United States, highlights of the program will include *America*, a 1969 film that goes to the frontline of anti-war demonstrations and captures stirring impromptu interviews with groups of angry youth and young Vietnam veterans fresh from the war. Also included will be a sneak preview of a work in progress by Hye Jung Park on North Korea. Third World Newsreel

staff will be present for the screening and discussion, and a reception will follow.

For thirty-five years, Third World Newsreel has strived to offer an alternative vision of the role of progressive people of color in shaping our diverse national and international communities. They were in the vanguard of alternative media visions at a time when moving images of even the most controversial issues were presented only by a handful of major corporations. When anti-war protesters, civil rights groups, and women's liberation activists needed a venue to present their voices, TWN was there.

Today, their mission reminds us that in the hands of creative independent media artists, the moving image retains its power to document, preserve, and disseminate cultural and historical perspectives often overlooked by the mainstream media.

For more information, visit www.hrw.org/iff.

MediaRights.org

**AIVF COSPONSORS:
MEDIA THAT MATTERS
FILM FESTIVAL**

MediaRights.org presents the third annual Media That Matters Film Festival, a celebration of short films, videos, and new media that inspire audiences to speak out and take action. Following the festival's premiere at the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, the Media That Matters films will be broadcast via Free Speech TV and WorldLink TV and will be screened around the country. The festival will stream online all year with links that allow viewers to immediately learn about and take action on the issues presented in these works.

Visit the festival online at www.mediarights.org/festival/presentation/mtmffmov.php.

FIVE 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:



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John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
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We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival; **CA:** Berkeley Documentary Center; Berkeley Video & Film Center; Film Arts Foundation; Filmmakers Alliance; Fireside Foundation; International Buddhist Film Festival; Media Fund; San Diego Asian Film Festival; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; The LEF Foundation; The Sundance Institute; USC School of Cinema TV; **CO:** Colorado Film Commission; Denver Center Media; **CT:** New Haven Film Festival; **DC:** Media Access Project; **FL:** Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival; Sarasota Film Festival; University of Tampa; Valencia Community College; **GA:** Atlanta Black Film Festival, Inc.; Image Film and Video Center; Savannah College of Art and Design; **HI:** Pacific Islanders in Communications; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago; Community Television Network; Light Bound; Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Communication; Rock Valley College; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Lowell Telecommunications Group; Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College; WGBH Education Foundation; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **ME:** Maine Photographic Workshops; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Festival; **MN:** IFP/MSP; Walker Art Center; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **MS:** Magnolia Independent Film Festival; **NC:** Cucalorus Film Foundation; UNC Greensboro, Broadcasting and Cinema; **NE:**

AIVF Salon/Lincoln; Great Plains Film Festival; Nebraska Independent Film Project; Ross Film Theater, UN-Lincoln; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; Freedom Film Society; **NM:** Telluride Film Festival; **NY:** After Dark Productions; American Museum of Natural History; Art21; Bronx Council on the Arts; Center for New American Media; Cinema Arts Center; Children's Media Project; 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.; International Film Seminars; John Jay High School; LMC-TV; Long Island Film Festival; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Video Resources; New School, Dept. of Communications/Film Department; New York Women in Film and Television; Nina Winthrop and Dancers; Paper Tiger; POV/The American Documentary; Pratt Institute; Ross Media Center; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stony Brook Film Festival; Syracuse University; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; Upstate Films, Ltd.; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Independent Pictures/AIVF Ohio Salon; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio University School of Film; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; Northwest Film Center; **PA:** American Poetry Center; Desales University, Department of the Performing Arts; Department of Film and Video, Carnegie Museum of Art; Great Lakes Film Association; Greenworks; Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; Philadelphia Independent Film and Video Association; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI:** Flickers Arts Collaborative; **SC:** Hybrid Films; South Carolina Arts Commission; **TX:** Austin Film Society; Michener Center for Writers; Southwest Alternate Media Project; **UT:** Sundance Institute; **VA:** PBS; PBS Midwest; VA Department of Drama; **VT:** The Noodlehead Network; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; **WI:** UWM Department of Film; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Short Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

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AIVF COSPONSORS:
ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



when: June 20-29
where: The Asia Society, NYC

Come celebrate twenty-six years of America's longest-running Asian American festival, with Asian/Asian American films and videos, third annual screenplay competition and reading, panels, workshops, parties, and more.

Screenings will include South Asian Cinema Night, Hong Kong blockbusters, Centerpiece Presentation, Korean Cinema Night, and the best of short and feature films from the Asian diaspora.

INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTION PANEL

when: June 28, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
where: The Asia Society, NYC
cost: \$6 AIVF & Asian Cinevision members/ \$8 general

International coproductions have become the standard deals for many producers. These joint efforts between production companies based in different countries pose unique challenges and solutions for financing, ownership, production duties and distribution control.

What do producers need to take into consideration before they try to sell their films in the international market or enter into conversations with potential co-venture partners? What are the normal deal terms? This panel of entertainment lawyers and producers will discuss their international coproduction experiences. The discussion will include everything from defining "co-venture" to clearing international music rights. Panelists TBA.

For more information, visit www.aivf.org or www.asiancinevision.org.

AIVF COSPONSORS: Entertainment
SHOWBIZ EXPO & LA DV SHOW



when: June 26-29
where: Los Angeles Convention Center
cost: 20% discount on conference fees for AIVF members

The LA DV Show and ShowBiz Expo are now one event, called Entertainment Technology World. It's one-stop shopping and learning for those seeking solutions in the creation, capture, design, editing, and delivery of film and digital media. The event fully covers and integrates the converging worlds of film and digital video.

INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

when: June 27, 6:30-8:30p.m.
where: Los Angeles Convention Center

Hosted by the LA Salon, the panel discussion will explore the various distribution options, which exist today for the independent producer. What will the effects of an ever-changing technical environment be on independent production? How can independents work with established distributors to maximize exposure while maintaining their creative freedom?

For more information, visit www.ent-techworld.com.

AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT: FILMS AT LINCOLN CENTER

where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC

AIVF members may attend select series (listed below) at a discounted rate—\$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office.

June 12—Open Roads: New Italian Cinema

June 13-26—Human Rights Watch International Film Festival

June 27-July 10—Heroic Grace: The Chinese Martial Arts Film

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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon 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.net

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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

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

**Cleveland, OH:
Ohio Independent Film Festival**

Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette Gillora, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

**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

Building Voices in Boulder

We have had a great year in Boulder, presenting several very popular films that were thoughtful, informative, and provocative. We have been fortunate enough to host some extraordinary speakers who presented films.

In December, Films for Change presented *the nea tapes*, a documentary on federal arts funding slashes, produced and directed by Paul LaMarre and Melissa Wolf. Melissa flew to Boulder and screened the film herself, and representatives from Colorado arts advocacy organizations also spoke. Arts for Colorado were grateful to have an opportunity to talk more specifically about the statewide arts funding cuts made in Colorado this year.

— Linda Mamoun

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

**Lincoln, NE: Nebraska
Independent Film Project**

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm)
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: Seattle Indie Network

Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 200-0933;
Wes Kim, (206) 719-6261; seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:

When: First Mondays, 6 p.m.
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Jana Segal and Rachel Sharp,
tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:

Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline,
(202) 554-3263 x4, washingtondc@aivf.org

Get-to-Work Getaways

by Jason Guerrasio

Whether you're in a remote location doing yoga, or in a small group of your peers discussing a project, retreats can be the best way to tap into a side of your creative mind you haven't found yet. Retreats come in all shapes and sizes, catering to everyone with breathtaking surroundings, experts in the field, and friendships that can last a lifetime. Below are just a few such programs.

The International Women's Writers Guild

(www.iwwg.com)

The twenty-year-old IWWG presents weekend workshops and retreats across the country for female writers of all levels of experience. Their June weeklong annual conference includes workshops on everything from "The Inner Writer: A Reclamation Project," with Emily Hanlon, to "Juggling for Writers," with Terry Hayes.

The Spoleto Screenwriters' Workshop

(www.spoletoarts.com)

Located in Spoleto, Italy, this intensive workshop for writers, producers, and directors covers every aspect of the screenwriting process. And when you take a break you can experience some of the best opera in the world.

New York Mills Arts Retreat

(www.kulcher.org)

In rural Minnesota, this two- to four-week retreat dedicated to emerging artists submerges them in their work by providing an environment that's low on outside distractions. Programs include gallery exhibits, musical and theatrical performances, and a philosophy competition.

Yaddo

(www.yaddo.org)

Situated on a beautiful 400-acre estate, Yaddo's mission is to nurture artists by providing them with an uninterrupted environment that can last from two weeks to two months. Past Yaddo residents included Mario Puzo, who wrote some of his legendary novel, *The Godfather*, on the grounds. Fittingly, Mark Winegardner, who has taken the reigns to write the next book in the *Godfather* saga, also went to Yaddo.

Headlands Center for the Arts

(www.headlands.org)

Through residencies and public programs, HCA is a labo-

ratory for creativity. Artists are given time and space to experiment, collaborate, and develop new work.

The Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center

(www.rockfound.org)

Set on Lake Como, Italy, the Bellagio Study and Conference Center provides an environment of solitude, contemplation, and productivity for scholars, scientists, artists, and writers from all over the world. The participants are broken up into small groups to work on their projects, magnifying the intellectual intensity of life at the center.

Byrdcliffe Arts Colony

(www.woodstockguild.org)

Artist-friendly Woodstock, New York, plays host to this century-old residency program for writers and visual artists. It provides a sanctuary to concentrate on independent creative works in the company of fellow artists.

Maui Writers Retreat

(www.mauiwriters.com)

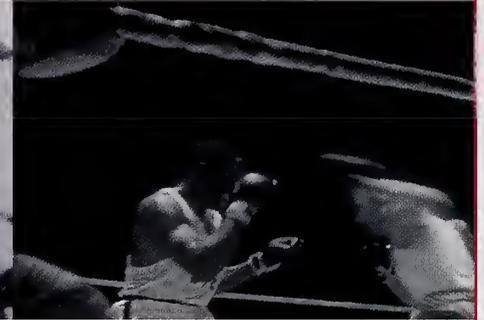
This screenwriting retreat offers story development in group sessions, and lectures to define the essentials of storytelling using professional screenwriters and top teachers in one of the most idyllic settings imaginable.

Esalen Institute

(www.esalen.org)

Overlooking the Pacific Ocean in central California's Big Sur, this famed hippy retreat offers a clothing-optional hot springs, vegetarian meals, and a wide array of programs. One of Esalen's most popular workshops, "Exploring Nirvana and Salvation through Film," explores religious traditions through six films. Using cinema as an entry point, the group sheds light on the relationship between Eastern and Western spirituality. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



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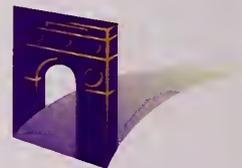
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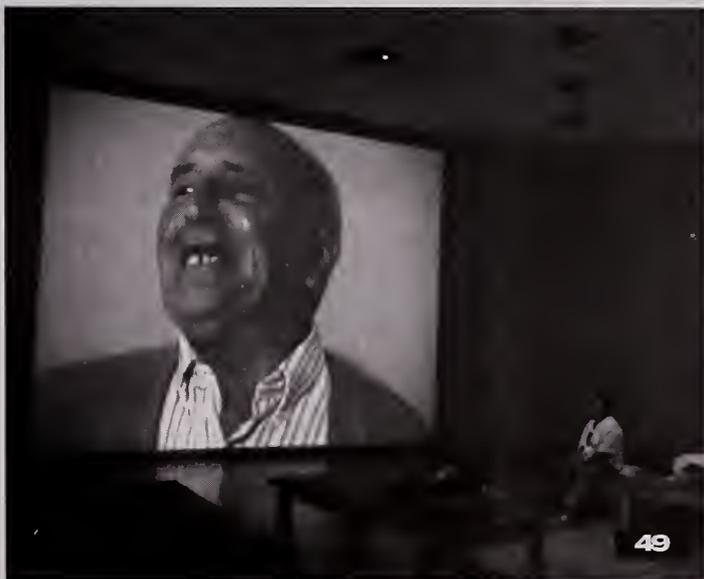
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 Film and video curator Chrissy Iles discusses trends in experimental film, video, and beyond. [by Ann Lewinson]

Photos, this page: Matt McCormick's *Sincerely, Joe P. Bear* (Peripheral Produce); *Tracing the Decay of Fiction: Encounters with a Film*, a collaboration by Pat O'Neill (Labyrinth Project); Craigie Horsfield's *The El Hierro Conversation* (Documenta11).

Page 5 photos: Still from Shirin Neshat's *Tooba* (Larry Barns, courtesy of Barbara Gladstone); *Quattro Noza* DP Derek Cianfrance (left) and director Joey Curtis (Fountainhead); Jessica Irish's website, *Inflat-o-scape* (Jessica Irish); Jonathan Demme, documentary maker and panelist at Full Frame Documentary Film Festival (Full Frame); Mark "Gator" Rogowski, subject of Helen Stickler's *Stoked* (Palm Pictures).

On the Cover: Image from Carrol Parrot Blue's collaborative project *The Dawn at My Back: A Memoir of a Black Texas Upbringing, 1900-2000*, an interactive CD-ROM based on a book by Blue which creates a patchwork of stories and landscapes exploring the layers of personal and cultural history that mirror the author's experience while expanding the viewer's (Dan Rhone, illustrated by Suzy Flood).



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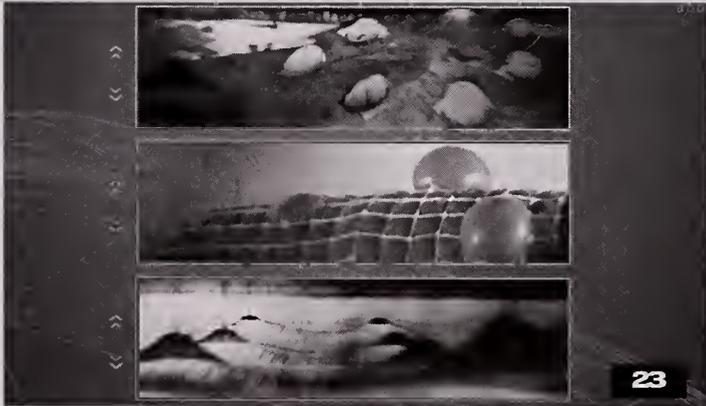




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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,
Somebody once told me that journalism is educating yourself in public.

For me this saying is truer for this issue of *The Independent* than for any other that I have edited since I arrived at the magazine. While I know a great deal about distribution, financing, and even technology, I will be the first to admit that my knowledge pool of experimental media is not particularly deep. But one of the keys to a good education is knowing what you do not know.

While this form of education is not always easy, one of the joys of journalism is that it gives you an excuse to contact people who have the knowledge you lack and become friends with them. In this case, I called Shari Frilot, Sundance programmer and filmmaker, who agreed to collaborate with me on this issue as a consulting editor.

When I originally spoke to Frilot, I took her a very broad idea of what I wanted to address in this issue and a working title, "Redefining X." I have been part of independent media for long enough to observe that experimental media has evolved beyond the seventies and the visuals the term "experimental" brings to the many viewers' minds.

Together Frilot and I molded and narrowed the approach to this theme. Her knowledge of the field and my experience of editorial content mixed together to create this issue. I searched for writers and edited their words while she explored topics and consulted with them. Cauleen Smith worked particularly closely with Frilot, and the resulting article, "Redefining Experimental Media: Counter-Currents and the Joy Quotient" (see page 40), comes closest to addressing

the original concept for the issue.

Holly Willis' piece, "The Labyrinth Project," about the Los Angeles-based new media initiative (see page 45), and Ann Lewinson's interview with the Whitney Museum's film and video curator Chrissy Iles (see page 49) round out the feature section by examining specific areas of the experimental world. Frilot's profile of *Quattro Noza* director Joey Curtis (see page 15) and Charlie Sweitzer's piece on Shirin Neshat (see page 19) further explore experimental media as a crossover artform continuously moving into galleries, general festivals, and theaters. And Brian Frye's trio book review reflects on some of the forerunners of the field.

Each month when I sit down to write this letter, I think about writing a sentence that runs something like, "While clearly we could not cover the entire topic of this issue in the limited amount of time and space available to a monthly magazine, I hope we have been able to increase your knowledge and enjoyment of the topic." And each month, I think, "That is true of every issue. Save it for a month when this is even more true than usual." This is that month.

I am happy to say that looking at the galleys as this goes to press, I see Frilot's fingerprints, as well as mine, all over this issue. We clearly did not achieve the goal of redefining experimental media today, because that would take a book and not a single issue of a monthly magazine. What I hope we have done is open the door for discussion and investigation not only among people already engaged in experimental media, but also among readers who are less familiar with the field.

Thank you for supporting *The Independent*.

Maud Kersnowski
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Two Steps Back

FCC ROLLS BACK MEDIA OWNERSHIP LAWS

By Charlie Sweitzer

The Federal Communications Commission has voted to loosen media ownership laws, allowing one company to own television stations that reach forty-five percent of the American viewing audience (up from thirty-five percent). The new rules also permit cross-media ownership. Now, one corporation can own both a television station and a newspaper in the same market.

On June 2, the FCC concluded its third biennial review and voted 3-2 along party lines (Republicans and

Commissioners Jonathan Adelstein and Michael Powell are deeply divided on the issue of media ownership.

Democrats, respectively) in favor of the new rules. The proposed changes provoked much discussion among voters, lawmakers, and even FCC commissioners. Commissioners Jonathan Adelstein and Michael Copps—who cast the two dissenting votes—were instrumental in organizing a series of public forums at which proposed changes were discussed. According to the commission, more than 520,000 comments regarding media ownership laws were filed over the past twenty months. Seventeen thousand were filed by individuals, with the balance collected through various groups.

In a June 2 press release, Adelstein, who is a junior member of the com-

mission, said that “public opposition [to the changes] is nearly unanimous, from ultraconservatives to ultraliberals.” The proposed deregulation drew criticism from organizations as diverse as AIVF, the feminist activist group CodePink (who were removed by the police from the June 2 proceedings), and the National Rifle Association. In a May 30 *Washington Post* op/ed piece, Ted Turner criticized the proposed changes: “They will stifle debate, inhibit new ideas, and shut out smaller businesses trying to compete.”

In his own press statement on June 2, Powell acknowledged the opposition but took a different view. “[W]e documented the state of the entire industry, empirically analyzed different transactions and their effect on our diversity goals, and—most importantly—sought the views of our citizens,” wrote Powell. “I have heard the concerns expressed by the public

about excessive consolidation. Though such generalized worries do not clearly suggest specific answers to the specific issues the Commission must address, they have introduced a note of caution in the choices we have made.”

“[The Republican commissioners] had a real belief that these things needed to be relaxed,” said Adelstein in a June 2 interview with *The Independent*, “and as public comment came in in opposition, they didn’t alter their approach. . . . The public view wasn’t ever particularly something that altered their belief that this needed to be done.

“The [new rules] argue that the market is essentially inefficient because of outdated structural rules, and there’s a need to get rid of some rules in order to free up some capital that’ll be channeled into better programming,” he continued. “The problem for me is, I didn’t make the leap between keeping more resources in the sector by consolidation and better programming for the public.”

Powell could not be reached for comment.

Adelstein and Copps urged Powell to postpone the vote to allow both the public and Congress to review and comment upon the proposed changes, arguing that a June 2 vote would be a violation of the Administrative Procedure Act. Under the act, laws must be published in the *Federal Register* before they can be implemented.

The new rules can still be challenged. In Adelstein’s June 2 press statement, he declared: “When this full document [of the changes] is finally made public, I expect it will be torn apart by media experts, academics, consumer groups, activists, and most of all, the American people. They will find it riddled with contradictions, inconsistencies, false assumptions, and outcome-driven thinking.”

“Congress is a higher authority than us,” said Adelstein for *The*

Independent, “and they can always change whatever it is that we’ve done, within the bounds of the Constitution. And of course the courts can always overturn us.”

When the new rules are challenged, it will be through the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. In a June 2 interview with *The New York Times*, former FCC official Blair Levin speculated that “the court will very likely give [the rules] discretion.”

Concluded Adelstein: “The public just needs to stay on top of this issue and not give up.”

These new laws came shortly after Powell’s May 19 announcement that the FCC would develop a federal advisory committee to assist the FCC in addressing diversity issues. Headed by Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis chief Jane E. Mago, the committee will help the agency to (according to the May 19 public notice) “formulate new ways to create opportunities for minorities and women in the communications sector.”

The FCC was founded in 1934 and regulates the country’s radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable. The five members of the FCC are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and no more than three can be of the same political party.

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer and frequent contributor to The Independent.

Asian American Media Activist and Filmmaker Linda Mabalot Dies

By Leslie Ito, Eddie Wong, and Angel Velasco Shaw

Linda Mabalot, executive director of Los Angeles’s Visual Communications (VC), filmmaker, tireless activist, photographer, and nurturer of numerous Asian American filmmakers, died on Monday, May 19, in Los Angeles after

a short battle with cancer at the age of forty-nine.

In addition to her hearty laugh and genuine smile, Mabalot will be most remembered for her advocacy and support for the endless number of Asian Pacific Islander artists that she influenced. Mabalot’s unrelenting support of artistic work in the Asian Pacific independent media arts community has forever changed the landscape of the field. She worked with and advised many of today’s Asian Pacific filmmakers, including Justin Lin (*Better Luck Tomorrow*), Gene Cajayon (*The Debut*), Eric Byler (*Charlotte Sometimes*), Rod Pulido (*Flip Side*), and Chris Tashima (*Visa & Virtues*). Mabalot was working on increasing Visual Communications’ artist services by strengthening VC’s Digital Media Lab, as well as conceptualizing a “farm league” for Asian Pacific writers.

“She always saw possibilities for growth and national coordination among media arts groups,” remembers Eddie Wong, Mabalot’s longtime friend and colleague. “Linda believed that media arts needed to bridge communities and connect those who worked in the commercial film and television industries with community artists. Her vision is left for us to fulfill.”

Born and raised in California’s Sacramento Delta area, Mabalot worked in the tomato fields alongside farm laborers, developing a social consciousness that would inspire her early films and cultivate her dedication to social activism for the next twenty-five years.

After graduating from UC Davis with a degree in psychology in 1977, Mabalot moved to Los Angeles where she met Duane Kubo and Eddie Wong, two of the founders of Visual Communications, the oldest Asian American media group in the United States. Wong, the current executive director of the National Asian American Telecommunications

Association (NAATA), fondly recalls that they “met while on a picket line at the Sun Building, a community service and small business building in Little Tokyo. Linda was checking out the anti-redevelopment struggle in Little Tokyo.” At that time, Kubo and Wong were co-directing a documentary about the impact of redevelopment on the local residents and shopkeepers, *Something’s Rotten in Little Tokyo*.

Impressed with VC’s early documentary work, Mabalot got involved with the organization that same year. She produced and directed the film *Manong*, a documentary on the history of the first wave of Filipino immigrants to America. Mabalot understood the power of media to tell stories, particularly those of the under-represented and undocumented. Her warrior-like determination to create visibility for the virtually invisible compelled her to make a lifelong commitment to producing and supporting other filmmakers to create sensitive and authentic stories of Asian Pacific Americans.

In 1985, Mabalot set her own artistic endeavors aside to run the organization, becoming VC’s executive director and sole administrator. “Linda Mabalot will always be remembered for her unique leadership qualities, which combined a long-range perspective with diligent daily work,” Wong said. “Through her stewardship, Visual Communications survived financial hard times and reinvented itself as a teaching and production facility, preserving its core value of community service.”

Despite the full-time responsibili-



ties of running VC, Mabalot was also involved in various projects such as *Planting Roots: A History of Filipinos in California*, a touring photographic exhibition; *In No One’s Shadow: Education as a Right: From Identity to Empowerment*; and *Patuloy Na Pag-Asa: Enduring Hope*, a five-part editorial and

photojournalistic series for the *Philippine American News*. In 1987, Mabalot shot the short documentary *You Can Still Hear Me Singing*, about the citizens and small farmers movement in the Central Philippines and their self-reliant efforts to solve their economic and political problems due to the monopolization and collapse of the sugarcane industry. This documentary built both financial and community support for the people of Negros.

In recent years, Mabalot worked to bridge the Asian Pacific media arts community to the Hollywood film and television community by introducing and showcasing emerging talent to the industry. Under Mabalot’s leadership, the VC FilmFest: Asian Pacific Film and Video Festival flourished. She had an enormous impact on the creation of the Director’s Guild of America’s Asian American Islander outreach for SAG Indie. Mabalot was also one of the founders of the Asian Pacific American Filmmakers Experience at Park City, an annual event for Asian Pacific Filmmakers at Sundance. ■

Leslie Ito is the interim executive director of Visual Communications. Eddie Wong is the executive director of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association. Angel Velasco Shaw is a board member of Asian CineVision.

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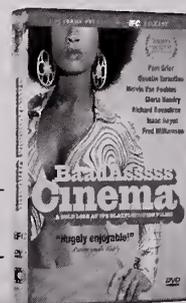
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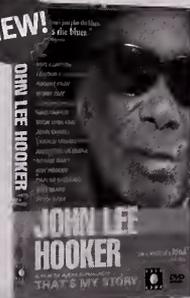
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Meaning Between Screens

A NEW ERA OF MULTI-SCREEN MEDIA

By Melanie Crean

A new generation of moving-image artists is embracing the multi-screen format and creating works, based on present-day culture and technology, that are very different from the groundbreaking multi-screen film and video projects of the late sixties and seventies. Thirty years ago, the port-a-pack video system and its ability to provide the instant feedback of video gave birth to ongoing explorations into the authorship of performance, the process of perception, and defining of the nature of the gallery space. Today, however, the rapid proliferation of the internet has changed the focus from a single image stream to the assimilation of multiple, simultaneous channels of information. These new video installations often address this new form of storytelling through fractured narratives. While some contemporary multiple projection pieces are certainly gratuitous—as if the artist was simply realizing a fetish to “gallerize” their work with several pieces of expensive equipment, other projects are beginning to push the classical grammar of cinema/montage into a new realm.

In the late sixties, video forever changed the experience of time in art by providing a single stream of real-time feedback. Video was an appropriate tool for exploring the dichotomy of viewer and art object. It gave artists a new way to explore the shadow, mirror, or double, which has delineated identity since Plato’s cave. Peter Campus’ 1977 closed-circuit video installation *aen* made the viewer the subject of the work by capturing their image, inverting it, and projecting its massive enlargement on the wall. Video systems could also record the authorship of the

artist and the actions of their performance, allowing them to fold these actions back into the work itself. For Gary Hill’s *Hole in the Wall*, he recorded himself drilling a monitor-sized opening in a gallery wall, and replayed the looped recording later on a monitor placed within the hole.

Like their predecessors from the seventies, contemporary artists have



responded to the technology at hand and the cultural changes it has precipitated. The advent of the graphical user interface’s (GUI’s) multiple windows on the PC desktop has changed the way we receive and process information. The GUI’s multiple windows of information were soon reflected in internet browsers as well, forcing us to process concurrent samples from each image stream into a unified whole to make sense of what we are seeing. Reassembling bits of simultaneous information has become common even in single screen formats of broadcast news (CNN), television shows (Fox’s *24*), and feature films (Figgis’s *Time Code*).

As screens have become cheaper and

ubiquitous, the range of dynamic media environments has broadened, moving from the sanctioned single screen of the theater to the public environment of shopping malls and the personal sphere of cell phones. Navigating daily life now requires the constant assimilation of an environmental gestalt of images. As a result, editing across several screens is being used to describe fractured subjectivity, to play with time spans, and to create meaning through the comparison of multiple channels of images and their meanings. Rather than utilizing video to define space and perception, contemporary artists are more concerned with deconstructing and reconstructing stories.

In traditional cinema, montage created meaning through contrast by editing images from different spaces or perspectives together into a single stream. Multi-screen works create a new form of spatial montage by laying out many such tracks simultaneously in space. Possibilities to create meaning are multiplied. Viewers must now look not only at the contrast between images appearing sequentially in a single track, but simultaneously across all the tracks to understand their value. Meaning is now laid out in a form of grid; images signify as they unfold in time and interrelate in space. Because no single viewer can possibly look at all images on all screens at once, they are forced to sample images across different screens, creating a different viewing experience for each person.

Spatial montage, or the spatialization of meaning, has created a new form of mise-en-scène through a different ordering of the image that exceeds the boundaries of grammar as defined by the cinema’s classical theorists, Eisenstein and Bazin. Some multi-screen works employ techniques that are based in classical montage, extensions of the “meaning through difference” formula, with an expanded play of counterpoint across space. Other multi-screen works, structured more like databases of non-narrative imagery, suggest meaning as they are

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referenced by an index such as time or physical composition, a mechanism that is beyond the description of montage. This database-like structure gives these works a generative quality; they can suggest an open variety of meanings, depending on how they are viewed.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila uses the multi-screen format in her recent work to explore the line between fantasy and reality in narrative. Three screens represent the splintered subjectivity of the protagonist in *The House*, which portrays a woman slipping into madness. Each screen conveys events in the subject's life from different real and imagined perspectives. Tension between these states becomes more apparent as one frame invades another: A cow on the television of one screen steps out of the box and walks through her apartment in the next. The different psychological screens/states interpenetrate one another to the point of psychological instability. *The House* is an extension of classical montage using the screens to show contrast between different points of view unfolding over time, but the subtle and enveloping disjunction brought out through tension between the screens draws the viewer into the work in a way that a single screen version would not.

Isaac Julien's *Paradise Omeros* is another example of the principles of montage being extended through space. The piece documents the transition of a West Indian youth moving to Britain, attempting to resolve conflicts in his life, represented by the dichotomies of Patois/English, Britain/Islands, Love/Hate and Black/White. The multi-screen editing gives time an elliptical quality in the piece, as different sides of the conflicting dualities fight for space on the three screens. As image and time expand and contract over one or two of the screens, it suggests the need for resolution of the protagonist's inner conflict in the third. This work also makes groundbreaking use of the space between frames to alter both time and

meaning, but because the second and third screens are chiefly used for counterpoint, the grammar also draws heavily on traditional montage.

The common experience of indexing digital databases of information from websites and spreadsheets has also had an impact on the structure of moving-image work. The presence of an organizing index is what distinctly separates these works from the traditional montage. Christian Marclay's four-channel *Video Quartet* references a database of Hollywood movie clips with stunning musicality. Surprising chance connections are made between images as they are indexed alternatively by the sounds made within the clips and by formal qualities within the image. Rhythms developed within the work in both sound and image tracks create a lyrical moving-image work of great depth. *Quartet* categorizes images and sounds through a non-narrative organizational index across four screens in a spatio-temporal arrangement. Because the piece could not be presented in the same way with classical montage on a single screen, it is an example of how multi-screen works are expanding cinematic language.

The presence of an organizational index gives works such as *Quartet* a third axis of meaning, creating a sense of dimension or volume often found in interactive pieces but not normally associated with moving-image art. Technical evolution, which has changed our perceptions since the introduction of the fixed perspective, is now poised to do so again in the unnegotiated spaces between digitally mediated image streams. Spatialization of the image happening on multiple levels of space and structure has given rise to iterative systems that continually propel new and multiple meanings and seek to expand the language of cinema. ■

Melanie Crean is a video artist who directs the Moving Image Division at Eyebeam, a nonprofit organization supporting digital arts.

For more info, visit www.eyebeam.org.

Joey Curtis

“QUATTRO NOZA” BLAZES NEW GROUND

By Shari Frilot

Stan Brakhage meets *West Side Story* in Joey Curtis’s “docu-fantasy feature” *Quattro Noza*. This beautifully crafted nouveau magical realist tale of love and betrayal is set against the Southern California hip-hop/illegal street-car racing scene. The story begins when Chato, a hard-neck cholo just out of lockdown, and his Mexican-born princess, Noza, get separated when Chato is arrested for violating parole. Enter Quattro, a sultry-looking Anglo kid from the high desert with a mad dope car. On a night that the LAPD busts a neighborhood street race, Noza escapes the scene by accepting a ride with Quattro, and a competition to the death is ignited between the two suitors. But this is no sugar-coated romance—*Quattro Noza* portrays the world of this urban, and sometimes violent, youth subculture with consuming raw authenticity and a visually hallucinogenic imagination. How did a twenty-nine-year-old white-boy filmmaker pull off such a stunt? It starts to make sense once you talk to him.

“My mom was a Catholic hippy and always wanted me to be an artist,” explains Curtis. “My father was a street racer in the sixties, and I followed in his footsteps. I raced around across the nation in my supercharged, slammed-to-the-ground, highly modified 1990 VW Corrado from the age of seventeen to twenty-one. Of course, reality eventually set in, and delivering Chinese food couldn’t pay for my expensive sports car forever, and I sold it to go to film school in Boulder, Colorado.”

At the University of Colorado, Curtis

Joey Curtis and one of his stars, an Audi Quattro.

was introduced to experimental filmmaking by some of the medium’s legends, Stan Brakhage and Phil Solomon. “They taught me a totally new way to watch movies. In order to see you had to open up your poetic eyes. Any kind of movie, whether narrative or experimental, had an entire subtext going on within the plasticity, or the actual cut-to-cut movement, shape,



form, dialogue, etc., that affected the viewer subconsciously,” Curtis says. “I heard lots of people complain that they weren’t learning anything about filmmaking because our equipment was bad and would create all sorts of mistakes and glitches, but if you paid attention you could make sense out of these so-called mistakes, which I came to consider as gifts from god.”

Curtis joined forces with his classmate, Derek Cianfrance, and co-wrote, edited, and produced the feature film *Brother Tied* (1998 Sundance Film Festival Selection). He also started thinking about *Quattro Noza*, the proj-

ect that would be his own directorial debut. But it would be a while before things got moving on that front, so to pay the rent, Curtis applied his experimental filmmaking training in unlikely places, editing and shooting everything from jazz shows to internet to documentaries to MTV. “[Then] I landed a job editing porno movie trailers for nine months, which let me perfect my experimental editing craft, which I later took to Hollywood, editing big movie trailers,” he says. The last of these was Robert Zemeckis’s *What Lies Beneath*. “When I first started, they thought all the tricks I was doing were unnecessary for big-budget,

star-driven pictures, but by the time I left they were asking me to teach them. Now, when I watch trailers, I see my style all over the place.”

After his stint in Hollywood editing trailers, Joey began experimenting with video. “I decided that film really was dead, at least for me, and I began experimenting with the Sony pd-100a camera, which is much like a 16mm Bolex in size and capability, only it shoots an hour of tape instead of 100 foot rolls. I also learned to use the bigger Canon XL1 which had a nicer lens for the narrative stuff that needed to be more slick,” he explains.

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At the time, Curtis was living in the Crenshaw area of Los Angeles with his co-writer Albert Hernandez and Hernandez's family from El Salvador. "It was an enlightening time in which I was reliving my youth with all these wild-ass city kids, but this time I had a camera with me. I began to realize that Albert was introducing me to the coolest kids from all the different hoods of LA, 'the gods,' and so I was meeting my cast, getting them used to the camera, and learning their capabilities and weaknesses as actors. They all had the confidence that came with youth and beauty, but on camera they were only as confident as I was; our strengths and weaknesses became linked the more we kicked it," Curtis remembers. "By shooting video, I never had to turn the camera off, and could capture so many moments that I never could have written. [I'd] then go back to my script and re-write the scene around some new discovery we had happen upon on the so-called 'set.'"

He amassed more than a hundred hours of footage, including documentary, narrative, and experimental footage of the racers and the entire scene. Joey had succeeded in capturing this period of SoCal youth culture on tape, but after two years of living on peanut butter and jelly and tuna sandwiches and sleeping on people's couches, Joey was broke and burnt out. He had to get a job and turned back to the world of advertising. But he did not give up on *Quattro Noza*.

Even though Curtis did not realize it, when he moved back to New York for advertising work, he was actually furthering his film. One of the producers he worked with, Fredric King of Fountainhead Creative, ended up becoming the producer of *Quattro Noza*. "I did a couple of advertising jobs for him, then asked him if I bought my own drives, could I edit at night on his Avids until I had something dope to show, then he could



have first-look. He got excited, because little did I know that this was his dream come true. So I edited every night for two months," Curtis says, "until I had about twenty minutes' worth of interspersed scenes cut. It was in no way a movie, only a few scenes that lasted in the film, but there was enough to cut a trailer and show off what I called the sci-fi style.

"I showed it to Fredric around 3 a.m., I think, on a Monday, and he was impressed. I kicked around the idea of making the footage into a short, fearing that he wouldn't want to finance an entire feature. It wasn't until a day or two later that he called me and told me that he couldn't stop dreaming about the images, and that he wanted to make it into a full-length feature. At last, my dream had finally come true. He paid me so I could write the script and start pre-production with full concentration on a project that mattered."

When *Quattro Noza* crossed our desk at Sundance, it sparked a lot of excitement. Years after digital cinematography hit the indie scene, we were still waiting to witness what new creative visual legacies might emerge out of "the digital revolution." Here was a film that looked like nothing else in the stack. It was a narrative story all

Victor Larios is Chato in Curtis's *Quattro Noza*.

right, but it masterfully and unapologetically spun off into colorful, lyrical, nonlinear riffs, stretching the genre and the visual cinematic form into a hybrid that was completely fresh. We could have easily programmed Curtis's film in Frontier or Midnight. But we decided instead to diversify the Dramatic Competition line-up.

Quattro Noza won the Sundance 2003 jury prize for Best Cinematography. And it won over a number of critics too, but the film still has not found a distributor. "It is quite prestigious to premiere your film in competition at Sundance . . . but it is the nature of success to complicate things more than simplify. My film was highly anticipated by the Hollywood market, which is a scenario that ups the ante of pressure for your film to perform and live up to whatever expectations they cast upon it," Curtis muses. "In my case, almost everyone at the first screening was from Hollywood and wanted to see *The Fast and the Furious*. I think about half the people in that first audience walked out at ninety minutes, dissatisfied because they didn't see what they wanted to see."

Regardless of what eventually happens with *Quattro Noza*, you can be sure that we are going to see a lot more from Curtis, and it is not going to look like anything we have seen before. Perhaps, just as Todd Haynes' experimental narrative *Poison* helped revolutionize the genre of independent film, Joey Curtis's indisputable skill and undying interest in narrative experimentation is destined to play a major role in forming what the "digital revolution" is ultimately going to look like. ■

Shari Frilot is the consulting editor for this issue of The Independent. She is also an independent filmmaker and film programmer. She was festival director for many years of MIX: The New York Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film Festival, and cofounded MIX Brasil and MIX Mexico. Frilot has been a programmer for the Sundance Film Festival since 1998 and has recently completed the award-winning short film, Strange & Charmed.

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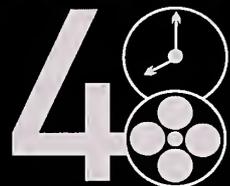
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Shirin Neshat

TRANSCENDING DISPARATE CULTURES

By Charlie Sweitzer

Separating New York and Iran are eight thousand miles, ten time zones, and three ocean current systems, not to mention innumerable cultural and political differences. But in the work of Shirin Neshat, this distance is often reduced to the width of a gallery.

For the past several years, Neshat has used dual video projection (usually, two large screens facing one another across a darkened room) to challenge traditional views of east and west, sacred and secular, and male and female. Her work, first displayed at galleries like the Guggenheim and Whitney, has recently spread to film festivals like Sundance and Tribeca, introducing many to a new perspective on experimental filmmaking. "The physical aspect of this presentation is very unlike a theater," she says, "where you're in a seat and removed from the picture. Here, it actually feels like you're walking into the piece. You can't escape your own personal involvement with the picture."

Neshat was born in Qazvin, Iran and currently lives in New York City. In 1974, she came to the United States to study art at the University of California. "It was the fashionable thing to do, to send the children to study abroad," she says, "because everyone was looking for that Western education."

Years later, she returned to Iran. "Basically, I felt pretty content not making art, and not being in that ambitious cycle like other artists. I found that whole process very intimidating—pushing your art, looking for galleries, and that whole thing. And plus, I didn't think my work was that good—at the time I was making paintings."

On returning, she found a changed

country. In 1979, the Islamic Revolution brought a religious fundamentalist regime, one militantly opposed to all things secular, into



power. "I felt that making this work that related to Iran, and the Revolution, became something of an excuse to keep that tie alive," she says, "even if I was [in Iran] without an audience or a program, just working independently."

Neshat's work often deals explicitly with Islam and Iran, though in a non-judgmental way, carefully avoiding what she calls a "polemical point of view." "I think that's dangerous—it becomes propaganda," says an artist who says her job is to provide questions, not answers. "Sometimes your point of view is woven into the work in a very subversive way that's not very obvious, and your criticism is there in a very subversive way, more subtle. I think that most of my work has a sharp edge but seems very innocent at first."

The thematically linked trilogy of

Turbulent (1998), *Rapture* (1999), and *Fervor* (2000) divide the two sexes between two screens. In *Rapture* and *Fervor*, men occupy fortresses, move in measured processions, and seem to be monitoring the women on the other screen. On one screen of *Turbulent*, a man sings to an audience of men; afterwards, on the other screen, a woman sings to an empty theater—as well as the men on the other side of the gallery.

(Under strict Islamic law, women are forbidden to perform music.)

The music and sound in Neshat's work are often just as detailed and carefully planned as the visuals. With the exception of the Phillip Glass-scored *Passage* (commissioned by Glass for a 2001 touring program of short films), the music, composed and performed by Iranian vocalist Sussan Deyhim, is strictly non-western. "She has a way of mixing very indigenous sounds and Middle-Eastern melodies together with a very sort of unrecognizable, very progressive electronic sounds," Neshat says. "It sort of reiterates the emotional aspects of the work, where the pictures are very much a reminder of the political realities of the narrative, but the music emphasizes something more primal, something very emotional. Also,

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somehow, the sound replaces dialogue that's missing."

And though Neshat's pieces all have, to varying degrees, clear narrative arcs, her only strictly narrative film is her recent short, *The Last Word*. Encouraged by the Sundance Institute, she is now working on a straightforward feature. She participated in the 2003 Screenwriters Lab with a narrative screenplay based on Shahrnush Parsipur's novel *Women Without Men*. She plans to shoot the film soon with cinematographer (and frequent David Fincher collaborator) Darius Khondji, who also shot Neshat's dual-screen *Tooba* in 2003.

"I find at this moment the film world is much more open and receptive to the kind of work that I do," she says. "I always think, oh, the art world is so small, so conservative. I find the film world more open and more experimental. By looking at the history of film, you see how non-Western filmmakers have made such an impact on the development of cinema—while in the art world [this kind of diversity] is still a new thing." She quickly adds, though, that in the art world "I have been very kindly treated." Neshat has

been represented by the Barbara Gladstone Gallery since 1999.

"I've been very lucky," Neshat says, of her works' reception in the art world, "because my films have a beginning and an end. In general, the attention span of people who walk into galleries is so minimum, it's ridiculous. . . . I think that's part of the reason I'm pulled away from it, because I'm not interested in making a commodity, where someone gives two minutes of attention."

Neshat plans to create a museum component of *Women Without Men*. Like Matthew Barney's *Cremaster* sculptures and photographs, they would complement the film itself. "I'm really interested in rethinking how you can tell a story in a museum space," she says. "Someone could experience an entire film in different rooms, through different fragments. I think that's a whole area that's relatively unexplored, in cinema, in film—the relationship between the viewer and the film." ▣

Charlie Sweitzer lives and writes in Brooklyn. His e-mail address is charliesweitzer@yahoo.com.

Still from Shirin Neshat's *Tooba*.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, BY LARRY BARNES; COURTESY OF BARBARA GLADSTONE; FACING PAGE, TANIA RETCHISKY

Ask the Documentary Doctor

By Fernanda Rossi



Dear Doc Doctor: I'm making a documentary on an abstract concept, hate. It's all talking heads. Someone suggested I turn it into an experi-

mental documentary. Is this possible? How do I know if it's the right approach? And what exactly is an experimental documentary anyway? It doesn't make sense.

Yes, the term "experimental documentary" sounds like an oxymoron because documentaries are supposed to be about real things, and experimental films about completely made up things, but the truth is that you can find as many definitions of each of these forms as there are filmmakers. Instead of locking yourself into a single definition of either documentaries or experimental films, consider these as approaches that cover a wide spectrum of possibilities rather than a static point unrelated to anything else. Your job is to find out where you stand in that spectrum and how to make it work for you and your film.

Documentaries (a.k.a. nonfiction films) can be defined as projects based on real events with a fair amount of footage, photographs, or recordings of those actual events. "Fair amount" is the key phrase here. Documentaries range from the purist verité style where the camera is a window into the world, such as Albert Maysles' films, to freestyle techniques where the camera is a pen writing the filmmaker's point of view and voice on every frame, such as Mekas' work. Whatever label you place on these films, they are unquestionably a shade of gray in a very wide scale.

You are wise to be looking for ways to push your film visually beyond mere talking heads. In this post-MTV and reality-TV saturated time, films that survive on compelling topics and interviewees alone are becoming the exception.

An abstract topic, such as yours, lends itself nicely to letting the imagination fly. How can an abstract concept such as hate become audio-visual and therefore tangible to the audience? You have picked an interesting challenge, and many of your answers may come out of the techniques and ideas used by experimental filmmakers.

If you are a committed verité style filmmaker, just the thought of your hand being visible in any way, let alone an experimental way, might give you a stomach ache. In that case, consider

come out clean in this respect. Their premise is "Let's pretend this is a documentary," but there is no attempt to pass fiction off as fact. Making up documents or testimonies without stating so is unethical and downright illegal. Using Super 8 footage of cloud patterns and color ink in water over a narration is fine with the law—the law of creativity.

Dear Doc Doctor:

I'm missing some footage to tell the story of my documentary and there is no way to get it at this point. It would be very hard for me to leave this project unfinished. Is there any hope?

Whenever there is imagination there is hope. The most common mistake filmmakers make when confronted with this dilemma is to avoid the situation altogether. But the documentary form is unforgiving in this regard. Gaps in the narrative structure become black holes that swallow the whole film.

After watching such films during a consultation, filmmakers look at me

Documentaries can be defined as projects based on real events with a fair amount of footage, photographs, or recordings of those actual events. "Fair amount" is the key phrase.

including experimental elements to your doc instead of making a full-blown experimental film. Remember, it is a very wide range, no need to choose just the extremes.

If you find yourself resisting these new tools, you might consider this: Are shooting re-enactments of hate scenes more proper for documentaries than having an experimental scene conveying the same concept? Aren't both made up?

The answer lies in being honest at all costs. The only unacceptable thing in a documentary is deception or misrepresentation. Even mockumentaries

with frozen smiles and arched eyebrows as if to say, "Please, let's pretend there is not a problem there, because we can't get the footage." Their faces are the vivid depiction of panic in anticipation. And when I inevitably point it out, they admit it with a resounding "I know, I know! But what do you want me to do?" followed by a painful recounting of production complications comparable to Homer's *Odyssey*.

No need to sweat it. Missing or impossible-to-acquire footage is an opportunity, not a curse. This is a chance to let your unique hand add

colorful paintbrush strokes to your documentary. It is not written anywhere I know of that documentary filmmakers are not supposed to use their imagination.

As in the case above of an abstract concept, you can go down the route of the experimental documentary if that suits you. And if you don't want to be experimental, you can certainly be innovative. How can you convey the information of the missing material? Voice-over and archival footage are the most obvious route, and for that reason generally the least effective. There are many other more dynamic solutions for situations when archival footage is not available. In *Bowling for Columbine*, Michael Moore tells the history of America in a five-minute animation sequence.

Another case is Doug Ing, producer and director of *A Crane Among the*

Chickens, about Jack Chia, who created the first girl-a-week, joke-a-day calendar and has been selling the same two hundred thousand calendars for forty years. Ing had only one interview with Chia and his calendars. But Ing is not only a documentary filmmaker; he is also an animator with plenty of imagination and patience. It was practically impossible to him to refrain from having calendars and drawings crossing the screen. The film turned out to be a visually engaging tale of persistence and entrepreneurship.

And filmmaker Maggie Hadleigh-West was not even missing any material, she simply made a creative decision. In her documentary *War Zone* she recounts her experience of almost being abducted by a stranger. By adding to her on-camera interview Super 8 footage of rain with the sound of a thunderstorm, she brings

the viewer closer to the actual event. She could have used her interview by itself, but with this subtle effect she helps the audience share the eerie feeling she had.

Find what will best convey your missing material, including the emotional response you want your audience to have, to the information. Once you make a decision, if you hear loud sirens denouncing your non traditional approach, remember, styles are innovative until enough people start doing it, then they become the norm. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

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.

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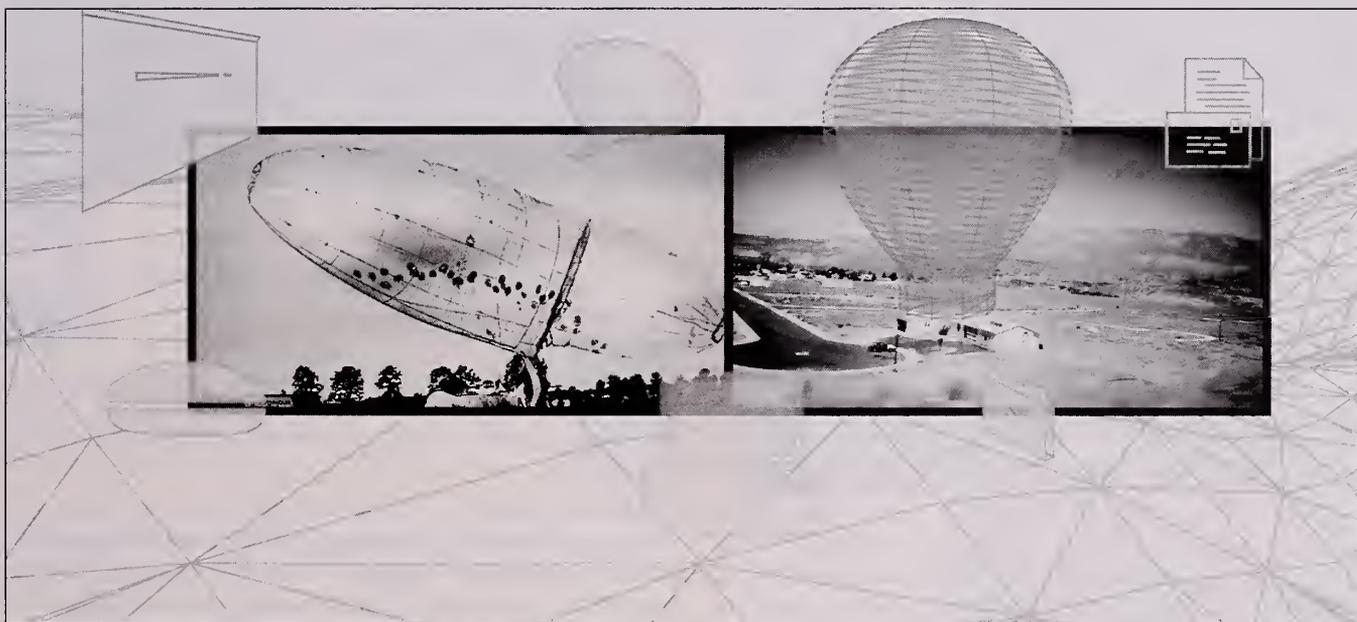
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By Maya Churi

According to *Webster's*, inflate means “to swell or distend by injecting air; to puff up; to elate, as with pride; to raise above the real value or value according to sound commercial principles.” In her experimental web project *Inflat-o-scape*, Jessica Irish explores inflatable themes such as architecture, economics, utopias, and balloons, all of which

al add-ons and inflatable advertisements in Los Angeles. “[I] began thinking of the disconnect between the once visionary ideas for urban renewal, temporary housing, and these goofy signs used to sell cars and hot dogs,” Irish explains. “I began thinking of the history of inflatable architecture, both for its ‘revolutionary’ promise and rapid demise as a curious parallel for that of the World Wide Web, which has often

to structure the project, but I did identify larger themes that connected all of my ideas together. I ended up using these themes as ‘chapters’ to break down the site.” Irish divided the site into six chapters: Speech, Clusters, Compression, Progress, Sub-conscious, and Appendage. Within each chapter Irish focuses on architecturally inspired graphics, photographs, music, and voice-over to create moods within the context of the inflatable themes, whether physical, economic, or imaginary. The historical and technical photographs come from the bibliography of books that Irish used in researching the history, uses, and ideas for inflatable architecture. The chapters themselves



are investigated within the medium that brought about the now burst dot-com bubble. The irony does not go unnoticed in this living, breathing website that seems as though it is actually taking in air as one moves seamlessly through it.

The project began in 1999 when the dot-com bubble was still intact. Irish started by photographing architecture

been touted as the ‘new democracy’ vision for our future. Interestingly, inflatable architecture usually manifests itself in waves of public optimism during periods of dramatic social or technological change.”

Starting with a broad based idea and then expanding it, looking for ways to connect her ideas to one another, Irish spent a year and half researching different forms of inflatable architecture. “When I began working, I wasn’t sure how I wanted

represent those historical uses. For example, the chapter entitled Speech represents the speech bubble as it relates to digital technologies, collective communications, and boosterism as architecture. Clusters focuses on landscape as mapped by consumer trends and marketing technologies, the bubble economy, and inflation as a crowd phenomenon. And Progress brings to the forefront visionary and failed prototypes of inflatable architecture, architectural experimenta-

A scene in the multi-dimensional world of Jessica Irish's *Inflat-o-scape*.

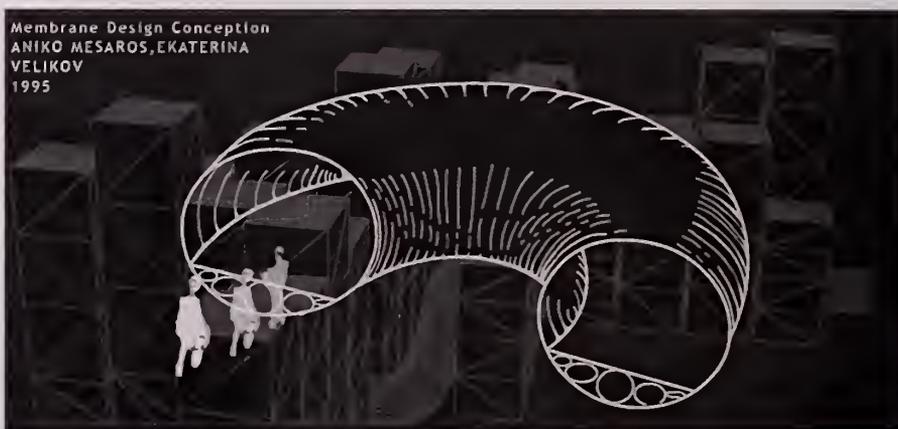
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tion, and interrelated social utopias and disasters.

Though *Inflat-o-scape* is a web project, her work deals directly with a mixture of many forms. "My work in general is usually related to the interface between landscape, media, technology, and ideology. I'm very much influenced by where I live. I'm fascinated by urban landscapes and the hidden macro-narratives or traces they contain. I've found Los Angeles

each movie, or are randomized in their sequencing."

Irish started her career in experimental video and went through so many edits of each project that she felt she was physically destroying her tapes as she was creating them. This realization turned her onto digital video, which does not have the degenerative qualities that analogue video has. "I bought a PowerMac and spent every morning and night mess-



interesting as a city because so much happens here in the shadow of neglect. LA reinvents itself through the waves of occupants that stream through the city, with their dreams and needs and disasters."

Non-narrative, experimental web projects require a certain amount of patience. One must be willing to explore the site thoroughly, allowing oneself to become immersed in the world that the artist has created. *Inflat-o-scape* is no exception. There is no defined path for the viewer, though the layout of the site does emphasize a certain order, which many viewers are likely to follow. But whether or not that order alters the experience of visiting the site is undetermined. "I think in making interactive works, artists have to be comfortable with giving up their control over this aspect. What is important is that viewers explore the site with a sense of curiosity and play. Many of the sections change as you interact with

ing it up and ended up learning a lot. I then started working on a variety of digital projects for my work as well as for art and community venues. I became interested not just in the possibilities of the medium, but in the dialog and public anxiety around new technologies."

Irish is currently working on a motion-graphics project. She says the project is "about the sixty-four demographic clusters that comprise the American population. My intent is to create a spiritual form out of the consumer data from these clusters as a collective portrait of desire." Along with her personal projects, Irish is the cofounder of OnRamp Arts, a digital arts nonprofit that produces collaborative new media projects with Los Angeles artists and underserved communities. □

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on an interactive web story about a gated community in Texas.

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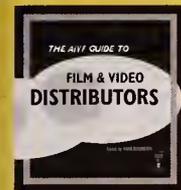
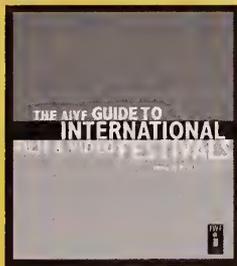
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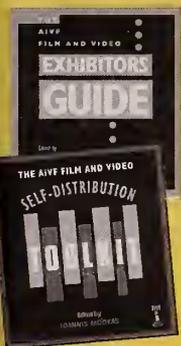
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Facets Multi-Media

Jason Guerrasio interviews Milos Stehlik

What is Facets?

Facets Multi-Media is an arts organization based in Chicago, Illinois. We also have the world's largest and most unique collection of foreign, classic American, independent, experimental, documentary, cult, fine arts, and children's videos and DVD's. The Facets collection represents over fifty thousand individual titles.

In addition we also do Facets Cinematheque, an important Chicago venue for the exhibition of independent cinema, the Chicago International Children's Film Festival, and exclusive theatrical and video distribution lines. A selected number of films exclusively acquired for the Facets Video collection are also released theatrically and in television markets.

When and why was Facets created?

Facets was created in 1975 by Nicole Dreiske and myself as a film exhibition center for international and American art films, alternative children's films, and as a center for the development and performance of experimental theater.

The mission of Facets is . . .

To develop and find new audiences for important films which are left outside either the commercial or even the mainstream art film circuits. We try to do this at every level—exhibition, distribution, and most importantly, media education for adults and for children.

Altinay Ghelich Taghani hides her gender for carpet mill work in Maryam Shahwar's *Daughters of the Sun*.

What types of films do you seek?

Great films that fall through the cracks. Our approach has always been curatorial, in the sense that we are always distressed about the hundreds and thousands of films that are



unavailable in any form and should be, deserve to be, and need to be [available]. It doesn't need to be new or made yesterday. For us it could be a small, quirky, and totally original documentary, or the work of Georges Melies. For example, the history and legacy of the American independent film movement, from the fifties, sixties, and seventies, are an area of great concern. All of this work should be on DVD.

Where and how do you find them?

All of the major markets, but very often from filmmakers and friends of filmmakers and friends of friends of filmmakers.

How does Facets cater to experimental filmmakers?

We've invested considerable resources in bringing the work of many of the key figures of American experimental film to the home video market, including James Broughton, Barbara Hammer, Scott Bartlett, Larry Jordan, and Paul Glabicki, to name a few. This has expanded to include the work of artists in video as well as

feature filmmakers. While finding them is not difficult, marketing is a challenge. American experimental medi makers have to be placed on the same footing, the same level playing field, as independent feature filmmakers. This is what we have attempted to do in giving experimental makers such a full voice in the context of Facets' catalogs and broadbased marketing efforts.

Explain your video distribution lines.

Facets Video hosts three exclusive video lines: Accent Cinema, a world cinema label that has particular strengths in Europe; Cinemateca, a

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Steve Bliss, *director of video sales*
Ray Privett, *distribution coordinator*
Video Wholesale Dept.: Tim Griffin,
Katherine Litwin, Hal Unterberger

Facets Cinematheque

Charles Coleman, *film program director*

Facets Children's Film Festival

Nicole Dreiske, *artistic director*
Jennifer Barker, *programmer*

The Slate:

DVD/VHS:

Medea, dir. Lars Von Trier,
May 2003

Electra, My Love, dir. Miklos Jancso,
May 2003

The Sky Is Falling, dir. Andrea Frazzi,
May 2003

The Nanny, dir. Marco Bellocchio,
July 2003

Last Images of the Shipwreck,
dir. Eliseo Subiela, July 2003

Traveling Companion, dir. Peter del Monte,
August 2003

Yerma, dir. Pilar Tavora,
August 2003

The Decalogue, dir. Krzysztof Kieslowski,
August 2003

Christ Stopped at Eboli, dir. Francesco Rosi,
September 2003

Keep Walking, dir. Ermanno Olmi,
October 2003

Goldstein, dir. Philip Kaufman,
November 2003

Spanish world cinema label that features films from Spain and Latin America; the Facets Video label, a world cinema label that has particular strengths in Middle Europe, the Middle East, and American independents. Additionally, Facets frequently undertakes exclusive distribution for other independent labels.

How many films do you acquire per year?

Between twelve to eighteen films annually for exclusive release on the Facets label; another twenty for exclusive distribution, and four to five thousand new titles every year for nonexclusive distribution.

How do you work with the filmmakers when preparing their films for release?

This is always a collaborative process, and just how easy or difficult it is depends to a great degree on how much

preparation the filmmaker has done in having a film ready for release. This means quality masters and adequate publicity materials, because if we have these then it's less time to dig for them and it allows us to concentrate on the job of distribution and marketing.

At what stage should filmmakers approach you with a film?

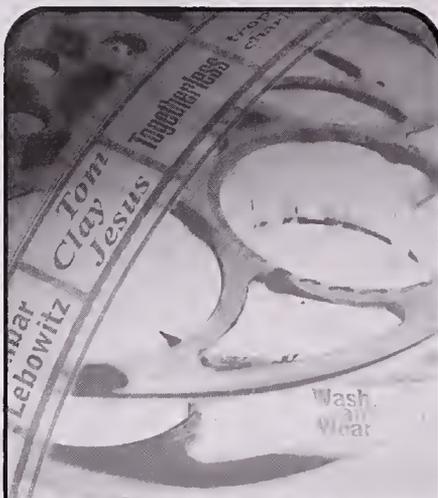
When the film is completely finished. That way we know exactly what we're dealing with.

How should filmmakers approach you with their projects?

The best way is just to send a letter with a description/background of the film.

What advice can you give filmmakers seeking distribution?

It's important to find the right distributor which, more than money, means the best fit. Distributors all have their strengths and weaknesses,



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and most of them are upfront and honest in admitting these. When facing such rejection, accept it as what it

Jan Tesez as a lost cabbie in Krzysztof Kieslowski's *The Decalogue*.

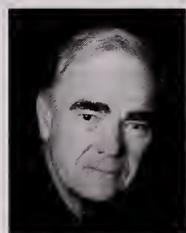
is—an admission of the capabilities of that particular distributor. For us, for example, it is very difficult to distribute independent features which aim at a broad, middle-brow audience, and which emulate Hollywood films or

television. There are other distributors perfectly capable of moving these films into the marketplace.

What are some issues Facets faces as an independent distributor at the present time?

It is a huge, fragmented marketplace, and make no mistake about it, the major studios and media conglomerates want to own it all. Establishing and finding a home and audiences for challenging films is not for the faint of heart, and we are blessed in the US with hundreds of courageous and brave souls committed to fighting the good fight for independent and art films. The biggest challenge for them, and for us, will be connecting to the youngest generation. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



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Indianapolis, Indiana

INTRODUCING INDY'S INDIES

By David Clay

Indianapolis is a city best known for its Motor Speedway and the Indy 500. But the "Racing Capital of the World" is also home to a growing film and art scene. It's true, there is more than corn in Indiana.

In 2001, the city launched a multi-million dollar campaign called the Cultural Tourism Initiative in an effort to raise the city's cultural profile and encourage residents and visitors to experience the artistic offerings within the community. Earlier this year, the Indiana Film Commission presented Indiana Film and Video Week, a state-wide campaign to raise public awareness of the impact locally-produced films have on the state's economy and standard of living.

But, politics and government agencies aside, many exciting things are

Key Cinemas/Filmmakers Showcase

This independently-owned two-screen arthouse on Indy's south side became the epicenter of the Indianapolis film scene when it opened its doors to area filmmakers every second Tuesday of the month for the Filmmakers Showcase. Owner Ron Keedy wanted to "provide an opportunity for Indy filmmakers to strut their stuff on the Big Screen, and then discuss and critique with fellow local filmmakers and enthusiasts."

There is no charge to screen your film, and admission is free. Films begin at 7 p.m. and run until 10 p.m. or whenever the last credits roll. Key Cinemas is also the only theater in town that has digital projection capabilities. "We don't want to leave anybody out," Keedy says. "We can project 35 and

16mm as well as VHS, S-VHS, DVD, BetaSP, or directly from any little camera with an S-video output."

The showcase has become so popular that even filmmakers from outside Indiana have brought their films to the event. The theater was a stop on Rooftop Films and *Clamor* magazine's "Power of Living: Become the Media"

Midwestern tour. Key Cinemas also plays host to the local Queer as Film and Indianapolis Underground film festivals as well. And that creative vision is expanding. Due to popular demand, Keedy is opening a second venue in Columbus, Indiana, later this summer and hopes to eventually add a third on the north side of Indianapolis. "It's a labor of love," he adds.

When local work or festivals are not screening, Key Cinemas plays alternative films, such as documentaries and foreign films. This arthouse is also one of the most cost-effective places to catch a flick, with tickets selling for only \$5. And it should also be noted that their classic 1948 Manley Popcorn Popper makes the best caramel and kettle corn in the state.

For more info, contact Key Cinemas, 4044 South Keystone Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46000; phone: (317) 784-7454; www.keycinemas.com.

The Film Commune

Formed in 2001, the Film Commune is a collective of young directors who describe themselves as "working in much the same spirit of the French New Wave filmmakers of Paris in the 1960's" and have joined together "to cause a scene and make Indy synonymous with indie film." Most of them met while students in the New Media program at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). In addition to making films, the "comrades," as they call themselves, also coordinate the annual Indianapolis Underground Film Festival each December.

The festival showcases edgier and more provocative cinema that would otherwise would go unscreened in this traditionally conservative town. It has introduced Indy audiences to films ranging from Jennifer Arnold's feature documentary *American Mullet* to Ari Gold's sixty-second Sundance crowd-pleaser, *Culture*. But in its inaugural year, it screened only films from Indianapolis-based directors. "We wanted to prove to the city that there were living and breathing filmmakers here who were making interesting and innovative work," says Jyvonnie Haskin, the program's director. And as a result, the festival caught people's attention.

"To be honest, I didn't even know there was much of a film scene at all in Indianapolis until the Commune created as much buzz as they did. I think



also happening on a grassroots level, in a movement that is very much youth-driven. Budding actors, artists, and filmmakers, as well as musicians from Indy's thriving music community, are joining forces and combining talents to form multiple collectives that are doing much to foster a creative and collaborative spirit throughout the Circle City.



it both surprised and inspired a lot of locals,” says John Karamanski, executive producer of Indie Scene TV. Karamanski approached the group about producing a television show to highlight the local film community. In the fall of 2002 they produced Indie Scene TV, an original series, for local ABC affiliate WRTV-6. What was it like for filmmakers to try television? “It’s a paradigm shift, that’s for sure. TV is quite demanding, with multiple assignments and mounting deadlines,” proclaims Joel Umbaugh, who pulled double-duty as both a producer and editor of the program, “but it was a learning experience, and we had fun.” The six half-hour-long episodes aired late on Saturday nights and promoted the city’s independent filmmakers, artists, and musicians. Each program contained director interviews and film clips, as well as on-the-scene segments at premieres, productions, festivals, and screenings. Indianapolis’ mayor, Bart Peterson,

Facing page: Joshua Breitbart of Rooftop Films and Jason Kucsma of *Clamor* magazine. Above: Film Commune directors Jyvonne Haskin, Joel Umbaugh, Chad Richards, Jeff Hendrickson, and Ryan Penington.

was even a guest on the show to discuss the impact and importance of the arts on the community. Today the comrades are all working on various film projects and planning for the next festival, to be held in early December 2003.

For more info, see www.thefilmcommune.com.

Heartland Film Festival

Heartland Film Festival director Jeff Sparks has had a lot of trouble over the past few years explaining what this festival, which has been heavily associated with the phrase “family values,” is all about. “No, this is not a religious film festival,” he explains. “It’s not a conservative or Republican festival either.”

Established in 1991, the Heartland Film Festival has developed many ways to pursue its mission: “to recognize and honor filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life.” Over the course of ten days each October, Heartland screens films from around the world, ranging from dramas to documentaries to animation, all of which “take entertainment to a higher level.”

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One thing Heartland clearly has is money. In its first ten years, the festival wrote checks totalling more than \$1 million to winning filmmakers. Each year, over \$100,000 in prize money is given out, including a \$50,000 grand prize for Best Dramatic Feature, with smaller awards going to various independent films and student productions.

Heartland also recognizes theatrically released films that "seek to enrich, inspire, and provide hope" with awards presented prior to a film's theatrical release. The festival's Truly Moving Pictures Award of Excellence recognizes these works "as examples of what happens when Hollywood makes movies with substance." The award has been embraced by some studio mar-

keters and now lands on about a dozen films a year, and made the poster for *Remember the Titans* and the video case of *Hearts in Atlantis*.

In 2002, Heartland also launched Heartland Film Festival Video, a new video distribution initiative. It will provide an outlet for promising independent films that otherwise may not gain wide distribution. Sparks hopes the label and the festival will encourage filmmakers to make movies that inspire, "but not necessarily in religious, family, or conservative ways." □

For more info, contact the Heartland Film Festival at: 200 South Meridian St., Ste. 220, Indianapolis, IN 46225-1076; phone: (317) 464-9405; www.heartlandfilmfestival.org.

David Clay is a writer living in Indianapolis.

RESOURCES

Indiana Filmmakers Network

The Indiana Filmmakers Network is a resource that works to facilitate dialogue among film and video makers throughout the state. Casual networking meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the House in Glendale Mall (6101 North Keystone Avenue).

For more info, see www.ifnweb.org.

Indiana Film Commission

In addition to the usual duties, the commission hosts grant workshops to assist Indiana filmmakers in preparing their applications for various production grants. Jane Rulon, commission director, is often found lending support at local screenings, events, and premieres.

For more info, contact the Indiana Film Commission; phone: (317) 232-8829; www.in.gov/film.

INDY Awards

The INDYs recognize and award the works of independent filmmakers from Indiana and neighboring states: Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan,

and Ohio. The objective is to encourage artists to create works that reflect their distinctive Midwestern heritage and perspective.

For more info, contact Steve Conway, phone: (317) 843-9744.

Queer As Film

All proceeds from the Indianapolis GLBT Film Festival, also known as Queer As Film, benefit the Indiana Youth Group, a social service agency that provides youth development programs and support services for GLBT teens and young adults in Indiana.

For more info, contact Rob Connoley, phone: (317) 541-8726; www.queerasfilm.com.

Circle Bar Saloon

Veteran filmmakers Richard Payne and Williamson Howe opened this bar in 2002 and it has quickly become the hotspot for area directors and film crews after a long week's shoot. It has played host to film festival after-parties, networking meetings, and fundraiser gatherings.

For more info, contact the Circle Bar at 148 E. Market St.; phone: (317) 917-0042.

To Tell the Truth

DURHAM'S FULL FRAME FESTIVAL

By Cara Mertes

Everyone knows the truth can be hard to take—it is even harder to find sometimes—but for one weekend in April, the Full Frame Documentary Festival seeks truth of every kind in its eclectic and often inspiring celebration of documentary filmmaking. Now in its sixth year, Full Frame is steadily widening its scope and, as ever, remains devoted to the curious and often inexplicable calling of discovering the truth about our world.

"It's about mixing it up," says Nancy Buirski, founder and executive director of the festival. "Documentary film for me connects to everything—literature, art, journalism, music." That sentiment resonates throughout the weekend, as writers, artists, journalists, academics, TV execs, funders, fans, and filmmakers mingle contentedly in the courtyard outside the restored Carolina Theater complex in downtown Durham, North Carolina. It is a surprisingly mixed group with a strikingly low-key vibe in comparison to other festivals, especially considering the critical mass of documentary professionals attending. With the centralized venues and focused activities,

everyone is generally in the same area, which makes it easy to run into people that are normally very hard to get to. People in the documentary world come from every background but share one thing—they can't help themselves. They don't do it for the money,

because there isn't any. They don't do it for the fame, because if there is any, it is brief and rarely compensates for the personal cost of making the film. In my experience, doc makers usually do it because they have to. With the odds stacked against you, there is no question that documentary is a perilous field to survive in, let alone make a living, but the fact is that people do it every day, usually through combining filmmaking with other jobs that pay the bills. The luckiest manage to get jobs that inform their practice. In one of the evening panels, Jonathan Demme explained his allegiance to the form by saying that his day job making Hollywood features supports his documentary habit. "I spend my time trying to make fiction seem more real, and trying to find the drama in real life. The two inform each other," he said.

Everything about this festival points to documentary's ability to be a great social leveler, and Buirski works hard at cultivating this unique sensibility. Everyone can relate to the permutations of the human experience expressed in the stories being told. Experimental films mix easily with the most traditional of high-end history films. A-list Hollywood feature directors like Demme and Martin Scorsese, that

love (and usually make) documentaries, can be found screening and discussing new works with filmmakers at the festival. International work is making more inroads to the festival, as is short film, a genre that Buirski believes does not get its due. Buirski also isn't standoffish about television's complex relationship to the documentary form. The festival even celebrates it, with an Industry Award every year—this year's going to Pat Mitchell, CEO of PBS, who spoke convincingly of the need for accountability. It was a well-timed award, recognizing the pivotal and often unheralded role public television has played for over thirty years in creating and maintaining a vibrant documentary practice in this country, and given under the shadow of perhaps the most difficult time PBS has ever faced. Despite the storm clouds on the horizon, public television was represented in force, with three of five major awards going to PBS makers or films. Showing the importance the genre represents to broadcasters across the board, though, the festival routinely draws representatives and projects from HBO, Court TV, National Geographic, A&E, Bravo, and even AMC. And in previous years, Full Frame has honored HBO's Sheila Nevins and the Soros Documentary Fund.

The festival's broad range of supporters is cultivated by Buirski with frequent

love (and usually make) documentaries, can be found screening and discussing new works with filmmakers at the festival. International work is making more inroads to the festival, as is short film, a genre that Buirski believes does not get its due.

Buirski also isn't standoffish about television's complex relationship to the documentary form. The festival even



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visits to New York to attend to her mostly East Coast-based board of directors and advisors, as well as their strong presence in the Raleigh/Durham arts and college communities—both sources of support for festival activities. Despite the presence of so many from the Eastern corridor, the festival has a decidedly local feel, something which draws people like author Walter Mosley (*Devil in a Blue Dress*, *What Next?*) back year after year. For him, it is critical that places other than heavyweights New York and Los Angeles contribute to the country's cultural dialogue. Durham affords an opportunity to stand outside of the expectations and pressures of larger cultural centers and do something different.

Buirski's enthusiasm for documentary as an art form is boundless, and she has seen the popularity of independent documentary rise in recent years, as do the submission levels, which numbered over six hundred this year. The festival concentrates on creating a program that appeals to general audiences and aficionados alike, moving from popular favorites such as Stephen Ives' *Seabiscuit* (slated for PBS's *American Experience*) and D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus's *Only the Strong Survive*, to experimental fantasies such as Bill Morrison's *Decasia* and long-form character-based stories, such as Laura Poitras and Linda Goode-Bryant's *Flag Wars* and Jesse Moss's *Speedo* (both award-winners this year). Tucked into the fabric of the festival are themed programs and revivals of classics. This year, Marie Wilson, executive director of the Ms. Foundation, and filmmaker Hegedus brought together a collection of classic documentaries focused on women and leadership, a program which they and the festival hope to tour.

Full Frame has made great headway since its origins as the DoubleTake Documentary Festival, a project of Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies, which still publishes *DoubleTake*, a journal of the image arts.

Buirski created a separate organization in 1998, renamed the festival, and since then, the Full Frame Festival has been a project of Doc Arts, Inc.

Recently, Buirski has concentrated on attracting new sponsors to the annual festival, as well as developing partnerships around initiatives that



take place year-round. An alliance with distributor Madstone Pictures last year resulted in a traveling selection of Full Frame Festival films in Madstone theaters in cities including Albuquerque, Ann Arbor, and San Diego. Off the beaten path, perhaps, but audiences have been enthusiastic, and it has allowed both the festival and the filmmakers to spread the word nationally. Buirski also brought on the New York Times Foundation as a major supporter, drawing on their resources to create a New York Times-sponsored panel and New York-based events for the festival. Full Frame is now produced in association with The New York Times. In one of the more unusual initiatives, Full Frame will be working with Docurama to create a DVD of selected short films from the festival in the belief that shorts deserve far more exposure and attention than they get.

Lauren Lazin, MTV's longtime director of News and Public Affairs, is also a festival fan. For Lazin, Full Frame's focus on nonfiction makes it unique and a good fit for MTV's pro-social campaigns. MTV returned as the sponsor of the MTV>News:Docs:Prize for a film portraying the lives of young

Mary Wilson and Rufus Thomas in D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus's *Only the Strong Survive*.

people. This year's winner was Jennifer Dworkin's *Love & Diane*. For the first time, Lazin brought Kurt Loder, MTV's ubiquitous and ever-skeptical on-air host, to introduce a screening of documentaries made for MTV and to moderate a panel following the premiere screening of Jonathan Demme



and Peter Saraf's new documentary *The Agronomist*, which turned out to be a festival high point.

The Agronomist tells the story of Radio Haiti's founder, Jean Dominique. The film in fact grew out of a will to make a feature based on Dominique's life, which, over time, became a documentary instead. Dominique became a friend of Demme in the 1980's, and Demme began working with Saraf on the creation of a portrait of his life and work in the interests of Haiti's poor and working-class people. In 2000, during Haiti's chaotic elections, Dominique was assassinated. In a deeply moving moment, Michèle Montas Dominique, his wife, who was a collaborator and one of the film's main characters, joined the panel. A survivor of an assassination attempt herself, her presence brought home the primal pull of documentary. When all is said and done, documentary is finally about how we live our lives and how we leave them, and that simple truth is what keeps us coming back for more. ■

For more information about the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, see www.fullframefest.org.

Cara Mertes is the executive director of P.O.V., PBS's award-winning documentary showcase for the best independent points-of-view. She served on the Shorts Jury this year at the Full Frame Festival.

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To NAB or not to NAB

THE VERNAL QUESTION

By Carl Mrozek

It's early April and the daffodils are blooming after a long, lean winter, so why would a cash-strapped independent film/video maker head for Vegas, where hotel rates are peaking, and airline travel is tedious under "Code Orange," for a trade show flush with folks from the SARS global outbreak epicenter—all to battle crowds in a maze of booths hawking gadgets and gizmos promising better video and audio, most of which you have survived just fine without and probably cannot afford anyway?

This is the question I wrestle with annually as winter rolls into spring and NAB time nears. Despite the many cons, including cost, the allure

of the World's Fair of audio-video technology usually prevails and I again find myself booking a flight to attend NAB, the Convention of the National Association of Broadcasters, the biggest trade show in Las Vegas.

NAB originated as a kind of annual boat show for mainly white male Americans and Europeans looking to equip their TV stations with lights, cameras, VCR's, monitors, routers, and such. But with globalization and the explosion of digital diversity, NAB has become highly digital, global, and multicultural. It now also embraces the little fish, as well as the big, in the expanding ocean of multimedia production and distribution.

While the sagging economy and concerns over the Iraq war knocked attendance below ninety thousand for the first time in years, NAB 2003 was still buzzing with activity. There were more than 1,200 vendors ranging from whales like Thomson/Grass Valley, Panasonic, and Sony, to little fish like Dalsa Digital Cinema, a Canadian outfit with a camera boasting video "truly synonymous with film," which, like many products at NAB, could be the next big thing or the next flash in the pan.

But NAB is much more than the gear show on the main floor. There are also association meetings, seminars, symposia, workshops, and press conferences covering everything from the future of analog TV to digital cinema and DVD. Some, like the Digital Cinema Summit, span several days while others, like the Cine Alta Festival, is an evening at the (digital) movies. The Digital Video Production Workshop, sponsored by the Digital Video Professionals Association, takes place the weekend before NAB and features workshops on everything from editing software such as Boris, After Effects, and Avid Symphony to surround-sound production to DVD authoring. Advance registration and fees apply to many special events, so be sure to check the NAB website (www.nab.org) for details.

But the main show will always be the 1.5 million square feet of exhibits. Following is a highly abridged overview of what you missed in Las Vegas this year.

Imaging/Recording

While there was no Canon XL2 at NAB 2003, there was the new GL2. This new generation inherited many of the features that endears the XL1S to its devotees, including optical image stabilization, cine frame mode, 16:9, color bars, clear scan, adjustable zooming, XLR audio, a memory card, an expanded menu, and custom keys. ZGC (www.zgc.com) also had something new for XL1 owners, the

NAB Bargains

By Carl Mrozek

One way to offset the cost of attending NAB is to capitalize on the discounts to be had as companies launch new products. These discounts range from five to fifty percent or more. Be sure to



ask for the show specials and, as always, shop around, as not all bargains are equal—and some of the best come in small bundles. Here are some good and some great values from NAB '03—most are under \$500 with the NAB discount.

Artdrive (www.all4dvd.com)

Sphynx, a portable 4X FireWire/USB multi-format DVD burner with mystical sketches by Swiss artist Johan Ulrich.

NAB price: \$399 **List:** \$450

Contour Designs

(www.contourdesign.com)

Desktop shuttle controls: Shuttle Pro 4 with thirteen customizable keys, or Shuttle Xpress with five custom keys.

NAB price: \$79/\$49 **List:** \$99/\$59

Final Draft (www.finaldraft.com)

The scriptwriting software for indie producers: Final Draft 6 plus upgrade.

NAB price: \$149
List: \$199 (FD 6 only)

ProMax (www.promax.com)

Steady Tracker, the poor man's steadicam, with tilts, pans, dutch and low angles while "flying" and with monopod.

NAB price: Starting at \$240
List: \$299 (\$498 w/low-angle basket)

Varizoom (www.varizoom.com)

The VZ Rock: zoom/focus controller for small Sony, Canon, Panasonic DV, and Hi-8 camcorders

NAB price: \$280-\$315 **List:** \$349

mini35Digital, a rig that turns your XL1 into a cine-style camera capable of using film lenses by Arriflex, Canon, Panavision, and Zeiss.

Hitachi unveiled a new Z-series camera. This new Z-4000 has been mated to their groundbreaking DVD recorder, the CR-D10. It records MPEG 2, which can now be edited in Adobe Premiere 6.5 and ULEAD's Video Studio Pro 6. The Z-4000 also docks to beta SP and DV format VTR's. Another camera, the HV-D17, operates at light levels as low as .0003 lux., basically moon-glow.

Ikegami (Ike) featured the HL-60W, a new fully digital camera with awesome digital processing, for use with a CCU or docked to various-format recorders, including Ike's DNE-31 dockable disk drive. As with the DNS-201 disk camcorder, the DNE-31 can record up to three hours of DV25, but it also records DV50 and other formats, like Avid's AVR-75. US military TV uses these Ike Editcams exclusively, as do many private television stations and some independents, especially Avid users. For HD shooters, Ike had a new six-inch LCD field monitor, the HTLM-600D.

Anther big name, JVC, introduced a dockable disk recorder for use with its DV-5000, DV-500, and DV-700 camcorders. With eighty gigabytes, the DR-DV5000 records up to six hours of DV video. Moreover, the internal hard drives can be swapped later for larger drives with more storage. Like the Editcam series, the DR-DV5000 features retro-loop recording. This feature captures video continuously while in standby and stores roughly eight seconds' worth before record is triggered, thanks to onboard memory. Also new, the GY-DV5000 camcorder now becomes a streaming camcorder with JVC's new MPEG 4 pack, which plays QuickTime plus Real and Windows Media for easy streaming and webcasting.

But JVC's biggest NAB hit was the world's smallest, cheapest HD cam-

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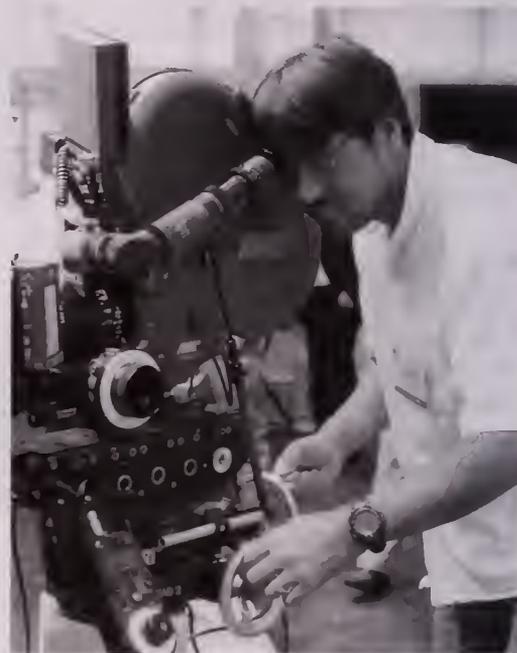
order. The JY-HD-10U uses a single 1.18 million pixel CCD to capture 720p, 480p and 480i. It outputs all these plus 1080i onto mini-DV tapes. Weighing under four pounds, this is the world's smallest HD camcorder and retails for under \$4,000. JVC cautions that it is not nearly equivalent to Panasonic's \$60,000 Varicam, which is also a 720p HD camcorder, but at fifteen percent of its price, the JY-HD10 enables little fish to get their fins wet in HD while the technology evolves. Cine Form of California further increased the viability of JVC's baby with an economical platform for editing footage shot with the JY-HD10, handling up to four streams of native 720p video with a single 2.7 GHz P4 processor. The video is loaded via a

FireWire port on the camcorder and should sell for roughly \$2,000, without the needed computer. Hopefully, this will kickstart a race to develop "affordable" HD camcorders and other HD gear that will put this format within financial reach of independents.

For its swelling base of DV shooters and editors, JVC introduced two new DV recorders, the BR-DV 3000 and BR DV 6000. Both feature FireWire (IEEE 1394), YC and composite video, XLR audio, RS 422 deck control, DVCAM playback and DV recording in PAL or NTSC, on mini and large cassettes. The BRDV 6000 DV includes a built-in tri-mode LCD monitor, plus assemble and insert editing capability. Best of all, both are priced well below the competition.

Panasonic showed off the most radical vision of tapeless video capture with its solid-state memory card camcorder, which captures up to four removable memory cards. At NAB 2003 each card had a one giga-bite capacity for a total of eighteen minutes of DVCPRO 25 video (four cards), or nine minutes of DVCPRO

50. In 2004, Panasonic plans to offer four gigabyte cards, and sixteens a year later. Configured together, the



cards have a data rate of 640 Mbps, enough for HD, a future target. But don't dump DVCPRO just yet; the new solid-state gear will not hit the market until early next year.

Panasonic also introduced a DVCPRO 50 camcorder with 4:2:2 sampling, capable of capturing in (480) 24p and 30p, besides 480/60i. The AJ-SDX-900 is also equipped with a FireWire 800 port for outputting DVCPRO 50 to the desktop instead of the more costly SDI option. New Panasonic DVCPRO 50 VTR's can be equipped with FireWire 800 cards as an option. To complete the 24p production loop, Apple will support DVCPRO 50 video via FireWire 800 ports in all its new computers. Moreover, 24p video shot with Panasonic's VX100 DV camcorder, the new SDX 900, and Varicam can all be edited in 24p in Final Cut PRO 4, as well as on Avid's new DNA line of NLE's, Pinnacle's Cine Wave, Chrome, and others besides.

NAB-goers try out the latest Arriflexes, and scads of other new equipment.

Panasonic rival Sony plans to have its first generation of tapeless equipment on the market this fall. The system uses blue-laser technology to record onto an optical disk. There will be two basic formats, one DVCAM-compatible at 25 Mbps, and the other equivalent to IMX, recording at 30, 40, and 50 Mbps with 4:2:2 sampling. For each there will be a camcorder using a new generation of CCD's and optical disk recorders capable of downloading at 30x-50x real time for instant editing. Sony asserts that the new optical disk system is designed to complement, rather than to displace, videotape.

Sony had good news for filmmakers taking the HD plunge, too, a line of "economical" multiformat HDCAM/betacam players, the J Series. While still priced high for most independents, at \$10,000 to \$24,000, they are a bargain compared to studio HD VTR's. The new J-H3, which plays 24, 25, 30p plus other HDCAM, IMX and betacam formats, automatically detects 3:2 pull-down in film-originated content.

Sony also introduced two new higher definition HD cameras. The HDW-F900 camcorder and HDC-F950 camera both capture RGB video uncompressed with 4:4:4 sampling and also 4:2:2 sampling. Furthermore, you can now monitor this heightened color via dual monitor outputs and also with an optional 2.5-inch LCD color monitor.

At the Bandpro booth, San Francisco's Baytech Cinema demonstrated their portable disk drive, which records five to eight minutes of uncompressed HDCAM. Clairmont Camera of Hollywood demonstrated their custom-modification of HDCAM's for digital cinema with industrial-grade parts.

Not to be outmaneuvered, heavy-weight Thomson/Grass Valley boasted the only camera with true progressive-frame HD imaging. Its LDK 6000 mk II uses 9.2 million pixel CCD's to capture native 1080I and 720p compatible with all global broadcast standards. It also showed improvements

to its uncompressed HD camera, the Viperfilmstream cam, which captures 4:4:4 RGB.

So many choices, so little certainty

Early in the transition to digital video there was broad hope that the two dozen ATSC-certified digital video formats would shake out to a handful. Today, there are more rather than fewer formats, with no end in sight. In its simplest form, digital video is a composite of bits and bytes sampled and processed in a multitude of ways. While DV has helped standardize packet sizes into multiples of 25 MB (DV25, DV50, etc.), there continues to be plenty of experimentation in terms of how and what to put into those packets, and whether to record them on videotape or on some tapeless digital medium.

In response, NLE developers such as Apple, Avid, and Pinnacle are developing editing platforms that can input and output digital video that comes in all flavors and formats, seamlessly, and in real time. The future of video may well be tapeless, but for the interim, tape, especially mini-DV, offers a bytes-per-buck ratio that is tough to beat. JVC's JY-HD10U, that records and outputs 720p, 480p, 480I, and 1080i, may embody the best strategy of the moment—ready to capture in HD and standard 480i and output to everything from 1080i to 480i, on mini-DV tape—a godsend when working on a mini-DV budget. Other companies, including Kodak with their Vision2 film line and telecine enhancements, have a different vision of the future—and NAB remains the best place to get a handle on those competing visions, which ultimately affect the tools we need to implement our visions. ■

Carl Mrozek is an independent producer/cameraman specializing in science, wildlife, and the environment. His equipment reviews appear in TV Technology Magazine. You can reach him at eagleye@localnet.com

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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Stoked: The Rise and Fall of Gator
Dir. Helen Stickler
(Palm Pictures, August 8)

Stoked tracks the life of a pimply-faced teen who becomes one of the top professional skateboarders in the world and eventually spirals down into financial ruin, fanatical Christianity, murder, and prison by his thirties. “I wanted to figure out what the real story was, and I knew there were a lot of people out there that wanted to know, too,” Stickler explains. “How does someone go from being mister



number-one to doing this desperate act of violence?”

Determination best describes filmmaker Helen Stickler’s six-year quest to make her documentary on eighties skateboarding star Mark “Gator” Rogowski. After years of searching for archival footage, conducting interviews, and collaborating with the film’s subject, Stickler has emerged with *Stoked: The Rise and Fall of Gator*, which chronicles the start of professional skateboarding’s financial success and how one star let the fame and fortune go to his head. “In the eighties [skateboarding] became mainstream, but there was a fallout, and Gator is the most prime example of that fallout,”

Stickler says.

Along with *Gator*’s tragic tale, Stickler documents the evolution of skateboarding videos used in stores to push products into films that are now programmed in film festivals. “They’re doing a lot more experimental things with the videos,” explains Stickler. “I think that, combined with *Dogtown*, has made skateboarding huge.”

Even though it covers some of the same turf, this is not a *Dogtown* and *Z-Boys* version 2.0—though it’s hard not to make parallels since *Z-Boys* director Stacy Peralta is in Stickler’s film. *Stoked* is a cautionary tale of fame too fast and too furious. Although none of the skateboarders interviewed excuse *Gator*’s acts, most of them have a there-but-for-the-grace-of-god-go-I attitude.

Love the Hard Way

Dir. Peter Sehr
(Kino International, July 4)

Based on the Chinese novel *Fire and Ice*, by Wang Shuo, this gritty love story revolves around petty con artist Jack (Adrien Brody, who filmed this before his Oscar-winning performance in *The Pianist*) and Ivy League student Claire (Charlotte Ayanna). Though they live worlds apart, the two find one another and fall in love. But Jack, with his Don Juan attitude, cannot admit his feelings for her, which eventually leads both of them to lives of pain.

Passionada

Dir. Dan Ireland
(Samuel Goldwyn, August 29)

After losing her husband in a fishing accident, the only thing that brings Celia (Sofia Milos) comfort is singing at a local restaurant and taking care of her strong-willed seventeen-year-old daughter (Emmy Rossum). That all

changes when a down-on-his-luck card shark (Jason Isaacs) comes to their small, New England town and falls for Celia—though he has to tell a few lies to get her attention. Filled with music, dance, and food, *Passionada* celebrates the Portuguese-American culture.

thirteen

Dir. Catherine Hardwicke
(Fox Searchlight, August 20)

Determined to fit in with the popular crowd, thirteen-year-old Tracy (Evan Rachel Wood) changes her look, attitude, and loses all morals to gain the good graces of Evie (Nikki Reed), the most popular girl in school. Struggling to deal with her daughter’s sudden change, Mel (Holly Hunter) must fight off the intoxicating influence of Evie to get through to her. The film marks the directorial debut of veteran production designer Catherine Hardwicke (who co-wrote the script with Reed in only six days, and who received the dramatic jury’s directing award at this year’s Sundance Film Festival).

Civil Brand

Dir. Neema Barnette
(Lions Gate, August 22)

Examining the sudden increase of women in prisons, *Civil Brand* takes a fictional look at what happens behind bars at a women’s correctional facility. Scared of late-night rapings by the guards, who are predominately male, and forced to work under slave conditions, the women of Whitehead Correctional Institute strike back. Unable to get help from the outside, the women must put their trust in one another to make a stand. With an ensemble cast including Lisa Raye, Lark Voorhies, and Mos Def, first-time director Neema Barnette puts a fresh spin on the prison-film genre.

This page: Brandi and Gator display fashion wear in Helen Stickler’s *Stoked*. Facing page: Marita Lorenz and Fidel Castro, as featured in Wilfried Huismann’s *Dear Fidel*.

Television

Dear Fidel—Marita's Story

Dir. Wilfried Huismann
(Sundance Channel, July 28)

While talking to locals in Bremen, Germany, where he lives, filmmaker Wilfried Huismann became fascinated by the story of a local girl with ties to Fidel Castro, the CIA, and some of the most notorious events of the twentieth



century. The daughter of a legendary German captain, Marita Lorenz claims to have been Castro's lover, and that after his agents forced her to abort his child, she was recruited by the CIA to assassinate the Cuban leader.

In *Dear Fidel*, Lorenz tells her tale of the affair with Castro, why she did not assassinate him, and her alleged affiliation with Lee Harvey Oswald and Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis. In the course of his journey with Lorenz from Germany, where she was imprisoned in a concentration camp as a child, to Cuba, where she attempts to see Castro, Huismann captures the portrait of a person who has seen too much and wants to find peace in the arms of the man she loves.

Though traveling with a woman claiming to be a former assassin for the US, Huismann says he was not that apprehensive about filming in Cuba. "We were sure that every step was watched," says Huismann. "I knew they would tolerate [the filming] because not accepting us might signify a scandal."

Family Fundamentals

Dir. Arthur Dong
(P.O.V., August 26)

In *Licensed To Kill*, Arthur Dong took

viewers into the minds of men whose contempt for homosexuals led them to murder. In his newest documentary he turns his camera on three conservative Christian families whose children are gay. As the parents actively fight against gay civil rights, Dong shows how their offspring deal with the actions of their parents.

The Six Wives of Henry VIII

Prod. Mark Fielder
(PBS, July 16)

This two-part documentary examines the six queens who ruled alongside Henry VIII during the sixteenth century. Though historians often portray these women as victims of a domineering ruler, Fielder interprets the wives as neither timid nor weak. Presenting each wife's story from her own perspective through dramatizations and letters that have not been touched for 450 years, we learn how clever and politically cunning these women had to be to gain their place aside the throne.

War and Peace

Dir. Anand Patwardhan
(Sundance Channel, July 14)

This documentary, split between peace activism and nuclear supremacy, looks at the people affected by the testing of nuclear weapons in India and Pakistan. With the fifty-year-old cloud of Mahatma Gandhi's death still hovering over these two countries, filmmaker Anand Patwardhan shows that not much progress for peace has been made between these feuding neighbors.

Wide Angle: Season 2

(PBS, July 10)
Launching its second season of weekly episodes, *Wide Angle* shows works from international documentarians on emerging world issues. The series' first season garnered tremendous acclaim as the programs have a degree of insight into international topics rarely seen on American television. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for
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Counter-Currents and the Joy Quotient

REDEFINING EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA

By Cauleen Smith

The label “experimental” has been troubling me for a while now. For too many people, the word only conjures up the films of Brakhage, Mekas, Anger, etc. So much so that the very term has calcified within the minds of hipsters and film aficionados alike—ending the canon in the seventies.

Today the notion of producing experimental work is equated with inevitable marginality. And this marginality is something that the makers, curators, and critics of the experimental genre seem to honorably embrace rather than fight.

I used to say that some of the spaces inhabited by experimental media feel like ghettos. But this is inaccurate because ghettos are permeable. While there are certainly exceptions, a better analogy for gallery spaces, museums, and classrooms might be the gated community.

What can all this mean to a maker like myself who has, by the very nature of her phenotype, a narrow, splintered seat in the societal margins, whether she likes it or not? When an artist seeks funding beyond the limits of grants and an audience too large to fill the local art gallery, where is she to go? What is she to do? Is she naïve and misguided to dream of marketing possibilities that might seduce strangers to new temporal forms, pressing content into the theater of pub-

lic access rather than the gallery of private mailing lists? Should she resign herself to the generally agreed upon fact that the microscreens which so lovingly exhibit experimental work exist solely for artists, intellectuals, and their benefactors? And that everyone else is, well, stupid?

I need to get clear on some things, you understand. So when this issue’s consulting editor, Shari Frilot, a filmmaker, programmer for Sundance, and founder of Mixfest, asked me to write an article about the state of experimental film today, I jumped at the chance. To this end, I sent a questionnaire to a handful of makers, writers, and programmers asking about their ideas on experimentation in moving image media and the worlds in which our work plays.



What is this thing I love so, called experimental film?

“It seems to me that the term ‘experimental film’ has two distinct (and only occasionally overlapping) meanings,” Caveh Zahedi (*Signs From God, I Am a Sex Addict*) answers. “The most frequently used meaning is the description of a genre of filmmaking, in the same way that the words ‘noir’ or ‘Western’ evoke a genre. This genre is typically non-narrative (although it often has narrative elements) and is associated with a school of filmmaking most com-



monly associated with the work of filmmakers like Stan Brakhage, Michael Snow, and Hollis Frampton. Films made in this genre can be good or bad, and they can be original or not, just as films made in the noir or Western genre can be good or bad, and original or not. But the other meaning of experimental film, and the one I prefer, is the literal meaning of a film that involves an experiment of some kind. In this sense, its determining characteristic is innovation and originality.”

The genre of experimental film, with its long, vibrant history, has come to connote a pretty crusty and rigid image, but experiments are happening almost every day in all different formats. “People in disparate fields are playing in new areas, creating a sense of cross-pollination that’s really exhilarating,” Holly Willis, editor of *RES* magazine, reminds me. “Similarly, artists who in the past may have turned to experimental film are now instead creating immersive video installations or interactive games with some cinematic element, or sound projects that grapple with narrative.” David Barker, filmmaker and program

director of Cinematexas in Austin, Texas, co-signed Holly when he wrote, “I think that it is part of the fun to have to be constantly defining and redefining these terms [i.e. experimental film]. A lot of the great work that we see at Cinematexas doesn’t fit easily into narrative, experimental, or documentary categories.”

Yes! Experimentation in moving images influences and infects the aesthetics and politics of any culture to which it is exposed. It is a living thing. It is happening now. I advocate a name change. My favorite suggestion for a new label came from Berénice Reynaud, a professor and curator at the California Institute of the Arts. It is a phrase that describes as well as creates: *counter-current*. Counter-current media, counter-current makers.

From now on I’m going to use the phrase counter-current interchangeably with experimental. For those of you who dislike this new moniker for experimental film/video, Reynaud offers a quote from Wayne Wang’s *Dim Sum* to assuage concerns: “You can get a girl out of Chinatown, but you can’t take Chinatown out of a girl.”

The inevitability of marginality

Jay Rosenblatt: “Popular culture has always appropriated experimental film for their own uses. When I get my yearly

Left page: Filmmaker Jay Rosenblatt. This page: Still images from Rosenblatt’s films: (clockwise) *King of the Jews*, *Prayer*, *Human Remains*, and *The Smell of Burning Ants*.

records of rentals from Canyon Cinema, there is usually some advertising agency that has rented one of my films.”

Holly concurs when she says, “Whether it’s graffiti art or streetwear, [advertisers] use [experimental media] to sell things while incorporating previously ‘radical’ imagery or avant-garde formal tropes into a commercial, mainstream vernacular.” What we both find more alarming than this is that, “There really isn’t a viable public conversation about alternative media right now. When we do read about any independent film practice, what we read are rags-to-riches stories about how filmmakers from nowhere suddenly score or how much a low-budget film grossed at the box office.” Alternatively, Willis points out, “Many people talk about ‘experimental’ only in aesthetic terms . . . with little regard to how the images are actually being used. There’s rarely much discussion regarding the political subtext of experimental strategies.”

“Ultimately, there is no context in the US for most peo-

ings of ‘innovative’ Chinese films that were *not* attended by my experimental filmmaker friends.”

Perhaps we ourselves, the counter-current makers, are responsible for our own marginality. Indeed we seem even to embrace it. Some of us are stridently proud of this. No nerds at the party, right? One man’s hipster scene is another woman’s ghetto. I, for one, do not have a romance with the ghetto. But maybe I should.

“Experimentation is never going to be mainstream, nor should it be. It is an alternative. It is about taking risks,” Jay Rosenblatt said to me. “Some of it is exciting. Some of it is subversive. Some of it is challenging. Some of it is boring. Long live experimentation. Long live experimental film!”

Amen to that, brother. But this definition basically accepts the futility in attempting to make work that does a thing most rare: Bridges gaps, creates links, softens the resistant, challenges the entrenched. Did I miss the boat? Have artists given up and set sail from Ayn Rand’s



ple to look at ‘difficult’ work,” David Barker states, admitting the painfully obvious. “In part this may be the extremely anti-intellectual bias of American culture, which becomes much more pronounced every decade. In the US, experimental films are really of interest only to people who make them and to certain art and film curators.”

Matt McCormick, of Peripheral Produce, more pointedly offers insight into the very reasons that experimental film and video are actually essential to popular culture, as well as why it feels very often like a retreat from a broader dialogue. “I am pretty embarrassed by mainstream culture. Most of the stuff in the world that is popular is soooo bad,” he says. “In some ways the limited-ness of experimental film is actually exclusiveness, a sort of invisible shield that keeps all the dummies from coming to our parties.”

Hmmm. Trouble is, some of us are gate-crashers at these parties. Reynaud shared a similar sentiment when she said, “I don’t know why. It breaks my heart—I have found myself so often the only straight girl in a gay festival, the only white girl in a black audience, the only Caucasian in a Chinese theater, the lone European in an American avant-garde showcase.” Reynaud writes, “I have organized screen-

shrugged atlas without me? I feel like I’ve picked at a scab here. A forgotten, perhaps even unnoticed rupture between the ways in which artists who make moving media define their work and the way in which this work creates value for them and for others.

Shari Frilot senses that today’s counter-current media may well be resting at a precipice similar to that of independent film in the early nineties. More and more often, programmers like Barker and Frilot are seeing work that blurs narrative and experimental. And these films are struggling to find screens or to stay on them for longer than a blip once they get there. If counter-current makers cocoon ourselves with the concept that exclusivity equals value, do we fail to force openings for exciting films like Joey Cutis’ *Quattro Noza*? (See page 15 for more on this film.)

Now “indie” films win Oscars. Indie film is a monster. “The Minotaur was considered a monster,” Reynaud reminds me, “because he was a ‘hybrid’ being—a man’s body

This page: Images from Matt McCormick’s *The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal*. Facing page: Caveh Zahedi and Caroline Capulet in Zahedi’s *I Am A Sex Addict*.

with a bull's head. Avant-garde/experimental film may have produced such hybrid collages that explode the boundaries of what was possible/permisible. I welcome the monsters that were, and the monsters to come." So let's bring it!

Counter-current media and commerce

Matt McCormick: "I never know if I should write 'filmmaker' or 'artist' as my profession on my tax forms."

Which brings me to this: A call for action rather than satisfaction. A request for visibility rather than exclusivity. The reality is that the seminal experimental feature film *Poison*, of Vachon and Hayes, would not be distributed today. But that doesn't mean its modern equivalent in terms of risk, innovation, and counter-cultural significance would not find a place in theater.

Caveh breaks it down like this, "The numbers of people who have to want to see any given film for a distributor to justify the enormous marketing costs involved in promoting it requires that a film be overwhelmingly enjoyable to watch by a large enough number of people for the film to be profitable. *Run Lola Run* was enjoyable to watch for a large enough number of people, and innovative to boot. So was *Amelie*. So was *32 Short Films about Glenn Gould*. The problem isn't how 'experimental' a film is, but how enjoyable a film is to a large enough number of people. Also, feature-length films require a much greater amount of enjoyment quotient to keep people engaged for ninety minutes than short films require."

I dig this. I will henceforth refer to Caveh's speculation into the formula for big screen experimental movies as *The Joy Quotient*. But why, you may be asking, fixate on the mass distribution, commercialism, and mainstreaming of experimental film? Why? Why?

I think it's because I came of age alongside hip-hop. I have yet to hear a sound as devastatingly innovative, arresting, and versatile as a needle scratching vinyl. I have watched the reign of DJ's over dark basement dance floors transform into blinding platinum bling-bling MC's. And I've reveled in every bit of it because I witnessed the margins devour the center. Hip-hop is a monster, and you know how Reynaud and I feel about monsters. Now, many people think that this music is horrible, the values are debased, blah, blah. Yes, some hip-hop MC's invite severe

ridicule even while the very beats upon which they lay their lyrics continue to innovate the lexicon. Along those lines we could debate the merit of several canonized (hell, sainted) filmmakers from the sixties.

I offer a challenge to the bold, brave, innovative, experimental counter-current community of makers whose work provokes, reveals, incites, inspires and, most importantly, engages. [Yes, that's you.] Reader, take a close look at *The Four Pillars of Hip-hop* (breaking, spinning, rapping, and graffiti) and consider, whether you ever listen to the music or not, just how much this wave of musical/cultural innovation has directly engaged you. Love it or hate it, hip-hop has

asserted itself as a force to be reckoned with. I believe that counter-current makers across the globe, across different media, have the power to be such a force. I believe that the masses are waiting.

I told Shari about the questionnaire I sent out to my colleagues, and my sense that questions about mainstreaming versus marginality were provoking some subtly resentful responses—as if the desire to broaden the audience for counter-current work is somehow antithetical to experimentation's very nature. Here's an example from Reynaud, who eloquently states, "We are involved in a contest about who is going to control, or seduce, or gently convince the hearts and minds of our contemporaries. . . . [There are] many experimental artists who are constantly wondering whether or not they should court the mainstream or stay in the

margin, and what is the best way to reach their audience. . . . Hollywood executives know exactly what they want—control over their audiences. They are *not* about to willingly share this control with *us*." But she hopes, as do I, to see broader mainstream forms of representation as currently being explored in works like those created by Rainer, Arnold, or Morrison.

Frilot also mused on the fact that modern audiences recognize the difference between authentic interventions into conventional media tropes and the packaged, calculated, commercial ones. And they resent the commercially appropriated corruption. In other words, audiences are ready for the real shizizat. When I told her that I couldn't accept the empowering loci of the ghetto any more than a hip-hop artist could, she pointed out that "the art world's rules of commerce rely on exclusivity, whereas the film



[and music] world's rules of commerce rely on mass numbers." Within art commerce, the more limited the creation of a particular object, whether it be a Jasper Johns print, or a Matthew Barney print, the more valuable the object. In film, value is defined by numbers sold, festivals won, box office dominance, etc. Since most experimental work has



operated [until fairly recently] within the fringes of the art world, I believe that moving-image artists have accepted, without much examination or reflection, a rarified exclusivity even though the very nature of film, the way in which it is designed to be watched, the temporal influence it holds over the watcher, and the costs of production, beg for broadband participation.

There was a time when hip-hop was thought to be nothing but a gimmick, in the same way that Godard's jump cut is now abused as a gimmick. What's the difference between the break beat and the jump cut? They both created a resonance within their audiences so strong that they will forever remain part of our vocabularies. Why are hip-hop artists paid and experimental filmmakers beggars? Because of the joy quotient, baby. DJ's have nothing but love for their audiences. *Last Night A DJ Saved My Life*—when was the last time a song was dedicated to Godard? DJ's dreamed of spreading the love to ears that were assumed deaf to the break beat. Experimental filmmakers appear to have a certain amount of resigned and patronizing contempt for their potential audiences, the kind of snobbery that is ruthlessly mocked in mainstream films. We artists tend to wrap ourselves in the assured cloak of intellectual superiority. Here's an example of a commonly-held belief among counter-current makers as offered by David Barker when he explains that "marketing avant-garde work does not depend on the audience 'enjoying it' but on other factors which tell them that it is something important to see." This attitude is something we inherited from a world

Caveh Zahedi in *Possessed*.

where people spend millions of dollars on a single canvas covered in paint because the work is important. Then we ridicule the industry for spending the same amount of money on a product that will then generate ten times that much because thousands of people will access it. We inherited the notion of exclusivity as something linked to our dignity as artists. Is the absence of pleasure a badge of honor? I'm with Emma Goldman, folks.: "If I can't dance, it's not my revolution." The thought of Master P selling his demos out of the trunk of his car in New Orleans fills me with pride because there is an artist who valued his work enough not to allow its value be determined by others. Then I think of Craig Baldwin, salvaging and archiving slug footage, then mutating it into gems like *Spectres of the Spectrum*, and I am grateful that we makers love our medium enough to protect it from the people who find it impenetrable. But let us love it a little more by looking at ways of increasing our audiences, the size of our screens, the sites of our dialogues, and the breadth of the label "experimental" itself.

Let us, as we have always done, take our destiny into our own hands, define value for ourselves, and look to new models for shaping the destiny of counter-current media today. Yes, there are institutions, hip scenes, audiences, galleries, and an ever-smaller number of funders who create microspaces for the ideas and images of moving-image counter-current artists. Are the trials of production so exhausting that we passively rely on these venues rather than forge environments that honor the form rather than degrade it [i.e., those awful closets they like to construct in museums/galleries to show poorly projected videos]? Or is the notion of hegemonic domination by the innovative and the probing just as frightening and reprehensible to us as what we have now: The commercial, tyrannical reign of the intellectually lazy and aesthetically stupid? Matt McCormick says no: "I always say that I just want to be doing the same things, just at a slightly higher level. When a Peripheral Produce tape comes out, I wish it would sell two to three thousand copies, not the two to three hundred copies it sells now. I wish I could pay myself and perhaps a part-time employee for the work put into Peripheral Produce. As for my films, it would be nice if they were financially viable enough so that I didn't have to ask for favors all the time, so I could pay myself and crewmembers, stuff like that. . . . It would also be nice to be on the cover of popular magazines." Right on, Matt. Power to the makers. Joy to the world. □

Cauleen Smith is a filmmaker currently living in Austin, Texas, for the sole purpose of teaching and making more experimental films. She also makes narrative features. Her current academic project is a DVD collection featuring film and video makers of the past and present. If this article pissed anyone off and they want to continue the discussion, she can be reached at cauleensmith@mail.utexas.edu.



The Labyrinth Project

By Holly Willis

Sergei Eisenstein and Luis Buñuel—the forefathers of interactive narrative? Yeah, sure. At first glance, the idea seems highly unlikely. And yet, Eisenstein’s writings on rhythmic montage have inspired new media producers. And Buñuel, while in Hollywood, developed a version of database narrative structure that, while created in jest, is surprisingly useful.

These connections to “old” media thinkers are just a few that inspire Marsha Kinder, chair of Critical Studies at the University of Southern California and director of the Labyrinth Research Initiative on Interactive Narrative at USC’s Annenberg Center for Communication. According to Kinder, both Eisenstein and Buñuel help illustrate divergent pre-computer modes for understanding the possibilities of interactive storytelling. And therefore it’s no surprise that they, in some ways, underpin the design and structure of Labyrinth’s multiple interactive media projects.

But let’s back up a bit.

In 1999, Kinder initiated a research project to explore the intersection of cinema and new media. The outcome was a three-day academic conference bringing together

scholars from all over the world, and an extensive exhibition, both of which were titled *Interactive Frictions*. The events sparked abundant discussion, and Kinder decided she wanted to pursue this line of exploration. But rather than merely discussing and showcasing interactive media projects, she wanted to make them.

“It became very clear to me that there weren’t that many works out there doing the kinds of things that I thought were possible,” Kinder explains from her office in the Kerkhoff House, an English Tudor-style home built at the turn of the last century that now accommodates the Annenberg Center for Communication. Kinder had already explored the use of new media in an academic context with her groundbreaking 1993 book *Blood Cinema*, a forty-year history of Spanish national cinema which includes a CD-ROM showcasing annotated clips from the hard-to-find films mentioned in the text.

Kinder decided that collaborating with artists already interested in narrative experimentation was the best strategy. She assembled a small team of designers and programmers and, for the first three endeavors, invited a trio of Los Angeles-based artists to collaborate on interactive projects that would evolve from their existing work. The artists included experimental filmmaker Nina Menkes, known for a series of austere yet visually striking and

Carroll Parrot Blue’s collaboration, *The Dawn At My Back: Memoir of a Black Texas Upbringing*, appears in the Labyrinth Project.

politically-oriented feminist films; filmmaker Pat O'Neill, who, since the 1960's, has created a host of elegantly-layered, optically-printed experimental films, including the

narrative as a form as something that has been very pervasive, not just in new media, but also throughout the history of film and literature, and in dreams."

As an example, Kinder cites O'Neill's films. "I have been writing about Pat's films from the seventies, and what I love about them is their layered quality, and the sense that, at any moment, you can follow them in any direction. You can follow any of the layers, any of the images. And there is such richness in this kind of work—a single narrative seems like a diminution."

With the work of John Rechy, Kinder highlights the repetition of compulsion and promiscuity evident in his novels. "In a sense it's database sex," she laughs. "The compulsiveness and the way it's linked to the deep structures of Catholicism and the rosary are central."

Beyond their sense of shared structure, the first three projects all have a certain sense of polish and cinematic scope, thanks in part to the work of art director Kristy Kang. However, the projects diverge radically with regard to their concerns. *The Crazy Bloody Female Center* CD-ROM, for example, draws on the haunting

images and storylines in the films of Nina Menkes, whose work is known primarily for its provocative form and its resistance to cinematic convention in the ways in which it explores notions of oppression. Menkes traditionally casts her sister, Tinka Menkes, who embodies a sense of subjugation that is simply unnerving. In the CD-ROM, viewers move through different spaces that psychically link the diverse stories, uncovering snippets of storylines and emotional resonances along the way, gradually building a story out of fragments.

In the CD-ROM *Mysteries and Desires: Searching the Worlds of John Rechy*, the collaborators created a loose adaptation of autobiographical elements, characters, and scenes from Rechy's novels and the author's own notorious past. Stylized dance sequences create metaphorical seduction scenes for gay hustlers in Griffith Park, while personal memorabilia and religious iconography create a rich personal history. The innovative interface design, created by Jim Tobias, at times tracks the speed of the moving mouse, lending an unusual, gestural dimension to the project's navigation.

The collaboration with Pat O'Neill resulted in a DVD-ROM titled *Tracing the Decay of Fiction*, which was made at the same time that O'Neill was finishing his latest feature film, *The Decay of Fiction*. The film and DVD-ROM are entwined but are essentially stand-alone projects, with each



award-winning *Water and Power*; and writer John Rechy, whose pioneering novels, including *City of Night* from 1963, explore gay Latino life in Los Angeles.

"We invited these three artists because we respected their work, and because we felt it was emotionally powerful," explains Kinder. "And we thought that what was lacking in this medium was real emotional engagement."

Before production began, the Labyrinth Project hosted an all-day workshop to discuss interactive narrative in general with artists and scholars. The result was an interesting debate that, to some extent, centered on the notion of database narrative, a term which, according to Kinder, refers to those narratives in novels, films, or games that show the processes of selection and combination that form the foundation of all stories, and of language itself. The notion derives in part from the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. When we make sentences, says Saussure, we select words from lists of possible linguistic choices and then combine them. Storytelling can work similarly, functioning according to patterns of selection and combination. Some scholars argue that database structures and narrative structures are diametrically opposed; Kinder adamantly disagrees.

"I felt that database narrative is a form that reveals the database structure underlying all narrative, and that really its value is that it exposes the arbitrariness of any one single direction, and therefore has an ideological function because it weakens the hold of master narratives," says Kinder, who goes on to note that to date, all of the Labyrinth projects use a database narrative as their structures. "I see the database

This page: Pat O'Neill's collaboration, *Tracing the Decay of Fiction: Encounters with a Film*. Facing page: John Rechy's *Mysteries and Desires: Searching the Worlds of John Rechy*.

revealing different story elements, engaging different faculties, and sparking different pleasures.

Both projects center on the history of Los Angeles' famed Ambassador Hotel, which was once a hangout for the city's rich and famous, while also serving as the backdrop for countless films. Perhaps most notoriously, the Ambassador played host, allegedly, to trysts between Marilyn Monroe and John F. Kennedy, and it was the site of the 1968 assassination of Bobby Kennedy.

In the film, O'Neill's camera wanders down the hotel's now shabby corridors, across the ballroom, and around the cracked and empty swimming pool, conjuring the wistfulness of time gone by. Optical overlays of ethereal inhabitants and scraps of appropriated dialogue from old movies rekindle past encounters and suggest the evanescent quality of both history and memory.

For the DVD-ROM, the Labyrinth team, which at this point included acclaimed interface designer Rosemary Comella, wove together an array of O'Neill's images from the hotel, creating a virtual, navigable space showing the hotel's interior in a way that is truly unique in capturing a very real sense of the space, while merging it with impossibilities of time, space, light, and movement. The DVD-ROM expands beyond the feature film's visual spectacle to include the hotel's storied past, as well as the history of the Wilshire corridor immediately surrounding the Ambassador. Extensive use of archival photographs, film clips, and commentary by experts and witnesses builds a highly-textured historical context within which one experiences the building's cavernous spaces. Highlighting the cinematic scope of *Tracing the Decay of Fiction*, Kinder notes that "the camera has a magisterial sense of motion, and it's very pleasurable to move through the project that way."

Indeed it is. But if *Tracing the Decay* is magisterial, then one of the team's next collaborations, this time with Hungarian video artist Péter Forgács, titled *The Danube Exodus: The Rippling Currents of the River*, is haunting. Over the last decade, Forgács has created a series of arresting videos that rework home movies, primarily shot by Jewish families between the 1920's and 1940's. Forgács slows the images down, adds sound effects and a haunting score, and brings viewers into the daily lives of Jews during the Holocaust. The private movies come to trace history from the inside, showing how political events are etched into the lives of ordinary people.

For his film *The Danube Exodus*, Forgács reworked footage shot by amateur filmmaker Nándor Andrásovits, who happened to be a riverboat captain traveling the Danube during World War II. Forgács focuses on two voyages filmed by Andrásovits—the first was made in 1939 when he ferried nearly one thousand

Jews fleeing Slovakia, and the second was made in 1940 as he facilitated the emigration of Bessarabian Germans when the Soviet Union annexed their land. The sequences show the victims of wartime as people on all sides who become easily dispensable.

The interactive *Danube Exodus* spatializes the film to create an immersive environment using five large screens with projected imagery and a touch-screen interface designed by Scott Mahoy. The installation continues Forgács' ongoing interest in history, but adds the elements of chance and viewer interaction. As viewers make selections, the images shift, and people begin to experience the past as a stream of always-changing moments and memories. The piece creates a powerful environment, and the conflicts and contradictions among the image orchestrations and stories help complicate simplistic notions regarding history.

"Peter had been collecting all of this archival material and re-editing it," explains Kinder, "and so literally he did have an archival database of these images." She continues, "So in many ways what was at the center of the project was montage, in the broadest sense of the term—an expanded sense of montage. And that was one of the reasons why this is one of the best mediums for dealing with interactive memoir; it shows you the way memory functions, and how it helps construct subjectivity."

The Labyrinth Project's two latest works are *Bleeding Through: Layers of Los Angeles 1920-1986*, made in collaboration with cultural historian Norman Klein, and *The Dawn at My Back: A Memoir of a Black Texas Upbringing*, made with writer and documentary filmmaker Carroll Parrott Blue.



Both projects are rooted in a particular place—for *Bleeding Through*, it's a section of Los Angeles where the most movie murders have taken place, and for *Dawn at my Back*, it's



Houston, as seen through the experiences of an African American woman who grew up there. Both projects are being distributed as book/DVD-ROM combinations.

Dreamwaves, a website designed by Steve Anderson, is Labyrinth's only web-based project to date. The participatory site explores dreams by bringing together an exhibition space of dream-based artworks, some of which are commissioned from artists and others that are curated by JoAnn Hanley, and an archive of the *Dreamworks* journal from the 1980's, co-edited by Kinder and Kenneth Atchity. The site also has a "Dream Dialogues" function, which is a searchable database of dreams described and entered by users. Altogether, the site's interface uses metaphors of evanescence and randomness to create the feeling that everything onscreen is in play, and the site invites users to participate in a way that allows for the experiential modeling of the dream state.

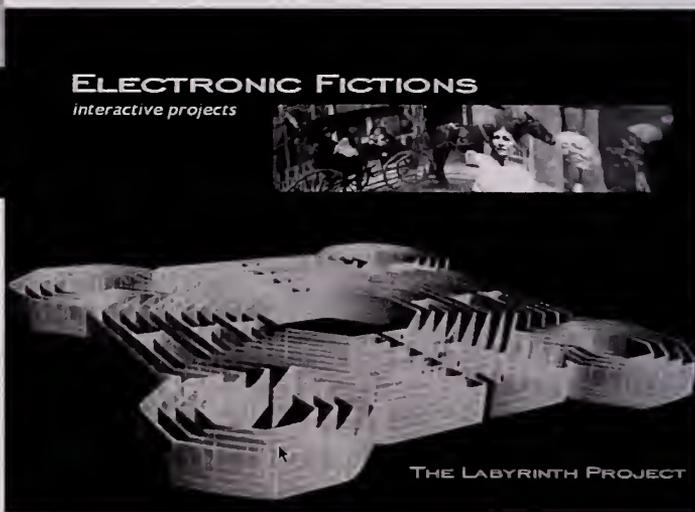
A good part of that modeling comes via the REM montage, which is a rapid explosion of images that overtake the screen at random intervals and for random lengths of time. The idea here was to simulate the loss of motor control that a sleeper experiences during a REM period. The site also welcomes the randomness that comes from having an open architecture, allowing for a dynamic, ever-evolving network of experiences and contributions.

All of the Labyrinth pieces employ some element of randomness. In a very practical way, the random elements help viewers see new directions and story options to pursue. More fundamentally, however, randomness links to Kinder's view, again via Saussure, that language is built on an arbitrary organization of sounds, and that storytelling is similarly influenced by random elements. "In *Dreamwaves*, the random element is in the REM images

Above left: Norman Klein's collaboration, *Bleeding Through: Layers of Los Angeles, 1920-1986*, from the Labyrinth Project. Above right: One of *Dreamwaves*' many episodes.

that suddenly appear without warning," she says. "And in *The Decay of Fiction*, it's the earthquake during which you suddenly get a random sense of images and sounds. But it also has a very practical function, because it jolts you, encouraging you to make new combinations."

Kinder notes that at a certain point she realized that all of the Labyrinth projects were database narratives of two types: "One was the interactive memoir centered around an



individual who was quite extraordinary and had lived through a series of contradictions." This certainly describes both the John Rechy and Carroll Parrott Blue projects. "With *Dawn at My Back*, the project is centered on Carroll's life and relationship with her mother and how that was contextualized in black Houston, and the way in which her relationship was affected by popular culture, racism, and all of these cultural forces," explains Kinder, who goes on to note that the project is essentially "a memoir embedded in a cultural history such that the history is illuminated and made rich and concrete through an individual's story."

The second type of project centers on urban spaces. "I think that one way to talk about these works is as digital city symphonies," says Kinder, who adds that a key aspect for these pieces is pacing. And this leads back yet again to Eisenstein and ideas of rhythmic montage.

Upcoming projects for the Labyrinth team include continuing to expand the *Dreamwaves* site; the development of an immense e-learning course on the legacy of Russian Modernism; consultations with video artist Bill Viola on a game project; and a collaborative piece made with Scott Fisher that will be a site-specific augmented reality piece, moving the team into telepathy. ■

For more info visit the Labyrinth Project at www.annenberg.edu/labyrinth.

Holly Willis is the editor of *RES Magazine*, and writes frequently on experimental film, video and new media. She also co-curated the *Interactive Frictions* exhibition with Marsha Kinder.



The View from the Whitney

ANN LEWINSON INTERVIEWS CHRISSIE ILES

Chrissie Iles is the curator of film and video at the Whitney Museum of American Art and has been curating for twenty-three years. Before joining the Whitney in 1997, she was head of exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford. Her Whitney exhibit, *Into the Light: The Projected Image in American Art 1964-1977*, is currently touring Europe.

The Independent: What trends do you see emerging in experimental film and video?

Iles: I think that there's an unprecedented hybridization of different forms, and the emergence of "the digital" has produced both a lot of work dealing with the digital and a strong reaction against it, towards the material, which is no

longer to be taken for granted. People hang onto the term "film" a little bit like they hung onto the term "sculpture" in the seventies when they were making anything but sculpture. "Video" has almost become a pejorative term. People like to say they're making a digital film, which is interesting because it's actually got nothing to do with film. There are more films on video being shown in galleries than ever before, single-screen films with a beginning, middle, and end, which is very interesting, and not always very satisfactory, and it's an ongoing and very complicated debate as to why that's happening . . .

The Independent: . . . why people are making narrative films?

Iles: Why they want to put them in a gallery.

The Independent: . . . with viewers walking in the middle . . .

Iles: If you're making a narrative film, why don't you want it to be screened in a theater where people will sit through the beginning, middle, and end, as opposed to a gallery, where people walk in, look at it for five minutes, and then walk out? They haven't seen the piece, but it doesn't seem to matter.

The Independent: At the Video Acts exhibit at P.S. 1 I was struck by how few people actually put on the headphones.

Iles: People never put on the headphones. If you put on headphones, you've cut out your main means of determining whether someone's coming up behind you. People will only put on headphones if they're at home, in an airplane, or if they're out and about on the street and can move



quickly. People, when they enter a gallery space, don't like to be restricted in any way. That's why if you put lots of seats in a gallery space you won't get anyone to sit down, but if you put lots of benches in you will, and that's a very strange thing. People don't pay enough attention to the psychology of the viewer. I mean, I wouldn't put headphones on in a public space. And they never work.

The Independent: So what do filmmakers gain by showing their films in galleries?

Iles: I think that the issue is one of exposure. One of the reasons that films are being put into the galleries is because people don't feel that their films will get any attention otherwise. People won't go and see an experimental film at seven o'clock on a Thursday, but they will if they're wandering through Chelsea. In Documenta [the massive contemporary art exhibit held in Kassel, Germany every five years] there were a number of single-screen films shown in the gallery. They were also shown in the film program, but all those people in the film program who didn't have a space in the gallery were not seen by the art world—no one knew Jonas Mekas was in Documenta because his work was only in the film program. But the art world was discovering people like Ulrike Ottinger because she had an eight-hour film in the gallery. The fact that people only saw ten minutes or half an hour of it was off-

set by the fact that many more thousands of people now know that she exists. So I think that the shifting of film into the gallery space is directly related to the elbowing out of film that's not Sundance and not Hollywood by an increasingly commercialized conglomerate of cinema spaces where you get the same thing showing in every cinema.

The Independent: What are some films that you think are showing a new direction?

Iles: There are some pieces that I think are very interesting at the moment. One is the Sharon Lockhart film [NØ, which recently showed] at Barbara Gladstone. Sharon was taught by Morgan Fischer and is very influenced by structural film of the seventies and has understood the conceptual premises behind it very well. So this film has a very clear structure to it. It's a film that requires that you see it from the beginning to the end. In installation, I thought that many of the pieces in Documenta were very important. One that comes to mind is by Craigie Horsfield. It's a video installation on four screens and it's eight hours long. It's called *The El Hierro Conversation*. El Hierro is the westernmost Canary Island. He worked with the people who live on the island. It's almost like an archive of their life. The way he has filmed it is absolutely stunning. At one point the camera spends twenty minutes just on the hands of a woman making cheese, very close-up, and you see the cheese emerging out of this very milky surface. These are films that ask us to think about a different way of experiencing time. In Craigie's installation there are benches that people can actually lie down on. It's a really meditative piece, and it requires you spending a lot of time.

The Independent: And outside the galleries?

Iles: There's a young filmmaker called Brian Frye who's made a neat film where he went into one of those reenactments of a Civil War battle. He filmed people as they were in battle, and then standing around having a fag and then going back into battle. So you see the filmmaker documenting the artificiality of the battle being fought. That's a lovely little experimental film.

The Independent: How about video?

Iles: Peggy Ahwesh has made a very interesting tape—it's called *The She Puppet*. Christian Marclay has made a multiple-screen video installation which takes slivers from Hollywood films and bursts of musical activity. And sampling is something I find very overdone and dull.

The Independent: But he was doing it before anyone else.

Iles: Exactly, and he transferred it from sound to video. It's like an orchestration of all these musical moments. That's all digitally done, and it's really superb, I think.

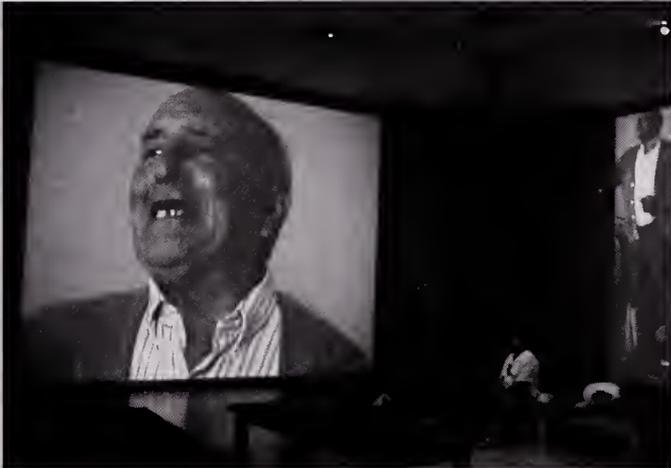
This page and facing: Craigie Horsfield's *The El Hierro Conversation*.

The Independent: Aside from sampling, what are some things that you think are overdone, or just irk you?

Iles: One of the things that irks me is real-time cameras documenting a street corner, and surveillance—it's been done for the last thirty years.

The Independent: Big Brother stuff?

Iles: Yeah, and just documenting a street in real time. It's too easy to make a moving image or a photographic image now. Cameras have become so sophisticated and everyone has one. There's a lot of very dull video and photography—



there's too much of it, I think. So you have to weed out things an awful lot, because there's not much deep thinking that appears to be going on in a lot of cases.

The Independent: What else do you find interesting?

Iles: There is an interesting quasi-documentary strand to filmmaking going on now, by artists and filmmakers, where they're playing around with what documentary is. Also, straight documentary is enjoying a lot of attention, which is very good, because documentary film is wonderful and it's a neglected medium. There's a lot of looking back to the seventies in a romanticized way on the part of artists, which can get overdone.

The Independent: How do you mean?

Iles: They're using the word "conceptual" when their work is not particularly conceptual. Now "conceptual" is applied to almost anything, which means that nothing is conceptual, because conceptual art did have a fairly narrow definition, and if you extend it too much it becomes meaningless.

The Independent: What else?

Iles: There's a great interest in the materiality of film itself, as celluloid. Both artists and filmmakers are deliberately focusing on the specific materials that produce a film and special projectors. They might be burying film for six months and

exposing the surface of the film to different natural elements.

The Independent: These are all things that were being done in the sixties and seventies.

Iles: But they're being done in a different way, in a way that I find interesting. They're experimenting with projecting film in the space. Luis Recoder is doing some very interesting work, and Bruce McClure—I showed his work here at the 2002 biennial. It's four projectors with colored gels, and he controls the timing and the way in which they interact. It's almost like a moving Rothko painting. Filmmakers like Luis Recoder and Bruce McClure really explore the materiality of film. I think that's partly in reaction to the digital, which is profoundly immaterial in a way that can be very unsatisfying.

The Independent: Have you seen artists that are working in digital dealing with that immateriality?

Iles: Not really. I think it sort of states itself in that there's such an ability to morph one image into another. It's a bit like the resurgence in drawing. I think people actually want to see that there's a mark made that's indisputable, something made with a hand. There's a real desire for that in the face of the digital, where everything is mutable, and I think the internet has a lot to do with that. The lines between the commercial environment, the internet environment, and what artists and filmmakers are doing has become so fluid that it's almost necessary to reinforce the differences.



The Independent: In terms of the intersection between art and commerce, we should at least mention Matthew Barney. A while back there was a discussion in *The Village Voice* in which some of the participating filmmakers—Ahwesh in particular—were expressing their resentment about the financial success of those films.

Iles: One of the failures of experimental filmmaking is that it never found a viable economic model for itself, so

it gets very suspicious when people want to try and do that. Why would you show an experimental film of yours for the \$20 rental fee and then complain that Matthew Barney's got a \$2 million dollar budget? Whose fault is that? You don't have to show your films for \$20. You can say these films are very precious, there are only two prints, and they're \$5,000 each. It's easy. There's no one stopping them going into the gallery saying, "Here's a film and it's

were four hundred people in the audience. Artists are very influenced by that kind of filmmaking, more than Stan Brakhage was. The art world doesn't make abstract film any more than they might paint abstract canvases. It's not right or wrong, it's just different. Jonas Mekas crossed into the art world right from the very beginning—he's in the next Venice Biennale—which is ironic since he's the most rigorous experimental filmmaker you could think of in



an edition of four." They have adopted a distribution model that restricts you to people with no money, universities, museums, nonprofits—who can't afford to pay anything more than \$20.

The Independent: So do you think this is a model that filmmakers should be adopting?

Iles: It's their choice not to adopt it, so they'll be in a poverty-stricken distribution system, because you can't eat on \$20 a screening. I don't want to be too negative about the experimental film crowd's reaction to Matthew Barney, but I do think it's very naive. Experimental filmmaking is not particularly experimental—Matthew Barney's work is more experimental than much experimental filmmaking. You know, it's an academy. In *Frameworks*, I see these exchanges where if someone does anything that touches remotely on video or on something commercial it's absolutely out of the canon. It's a genre, and if it's going to restrict itself so completely, then it has to understand that it will have a very small audience.

The Independent: You've articulated two very separate worlds.

Iles: I never see filmmakers at openings for gallery shows, just like I never see the art world at Anthology Film Archives. Artists are very immersed in Hollywood film, the forties to seventies mainly. They have them all on video and they're really knowledgeable about them. I went with some artists to see the Nicholas Ray films at MoMA and there

terms of keeping the faith.

The Independent: For the 2004 Whitney biennial, what are you looking for?

Iles: Excellent work.

The Independent: What does that mean?

Iles: You know it when you see it.

The Independent: Which is what, exactly?

Iles: It's like saying, "What makes a great painting?" It's impossible to define, you just know it. I think that great work, whether it's film or sculpture or painting, has a resonance with its audience that is very powerful, and it transforms you in some way. Your role as a curator is to find that work and bring it to a greater public so that they can share in what you've been moved by. That's the basis on which I curate—it starts from the heart, not the head. □

For more info on the Whitney Museum, visit www.whitney.org. *Frameworks* listserv info is at www.hi-beam.net/fw/index.html.

Ann Lewinson is a New York-based writer and a frequent contributor to The Independent.

Isles's *Into the Light* project is now touring Europe: Left, David Oppenheimer's *Echo*; right, *Shower*, by Robert Whitman.

Voice from the Past

"VILLAGE" REVIEWS TO NOTES BY BRAKHAGE

By Brian L. Frye

Forty or so years after a haze of "theory" descended over film history, many people have forgotten the most basic rule of scholarship: If you cannot write criticism, you cannot write about art. And that is even truer of the movies, the lingua franca of modernity, than any other art form. Every great film theorist is a critic; some hail from the academy, others from the tabloids. J. Hoberman is one of the latter, and as the long-standing chief film critic at *The Village Voice*, he has proven himself one of the finest—and most protean—exegetes of today's cinema. In his new book, *The Magic Hour: Film at Fin de Siecle* (Temple University Press), Hoberman collects about fifty of his finest *Voice* reviews from the last ten years. You probably read some of them when they first appeared. Look again, and you'll see Hoberman eulogizing and encouraging the "fusion of modernist aspiration and mass appeal" that he rightly considers the movies at their best.

Hoberman is peculiar in that, like Manny Farber, he is one of the few critics who write as passionately and as well about the avant-garde as they do the latest Hollywood blockbuster. From Lang to Kubrick to Paradjanov to Spielberg to Sokhurov to the Farrelly Brothers to John Waters to Lewis Klahr, he never misses a beat. The best film critics can capture the essence of a movie in a couple of lines, and Hoberman does it just as well

with Craig Baldwin's *Tribulation 99* ("a satire of conspiratorial thinking, and an essential piece of current Americana—the missing link between *JFK* and *The Rapture* (and a better movie than either)") as *There's Something About Mary* ("Not the least of the movie's triumphs is Cameron Diaz. At once eternal foil and Holy Grail, perfectly oblivious, always credulous, generous in her affec-

tion, she's a woman so perfect she even likes to talk football"). Generally undoctinaire in his leftism, and always a pleasure to read, Hoberman offers the first best accounting of movies at the millennium. His vision of what the movies have been, and can still be, is essential.

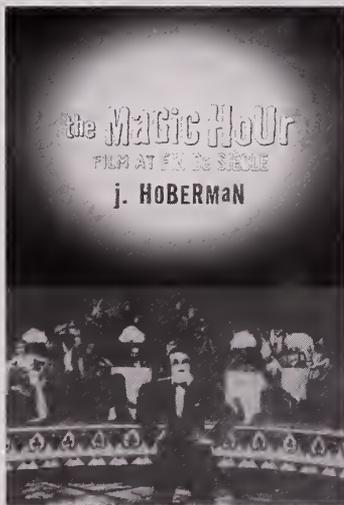
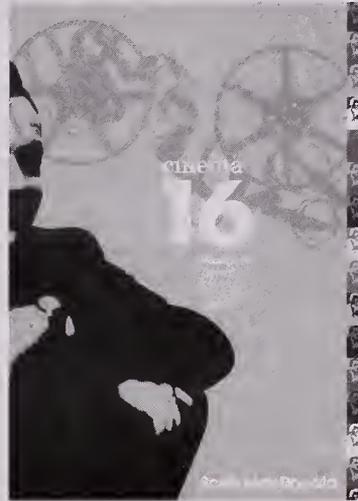
From the academic side of the street comes film scholar Scott MacDonald's latest contribution, *Cinema 16: Documents Toward a History of the Film Society*. In recent years, MacDonald has built a reputation as one of the finest chroniclers of the avant-garde on his series of *Critical Cinema* books. These collections of uncommonly perceptive interviews with prominent avant-garde and independent filmmakers are careful scholarship without the stuffy, jargon-laden

academicism. It's no wonder they've proven so successful. After slogging through the turgid nonsense that generally passes for critical writing on avant-garde film, MacDonald's lucid, insightful interviews are a blessing.

Cinema 16 is no exception. With this remarkably comprehensive study of Amos Vogel's epochal New York film society, told through interviews, ephemera, and short historical essays, MacDonald truly outdoes himself. *Cinema 16* impresses both in the quality of its scholarship and in the sheer scope of the project. The archival work involved in collecting and reprinting the hundreds of pages of letters, calendars,

and programs must have been staggering. In fact, MacDonald appears to have initiated the project more than twenty years ago, when he first began interviewing Amos Vogel. But most astonishing of all is his subject itself, *Cinema 16*, which remains America's largest, most successful, and most eclectic film society, ever.

Forty years after its demise, it is still hard to believe how many firsts *Cinema 16* can claim. Over a thousand people attended each of the weekly screenings, which combined films by young, avant-garde filmmakers like Stan Brakhage, Kenneth Anger, and Gregory Markopoulos; Hollywood greats like Hitchcock, Vidor, and Welles; European classics like Eisenstein, Bunuel, and Dreyer; and scientific and instructional films. Not only were many of the films Vogel showed United States premieres, but they were wildly experimental, even by today's standards. It has been some time since Brakhage films filled a 1,200-seat auditorium in New York, and it is hard to believe they did so



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regularly in the 1950's.

But the most peculiar and exciting aspect of Cinema 16 is the astonishing eclecticism of Vogel's programs. He and his assistant, Jack Goelman, explicitly treated film programming as an integral part of thinking about the films that they were showing, which would work together, and how they might support and complement one another. The depth of Vogel's interest in the films he showed is reflected in the rich and extensive program notes for which Cinema 16 is rightly renowned. According to Vogel, Cinema 16 was not just about showing films, but teaching people about film. If he was a showman, he was a missionary as well.

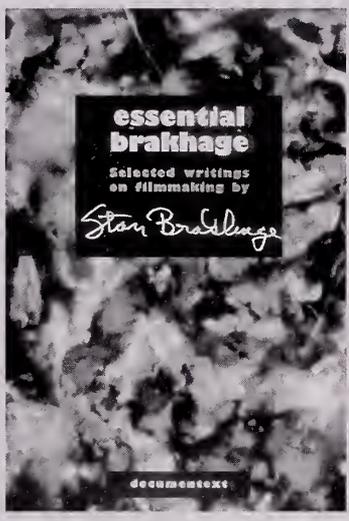
And yet, MacDonald draws another, most relevant lesson from the history of Cinema 16. Vogel was showing difficult films long before the days of public funding and grant bonanzas. Cinema 16 did not fold because Vogel lost interest; it folded because he ran out of cash. For today's nonprofits, audiences often seem like an afterthought. In Vogel's day, the audience had to pay the bills. And for all his professed pseudo-socialism, Vogel is a businessman who knows that nothing comes for free. While professing support for government funding of the arts, he is much more concerned about the "no strings attached." And of course, there is no such thing as "no strings attached." because where the money comes from always dictates how it gets spent. As Vogel says, "the avant-garde will never die; it *cannot* die." But it is not the government that will keep it alive. It is the "artistic impulse" itself, that element of humanity that simply cannot be silenced.

A handwritten note from Amos Vogel prefaces *Tribute to Sasha (Synema)*, a charming monograph on the pioneering avant-garde filmmaker and Cinema 16 regular, Alexander Hammid, edited by Michael Omasta. Today, Hammid is best known as the husband and collaborator of Maya

Deren; they codirected the seminal *Meshes of the Afternoon*, and he contributed significantly to several of her other films. But Hammid had a long and distinguished career of his own, one all too often forgotten. In addition to his wonderful experimental films—notably *Aimless Walk* and *The Private Life of a Cat*—he made a multitude of beautifully sensitive commissioned documentaries. With characteristic humility, Hammid calls his documen-

taries “more or less routine stuff,” but the best have the same subtle integrity of style as Flaherty’s.

About half of the assorted essays, interviews, and ephemera collected in this lovely little book are in English, and the rest are in German. Still, *Tribute to Sasha* is worthy of anyone interested in Hammid, whether or not he or



she can read German. In a long interview, he recounts the key events of his career and discusses the production of his various films. Given the dearth of writing on Hammid’s activities before and after his collaboration with Deren, this interview is quite welcome. Loren Cocking’s 1969 essay on the films Hammid made with Francis Thompson (*To Be Alive!*, *To The Fair!*, *We Are Young*, *US*) helps explain Hammid’s influence on the development of large-screen cinema as a pioneer of the IMAX format. And Michal Bregant’s essay, while a little purple, perfectly conveys the charm and beauty of Hammid’s self-effacing style. These are rounded out by plenty of stills and snapshots and an invaluable complete filmography. *Tribute to Sasha* is a fitting tribute to a filmmaker who well deserves the attention.

On March 8, 2003, another habitué of Cinema 16 passed away. Stan

Brakhage was seventy years old. He left behind more than four hundred films, an avalanche of essays and books, and a cinema fundamentally different than he found it. Although many people have never seen a Stan Brakhage film, anyone who has seen a film in the last thirty years has experienced his influence. Rarely does a single artist drag an entire medium into modernity, but there you have it. Brakhage has his antecedents, but there is no denying he made film a modern art. And it still does not like it.

Undoubtedly, now that Brakhage has died he will finally receive the recognition granted so grudgingly for so long. But anyone interested in getting a jump on the critics is well advised to buy a copy of *Essential Brakhage* (McPherson Press), an excellent

collection of Brakhage’s writings on film. It is the barest introduction to Brakhage’s thinking, but offers selections from some of his finest and most important manifestos and musings, including the all-important beginning to *Metaphors on Vision*: “Imagine an eye unruled by man-made laws of perspective, an eye unprejudiced by compositional logic, an eye which does not respond to the name of everything but which must know each object encountered in life through an adventure of perception.” Cinema is still the youngest art, and the grandest. And Brakhage was its Martin Luther, claiming it again for the individual, insisting on the immediacy of a relationship that had grown strained. He has gone, but his cinema lives on. □

Brian L. Frye is a writer, curator, filmmaker, and law student living in Washington, DC.



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High-Tech Homebrew

SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR THE
BUDGET-CHALLENGED FILMMAKER

By Greg Gilpatrick

The past few years have seen significant advances in the tools for creating visual effects with desktop computers. Yet these tools cost at least a few hundred dollars and can quickly move into the thousands with the addition of plug-ins and ancillary tools. For the independent filmmaker interested in creating the illusions of visual effects in their work, there is no cheap way to experiment with these programs and learn the concepts of visual effects production. Fortunately, with the combination of Adobe Photoshop, QuickTime Pro, and a number of free or low-cost editing solutions, visual effects are within reach of even the penny-pinching independent.

Below are guidelines for creating three popular types of visual effects by manipulating video files as sequences of image files. Without a dedicated compositing application, we must break video clips into separate images for each frame. The process of manipulating video as image sequences is simple but time consuming. The following tasks aren't the ideal ways of working if you have access to a compositing application like After Effects, Combustion, or Commotion, but these are a good test to see if you are ready to tackle the complex world of visual effects production before investing a big chunk of money in specialized software.

We'll need a variety of tools to move our video into the computer, break it into image sequences, and manipulate the images. First, there are the video-oriented programs that utilize the QuickTime architecture for exporting video, such as iMovie, Final Cut Express, Premiere, EditDV, and QuickTime

Player. QuickTime Player is an especially important tool in addition to another editing tool because it will act as the intermediary between the editing program and the second type of tool, the image editing application. The most well-known image editing program is Adobe Photoshop (Mac/Win, \$600), a full-featured program whose features will be of use for our tasks below. We'll use Photoshop extensively throughout this article, but there are other options that cost less (see sidebar).

First, we'll need to capture and export the footage from the editing program. Most QuickTime-based editing programs should be able to export a QuickTime reference movie. A reference movie is a file that can open in QuickTime-aware programs that allow it to reference footage stored in other files. This will let you to export a clip from your timeline without recompressing the video, thus preserving the image quality.

Released from the confines of the editing program, we can open the video clip inside QuickTime Player in order to convert it to an image sequence. Open the exported movie inside QuickTime Player and select Export from the File menu (if you don't see Export as an option, you need to upgrade to QuickTime Pro). Inside the Export window, select Movie To Image Sequence from the Export menu and click the Options button. Inside the Options window, select an image format that you can open in your image editing program. Some safe choices are TIFF, JPEG, or PSD. Click the OK button in the Options window and the Export window, and you'll have a folder full of separate images that represent

each frame of your video. Make sure you create a new folder for each new image sequence.

With our video turned into a series of images, it's time to open up Photoshop. When dealing with a series of images in Photoshop, it's imperative to remember that many tasks will have to be duplicated over and over again. Fortunately, Photoshop has a feature called Actions that makes it easy to record tasks and automatically duplicate them many times. Unfortunately, there is not nearly enough space here to explain the process of recording and using Photoshop actions, so you should consult Photoshop's help system, manual, or a third-party book on using Photoshop for more help with using Actions such as converting colors or creating frames.

We can now move onto some potential projects for our iMovie/QuickTime/Photoshop FX system. We'll start with a pretty basic but useful effect, the obscuring of someone's face with a mosaic filter like that used in documentaries and reality TV shows. Using Photoshop, it's best to use footage where the subject to be obscured is still. If it moves around much, you will have to adjust the selection area on each frame—a time-consuming task.

STEP 1: Export the shot from iMovie as a QuickTime reference clip.

STEP 2: Open the clip inside QuickTime Player.

STEP 3: Export the clip as an image sequence.

STEP 4: Open the first frame inside Photoshop.

STEP 5: Create a new action inside the Actions palette and turn on recording.

STEP 5: Draw a selection around the subject you wish to obscure.

STEP 6: Apply a Mosaic filter to the selection.

STEP 7: Turn off Action recording.

STEP 8: Open Batch from the Automate section of the File menu

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and select the folder with your image sequence as your source. Create a new folder to create copies for your output.

STEP 9: Open the new image sequence inside QuickTime Player.

STEP 10: Save the Movie as a QuickTime Movie.

Next, we'll move onto a time-consuming but more interesting effect—rotoscope animation. Rotoscope animation is the process of drawing over live action. Photoshop's layer system allows for drawing a picture onto a new layer, perfect for rotoscoping. Extracting an image sequence and turning it back into a video clip is the same as above for this and the next project.

STEP 1: Open an image from the image sequence in Photoshop.

STEP 2: Create a new layer in the Layers palette.

STEP 3: Use the drawing and painting tools to draw on your new layer over the picture.

STEP 4: Use Save As to save a new copy of your image with the same sequence number in a new folder. Make sure you use a format that will compile the image into a single layer, such as a JPEG.

Finally, we'll tackle one of the most complicated tasks in the postproduction field—compositing. Compositing is the process of combining two separate images. We'll take a simple shot with a painting in the background and replace it with a different picture. Like the mosaic effect, this task goes more smoothly if the shot and its subjects move as little as possible.

STEP 1: Open the first image from the image sequence.

STEP 2: Create a new Action and start recording in the Action palette.

STEP 3: Open the image you want to add to the original.

STEP 4: Copy and paste the replacement image in your original image and place it in the area you want. You might have to use the Transform function to resize the picture to fit the original.

STEP 5: Use any sort of effects or image controls to make the image fit in with the original.

STEP 6: Save your Action and use it to batch process all the original image sequences into a new one. If your original video was shot on a tripod and the painting wasn't

Live-action images are embellished with the rotoscope function.

Photoshop: Not Just For Photographers

Photoshop is the most widely used image editing program and one of the widest known computer applications in the world. Yet, for all of its celebrity it is misunderstood by many people—even some that use it every day. Most people think about Photoshop as a tool for very limited purposes like designing images for a website, cropping and adjusting photos, or preparing photos for publication. Yes, Photoshop is good for all of those tasks, but it is a versatile program that can help with image-related tasks in many fields, including film and video production. Film production does not seem like an ideal use for a program that is best known for preparing photos for print, but film production is at the heart of why Photoshop even exists. Photoshop was originally created by brothers Thomas and John Knoll. Those of you who read the credits of big-budget movies will probably recognize John's name—he is one of the most prominent visual effects specialists in the industry. The Knolls developed Photoshop, in part, for visual effects



Adobe Photoshop 7.0

production. That means that, with Photoshop on your computer, you have an industrial-strength special effects tool at your disposal.

Photoshop's use in the film and video world goes beyond just visual effects. Titles, lower-thirds, and DVD menus are just a few of the tasks that postproduction artists regularly call upon Photoshop for. Most nonlinear editing applications such as Final Cut Pro, Premiere, or Avid Xpress DV can import native Photoshop files directly. Even people with professional compositing applications like After Effects and Combustion often lay out and design their graphics pieces in Photoshop first and import the files from there.

One big drawback to Photoshop is its hefty price tag. There are alternatives, though. Photoshop Elements is a low-cost version that jettisons some of the program's more professional features but retains many elements helpful to editors and designers starting out with Photoshop. Corel's Photopaint is a similar program with a smaller user base that will take a smaller bite out of your budget. And for those that like free stuff, there is the unfortunately named application, the GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program). The GIMP is an open-source program developed for the Linux operating system by people around the world that is also available for Windows and Mac OS X systems. Be aware that like many free things, there is a price to be paid for the GIMP—the process of installing and using the GIMP is not as user-friendly as the commercial programs from Adobe and Corel.

obscured during the shot, you should have a convincing composite.

As stated at the beginning of this article, these ways of working are not ideal. They take up more time and disk space than they would with a dedicated compositing program that could open video files directly, but the concepts of image compositing described above

apply universally to whatever system you choose to create visual effects. If you have plenty of time but not a lot of money, these steps will get you through the basics of creating many types of special effects for your film. ■

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

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Festivals

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 (e.g., Sept. 1st for Nov. issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

AFI FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-16, CA. Deadline: June 6; July 3 (final: shorts); July 18 (final: features). Entries must be LA 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video, digiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: features (over 30 mins.) \$40, shorts \$30. Final: features \$50, shorts \$40. Contact: AFI Fest, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027-1657; (886) AFI-FEST; fax: (323) 462-4049; afifest@afi.com; www.afi.com.

AMERICAN INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-13, CA. Deadline: August 8. Fest seeking works by or about American Indian or First Nation people produced in previous year. Founded: 1975. Cats: doc, feature, short, commercial feature, live short, animated short, public service, industrial, music video. Awards: Award Busts for Best Doc., feature, short, animated short, actor, public service, music video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$50. Contact: American Indian Film Institute, 333 Valencia St., Ste. 322, San Francisco, CA, USA 94103; (415) 554-0525; fax: 554-0542; indianfilm@aifisf.com; www.aifisf.com.

ASBURY SHORTS OF NEW YORK, Nov. 15-18, NY. Deadline: Sept. 30. Fest combines

screenings of shorts, under 25 min. in length, w/ live musical performances, comedy surprises, & celebrity hosts. Organizers also invite members of the advertising & television broadcast industries. Cats: short, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15. Contact: Festival, 553 Prospect Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215; (917) 648-7832; fax: 369-3807; awdougherty@hotmail.com; www.asburyshorts.com.

BEARDED CHILD UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 8-9, MN. Deadline: July 25. Non conventional fest presents innovative short films that defy the traditional boundaries of the mainstream, encouraging "the experimental and bizarre." Cats: experimental.



for groundbreaking world premiers, from legends such as Stan Brakhage to a new generation of leading experimentalists. The fest is the only international festival dedicated exclusively to celluloid (8mm, 16mm, 35mm) experimental film exhibition. This year's edition, presented collaboratively with the Fine Arts Center and TIE, includes a program of Brakhage masterpieces plus an archived program of Brazilian works. See listing.

Formats: 1/2", 16mm, DVD, min-DV, Super 8, 8mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (no fees for international entries). Contact: c/o The Rief Center, 720 Connifer Drive, Grand Rapids, MN, USA 55744; beardedprogeny@hotmail.com; www.beardedchild.moviespage.com.

BROOKLYN UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 8-12, NY. Deadline: May 20; July 15 (final). Fest's mission is to create a fresh arena for discussion between filmmakers, artists & audiences in an explorative & inspirational environment. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25; \$30 (final). Contact: Josh Koury; (718) 789-7465; info@brooklynunderground.org; www.brooklynunderground.org.

CHICAGO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-16, IL. Deadline: July 25. 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. Chicago is the first US fest to award the FIPRESCI prize for 1st & 2nd time directors. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 70mm, 3/4", 1/2", DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$100 (feature); \$80 (doc feature); \$40 (short under 30 min.); \$50 (short 30-60

Avant-Garde, Baby!

Since its inception in Telluride, Colorado, the International Experimental Cinema Exposition (TIE) has screened over four hundred innovative historic and contemporary films and celebrated over 120 of the world's most influential avant-garde filmmakers. TIE has also become home

min.); \$30 (student). Late fees: \$20-\$100. Contact: Cinema/Chicago, 32 W. Randolph St., Ste. 600, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 425-9400; fax: 425-0944; info@chicagoilmfest.com; www.chicagofilmfest.com.

COMMON GROUND FILM FESTIVAL, Nov., DC. Deadline: Aug. 15. Festival will take place in Washington, D.C. Looking for films that demonstrate the finding workable solutions to contentious problems. The films should stress the commonalities among the parties, while not ignoring the differences that divide them. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC Only). Contact: Common Ground Film Festival, 1601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 200, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 265-4300; fax: 232-6718; skoscis@sfcg.org; www.sfcg.org.

CONEY ISLAND SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 27-28, NY. Deadline: July 15; July 29 (final). Fest is open to filmmakers working in all genres & formats. All entries must be 60 min. or less. The festival's unique program takes place at the legendary Sideshows by the Seashore venue in Coney Island. Cats: doc, experimental, animation, music video, comedy, drama, short. Formats: 1/2", DV, DVD. Preview on VHS or Beta SP. Entry Fee: \$15; \$20 (final). Contact: Rob Leddy, c/o indiefilmpage.com, 532 LaGuardia Place #625, New York, NY 10012; (212) 696-6689; indiefilmpage@yahoo.com; www.indiefilmpage.com.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, Jan. 9-10, 16-17, NY. Deadline: Sept. 15. 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, a "live pitch" for choreographers. Founded: 1972. Cats: Experimental, Feature, Short, doc, animation. Awards: cash prize for "Best of Festival." Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35. Contact: Dance Films Association, Inc., 48 W. 21st St., #907, New York, NY 10010; (212) 727-0764; fax: 727-0764; dfa5@earthlink.net; www.dancefilmsassn.org.

DENVER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-19, 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. 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.

DIRECTOR'S VIEW FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 12-16, CT. Deadline: Sept. 15; Oct. 15; Nov. 1. The Director's View Film Festival is dedicated to the director's craft & firmly believes film to be a director's medium. Founded: 1999. Cats: short, feature, doc, student. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", DVD, DigiBeta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Sept: \$40; Oct: \$50; Nov: \$100. Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 312, South Salem, NY 10590; fax: (914) 533-0269; info@thedirectorsview.com; www.dvff.org.

FRESNO REEL PRIDE INTERNATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 17-21, CA. Deadline: Aug. 1. Fest is a celebration of international gay and lesbian cinema and has grown to become the premiere gay and lesbian cultural event in central California. Founded: 1990. Cats: short, feature, doc. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DV Cam. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Stephen Mintz, Program Director, P.O. Box 4712, Fresno, CA 93744; (559) 360-9515; fax: 443-0700; Mintzworks@aol.com; www.reelpride.com.

HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 30-Nov. 9, HI. Deadline: June 13; July 11 (final). 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 200 films across six islands to over 65,000 people. Fest is the U.S.'s only statewide film event. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL/ Secam). Entry Fee: \$35; \$50 (final). 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.

HOLLYWOOD BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 25-30, CA. Deadline: Aug. 31; Sept. 30 (final). Annual fest brings the work of accomplished & aspiring Black filmmakers to an environment encompassing the mainstream Hollywood community & S. California film-going audiences. World Cinema Program 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta, Beta, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25; \$35 (final). Contact: Jacqueline Blaylock, P.O. Box 34858, Los Angeles, CA 90034-0858; (310) 712-3998; fax: 943-2326; info@hbff.org; www.hbff.org

INDIAN SUMMER / DELTAVISION FILM & VIDEO IMAGE AWARDS, Sept. 6, WI. Deadline: July 15. Created by Indian Summer Festival (North America's largest Native American arts & cultural fest) & DeltaVision Entertainment to increase awareness of

American Indian history & culture by recognizing filmmakers who explore these topics. Films from outside the US should be subtitled. Cats: animation, doc, short, feature, music video, educational, PSA, corporate. Awards: Awards in each category. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$50; \$25 (student). Contact: Festival, 10809 W. Lincoln Ave, Ste. 101, West Allis, WI 53227; (414) 604-1000; fax: 774-6810; indiansummer@wi.rr.com; www.indiansummer.org.

INT'L BLACK WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, fall/winter, CA. Deadline: Aug. 1. The fest's mission is "to bring new & classic film by and/or about Black women from around the world to a wider, general audience." The fest prides itself in bringing good cinema by women who have a unique & powerful perspective to filmmaking. Cats: feature, short, animation, doc. Formats: Beta, Beta SP, DVD, 1/2". Preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: \$5 for US & Canadian residents only. Contact: Adrienne Anderson, 58 West Portal Ave., Ste. 141, San Francisco, CA 94127; fax: (415) 680-2413; ibwff@filmfests.net; ibwff.filmfest.net.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA EXPOSITION, Nov. 14-16, CO. Deadline: Sept. 1. Festival, hidden in the mountains of Colorado, showcases work by both new avant-garde filmmakers and well-known experimental film figures. Exclusively celluloid. Cats: experimental, installation. Awards: Luxury accommodations for entire length of expo for films accepted. Formats: 16mm, 8mm, super 8, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (10 min. or less); \$35 (10-20 min.); \$50 (30-60 min.); \$60 (60 min. or more). Contact: TECE, 2 North Cascade, Ste. 1100, Colorado Springs, CO, USA 80903; (719) 277-6657; entry@experimentalcinema.com; www.experimentalcinema.com.

LEHIGH VALLEY QUEER FILM FESTIVAL, October, PA. Deadline: July 25; Aug. 25 (final). Situated between New York & Philadelphia, the Lehigh Valley is the largest-growing region in Pennsylvania, boasting over one million residents. This community at the foothills of the Appalachians has maintained its rustic beauty & charm & continues to attract numerous visitors. Founded by Pride of the Lehigh Valley, the fest promotes tolerance by showcasing gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgendered films & videos. Founded: 1993. Cats: feature, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DVD. Preview on VHS & DVD. Entry Fee: None (\$5 for

return of screener). Contact: Liz Sherry, 927 Spruce St. #5, Philadelphia, PA 19107; (215) 925-7764; filmfest@pridelv.org; www.pridelv.org.

MANHATTAN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 28, NY. Deadline: July 31, Aug. 14 (final). The top short films in the world are simultaneously broadcast on multiple screens inside Union Square Park NYC, on a digital Beta format for the public of New York's viewing pleasure. The Fest also plays in Dublin, London, Paris, Milan, Berlin, Sydney & Melbourne on the same evening. Founded: 1988. Cats: short, any style or genre, animation, experimental, student. Awards: A feature film package awarded to the best short film; best doc, best student film, best animation, best screenplay. Formats: DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC/PAL). Entry Fee: \$35. Contact: Nicholas Mason, 853 Broadway, Ste. 1516, New York, NY 10003; (201) 333-4322; msfilmfest@aol.com; www.msfilmfest.com.

MICROCINEFEST, Oct. 31-Nov. 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, multiply number of min. by \$2. Contact: Skizz Cyzyk, Box 50098, Baltimore, MD 21211; (410) 243-5307; bfink@bcpl.net; www.microcinefest.org.

NEW YORK FESTIVALS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO (NON BROADCAST) AWARDS, Jan. 18, NY. Deadline: Sept. 14. An int'l competition for wide range of media, from "low budget productions to multimedia extravaganzas." Receives 1,300 entries from 36 countries; awards presented at ceremony attended by 900. Multi-image/business theater productions must be submitted w/ presentation book. Cats incl. Industrials, Crafts, Multimedia, Slides, Educational. Founded: 1957. Cats: doc, short, animation. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$125-\$275. Contact: Festival, 7 W. 36th St., 14th Flr., New York, NY 10018; (212) 643-4800; fax: 643-0170; info@newyorkfests.com; www.newyorkfests.com.

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 4-20, NY. Deadline: July 16. 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, short, experimental, animation, student, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS or Print. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Sara Bensman, c/o Film Society of Lincoln Center, 165 West 65th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; fax: 875-5636; sbensman@filmlinc.com; www.filmlinc.com.

OLYMPIA FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-16, WA. Deadline: Sept. 15. Annual fest now accepting entries. For 20 yrs. the Olympia Film Society has been presenting the finest in int'l, indie, classic & fringe features, docs & shorts. CINE-X competition is two programs of experimental shorts. Founded: 1984. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, family, children. Awards: in the past, CINE-X winners have received film stock from Kodak & postproduction support. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, various video, DV, 1/2", 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10 (+ postage for return). Contact: Sean Savage, 416 Washington St. SE, Ste. 208, Olympia, WA 98501; (360) 754-6670; fax: 943-9100; ofs@olywa.net; www.olyfilm.org.

PITTSBURGH INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-26, PA. Deadline: July 15. 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, youth media, family. Awards: Best of Fest Short Film \$500, Best Doc Film \$500. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: PILGFF, 322 Mall Blvd., #400, Pittsburgh, PA 15146-2229; (412) 232-3277; fax: 422-5829; pilgff@aol.com; www.pilgff.org.

PUTNAM COUNTY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 4-5, NY. Deadline: July 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, 93 Wiccopee Road, Putnam Valley, NY 10579; ph/fax: (845) 528-7420; braintrust@usa.com; www.putnamvalleyarts.com.

REHOBOTH BEACH INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 5-9, DE. Deadline: June 20; July 25 (final). Fourth annual fest celebrates independent & foreign cinema in a picturesque coastal resort setting. Approx. 100 entries will be selected (55 features & 45 shorts shown in 2000) for diverse programming in nine theaters. No repeat entries. Founded: 1998. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, children, short, gay & lesbian. Formats: 35mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL). Entry Fee: \$25; \$20 (students), \$5 early discount. Contact: Joe Bilancio, 102 Midway Village, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971; (302) 645-9095; fax: 645-9460; joe@rehobothfilm.com; www.rehobothfilm.com.

ROUTE 66 FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 26-28, IL. Deadline: July 15. Fest seeks works that "involve some kind of journey." Cats: feature, short, experimental. Awards: Awards in different cats. Formats: 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (features); \$10 (shorts, under 20 min.). Contact: Linda McElroy, 207 N. Lincoln, Springfield, IL 62702; linmcelroy@aol.com; www.route66filmfest.com.

SHOCKERFEST, Sept. 26-28, CA. Deadline: July 18; Aug. 15. Formerly the Firelight Shock Film Festival, fest is genre specific to the Horror, Fantasy & Sci-Fi genres, accepting all lengths & styles of film w/in these genres. All films are prescreened & judged prior to public exhibition. The event is sponsored by the Fireside Foundation, a California non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation, promotion & perpetuation of independent film & video. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, animation, experimental. Awards: Shocker Award—Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress in each category & for each length as set forth on the entry form. Overall Audience Award. Formats: 35mm, DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: feature: \$45, \$55(late); short: \$35; script: \$35.

Contact: George Baker, Fireside Foundation, PO Box 580450, Modesto, CA 95358; (866) 988-2886; fax: (209) 531-0233; director@firelightshocks.com; www.firelightshocks.com.

SHORTS INT'L 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. Cats: animation, comedy, doc, drama, experimental, student, digital. Length: 40 min. or less. Films must be completed after Jan of previous year. Founded: 1997. Cats: Short, Animation, Doc, Comedy. 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.shortso.org.

SHRIEKFEST FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 11-12, CA. Deadline: Aug. 8; Sept. 5 (final). 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, Young Filmmaker (under 18). Entry Fee: Early: \$25 (shorts), \$35 (features); Reg: \$35 (shorts), \$45 (features); Late: \$45 (shorts), \$55 (features). Contact: Shriekfest Film Festival, P.O. Box 920444, Sylmar, CA 91392; email@shriekfest.com; www.shriekfest.com.

SOMEWHAT NORTH OF BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-9, NH. Deadline: Aug. 1. Cats: doc, short, feature, any style or genre. Formats: DV. Preview on VHS NTSC. Entry Fee: \$10 under 30 min.; \$15 over 30 min. Contact: Festival, c/o Red Rivers Theaters, 15 Pleasant St., Concord, NH 03301; (603) 223-6515; contactsnob@snobfilmfest.org; www.snobfilmfest.org.

ST. LOUIS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 13-23, MO. Deadline: Aug. 1; Aug. 15 (final). Annual fest brings together American indies, horizon-expanding int'l films & mainstream studio films to audiences prior to commercial release. Cats: Short, Doc, Feature, Animation, foreign. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$50 (features); \$25 (shorts, under 45 min.); \$100/\$50 (all late films). Contact: Chris Clark, 394A N. Euclid Ave., St. Louis, MO

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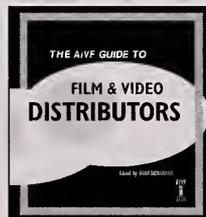
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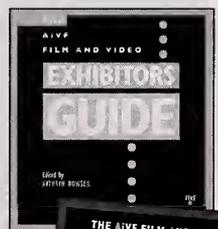
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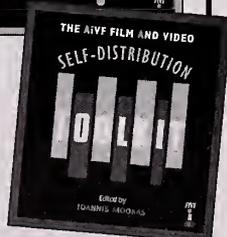
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63108; (314) 454-0042; fax: 454-0540; chris@sliff.org; www.sliff.org.

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@twoboosts.com.

TAMPA INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, October 3-13, FL. Deadline: July 7. The Fest considers all genres of any length by, about & of interest to lesbians and gay men. Fest is "committed to presenting culturally inclusive & diverse programs" of video & film. Founded: 1991. Cats: Gay/Lesbian, Any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10 shorts; \$20 features. Contact: Festival, PO Box 18445, Tampa, FL 33679; (813) 879-4220; fax: 932-7329; keven@tiglff.com; www.tiglff.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 aficionados 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.

THE PORTLAND LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-19, OR. Deadline: Aug. 1. Presented by Sensory Perceptions, a nonprofit organization, the Portland LGBT Film Fest seeks "people-pleasing features & shorts." Cats: Gay/Lesbian, Feature, Doc, Short, Animation, Experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV Cam, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS or

DVD. Entry Fee: None. Contact: c/o Sensory Perceptions, 818 SW 3rd, #1224, Portland, OR 97204; (503) 242-0818; fax: 239-0026; john@sensoryperceptions.org; www.sensoryperceptions.org.

URBAN LITERARY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-18, NC. Deadline: Aug. 23; Sept. 13 (final). Dedicated to the promotion of urban-independent shorts, features & documentaries as a form of art, creative expression & livelihood, the Urban Literary Film Festival, to be held at the Carolina Theatre in Greensboro, NC, will provide the urban-theme filmmaker networking opportunities & exposure. Cats: feature, animation, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, 1/2", S-VHS, Mini DV. Entry Fee: \$25-\$55. Contact: Joseph Wilkerson, 825 Valley Oak Drive, Greensboro, NC 27406; (336) 379-7746; ulff@urbanliterature.com; www.ulff.org.

WINSLOW INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 23-26, AZ. Deadline: August 15, Sept. 12 (final). Annual fests showcases films from all genres & subject matter. Fest also features a panel discussion of visual effects pros. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Awards in all cats. Formats: 35mm, DVD, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$40 (US), \$45 (Int'l); Late: \$45 (US), \$50 (Int'l). Contact: Jennifer Lee, Festival Director, C/O La Posada Hotel, 303 E. Second Street, Winslow, AZ 86047; (818) 219-9339; info@winslowfilmfest.org; www.winslowfilmfest.org.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTORS CHAIR INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mar. 12-24, IL. Deadline: Sept. 1, Oct. 1 (final). Annual fest is the largest & longest-running women's film/video fest in US Previous fests have included over 120 outstanding works from women directors around the world, int'l guest artists, diverse programming from an inter-generational queer women's video workshop to a hip-hop extravaganza. Some works may be included in year-long nat'l tour. Participants in tour receive stipend based on number of screenings. Founded: 1979. Cats: any style or genre, installation, children, family, TV, youth media, student, music video, experimental, animation, feature, doc, short. Awards: Non competitive film & video prizes awarded. Formats: 3/4", 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (early, WIDC members); \$30 (final). Contact: Festival, 941 W. Lawrence, #500, Chicago, IL, USA 60640; (773) 907-0610; fax: 907-0381; widc@widc.org; www.widc.org.

INTERNATIONAL

AMIENS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL & MARKET, Nov. 7-16, France. Deadline: July 15 (docs); Aug. 31 (features/animation). Competitive showcase focuses on films exploring cultural identity, minority groups & ethnic issues w/ 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. or previous yr. & Oct. of yr. of edition; also must be French premieres. Founded: 1980. Cats: Feature, doc, short, animation, children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta (for docs), Beta, Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Jean-Pierre Garcia, MCA Place Léon Gentier, 80000 Amiens, France; 33 3 22 71 35 70; fax: 33 3 22 92 53 04; contact@filmfestamiens.org; www.filmfestamiens.org.

CINEMA TOUT ECRAN, Nov. 3-9, Switzerland. Deadline: Aug. 30. Fest presents films of artistic quality produced for TV. Cats incl. Official Competition, series & collections, & short films. Cats: short. Awards: Awards presented in all cats. Formats: DigiBeta, Beta, 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, 16, rue General Dufour, CP 5305, CH-1211, Geneva 11, Switzerland; 011 41 22 800 15 54; fax: 41 22 329 37 47; info@cinema-tout-ecran.ch; www.cinema-tout-ecran.ch.

EURO UNDERGROUND, Nov. 14-Dec. 22, Euro Tour: Poland, France, Germany. Deadline: July 19. Festival seeks underground, experimental media arts/doc/short films for their fall European exhibition. Cats: feature, doc, experimental, short, animation, performance video, installation. 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 60647; (312) 399-4531; info@eurounderground.org; www.eurounderground.org.

EXGROUND FILMFEST, Nov. 14-23, Germany. Deadline: Aug. 1. Non competitive fest seeks American independents, films from the Far East, shorts, music films, trash & more for event outside the mainstream. Founded: 1990. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, Super 8, 1/2". Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee:

None. Contact: Andrea Wink, Ernst-Gobel-Str. 27, D-65207, Wiesbaden, Germany; 011 49 611 174 8227; fax: 49 611 174 8228; info@exground.com; www.exground.com.

FANTASTISK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 19-28, Sweden. Deadline: July 28. The only int'l film fest in Scandinavia totally devoted to the cinema of the fantastic: science-fiction, fantasy, horror & thriller. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Awards: Melies d'Argent/Best European Fantastic Film (feature, short), Audience Prize (feature, live-action short, animation short). Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DV (PAL), Beta SP (PAL). Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC). Entry Fee: None (shorts have to pay their own freight). Contact: Magnus Paulsson, Stora Varvsgatan 11K:1, Malmö, Sweden 211 19; 011 46 40 12 4666; fax: 46 40 12 2264; info@fff.se; www.fff.se.

FILMFEST HAMBURG, Sept. 19-26, Germany. Deadline: July 25. 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, Steintorweg 4, Hamburg, Germany 20099; 011 49 399 19 00 0; fax: 49 40 399 19 00 10; office@filmfesthamburg.de; www.filmfesthamburg.de.

FLANDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL-GHENT, Oct. 17-18, Belgium. Deadline: Aug 10. Fest originated in 1973 w/ focus on music in film. Today the int'l jury selects winners from features from around the world (many of them w/out a Belgian distributor). Founded: 1973. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 70mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC) w/ documentation of film (pressbook, B/W stills, reviews & director's bio). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Wim De Witte c/o les Citadines, Leeuwstraat 40b, B-9000, Ghent, Belgium; 011 32 478 20 20 02; info@filmfestival.be; www.filmfestival.be.

GIJON INT'L FILM FESTIVAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, Nov. 20-28, Spain. Deadline: Sept. 26. 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. 1st of preceding yr. & has non-comp element too; Information Section incl. cycles, retros & tributes. Also special screenings & other film-related events. Founded: 1962. Cats: Feature, Short, Children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Jose Luis Cienfuegos, Paseo de Bogona, 24-ent, Box 76, 33205 Gijón-Asturias, Spain; 011 34 98 518 2940; fax: 34 98 518 2944; festgijon@telecable.es; www.gijonfilmfest.com.

HAVANA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA, Dec. 2-12, 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. 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. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Ivan Giroud, Calle 2 #411 e/ 19 y 17, Vedado, Havana, Cuba 10400; 011 53 7 552841; fax: 53 7 333078; festival@icaic.inf.cu; www.habanafilmfestival.com.

INTERFILM BERLIN-INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL BERLIN, Nov. 4-9, Germany. Deadline: July 18. 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: 15 prizes in various cats. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (PAL/SECAM/NTSC). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Heinz Hermanns, Tempelhofer Ufer 1A, Berlin, Germany D 10961; 011 49 30 693 29 59; fax: 49 30 25 29 13 22; interfilm@interfilmberlin.de; www.interfilmberlin.de.

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL OF KERALA, Dec. 12-19, India. Deadline: Sept. 30. 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

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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: Bina Paul Venugopal, 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.

LEIPZIG INT'L FESTIVAL FOR DOC & ANIMATED FILMS, Oct. 14-19, Germany. Deadline: Aug. 25. Under theme "Films of the World-For Human Dignity," this fest, founded in 1955, is one of the oldest int'l competitive events focusing on doc & animation form. Sections incl. Int'l Competition, special programs & retros. Competition incl. cinema or TV doc films of all genres, productions on video (doc & animation films) & animation films. Entries for competition or info programs must not have been shown in public prior to June 1 of preceding yr. About 300 productions showcased each yr. Founded: 1955. Cats: doc, animation, TV. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: none. Contact: Gerol Wernes Schnabel, Grosse Fleischergasse 11, 04109 Leipzig, Germany; 011 49 341 9 80 39 21; fax: 49 341 9 80 61 41; info@dokfest-leipzig.de; www.dokfest-leipzig.de.

LES ECRANS DE L'AVENTURE/INT'L FESTIVAL OF ADVENTURE FILM, Oct. 16-19, France. Deadline: July 15. 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. Awards in various cats. Formats: Beta SP (PAL), 16mm. Preview on VHS (PAL, Secam); 3/4 (Pal, Secam, NTSC). Entry Fee: None. 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.

MILANO FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 12-21, Italy. Deadline: June 30 (shorts); July 31 (features). Annual fest invites features films & shorts (under 45 min.) 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: none. Contact: Festival, via Paladini, 8, Milano, Italy 20133; 011 39 02 713 613; info@milanofilmfest.it; www.milanofilmfest.it.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 27-Sept. 7, Canada. Deadline: June 25 (shorts); July 25 (Features). Only competitive fest in N. America recognized by FIAPF. Large & int'lly known fest boasts audiences of over 700,000 & programs hundreds of films. Features in competition must be 70mm or 35mm, DVD or Video 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. Founded: 1977. Cats: feature, short, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 70mm, DVD, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Serge Losique, 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.

OULU INT'L CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 17-23, Finland. Deadline: Sept. 15. 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. Entries should not be shorter than 45 mins. Founded: 1982. Cats: Children, doc, feature, family. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Eszter Vuojala, Fest Sec., Torikatu 8, 90100, Oulu, Finland; 011 358 88 881 1293; fax: 358 88 881 1290; oek@oufilmcenter.inet.fi; www.ouka.fi/lef.

SÃO PAULO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-30, Brazil. Deadline: August 11. Recognized by FIAPF, this annual competitive fest presents 2 major sections: Int'l Perspective & New Filmmakers' Competition (up to 3rd film of director). Founded: 1979. Cats: feature, doc, short. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, 288 Rua Antonio Carlos, 2º andar, São Paulo

- SP, Brazil 01309-010; 011 55 11 3141 2548; fax: 55 11 3266 7066; info@mostra.org; www.mostra.org.

SIENA INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 21-29, 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. Cats: feature, animation, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. 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; festival@cortoitaliacinema.com; www.cortoitaliacinema.com.

TBILISI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 30-Oct. 5, Georgia. Deadline: Aug. 15. Fest seeks films dealing w/ problems of young people, showing the life of the new generation, selected for Int'l Competition. Sections also incl. non-competitive Forum, Film school presentation, workshops & retros. Films must be at least 60 min. in length & completed in last 2 years. Founded: 2000. Cats: feature. Awards: Prometheus Awards (gold & silver). Formats: 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: TIFF, 2 Kakabadyebi St, 380008, Tbilisi, Georgia; 011 995 32 995 852; film@caucasus.net.

TORINO FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 13-21, Italy. Deadline: Aug. 29 (shorts); Sept. 26 (features). Founded: 1982. Cats: feature, doc, short, script. Awards: Best International feature; Best Screenplay; Best short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2", Digital formats. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: TFF, via Monte di Pieta 1, Torino, Italy 10121; 011 39 562 3309; fax: 39 562 9796; info@torinofilmfest.org; www.torinofilmfest.org.

TRANSMEDIALE, Jan. 31-Feb. 4, Germany. Deadline: Sept. 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. Entry Fee: None. 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.

Films/Tapes Wanted

By Charlie Sweitzer
and Melinda Rice

Noncommercial notices and screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Commercial notices are billed at classified rates. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Sept. 1 for Nov. issue). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending.

DISTRIBUTION

EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS VIDEOS on guidance issues such as violence, drug prevention, mentoring, children's health & parenting for exclusive distribution. Our marketing gives unequalled results! Call Sally Germain at The Bureau for At-Risk Youth: (800) 99-YOUTH x. 210.

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS 20+ years as an industry leader! Join more than 100 award-winning film & video producers. Send us your new works on healthcare, mental health, aging, disabilities, and related issues. (800) 937-4113; www.fanlight.com.

MICRO-DISTRIBUTION COMPANY looking for shorts. If you're a non-Hollywood Maverick filmmaker, I want to see your video/film. Please send a VHS copy to: Homegrown Cinema, Jason Sibert, 116 W. Zupan, apt. 34, Maryville, Il. 62062.

NEW DAY FILMS seeks energetic independent film and videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatrical markets. If you want to maximize your profits while working within a remarkable community of committed activist filmmakers, then New Day is the perfect home for your film. New Day is committed to promoting diversity within our membership and within the media

we represent. Explore our films at www.newday.com, then contact Heidi Emberling at (650) 347-5123.

SUBMIT TO THE SERIES THAT SHARES a cut of the door, William Bonney's Picture Show! Run by filmmakers, submission includes feedback on each film. Inspired by the great indie rebel, William Bonney—aka Billy the Kid. www.williambonney.org.

TAPELIST @ DISTRIBUTION. Reach distributors, exhibitors, media and filmgoers on an exciting new distribution platform for independent film. For Filmmakers, Producer's Reps, Distributors, Festivals and IndieTheaters. www.tapelist.com.

THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational & animation programs for distri-

Alternative Screen: A Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS viewing tape, press kit (any written background materials), cover letter w/ contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, L.A., CA 90028. Tel.: (323) 466-3456 x115; fax: 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

CAPE COD FILM SOCIETY SCREENING SERIES of Brewster, MA, seeks experimental, documentary & fiction films & videos. Films can be any length, genre, or style, but should fit into one of these 7 categories: war, women filmmakers, race & identity, religion, Cape Cod, masculinity, or grief. Please send work on VHS, DVD, or mini-DV w/ filmmaker



The All-Screening Eye

Electric Eye Cinema functions as a microcinema out of the Electric Earth Café in Madison, Wisconsin. Local media artists are encouraged to screen work, and programs typically reflect the political, the humorous, and the bizarre in a mix of shorts and documentaries. Creator Brian Standing's other project is Prolefeed Studios, and the two share some films. Works from Electric Eye screenings occasionally find their way into Prolefeed's catalog; and Prolefeed productions show at Electric Eye. From the Prolefeed manifesto: "Truth is stranger, and more wonderful, than fiction." See listing.

bution. Send video-cassettes 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.

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO. Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands, plus royalties to sustain your program. 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.

MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, The

bio & suggested category. Also indicate your availability to appear with your work for Q&A. Send to: Rebecca M. Alvin, Belly Girl Films, Inc., PO Box 1727, Brewster, MA 02631-7727; bellygirl@earthlink.net.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. For more info call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society featuring monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, Beta-SP, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry fee: \$20; fee waived for AIVF

members. Entry form & instructions at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, PO Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

CLUB DIY is a new monthly screening series in Hollywood, CA, showcasing the best work from the DIY Film Festival. Premieres April 3 at the Derby nightclub. Each screening will also feature discussion panels and cocktail party. For more info, call (323) 665-8080; DIYConvention@aol.com; www.DIYReporter.com.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Dialogue must be subtitled. Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental video for our ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series,

Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

FLICKER encompasses a Super 8 & 16mm showcase held Ashville, Athens, Chapel Hill, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Richmond & Bordeaux, France. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you; see the website for a list of local Flickers: www.flickeraustin.com.

GIRLS ON FILM is a quarterly screening series in San Francisco that seeks short narrative, doc & experimental works of 30 min. or fewer by women of color. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. No entry fee. Send preview (clearly labeled with name, title, length, phone & e-mail) to: Jennifer Jajeh, Girls On Film, 1566 Grove Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include S.A.S.E. if you'd like your work returned. For more info, e-mail girlsonfilmseries@hotmail.com; www.atasite.org.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in Urban Mediamakers magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. Tel.: (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

MAKOR continues its Reel Jews Film Festival & ongoing screening series showcasing the work of emerging Jewish filmmakers. Now accepting shorts, features, docs, and/or works in progress, regardless of theme, for screening consideration. Contact Ken Sherman: (212) 413-8821; ksherman@92ndst.org.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE seeks short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly Microcinema screening program. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS at New York's Anthology

Film Archives seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. No entry fee or form. Send a VHS copy of your film or video w/ a brief synopsis to David Maquiling, New Filmmakers, Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10009. For more info, visit www.newfilmmakers.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS LOS ANGELES seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. Films can be any length/year of production. Films without distribution only. No entry fee. Keep press kit to a minimum: synopsis, director's bio, 1 production photo. Submissions preferred on DVD; VHS (NTSC) & Mini DV also accepted. Send submissions to New Filmmakers, P.O. Box 48469, Los Angeles, CA 90048. For more info, e-mail newfilmmakersla@yahoo.com; www.newfilmmakers.com/LA%20call_for_entries.htm.

OCULARIS provides a forum for film & video makers to exhibit their work at Brooklyn's Galapagos Art & Performance Space. All works are considered for programming in the weekly series, travelling programs & other special projects. Local film/video makers can submit works under 15 min. to Open Zone, a quarterly open screening. Nat'l/int'l works & medium length works (15-45 min.) will be considered for curated group shows. For submission guidelines & other info, visit www.ocularis.net; shortfilms@ocularis.net.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length, for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following your film's screening. Any length/genre. Connection to New England, whether through subject matter, filming locations, or hometown of filmmakers, helpful but not necessary. Send VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

ROOFTOP FILMS seeks submissions for its 7th season of films screened on a Brooklyn rooftop. Series runs every Friday night from June 13 to Sep. 12. Seeks work in any

genre; especially seeks work by women or people of color. Submissions accepted on an ongoing basis, but deadlines for this summer's screenings have passed. Curators encouraged to send entire programs. For more info, visit www.rooftopfilms.com, or email Dan Nuxtoll, director of submissions: dan@rooftopfilms.com.

SCREENINGS UNDER THE STARS, Pleasantville & Yorktown, NY's free outdoor summer movie series, is happy to announce its new season: July 11 & Aug. 1 in Yorktown & July 19 & August 8 in Pleasantville. Programming will be announced shortly. For more info, call (914) 747-5555; www.burns-filmcenter.org.

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 bio & contract info. Deadline: ongoing. Tapes are not returned. Submissions will become part of the Shifting Sands Archives & will also be considered for curated exhibitions & 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.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks 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 & an application form, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473. For questions call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

VIDEOTHEATRE, New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All kinds. No deadlines. No late fees. Year-round submission. Weekly programming in a 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. Grand opening 6/03. VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com; www.VideoTheatreNYC.com.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.ArtInGeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

RUNNING FREE, a touring collaborative video installation presented by Montreal's View 72, seeks shorts (5 min. or fewer) of a single person running continuously. Format must be mini-DV, but send VHS for preview. Immaculate_conception@view72.com; www.view72.com.

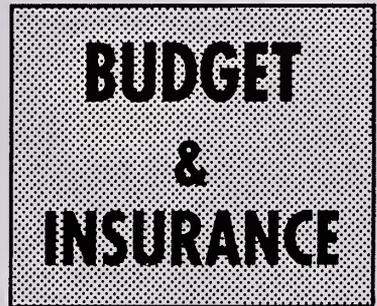
UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

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 2003/2004 season. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact UICA Race St. Gallery, 41 Sheldon Blvd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; (616) 454-7000; fax 459-9395; www.uica.org.

SHOWCASES

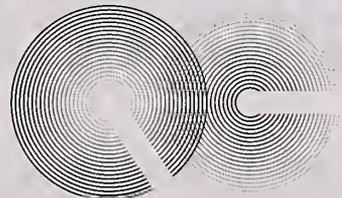
CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA features the excitement of an annual film festival w/ a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest & movie showcase. On the first Tuesday of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films & features of all genres are showcased to an audience

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FREIGHT FILM SALON seeks submissions for its Monday Night Shorts showcase series. Work can be any genre, 20 min. or fewer; must be on VHS or DVD. Will screen on 6' screen, 2 plasma screens & 4 monitors. Please e-mail FreightFilmSalon@yahoo.com for additional info, or visit www.FreightNYC.com.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. 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.

FILMFINDS, KSC-TV's new showcase of independent films, now seeks work for broadcast in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Only feature-length narrative films considered. Work must have played in at least 2 juried film festivals & cannot have had a wide release or previously been broadcast on network TV. Chosen films will receive an initial payment for 2 airings within a 1-year timeframe & additional payments for syndication. For more info & a downloadable appl., visit www.mnfilm.org; filmfinds@mnfilm.org.

INDIE FILM SHOWCASE, the award-winning Twin Cities cable showcase, accepts ongoing submissions. Programs run 7-8 p.m. every Saturday & Sunday for a month. No fees. Send your work in any format & a S.A.S.E. to: Indie Film Showcase, 2134 Roth Pl., White Bear Lake, MN 55110. For a release form & more info, visit www.proletariatpictures.com.

MIND IGNITE seeks short films for Australian anthology TV show. Work must be 28 min. or fewer, any genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, mini-DV, SP, Super 8 or 8mm. Along with film, the filmmaker must also sub-

mit a press kit, clearance for all music & sound, artistic release & signed nonexclusive licensing agreement, which can be found on www.mindignite.com. For more info visit site, or call Anne Maryfield, +618 9324 4455.

THE SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films that airs on PBS, Cox Cable & Movieola. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Eastman Kodak & Cox Channel 4. Awards 5 Kodak product grants annually. Submit on VHS or DVD. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.cc or www.theshortlistv.com. Contact: fax (619) 462-8266; shortlist@mail.sdsu.edu.

THEXPATCAFE TELEVISION SHOW is a screening venue for short independent film/video/new media produced artists, accepting submissions for the 2003 season. Work must be fewer than 20 min. in length. Mini-DV & SVHS format only. Submission form is available at www.thexpatcafe.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.

VIDEOHYPE TV is producing a cable public access 13-week show to highlight indie films in a video-bio format. Show up to 15 min of your work w/ your contact info. Show will be seen in Chicago IL, CA & NY. For submission application and more info, e-mail: daproducer2003@yahoo.com.

WEBCASTS

ATOM FILMS seeks quality films & animations for worldwide commercial distribution to our network of television, airline, home entertainment & new media outlets, including the award-winning AtomFilms website. Submissions must be 30 min. or fewer. For more info & a submission form, visit www.atomshockwave.com.

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine that is a showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the web. Seeks works created in Flash and Director as well as traditional animations & videos fewer than 10 min. in length to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

Notices

By Charlie Sweitzer
and Melinda Rice

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Sept. 1 for Nov. issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY COMPETITION promotes the positive portrayal of gays & lesbians in film. The competition is open to all writers and offers cash awards & industry contacts to winners. Deadline: Sept. 1, 2003. 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.

SHORT FILM SLAM, NYC's only weekly short film competition, is looking for submissions. Competition on Sundays at 2 p.m., and audience votes for a winning film, to receive further screenings at the Pioneer Theater. To enter, submit a film, 30 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format, to the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) during operating hours, or get in touch w/ Jim at (212) 254-7107; jjm@twoboots.com.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

INTERNATIONAL FILM WORKSHOPS offers 150 summer workshops from March to October, as well as 4-week summer film school & many other programs in Oaxaca, Mexico; Seville, Spain & Rockport, ME. For more info, visit www.FilmWorkshops.com, or call for their catalog toll-free: (877) 577-7700; internationally, (207) 236-8581.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV administrator, now offers an ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each month's workshop is held at MNN & features a different speaker, screening & focus; past speakers have included Sharon Greytak, Joel Katz & Sam Pollard. For more info visit www.mnn.org or call (212) 757-2670.

NORTHEAST HISTORIC FILM'S SUMMER FILM SYMPOSIUM will be held August 8-9, 2003, in Bucksport, ME. This year's theme is "Barriers to Access, Barriers to Understanding/Crashing, Leaping & Running Around." For more info, visit www.oldfilm.org.

PUBLICATIONS

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To send work or for info, contact Roselly Torres, LAVA, 124 Washington Pl., NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108; imre@igc.org.

GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FILMS SHOT IN NY STATE avail. for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numerous tax exemptions avail. in NY state for film, TV & commercial production. Put together by Empire State Development Corp. & NY State Dept. of Taxation &

OTHERZINE, the e-zine of Craig Baldwin's Othercinema.com, seeks written works fewer than 1,000 words in length, including interviews, filmographies, alternative histories of obscure or marginalized work, criticism & theory. Previously published work welcome, though work previously published on the internet is not eligible. Text formats: MS Word, ASCII text & HTML. Submit to: noellawrence@sprintmail.com; www.othercinema.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's 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 & communities. 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.

BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS, TELEVISION, AND NEW MEDIA COPRODUCTIONS provides in-kind investments & scholarships in return for equity investments (which vary



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

On Closer Inspection

The Soros Justice Foundation, created through the Open Society Institute and George Soros' philanthropy, has awarded twenty-seven Media Fellowships since its inception in 1998. Fellows publish or show in print, photography, radio, and documentary film and video to increase media representation of a criminal justice system in need of reform. The fellowship awards are intended to encourage in-depth reporting on stories. See listing.

Finance, 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & TV Development, 633 3rd Ave., 33rd fl., New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

according to the nature & scale of the project). Applicants must be mid-career or senior professionals w/ professional development needs. Deadlines: Feb. 28, June 30, Oct. 31. For more info, contact Sara Diamond, (403) 762-6696; fax: 762-6665; sara_diamond@banffcentre.ca; www.banffcentre.ca.

BLACK DOCUMENTARY COLLECTIVE provides people of African descent working in

the documentary film & video field with the opportunity to network professionally, promote each others' work, exchange ideas in order to generate productions & advocate on issues impacting black documentary makers. They hold works-in-progress screenings, project seminars, participate in the IFP Film Market & have special sessions with funders for independent producers. For more info, e-mail BlkDocCol@aol.com.

CABLE POSITIVE, the cable & telecommunications industry's national nonprofit AIDS action organization, provides funding for AIDS organizations & local cable systems to work together in joint community outreach efforts, or to produce & distribute new, locally-focused HIV/AIDS-related programs & PSA's through the Tony Cox Community Fund. Grants are available up to \$5,000. Contact: Jesse Giuliani, (212) 459-1547; jesse@cablepositive.org; www.cablepositive.org. Deadlines: March 14 & September 12.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER PRESENTATION FUNDS award up to \$1,000 each year to nonprofit media arts organizations in New York State. Funds must go to fees to artists for in-person presentations of film, electronic media, sonic art, and art using new technologies and the internet. For more info, call program director Sherry Miller Hocking, (607) 687-4341; etc@experimentalcenter.org; www.experimentalcenter.org.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundations goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote int'l cooperation & advance human achievement. www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

GLOBAL CENTER, a nonprofit, IRS-certified 501(c)(3) educational foundation, seeks filmmakers seeking fiscal sponsors. For more info, call (212) 246-0202, or e-mail roc@globalvision.org; www.globalvision.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support

education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd; (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

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.

NEW DAY FILMS is a 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. Website: www.newday.com.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS announces the availability of funds through its Electronic Media & Film Program for distribution costs of works that have been completed between Jan. 2002 & Aug. 2003 by New York State artists. Grants up to \$5,000 will be awarded for audio/radio, film, video, computer-based work & installation art. Deadline: Aug. 15. For info, send e-mail to pjarpwski@nysca.org.

NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION is issuing an open call for production and completion funds for applicants w/ public TV projects in production & postproduction phases. Awards average from \$20,000-\$50,000 per project. Open call deadline: Aug. 29 2003. Open door completion fund deadline: none, but full-length rough cut must be submitted. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Contact: NAATA Media Fund, 145 Ninth St., Suite 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814 x122; fax: 863-7428; mediafund@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, along w/ instruction & technical support. Students, media arts center members & unaffiliated

independents are encouraged to apply. Commercial projects, music videos & PSA's not considered. Feature-length works also discouraged. Provides camera on year-round basis. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 weeks minimum for processing. Tel: (206) 467-8666; fax: (212) 467-9165; film-grant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PANAVISION'S NEW FILMMAKER PROGRAM donates 16mm camera packages to film projects, incl. graduate student thesis films, of any genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

SOROS JUSTICE FELLOWSHIPS support individuals who further the Criminal Justice Initiative (CJI) of the Open Society Institute's mission of reducing the nation's over-reliance on policies of punishment & incarceration & restoring discretion & fairness to the U.S. criminal justice system. Fellowships encompass a Justice Advocacy Fellowship, Senior Fellowship & Media Fellowship & award \$45,000-\$98,200. Deadline: Sept. 26, 2003. For more info & an application, visit www.soros.org/crime, or contact Kate Black, acting program officer, at (212) 548-0170; kblack@sorosny.org.

SUNDANCE DOCUMENTARY FUND, formerly the Soros Documentary Fund, supports int'l doc films & videos on current & significant issues in human rights, freedom of expression, social justice & civil liberties. Development funds for research & preproduction awarded up to \$15,000; works-in-progress funds for production or postproduction up to \$50,000 (average award is \$25,000). www.sundance.org.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area & Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must have nonprofit status/fiscal sponsorship. Send letter of inquiry and synopsis to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave., #209, San Francisco, CA 94133-3930; (415) 391-0911.

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SUPER16 CAMERA PACKAGE: Arri SR11 S16 w/tap and excel. 1st A.C. avail. \$275.00/day. Will travel. 818-679-4203 - tmccarthy@san.rr.com.

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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 for feature films and shorts. Owns 35mm, Super 16, 24p, complete lighting pkg. and a Tulip Crane. Best Cinematography Award for "Final Round" and other film Awards at Sundance, Berlin, and Raindance. Call for more info at: (212) 208-0968 or www.dpFlynt.com email: bcflynt@yahoo.com.

CINEMATOGRAPHER. Numerous features, TV credits, festivals, awards such as Best Short at Cannes. Internat'l experience. Excellent with handheld and lighting. Own Sony DSR-300, lights, etc. For reel/rates call Bryan Donnell, (213) 309-3282.

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 JOEL DIAMOND: NYC Studio. Credits include "The Believer" Sundance Winner, A&E, ESPN. <http://www.joeldiamondmusic.com>; (917) 215-3112.

COMPOSER MIRIAM CUTLER loves to collaborate - docs, features. 2002 Berlin "Lost In La Mancha", Sundance/POV "Scout's Honor" & "Licensed To Kill", Peabody "The Castro", "Pandemic: Facing AIDS" & more. (310) 398-5985; 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.

COMPOSER: Perfect music for your project. Orchestral to techno—you name it! Credits incl. NFL, PBS, Travel Channel, Sundance, Hamptons and many others. Bach. of Music, Eastman School. Quentin Chiappetta (718) 782-4535; medianoise@excite.com.

COMPOSER SARAH PLANT: Original +licensed music. Arr., flutes: Ang Lee Oscar-nom. Eat Drink Man Woman. Scores: PBS, Bravo, Canal+, Nat. Hist. Museum. Classical, contemp, int'l. Acoustic+digital studio. www.sarahplantmusic.com. (845) 657-8454.

COMPOSER: Uniquely Suited to Dramatic, Gothic, and other genres on the dark side. Co-Creator of JohnnyHollow.com and Sound Designer for Award-Winning mypetskeleton.com. Have been compared to Danny Elfman with attitude. Full Production.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri SR Super 16/16mm & 35BL-2 camera pkgs. Expert Lighting & Camerawork for independent films. Create that "big film" look on a low budget. Great prices, willing to travel. Matthew (617) 244-6730; (845) 439-5459.

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.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition & educational media projects). 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) 779-7059; 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; www.edwardsfilms.com.

MUSIC SUPERVISOR/CLEARANCE: 20 yrs experience in music business, former ESPN MD, wks on tons of docs & indies, Weather Underground, Mule Skinner Blues, Sounds Sacred; Billboard award winning sdtrk producer. brooke@rightsworkshop.com; (415) 771-2069.

NEED PRODUCER BUT THINK YOU CAN'T AFFORD ONE? Experienced professional Line Producer for Budget (detailed/top-sheet), Script Breakdown, Schedule, Day-out-of-Days. Specialty low budget but high quality AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates/references.

PRODUCING YOUR OWN SCRIPT? A schedule & budget are more than just lists & numbers. Your schedule & budget should be done with the same creativity as your writing & directing. Experienced Production Mgr/Line Prod. filmguy13@mindspring.com.

RICHARD CHISOLM, DOCUMENTARY DP; National EMMY winner; International experience; Personal style; Hand-held expertise. (410) 467-2997. www.richardchisolm.com.

STORYBOARD ARTIST: With independent film experience. Loves boarding action sequences and complicated shots. Save money by having shots worked out before cameras roll. Call Kathryn Roake. (718) 788-2755.

WEB DESIGNER with good streaming media background to design site for your film, video or production company. Affordable prices. Call or e-mail SethThompson: (330) 375-0927; seththompson@wiggged.net. Website: <http://www.wiggged.net>.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

50 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR VIDEO BUSINESS. FREE REPORT. Grow a successful video business in Legal, Wedding, Corporate, TV and more. <http://videouniversity.com/50web.htm>

DISTRIBUTOR AGENT SEEKING CLIENTS for video release representation. Over ten years experience. All submissions reviewed. Will return 2 page professional assessment regardless of contract offer. Will not return submitted materials. Send \$49.99 assessment fee (check, no cash) and materials to: WidowMaker Films Review, PO Box 1111, Bloomfield, NJ 07003.

NYC DOCUMENTARY EDITOR NEEDED for cinema verite film on recovering bipolar woman who travels to death's door and back. 1st feature by filmmaker w/experience as Producer on Emmy-winning PBS projects. Seeking award-winning editor w/sensitive but lively style. Aug/Sept full-time commitment to meet October 3rd Sundance deadline. Work from DUMBO studio w/Media 100. Pay negotiable, yet definitely a labor of love. Send resumes to petuniafilms@aol.com. Reels requested later.

WE NEED YOUR FILM. Our membership network is anxious to watch and review your selected feature or short film, any genre. Reviews compiled and posted online. Always accepted, no entry deadline. Sign up & register films at www.viewashow.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.

PREPRODUCTION

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.

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 incl: Miramax, Warner Bros, Fine Line. Rewrites available. (212) 219-9224; www.su-city-pictures.com.

POSTPRODUCTION

AUDIO POST PRODUCTION: Full service audio post-production services for the independent filmmaker. Mix-to-pic, ADR, voice-over, sound design and editing. Pro Tools 5.1 environment. Contact Andrew: (718) 349-7037; brooksy647@aol.com.

AVID EDITOR: Over 25 feature films. Also Trailers, Docs, TV, Reels. Fully equipped Tribeca AVID suite, FCP, DVD. Pro-tools editing & mixing. Very fast & easy to get along with. Credit cards accepted. Drina (212) 561-0829. DrinaL@aol.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 transfers, wet-gate, scene-by-scene, reversal film only. Camera original Regular 8mm, Super 8, and 16mm. For appointment call (978) 948-7985.

DO YOU TEACH VIDEO EDITING? A new instructional resource that provides all raw materials you need to successfully run your class. Students can edit a 24 min. funny short. Comes with raw footage & completed film, music, sound FX, script, and graphic elements. www.teachvideo.com.

eMediaLoft.org FINAL CUT PRO G-4 digital video with editor \$65/hr; Discounts; Production; S/8 & R/8 film transfers; VHS, Hi-8, CD-Rom, DVD, mini-DV, DV-Cam; Photos, Graphics, Labels. West

Village. Bill Creston (212) 924-4893
eMediaLoft@lycos.com.

FINISH! YOUR VIDEO/FILM PROJECT!

Save money and learn for yourself with semi-assisted guidance. Expert explainer will clarify all remaining steps, teach you how to do it yourself, or provide assistance. Resolve strategies, mixing plans, sync issues, etc. DV and 16mm editing, transfer, and sound mixing too. Initial consultation includes clear summary report outlining detailed "next steps," proper sequence, and why. Low intro rate. (212) 777-1180; info@editlab.com.

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS: Is 75% of your budget going towards camera equipment, film stock and lab costs? Shoot your project on video and have your final production transferred to 35mm film inexpensively! EFX One is a fully integrated digital post production facility serving the independent film industry. Call 1(800) 398-0206 or visit www.efxone.com today!

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.

SOUND EDIT/DESIGN/MIX: Protools HD, 5.1, M&E. AVID &FCP equipped. 10 Years Experience. Dozens of Features and Shorts, TV, Docs, Trailers, Spots. Flat Rate Packages available. Credit Cards. Frank, Mark (212) 340-4770. SoundDesignMix@aol.com.

SOUND MIX - plus: sound edit, music edit, sound design, VO, ADR / 8 yrs experience w/ features, docs, TV, trailers / can work w/ any budget, from seasoned pros to students/ ProTools 5.3 - Corey (347) 613-6257, CoreyBFolta@Earthlink.net.

COMPOSER ROBERT JEVA - LA AREA. Highest Quality Music for your budget you must hear to believe. Orchestral to contemporary instrumentation with a unique style. Credits incl: To Die Quietly, Operation 411 and Mutual Film Com (310) 470-8856.

WRITER'S RETREAT GRANT: FLYINGARK FILMS is sponsoring a 3 week writer's retreat at mountaintop cabin located in the heart of California wine country. Deadline: Aug. 1. www.questforturtleisland.com. Click "contact us" & request guidelines.

Looking for past issues of **THE INDEPENDENT?** We've got them!

NOVEMBER 2002

The Great Money Hunt

- ❖ A fundraising primer
- ❖ Inroads to international investment
- ❖ Stories (and ideas) from the financing trail
- ❖ Legal issues with finishing funds
- ❖ Budgeting software for the filmmaker



DECEMBER 2002

The Write Stuff

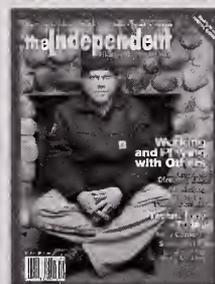
- ❖ Stories from screenwriters-turned-directors
- ❖ Screenwriting competition: perks and pitfalls
- ❖ A look into the screenwriter's toolkit
- ❖ Doc Doctor: scripting a doc
- ❖ Protecting copyrights



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2003

Working & Playing With Others

- ❖ Special technology section
- ❖ Media mentors as youth guides
- ❖ Collaborations in film and sound; and sound recording basics
- ❖ Opinion: the right to public domain art



MARCH 2003

The Women Behind the Camera

- ❖ Women Make Movies turns thirty
- ❖ Women cinematographers
- ❖ Feminist film and the ivory tower
- ❖ Work of Flash artist Marina Zurkow
- ❖ Sundance sleepers



To order back issues, contact info@aivf.org,
or send \$5/issue (plus \$2 s&h each) to:

The Independent—Back Issues Orders
304 Hudson St. (6th fl.)
New York, NY 10013

A NOTE TO MEMBERS:

**OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED
JUNE 30. WE WILL RE-OPEN ON
JULY 8.**

AIVF events take a brief respite during the months of July and August. During this time we will be concentrating on developing our fall program schedule. Be sure to check out our co-sponsored programs and look for details for what's to come:

New York City programs will continue with **Documentary Dialogues**, and our ever-popular **Producer's In Brief Legal Series**—as well as a new **Director's Toolkit Series**.

AIVF co-presents
HBO's **Frame** by
Frame Series
in October.



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 weekend-long board meetings and approximately six hours per month between meetings to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

- Attendance at all board meetings and participation by e-mail and conference calls in interim
- Preparation for meetings by reading/preparing advance materials.
- Active participation on at least two committees.
- General support of executive board and staff.
- Commitment to the organization's efforts toward financial stability and program goals through annual contributions and through support on fundraising activities.

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, e-mail 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 e-mail box by 6 p.m. EST, Friday August 29, 2003. Voting eligibility: Only paid AIVF members may vote. Renew by October 15 to be eligible. To verify your membership status, contact members@aivf.org or (212) 807-1400 x236.

July

AIVF COSPONSORS:

OUTFEST:

LOS ANGELES

when: July 10-21

where: Los Angeles, CA



OUTFEST 2003: The 21st Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival will feature more than 225 films from two dozen countries, seven venues. According to the Los Angeles Times, "With an always intriguing lineup of films, seminars, parties and more, OUTFEST is more than just a film festival; it's a full-on happening."

For more information, visit www.outfest.org or call (213) 480-7065.

reach AIVF...

**Filmmakers' Resource Library
summer hours: Wednesday
11-9 or by appt. to AIVF members
Tuesday and Thursday 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
Tuesday-Thursday 2-5 p.m. EST**

**By internet:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org**



Film Society of Lincoln Center

**AIVF COSPONSORS:
NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL**

when: July 23–27, 2003

where: Walter Reade Theater, NY

Each summer, the NYVF explores the pleasures, both odd and profound, of the ethereal art of video: investigate the mutant media spawned by video game engines, discover new artists and new ways of using digital media, watch the passionate deconstruction of music videos. Video artists like Robert Frank, Alfred Guzzetti, and George Kuchar, as well as young upstarts, are out in force, taking a stand, making us laugh or cry, but mostly leaving us awestruck by the power of that little digital gadget.

For more information, visit www.filmlinc.com/nyvf/nyvf.htm.

August

**AIVF COSPONSORS:
CHICKS WITH FLICKS FILM
FESTIVAL**

when: Aug. 4–5

where: New York, NY

Chicks with Flicks is in its fifth year celebrating films made by independent women filmmakers. This year's fest will screen shorts in various genres including documentary, experimental and narrative. Chicks with Flicks is committed to providing a venue for emerging artists and showcases films that are diverse, original and entertaining.

For more information, visit www.chickswithflicks.org.

**AIVF COSPONSORS:
ROXBURY FILM
FESTIVAL**

when: Aug. 14–17

where: Boston, MA



The 5th Annual Roxbury Film Festival: Celebrating the Vision and Voice of New England Filmmakers of Color will be shown at Northeastern University, Massachusetts College of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

RFF screens all genres of films (i.e. narrative, documentary, shorts, features, and animation) produced, directed and/or written, by or about people of color.

For more info, visit www.roxburyfilmfestival.org or call 617-541-3900 x223.

**filmlinc AIVF MEMBER
DISCOUNT:
FILMS AT THE
LINCOLN CENTER**

where: Walter Reade Theatre,
Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC
www.filmlinc.com

AIVF members may attend select series (listed below) at a discounted rate—\$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office.

Through July 10—**Heroic Grace:
The Chinese Martial Arts Film**

July 11–21 and July 28 through Aug. 4—**Man in the Shadows: The Films of Alain Delon**

July 23–27—**The New York Video Festival**

August 8–14—**Bob Hope's 100th Birthday Celebration**

August 15–September 4—**Films in Cinemascope**

AIVF

With the mediamaking landscape morphing almost daily, AIVF keeps you on top of new developments, opportunities, initiatives, people, and advocacy in the field...



THE INDEPENDENT

Through **The Independent**, keep up to date with new product reviews, distributors and funders, and profiles of makers who understand what being independent is all about...



JOIN US

With our low-cost membership giving you production discounts, access to affordable health insurance, as WELL as our resources, can you afford not to join?

www.aivf.org

FIVE 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 Caliban Foundation
Empire State Development Corporation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
Home Box Office
The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation
The Jewish Communal Fund

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
The New York Community Trust
New York Foundation for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Panasonic USA
Sony Electronics Corporation

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

Business/Industry Members: **AL:** Cypress Moon Productions; **AZ:** Duck Soup Productions; **CA:** Blueprint Films; Eastman Kodak Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; The Hollywood Reporter; SJPL Films, Ltd.; Ultimate Entertainment; Video Arts; **CO:** Makers Muse; Pay Reel; **DC:** 48 Hour Film Project; Spark Media; **FL:** E.M. Productions; Vision Films; **IL:** i-cubed Chicago; Screen Magazine; **MA:** Glidecam Industries; **MD:** Dig Productions; The Learning Channel; NewsGroup, Inc.; Waltery Insurance; **MI:** 10th Street Productions; Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Michael Kuentz Communications; **NJ:** Monkey Rant Productions; **NY:** All In One Productions; Arts Engine, Inc.; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cataland Films; Chicks With Flicks Film Festival; Code 16/Downtown Avid; Communications Society; Cypress Films; Dekart Video; Docurama; D.R. Reiff and Assoc.; Field Hands Productions, Inc.; Forest Creatures Entertainment; Fred Siegel, CPA; Gartenberg Media Enterprises; Greenwich Street Productions; HBO; Interflix; Karin Bacon Events; Lighthouse Creative; Lightworks Producing Group; Lowel Light Manufacturing; Mercer Media; Metropolis Film Lab, Inc.; Moxie Firecracker Films; Off Ramp Films; Outside in July, Inc.; Persona Films, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Robert L. Seigel, Atty.; Robin Frank Management; Roja Productions; Symphony of Chaos Productions; Tribune Pictures; Wildlight Productions; **OH:** Cleveland Film Society; Independent Pictures; **PA:** Cubist Post and Effects; Janny Montgomery Scott, LLC; Schiff Media/SBS Films; **TX:** The Media Cottage, Inc.; Worldfest; **VA:** Kessler Productions; **WI:** Image Pictures, LLC

Nonprofit Members: **CA:** Berkeley Documentary Center; Berkeley Video & Film Center; Film Arts Foundation; Filmmakers Alliance; Fireside Foundation; International Buddhist Film Festival; The LEF Foundation; Media Fund; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; The Sundance Institute; **CO:** Colorado Film Commission; Denver Center Media; Telluride Film Festival; **CT:** New Haven Film Festival; **DC:** Media Access Project; **FL:** Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival; Sarasota Film Festival; University of Tampa; Valencia Community College; **GA:** IMAGE Film and Video Center; Savannah College of Art and Design; **HI:** Pacific Islanders in Communications; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago; Light Bound; Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Communication; Rock Valley College; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Long Bow Group; Lowell Telecommunications Group; Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College; WGBH Education Foundation; **MD:** Laurel Cable Network; **ME:** Maine Photographic Workshops; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Festival; **MN:** IFP/MSP; Walker Art Center; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **MS:** Magnolia Independent Film Festival; **NC:** Cucalorus Film Foundation; UNC

Greensboro, Broadcasting and Cinema; **NE:** AIVF Salon/Lincoln; Great Plains Film Festival; Nebraska Independent Film Project; Ross Film Theater, UN-Lincoln; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; **NY:** After Dark Productions; American Museum of Natural History; Bronx Council on the Arts; Children's Media Project; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Creative Capital Foundation; Department of Media Study SUNY Buffalo; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community Television; Electronic Arts Intermix; Experimental TV Center; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Globalvision, Inc.; International Film Seminars; John Jay High School; LMC-TV; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Video Resources; New School, Dept. of Communications/Film Department; New York Women in Film and Television; Paper Tiger; P.O.V./The American Documentary; Pratt Institute; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stony Brook Film Festival; Syracuse University; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; Upstate Films, Ltd.; **OH:** Independent Pictures/AIVF Ohio Salon; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio University School of Film; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; Northwest Film Center; **PA:** American Poetry Center; Greenworks; Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; Philadelphia Independent Film and Video Association; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; **RI:** The Rivival House; **SC:** Hybrid Films; South Carolina Arts Commission; **TX:** Austin Film Society; Southwest Alternate Media Project; **UT:** Sundance Institute; **VT:** The Noodlehead Network; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Short Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Friends of FIVF: Angela Alston, Desmond Andrews, Marion Appel, Phillip Aupperle, James J. Batzer, David Bemis, Doug Block, Dana Briscoe Brown, Margaret Brown, Adrienne Brown Ryan, Carl Canner, Liz Canner, Hugo Cassirer, Barbara Caver, Paul Devlin, Loni Ding, Martin Edelstein, Esq., Aaron Edison, Marilys Ernst, Paul Espinosa, Daniel Fass, Phoebe Ferguson, Holly Fisher, Nicole Guillemet, David Haas, Nancy Harvey, Sarah Jacobson, Jane Jaffin, John Kavanaugh, Amelia Kirby, Vivian Kleiman, Amie Knox, Leonard Kurz, Lyda Kuth, Bart Lawson, William Lyman, Diane Markrow, Matthieu Mazza, Jim McKay, Diane Murphy, Sheila Nevins, Richard Numeroff, Elizabeth Peters, Mimi Pickering, Christina Reilly, David Reynolds, Amalie Rothschild, Hiroto Saito, Larry Sapadin, John B. Schwartz, Robert L. Seigel, Esq., Gail Silva, Kit-Yin Snyder, George Stoney, Cathy & James Sweitzer, Rhonda Leigh Tanzman, Rahdi Taylor, Cynthia Travis, Joyce Vaughn, Cynthia Veliquette, Ph.D., Jane C. Wagner, Bart Weiss, Mary H. Wharton

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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon 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.net

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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
Gillora, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

**Lincoln, NE: Nebraska
Independent Film Project**

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm)
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: Seattle Indie Network

Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 200-0933;
Wes Kim, (206) 719-6261; seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:

When: First Mondays, 6 p.m.
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Jana Segal and Rachel Sharp,
tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:

Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline,
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**Upbeat at Upstate
New York's Salon**

Upstate Independents (UI), the Albany/Troy, New York, AIVF Salon, has been hard at work showcasing the talents of local filmmakers by launching two screening series.

The Independent Digital Film Series, held at Hudson Valley Community College, included a diverse selection of short, independent digital film. Q&A's followed each film, giving the public a chance to get to know the filmmakers. This ongoing series will continue to feature local filmmakers with two more events this year.

UI also teamed up with WAMC Northeast Public Radio to present local short films. A panel discussion with the filmmakers followed the screenings, and audio clips from the discussion were featured on WAMC, giving UI exposure in the seven states that the station reaches.

— Jeff Burns

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

Experimental Film Moments

By Charlie Sweitzer

Experimental films are especially good at provoking vivid, flashbulb memories. This issue, we've asked an assortment of artists to contribute their favorite experimental moments.

"In the short movie called *Zoe Teaches* (by Kayte Young), an eight-year-old girl explains Buddhism. She says things like: 'If you're Catholic and can't fall asleep, then you'll stay up forever thinking, but if you're Buddhist, then you can meditate.' On the particular day that I saw this on *Learning to Love You More*, it made a little bridge over sadness for me."

— Miranda July (*The Amateurist, Nest of Tens*)

"The sex scenes in *Thundercrack*, [written] by George Kuchar."

— Martha Colburn (*Spiders in Love, Skelehellavision*)

"At the moment where Hollis Frampton's character entered frame and promptly died in Michael Snow's *Wavelength*, it became clear to me that a film could break truly new intellectual and aesthetic ground, while maintaining a marvelous sense of spontaneity, playfulness, and humor."

— Simon Tarr (*Rubicon, Joe's Suspenders*)

"I love the sequence in Buñuel's *L'Age d'or* when all the party guests are arriving and the movie's most recognizable extra—the shortest man with the largest moustache—arrives in a wide shot and takes his top hat off. In the very next shot, also a wide shot, he again arrived and removes his top hat, as if he'd never been there before. This brazen breach of continuity by Buñuel branded itself upon my brain as an example of how powerful such subversions or indifferences can be, and I've been hooked on giving continuity geeks all they can handle ever since."

— Guy Maddin (*Dracula: Pages from a Virgin's Diary, The Heart of the World*)

"I am afraid that I have two favorite moments that are tied in a deadlock:

"In Bryan Boyce's *Election Collectables*, when George Bush flails his hands around explaining that 'Demand is ten times greater . . . than the supply.'

"In Bill Brown's *Confederation Park*, there is a shot where

the reflection of an airplane flying overhead can be seen in a puddle of water underneath a bridge, but the plane itself cannot be seen."

— Matt McCormick (*The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal; Sincerely, Joe P. Bear*)

"I will never forget what has to be called an epiphany that took hold of my nervous system maybe halfway into Bruce Conner's *Crossroads*. I opened to the hypnotic suggestion of a truly beatific vision: I saw God in that mushroom cloud. The natural physical laws of biological evolution had sufficiently advanced so far as to evolve an 'intelligent' organism (man) who was able to 'loop' back to discover the laws of its own atomic make up (physics), and to develop a photographic technology (the camera) to document its effects, and an art form (cinema) to reconsider it, and an aesthete (me) to marvel at it, and I was exactly at that moment in cinema history. My hair was standing on end, and I managed to crawl out of the theater and cry my eyes out at the perfect-moment enormity of it all."

— Craig Baldwin (*Spectres of the Spectrum, Sonic Outlaws*)

"I saw Stan Brakhage's *Reflections on Black in 1955*, during his first visit to New York, at a screening organized by Willard Maas, Maria Menken, and Hans Richter, at the Living Theater when it was still on Broadway & 100th Street. And I still remember the shot of the man descending the stairs with his eyes scratched out—scratched directly on the film—and the sound that went with that shot. I still think of that moment of cinema as the beginning of post-Maya Deren avant-garde film in America.

— Jonas Mekas (*As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty*); artistic director, Anthology Film Archives ■

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer and a frequent contributor to The Independent.



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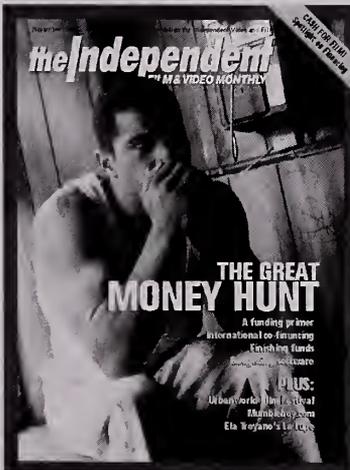
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Page 5 photos: The cast and crew of Little Rock's Destructo Video Company (Melvin Clifford); Ditsi Carolino's *Life on the Tracks* (Human Rights Watch International Film Festival); Kent Lambert's *Security Anthem* (Thaw Film Festival); Chris Wilcha's *The Social History of the Mosh Pit* (Chris Wilcha); Arnold and Jesse Friedman in *Capturing the Friedmans* (George Argerolos/Magnolia Pictures).

On the Cover: Hope Davis as Joyce Brabner in *American Splendor* (John Clifford/HBO/Fine Line Features).



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Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

Most filmmakers dream of *making* their movies, not marketing them, but publicizing a film is a

large part of the business of getting audiences to see any project. Even a film that gets picked up by a distributor or handled by a leading independent publicist needs marketing attention from the filmmakers before and after the pros move in. In fact, the most common questions we are asked at *The Independent* are not about how to make movies, but how to get them noticed. For that reason, this issue is dedicated to the mystery of marketing independent films.

Clearly the typical independent project has limited funds to dedicate to a marketing budget. So, we tried to give you insight into the best ways to expend your time, money, and luck. R.J. Millard, vice president of publicity and marketing for IDP Distribution and former press officer of the Sundance Film Festival, takes us through a step-by-step guide of how to best leverage your film's festival screenings. In this article Millard explains the before, during and after of "how to get your film noticed at a festival" (see page 44).

Since getting press coverage can be such a crucial component of any film's publicity, I checked in with two of my fellow editors who cover independent film, Eugene Hernandez of *indieWIRE* and *IFC Rant*, and Dennis Lim of *The Village Voice*. While the policies and structure of every publication are different, I believe the three of us managed to provide an accurate picture of how decisions about which films are written about are made within most publications (see page 50). To further increase your chances of getting great press coverage, Phil Hall, president of Open City Communications, details the ins and outs of creating the

killer press kit (see page 48).

Andrea Meyer contributed our cover story on the documentary-biopic-comic book, *American Splendor*. As part of the story behind the film, Meyer examines the marketing of this multi-genre film in addition to exploring the film's evolution (see page 40).

For more twists on marketing, Maya Churi clicked on the website for the documentary *Capturing the Friedmans* in our Site Seeing column (see page 27), and our resident Doc Doctor, Fernanda Rossi, offered to lead mediamakers out of publicity quagmires (see page 29).

This month we are running an unusual column for this magazine, Letters to the Editor (see page 13). During my year at the magazine we have never received so many responses to a column as Robb Moss's article "Duty to Country" generated. For this reason we chose to run a letter by Mara Wallis and Moss's response to that letter. Clearly issues of pluralism and diversity of all types will continue to be of vital concern for our community.

To fill out the issue we have included some non-marketing related relief. You will find reports on the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival (see page 37) and Iowa's experimental film festival THAW (see page 34), along with profiles of filmmakers Chris Wilcha (see page 15) and Catherine Hardwicke (see page 19).

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new managing editor Shana Liebman to the staff. This issue is her first with us and I hope you will all make her feel welcome. James Ellis, who put so much time and energy into this publication in the past year, has sadly moved on to the land of larger apartments and colder winters, Chicago.

Thank you for supporting *The Independent*.

Maud Kersnowski
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P.O.V.'S Seventh Emmy Nomination

By Claiborne Smith

Among the nominees for the 24th Annual News and Documentary Emmy awards are a number of independently-produced programs that touch upon subjects as disparate as Amish teenagers and vinyl siding but which share a penchant for telling large stories from small details.

The Smith Family, Tasha Oldham's affecting portrait of a seemingly traditional family of Mormons (two boys, a dog, a nice home, and a devout faith) grappling with HIV has already

Tasha Oldham's moving portrait of the Smith family was nominated for an Emmy Award.

received the duPont-Columbia Journalism Silver Baton and the Director Guild of America's Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Documentaries. Now it has been nominated for an Emmy for its broadcast on P.O.V. This is the seventh year in a row that a film that was broadcast on this documentary series has been nominated. In its sixteen years as a showcase for independent non-fiction storytellers, P.O.V. films have won eighteen Emmy awards.

In addition to *The Smith Family*, the other films nominated for "Best Informational Programming—Long Form," are *Telling Nicholas* from HBO's

America Undercover series; the History Channel's *Inside Pol Pot's Secret Prison*; TLC's *110 Stories*; and two National Geographic Explorer programs, *Forgotten Desert* and *Search for the Afghan Girl*.

Other notable Emmy nominations include Judith Helfand and Daniel Gold's *Blue Vinyl*, which also aired on HBO's America Undercover series. The documentary, which uses vinyl siding as a way to investigate a culture that accepts lurking toxicity in the environment, received nominations for "Best Documentary in 2002" and "Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Research." Todd Robinson's *Amargosa*, a documentary about seventy-six-year-old artist Marta Becket's struggle to build a theater in Death Valley, garnered nominations in the "Outstanding Cultural & Artistic Programming—Long Form" category.

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ry as well as a nod for Curt Aduhan's cinematography. *Amargosa* aired on the Sundance Channel. And Lucy Walker's *Devil's Playground*, about Amish teenagers tempted by life outside the Amish community, premiered on Cinemax's Reel Life series in May 2002, and received three nominations: outstanding direction, outstanding editing and best documentary.

Claiborne Smith is a freelance journalist and the former senior editor of The Austin Chronicle.

Award-Winning Ballet Documentarian Anne Belle Dies

By Catherine Tambini

Anne Belle, award-winning documentary filmmaker, died June 18 while in Los Angeles. The cause of death was a heart attack. She was 68 and lived in New York City and Remsenberg, New York. Belle's most recent film, *Suzanne Farrell: Elusive Muse*, profiled the last great muse and quintessential interpreter of the late choreographer George Balanchine. It was nominated for an Academy Award after premiering at the New York Film Festival in 1996. It was also shown as a special on PBS Television's Great Performances/ Dance In America. *The New York Times* wrote that it was "an exquisitely made film. . . . An endlessly absorbing chronicle of life, art, and passion intertwined." It was the third in a trilogy of dance films by Belle. The first was *Reflections of a Dancer: Alexandra Danilova*, a portrait of the great Russian-American prima ballerina assoluta of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; then *Dancing for Mr. B: Six Balanchine Ballerinas*, a multiple portrait of six famous American ballerinas—Maria Tallchief, Melissa Hayden, Allegra Kent, Merrill Ashley, Mary Ellen Moylan, and Darci Kistler—who danced for Balanchine from the 1930's to the 1980's. The film is also a multifaceted portrait of Balanchine as seen through the eyes

of his ballerinas. *Dancing for Mr. B* also premiered at the New York Film Festival and was showcased on PBS's Great Performances/Dance In America. *The New York Times* called it "a lovely, shrewd elegy, as graceful, taut, and fiercely controlled as the dancers who are its subjects." Other award-winning films by Belle include *Baymen—Our Waters are Dying*, a documentary about the men who harvest shellfish from the bays of Eastern Long Island, and *Henry*, a portrait of a fiercely independent old man living on a one-time sugar barge on the Hudson River. *Baymen* was shown nationally on PBS, and *Henry* premiered at the Museum of Modern Art and was shown on WNET/Thirteen. Belle's films have been shown and won awards at many festivals worldwide, including Sundance, the Berlin Film Festival, Montreal Film Festival, Chicago Film Festival, Leningrad Film Festival, Melbourne and Sydney Film Festivals, American Film Festival, Dance Films Festival, and on international television.

Belle received five awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, and two major grant awards from the New York State Council on the Arts. She was awarded the first Suffolk County Distinguished Filmmaker Award for *Baymen*. She also produced, directed, and edited several short films for Children's Television Workshop, wrote many articles on a variety of subjects for various magazines as a freelance writer, and served as a consultant on several documentary films.

She has been in the process of completing a documentary on master ballet teacher Stanley Williams, of the School of American Ballet, who influenced the careers and lives of many of ballet's leading dancers, including Rudolf Nureyev, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Gelsey Kirkland. She was also in the process of turning the book *Passionate Nomad*, by Jane Fletcher Geniesse, on the life of the adventurer and explorer Freya Stark,

into a screenplay.

Anne Belle was born in Chile to Albert and Cynthia Stagg. Albert Stagg was a great-grandson of General Juan Jose Flores, who joined with Simon Bolivar in the quest to liberate South America from Spanish rule. Flores went on to become Ecuador's first president. Belle's early years were spent living in Canada, Morocco, and England. She studied classical ballet in London before settling in New York City. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from New York University's Graduate Institute of Film and Television in 1968.

A scholarship fund for young dancers at the Suzanne Farrell Ballet has been established in Belle's name. Contributions can be sent to the Suzanne Farrell Ballet, Anne Belle Scholarship Fund c/o Kennedy Center P.O. Box 10808, Arlington, VA 22210 or call (202) 416-8310. There will be a memorial service in November at the Walter Reade Theatre in New York.

Catherine Tambini co-produced Suzanne Farrell: Elusive Muse with Anne Belle. They were in the process of making Reaching for Perfection: Stanley Williams, Master Teacher at the time of Belle's death.

Louisiana Positioning to be New Canada

By Melinda Rice

Louisiana recently became the first state to invest in a film fund—when the Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) partnered with the Louisiana Institute of Film Technology (LIFT) and the LA distribution company, Samy Boy/HSI Entertainment. The resulting financing company, LA Squared, is the brainchild of Mark Smith, director of the Governor's Office of Film and Television, who recruited LIFT CEO Malcolm Petal, Samy Boy CEO and founder, Sam Nazarian, and HSI's Adam Rosenfelt to help with the project. LEDC provides investment capital, LIFT provides financial sup-

port and debt financing, and Samy Boy takes care of distribution and equity. This support allows LA Squared its \$50 million production slate. It is "an unprecedented first step," according to Rosenfelt. "[The state of] Louisiana saw a void, a niche that needed to be filled, and we helped to fill that."

Supporters hope that LA Squared will create new revenue for Louisiana and encourage more film production in the state. The company is already planning to produce ten to twelve films in the next three years. The first film under the fund is James Merendina's horror flick, *Trespassing*, which is currently in postproduction. It was shot in New Orleans. *Home of Phobia*, with new writer/director Ryan Shiraki, began production in August, and will be produced in collaboration with The Greenblatt Janollari Studio (*Six Feet Under*), Dan Halsted (*S.W.A.T.*), and Persistent Entertainment. *Waiting*, whose writer/director, Rob McKittrick, is also a newcomer, is still in pre-production, and will star Ryan Reynolds (*Van Wilder*). LA Squared's officers want filmmakers to consider Louisiana as a site for their next films, particularly as an alternative to countries like Canada and Australia that offer big tax breaks.

The Louisiana tax incentives for film and television productions passed into law in 2002. They include a twenty percent tax credit for locals hired by film companies, exemption for the companies from state sales tax, and tax credits ranging from fifteen to twenty percent for productions costing between \$350K and \$1 million. In addition to encouraging film companies to hire Louisiana residents through tax incentives, state officials have funded two new film-industry training programs at community colleges, using over \$1 million in federal welfare-to-work dollars. LA Squared, for its part, is doing its best to draw from the talent pool that already exists in Louisiana. □

Melinda Rice is an intern at The Independent.

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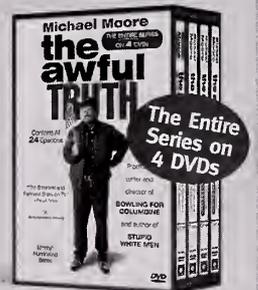
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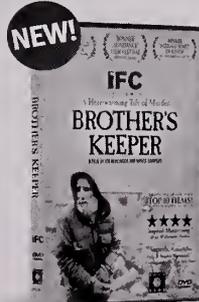
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Letters to the Editor

READERS RESPOND TO PAST ISSUES



The New Right?

To the Editor:

I'd like to congratulate Robb Moss on being the first indie filmmaker to state the obvious fact that the independent film "community" is totally left-wing. [In the June issue of *The Independent*, Moss wrote a First Person column entitled "Duty to Country."] One has only to look at the project requirements to apply for funding, where buzzwords such as progressive, social justice, reproductive rights, diversity, social responsibility, and all the other catch phrases are used to identify the applicant as a true leftist. Others need not apply. While I find a certain amusement in Moss' concern about "what would happen to us" if other opinions were tolerated (the horror!), he appears oblivious to the fact that up until now those other opinions have been, and continue to be, shut out. To the leftist film politburo in control of what gets funded, exhibited, and rewarded, certain subjects can only be presented one way—their way. While Moss appreciates that independent film is not "presided over by corporate inter-

ests," how does that make any difference to an independent filmmaker who is out of the leftist mainstream? And isn't there something wrong with using what is often taxpayer-funded resources to maintain a closed shop?

While it is positive that Moss is asking these questions, I'd like to know what "right-wing propaganda masquerading as film" he is speaking of, and why does he not have a problem with left-wing propaganda masquerading as film? Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* comes to mind.

It will be interesting to see the reception that the independent film crowd gives to a new batch of conservative student filmmakers who are making documentaries that are critical of their left-wing teachers, as well as other up-and-coming nonleftist filmmakers attempting to have their voices heard. Will these

needed in the independent film community. In his last sentence, he says "our job as patriotic American independents is to make work that searches for the truth—and does not claim to be the sole possessor of it." Unfortunately, much independent film only searches for "truth" if it means that mainstream America comes out looking like villains, morons, or conspirators.

—Mara Wallis

San Francisco, CA

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Moss Responds

I share Mara Wallis' view that most of us in the independent film- and video-making community have traditionally been politically left of center. Organized around the view that mainstream media was in the thrall of a status quo guided principally by corporate, and sometimes government interests, this is a community that dedicated itself to making works that gave a voice to those aspects of the American experience less visible

**To the leftist film politburo in control
of what gets funded, exhibited, and
rewarded, certain subjects can only be
presented one way—their way.**

filmmaker be left out in the cold? Will film festivals accept their work? It appears to me that the pluralism that Moss deems necessary to independent films only means, at the present time, ethnic or sexual preference categories, not opinions. Perhaps a good start would be to stop demonizing those who are right of center and treating them, no matter how mild their politics, as nuts capable of bombing abortion clinics. This would be the same as tarring all leftists by equating them with Volkert van der Graf, who shot Dutch politician Pym Fortuyn.

To give Moss credit, he does broach the subject, and stresses that more openness to differing truths is

to mainstream culture. But times change. Even Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* does not argue that the answer to American gun violence is the liberal solution of gun control. And of the four non-fiction films on national screens this summer, none were particularly ideological. The success of *Capturing the Friedmans*, *Winged Migration*, *Spellbound*, and *Stone Reader* suggests that independent work can be realized without ideological dominion. Perhaps good stories are good enough.

Ms. Wallis also says that, "It will be interesting to see the reception that the independent film crowd gives to a new batch of conservative student filmmak-

ers who are making documentaries that are critical of their left-wing teachers..." For the record, I encourage my students to make work that is expressive, visual,

respond, and she clearly feels excluded from the ranks of the independent film and video world. I do not think she should be excluded from anything. In

media's left-wing hegemony with right-wing control of these scant resources. If so, what we are actually talking about is power, not values, and perhaps it has been politically unwise of me to open up the independent media-making community to public criticism. But, while sometimes uncomfortable, I strongly believe that debate is healthy. And if we are to remain vital and relevant as a community, we must not only stay open to challenging dissent, but welcome it.

If in times of political upheaval it is sometimes necessary to close ranks, such times may also be the precise moment to re-examine and reassert core values. For myself, I would be interested in seeing Ms. Wallis' work. What counts is what is on the screen, not the ideology of its maker. □

—Robb Moss
Cambridge, MA

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The success of *Capturing the Friedmans*, *Winged Migration*, *Spellbound*, and *Stone Reader* suggests that independent work can be realized without ideological dominion. Perhaps good stories are good enough.

and true to themselves. If they want to make work that is critical of me, either now or in the future, that is their right. One of the implicit questions in the article was about identity: Who are we as a community? Who gets to authorize membership? It was to these questions that Ms. Wallis primarily chose to

respond, and she clearly feels excluded from the ranks of the independent film and video world. I do not think she should be excluded from anything. In the end, I stand by the central point of my article, that the enemy of democracy is ideological absolutism, whether practiced by the left or the right.

On the other hand, Ms. Wallis' tone and occasional word choice ("politburo") suggest that she might be happy to replace what she sees as independent

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Chris Wilcha

FIRST-HAND TALES FROM THE ROADSIDE

By Charlie Sweitzer

When the Dutch East India Company first settled what is now known as New Jersey, one of the first things they did was establish trading posts where they could exchange “exotic” goods with other colonists. Four hundred years later, on weekends when it doesn’t rain, New Jersey still teems with people eager to sell or exchange their stuff.

It was these garage sales and flea markets that proved to be the inspiration for Chris Wilcha’s short *Second Hand Stories*, which he is currently transforming into an hour-long pilot (and, if the pilot does well, a series) for PBS. Wilcha had been “going to garage sales in northern New Jersey every weekend religiously and shooting them” when he was introduced to John Freyer. At the time, Freyer was working on a website/book/conceptual project called *All My Life For Sale*, which documented the sale of all his earthly possessions on eBay.

“It was clear that we had these overlapping interests,” says Wilcha, whose first feature-length documentary, *The Target Shoots First*, consists almost entirely of footage shot on the job at an entry-level position with mail-order music

Chris Wilcha enjoys a quiet moment on a couch in *Second Hand Stories*.

giant Columbia House. Wilcha’s films combine a curiosity about the reasons people do what they do (or buy what they buy) with uncommonly honest first person introspection.

“The first person,” Wilcha says, “allows you to make observations and combine tones in really interesting



ways. I’m not talking about my girlfriends or my finances—[these documentaries] are not my memoirs. It’s an *essay* voice. . . . It’s like Robert Sullivan, [who wrote] this book *The Meadowlands*, where there’s this mix of personal observation, but also legitimate jour-

nalism, legitimate historicism, even slightly poetic observations. You can be reflective. You can just do so many things you can’t get away with in traditional documentaries.”

Even when Wilcha’s not actually in his movies, there is a sense of the personal. Take a series of promos he did for MTV several years ago: A long, stationary, largely silent shot of a mundane building exterior is followed by a quick title card identifying it as the former residence of Metallica, or where Nirvana recorded *Nevermind*, or where Run-DMC first practiced. These

locations mean a lot to Wilcha, and, somehow, by the time the fifteen-second spot is over, they mean a lot to the viewer, too.

After realizing Freyer shared his fascination with the “second hand universe,” the two of them made *Second Hand Stories*, a fifteen-minute film that owed as much to conceptual performance art as to *Antiques Roadshow*. They purchased a used ambulance on eBay and set out to “thrift” their way to a screening at the Aurora Picture Show microcinema in Houston, Texas. “We would accumulate all this stuff,” says Wilcha, “and then we’d sell all that stuff to pay for our way home. So it would be a self-sustained, self-containing sight-seeing tour.

“We wanted to see if we could test out this digital universe—we cut little

pieces of footage we had shot along the way, and we showed them at the screening [in Houston], and we were buying things, photographing them, and posting them on our website each day,” he says.

The film itself was shot on second-

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hand cameras, and the soundtrack comes entirely from used LP's and CD's. PBS has a unique arrangement with music publishers and does not need to clear music rights, so Wilcha looks forward to further use of second-hand music. "If we did this on HBO," he says, "we would have to have a clearance budget of \$250,000."

Along the way, Wilcha and Freyer bought exclusively "rare and unique items you didn't even know existed, but now cannot live without." These included a large highway safety device called the Wobble Light, a pair of fuzzy handcuffs, and lots of home movies and answering machine tape messages, which, like the cast-off objects cataloged in *Found Magazine*, provide eerie little peeks into strangers' lives. They also interviewed the people selling these items. The man selling the Wobble Light, for instance, turns out to be its inventor, and the middle-age woman selling the fuzzy handcuffs denies any knowledge of their origin.

"The reasons people buy stuff—for nostalgic reasons, or hipster irony, or [with the] actual intent to reuse it, or change its use in some way—that's a whole narrative we're interested in," he says. "It wasn't mining for things that have *value*—it was mining for things that have *meaning*."

Wilcha stops, and laughs at himself. "That sounds so pretentious."

A philosophy major as an undergrad, Wilcha went to Cal Arts to study film shortly after quitting his Columbia House job. "Graduate school was about buying the time to do something," he says. "Part of it was the infrastructure, having an Avid I could sit at for sixteen hours straight . . . It was in school that I realized I wanted to make films, but it wasn't completely clear that I could make a living making films."

After graduating, he went to work as a freelance director and producer, doing a lot of work for MTV; his MTV special *Social History of the Mosh*



Pit has spun off a whole *Social History of...* series.

"In the realm of commercial work, I try to do things that I'm interested in. But *The Social History of the Mosh Pit* was not personal or reflective." He considers this for a second, and then says, "but it *was* personal, because I was interested in it. *Social History of the Mosh Pit* really was a way to take a really specific, micro-detail of hardcore and punk rock music and try to use that as a way to investigate the history of alternative, punk rock, and metal music. . .

"When I'm making stuff for any of these places, it's instructive. It's useful. It's meaningful. And to be around the equipment, and to have to talk about your ideas and articulate your ideas and then try to translate your ideas out of the ether into a show—those exercises are useful to me."

Wilcha credits the development of *Second Hand Stories* as a series entirely to the enthusiasm and support of *EGG: The Arts Show* creator Jeff Folmsbee, whom Wilcha met "a couple years ago" at a party. He sent Folmsbee a tape of *Second Hand Stories*, "and when he got it,

Wilcha's *The Target Strikes First*.

he really *got it*, and I think he saw there was an opportunity to do it in a more serialized, episodic way.

"I realize now," Wilcha continues, "that that's the only way to get things made—to have someone who'll get behind it. Because I could have never navigated the byzantine politics of a place like PBS or WNET [New York's PBS affiliate]."

The *Second Hand Stories* pilot will air in October on PBS. If the ratings are good, an entire season will be commissioned, and, says Wilcha, "that'll keep me busy for a year. It's been a couple years now of actually making a living at [filmmaking]. I'm not freelance music writing. I'm not a paralegal at night. That to me is something I'm only now accepting. And I'm not going to fucking lie to you—it feels precarious at times. It doesn't feel stable. [If the show goes through] it'll be the first time I'll be able to say I know exactly what I'm doing for the next twelve months." ■

Charlie Sweitzer is a Brooklyn-based writer who will, at some point before the end of the month, become a Los Angeles-based writer. His e-mail address is charliesweitzer@yahoo.com.

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Catherine Hardwicke

FROM BEHIND THE SCENES TO BEHIND THE CAMERA

By Jason Guerrasio

While attending the Sundance Film Festival in the mid-nineties, Catherine Hardwicke took in a screening of John Cassavetes' classic *A Woman Under the Influence*. Years later, her memories of the tragic Longhetti family would influence the making of her own film about a family in turmoil. Just as Cassavetes mined his life for the subject of his films, and used family and friends to make them, Hardwicke's feature *thirteen*, about a teenage girl's radical transformation from mommy's little girl to an out-of-control teen, closely resembles the events in the life of its star, co-writer, and close friend of Hardwicke's, thirteen-year-old Nikki Reed. Along with helping Reed's family at a difficult time, the film signifies Hardwicke's fifteen-year journey to the director's chair.

Studying architecture at the University of Texas in the early eighties, Hardwicke quickly realized that she was from a different mold than most people in the conservative world of architecture. "I was a little out there for architecture school," Hardwicke admits. "I would dress up like my building design and do a little mini striptease to show the evolution of the building and people were like, 'Wow, dude, architecture really doesn't encourage that type of creativity.'" After getting her degree, she enrolled in the UCLA graduate film school to feed her creative cravings and eventually won a FOCUS Award for an animated short she made there. Her architecture background led her to a career in production design, where she's established herself as one of the best. Having worked with the likes of Cameron

Catherine Hardwicke on the set of *thirteen*.

Crowe, Richard Linklater, and David O. Russell, Hardwicke studied the directors of the films she designed in hopes of one day becoming a director herself. "I always told them I really want to make my own movies, and they were all very generous and gave me tips," says Hardwicke, who points out that being able to work with directors in the early stages of production proved beneficial. "As you're riding



around with the director location-scouting, you hear a lot of conversations and you start piecing them together, so I think that helped me." In between film projects, Hardwicke would diligently work on scripts, make short films, teach herself Final Cut Pro, and even take acting classes to hone her directing chops. But a thirteen-year-old girl's struggle with her family would give Hardwicke all the confidence she needed to make her dream to direct a feature film a reality.

Having been a part of Nikki Reed's life since she was five years old,

Hardwicke was determined to stay close to her and her brother after Hardwicke and Reed's father ended their four-year relationship. "I started getting my hair cut by her mother, which is similar to the film, so I saw them every few months," Hardwicke says. "When [Nikki] turned thirteen, I started noticing she had completely changed to becoming quite angry with her family, her mother, and herself. I started seeing all these changes and difficulties she was going through, so I thought, along with her parents, that if she could hang out with me, things would be better." After weeks of expanding her tastes

from hair and makeup to museums and plays, Reed disclosed an interest in acting, which sparked the idea that the two should write a romantic comedy about life as a thirteen-year-old. "We both thought it would be a teen comedy; it didn't turn out that way," Hardwicke confesses. "We decided the real stuff was more compelling than any wacky thing we could make up. We just wrote about the real stuff she and her friends were going through."

Instead of *The Lizzie McGuire Movie*, Hardwicke and Reed create an eye-opening portal into the life of

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teenagers growing up at an alarmingly young age; the anarchic friendship between Tracy (Evan Rachel Wood) and Evie (Reed) leads to a chaotic chain of events that include drugs, sexual encounters with a guy twice their age, and self-mutilation. But Hardwicke believes the film's main plot, which revolves around Tracy and her mother (played by Holly Hunter,

if it's with a digital camera and me as the whole crew."

The night Hardwicke and Reed put the finishing touches on the script, Hardwicke went to a dinner party with screenplay in hand, and ran into an old friend, producer Michael London. "She was carrying it around with her like it was a newborn child," London recalls. "I read it that night



who is also the executive producer of the film), can help bridge the gap between parent and child. "I thought partly doing this project would help [Nikki] and other kids have a little bit more understanding of their mom's point of view, and their moms have a little more understanding of their kids' point of view."

Having discussed the script during Reed's winter vacation from school in 2001, the two sat down after the holidays and wrote it out in less than a week. "We had six days before she went back to school," Hardwicke explains. "So we just pounded it out, and it's pretty damn close to what you see on the screen." Why the urgency to get the script done so quickly? "I felt it was almost like a snapshot of a particular time," she says. "I really wanted Nikki to be in it, because her energy was so inspiring to it, and I don't like movies where the person is eighteen years old playing a thirteen-year-old, so I said, 'We're going to shoot it even

and called her the next day at like eight in the morning and said, 'This is really, really extraordinary. What do you want to do with it?'" After hearing that she wanted to start production in five months and her reasons why, London was partly stunned, but mostly inspired. "It was really liberating to hear that from a filmmaker, because that meant I could go out and tell people we were making the movie, come hell or high water, that summer. When you're making a movie and people believe you're making a movie, all of a sudden people start committing, and the fantasy of making it in the summer actually becomes a reality."

Planned production began in June of 2002 with a budget of almost \$2 million (a third of what Hardwicke's art department budget was on Crowe's *Vanilla Sky*), with Hardwicke's home as headquarters for the first three weeks.

Holly Hunter, Evan Rachel Wood, and Nikki Reed in Catherine Hardwicke's *thirteen*.

In fact, most of what you see in the film is from Hardwicke's home. "A truck pulled up to my house and took away all my plants, my picnic table, my couch, clothes, photographs—everything was used on the movie," Hardwicke says. But this time she was responsible for more than just the look of the film. "You just learn a zillion things," explains Hardwicke about directing. "I became a music supervisor, sound editor. After we ran out of money for the casting directors I had to be the casting director for about three weeks." London recalls that one of the biggest problems Hardwicke had to confront was how the film should be shot. "She knew the feel that she wanted, something with a lot of energy, authenticity, and intimacy, [but] I don't think she knew how to accomplish that." With veteran cinematographer Elliot Davis on board, the problem was solved since shooting handheld on a Super 16 camera brought an in-your-face energy to the film that blended perfectly with what Hardwicke and Reed put on paper.

thirteen premiered at Sundance in 2003, was picked up by Fox Searchlight, and Hardwicke won the dramatic jury's Best Director prize. "That was a shocker," says Hardwicke. "You don't know if your film is going to be good or bad, or if you're going to be the only one that's going to like it, so that was a nice little icing on the cake." With the acclaim that she and the film have received (Hardwicke was highlighted as one of ten directors to watch by *Variety*), Hardwicke hopes the scripts she wrote in the past, which include everything from animation to a period piece, will interest financiers and end her days as a production designer. "I hope I'm not going to continue being a production designer," she admits. "But you never know. If I never get another directing job, I'll probably be begging to go back." ■

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for *The Independent*.

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Little Rock, Arkansas

ALL-OUT INDEPENDENT

By Kay Frances Scott

Little Rock, Arkansas, became a national focus during the eight years of Bill Clinton's presidency, but Little Rock has always been a state and regional hub, not only for politics (before Clinton, there was Fulbright, McClellan, and later, Bumpers), but also for the arts and for artful living. Its redesigned riverfront features fine dining, live music, and an upscale marketplace. The city's Quawpaw Quarter offers living in restored antebellum homes. The Arkansas Arts Center houses a superb permanent collection in addition to its many changing exhibits. And now, a small but growing group of independent filmmakers are busy creating *their* community, *their* work, and *their* identity, centered in Little Rock but extending throughout the state. Like all fledglings, they are energetic, noisy, needy, and ultimately demanding—and deserving—our attention.

Arkansas Independent Film & Video (AI)

This recently-formed, loose affiliation of local film and video artists is a twenty-member mix of independent filmmakers, actors, writers, and anyone in the area interested in learning about or working on independent films and videos. AI was founded in October 2002 based on the principles of three Little Rock-based low-budget production companies Crowfeather Films, Daydreamer Productions, and No Parking Productions. It connects filmmakers with one another and provides assistance for its members' works. Members range in age from

Julia Baugh plays a neurotic patient in Robert Kirkpatrick's *Therapy*.

seventeen to sixty years old. "We're really trying to build a community," one founder notes, "because even if you can't help one another, it's sometimes nice to know that you have other people around that are thinking and worrying about the same things."

AI's self-assigned directive is "to encourage as many creative works from the community as possible." The group meets informally to discuss problems and issues, and support one another. They also collect information on low-budget productions throughout the state and use their website to serve as a virtual bulletin board for members and visitors. Visions and backgrounds vary, but they have energy and commitment in common.

For more information, see www.crowfeatherfilms.com/AI.html

Crowfeather Films

Filmmaker Robert Kirkpatrick, the founder of Crowfeather Films, has taken a long road both to independent film and Little Rock. He emigrated with his parents to the US from Thailand when he was three, and they eventually settled in Little Rock. After leaving Little Rock for Oberlin College in 1989, he and several classmates formed Ominous Zygote, a sci-fi/horror and martial arts films production company. (Their 1992 student film *The Undergraduates*—recently remastered—can be accessed in the downloads section of the Crowfeatherfilms.com website.) After college, the Ominous Zygote founders went their separate ways, and Kirkpatrick moved to Chicago, where he spent two years "observing rather than participating" in Chicago's art scene, most notably the Asian-American film festivals.

During this two-year hiatus, two things happened: Cameras got lighter and easier to work with, and prices fell to more affordable levels.

When Kirkpatrick returned to Little Rock and resumed his film work, his interest had shifted from the set pieces and special effects that dominated his experience with Ominous Zygote to character-driven films and the actors who enliven them, as well as some serious storytelling. "[In the



past] I just told the actors what to do—stand here, say this line," he says. "There wasn't any input [from the actors. Now] I'm trying to . . . make the filmmaking much more collaborative." To that end, he spends time observing performers at work on his own as well as others' projects.

Kirkpatrick describes his most recent film, a short titled *Therapy* that wrapped in March of this year, as "warped *Twilight Zone*-esque," revolving around a female patient's therapy session (one of many) where issues arise that the psychiatrist can't handle.

His commitment is to unconventional stories he has to tell that do not fit the ninety-minute format. "I'm probably going to watch the million-dollar action movie because I know they're going to give me more of the spectacle. But when it comes to more intimate storytelling, that's the advantage of this [independent filmmaking]," Kirkpatrick says.

See www.crowfeatherfilms.com.

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Daydreamer Productions

James Morrison, a high school student from north Little Rock, and Nathan Marchese, a student at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, met in the summer of 2001 when Marchese and a couple of friends were working on *Natural Benevolence* (currently available at www.studentfilms.com), and Marchese was brought on to help. Since then the two have continued to collaborate, and formed Daydreamer Productions together. They work in High 8 and sometimes Super 8, and have spent this past year on various short films, completing *Alternative*, initially envisioned as a feature and subsequently abbreviated. The division of labor between the two is a trade-off. Says Marchese, "We both just reach in and grab a handful of whatever has to be done." But most of the time Morrison envisions the idea and writes the initial script, then Marchese gets into the mix and the collaboration goes forward. They share the goal of working in the industry in LA and plan to move to the West Coast after Morrison finishes high school. Until then, they are busy using their talent and energy to create a body of work in Little Rock.

See www.crowfeatherfilms.com/daydreamer.html.

No Parking Productions

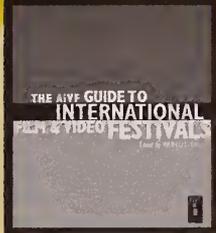
Chris Paradis of No Parking Productions has designed and published the *Rock & Roll Tarot* (it is very cool!), directed several video productions, and most recently was the cinematographer for Daydreamer Productions' *Alternative*. He also produced *Madame Sosostris*, a silent movie based on a portion of T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*, shot in 8mm, and featuring music from the band Remy Zero. Paradis says his strength lies in visualizing the "Big Picture." "Once I get an idea in my mind, it wants to see the light of day," says Paradis. "So I guess directing or art direction would be the best answer." For him, No Parking Productions is about innovation, not staying in one place.

To see *Madame Sosostris*, or sample Chris Paradis' *Rock & Roll Tarot*, go to www.crowfeatherfilms.com/noparking.html.

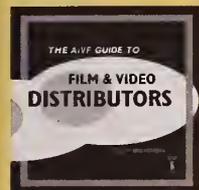
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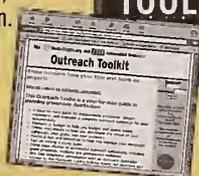
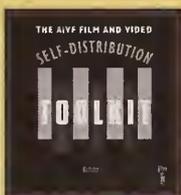
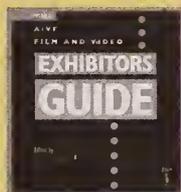
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Destructo Video

This zany crew of filmmakers and performers, reminiscent of Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters minus the acid, originated when media student Lenny Highland and friend David Carlisle took their camera and hit the streets after Lenny promised his University of Arkansas media instructor eight thirty-minute segments in eight weeks. That was in 2000. Three years later,



Destructo Video still continues to pump out thirty-minute segments, but at the slightly reduced rate of one or two per month. Their mix of improvised scenes shot in their garage/studio Laboratory of Destruction—street theater, guerilla-type scenarios, and studio work—can now be viewed on public access television Channel 62 through the university.

Destructo Video's performers, musicians, and videomakers have created their videos guerilla-style, shooting themselves interacting with pedestrians in Little Rock shops and on the streets. They developed stock characters such as Julian the Psychic, who parades his otherworldly prowess and tells fortunes

Lenny Highland and Action Chad in the Laboratory of Destruction.

on the street, and the Save-the-Butter Man, who takes it personally when people waste butter, patrolling restaurants and surprising customers by retrieving butter from certain oblivion. Their work tweaks social convention, pokes fun, and generally shakes up the so-called status quo.

More than one episode features a sport they devised, "box diving," which involves setting up a huge pile

of cardboard boxes and then diving into them. But context is everything. In one such episode, two of the players are seen swinging on a swing set in a backyard, talking casually as they move to and fro against a backdrop of summer lawn and sky, when suddenly one of them does a box dive, and we see the pile of boxes for the first time. In another episode, the boxes are set up in a large, empty parking lot, and players dive, one after the other, in what appears to be a relentless attempt at self-injury, or an externalization of some inner, psychological dive into the boxes/segments of memory or existence, or—wait—was it all just fun? The episode is cut short when divers get out of control and begin diving off a tall fence at the edge of the parking lot.

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They also create, rehearse, and shoot scenes at the Laboratory of Destruction. The lab/studio is

equipped with a small sound system and lights, all run off an extension cord. The lab also houses their by-now extensive collection of costumes and props, gathered from a friend's down-sized flea market, and culled from garbage on the streets.

Participants in Destructo projects over the past three years number fifty-plus, but the core group is small—fifteen to twenty people ages fifteen to twenty-four. Currently they are at work producing "The Best of" Destructo Video series, soon available in video stores in Little Rock. In the words of Tobias, one of the Destructo gang, "Just see if we won't." □

For more information on Destructo Video, see www.destructovideo.com.

Kay Scott is a writer and actress currently living in Iowa.

Chris Paradis of No Parking Productions.

The Ozark Foothills FilmFest

Now in its second year, this fledgling festival is proving to be a big local hit, screening a variety of films including mainstream features and documentaries. The 2003 festival ran for ten days this spring in the north central Arkansas town of Batesville, showing films at two theaters. Featured guests included Lisa Blunt, with her 2001 Academy Award-winning short film *The Accountant*, *Rolling Stone* magazine editor David Dalton, and Maureen Gosling, whose first feature documentary, *Blossom of Fire*, was screened. The festival does not accept submissions.

For more information, contact Bob Pest at (870) 251-1189 or see www.ozarkfoothillsfilmfest.org.

Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival & Institute

Since 1992, Arkansas has played host to one of the premiere documentary film festivals in the United States.

The Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival was founded cooperatively by the Southern Film Alliance and a group of Hot Springs volunteers. The 2003 festival dates are October 24 through November 2.

For information, go to www.docufilminst.org.

Arkansas Film Commission

Founded in 1979, the state film commission held its third annual Arkansas Cineposium at the Hot Springs Convention Center on March 15. Dr. Sam Grogg, dean of the American Film Institute (AFI) Conservatory, and Jerome Gary, award-winning producer and senior lecturer at AFI, were featured lecturers and guests. This event, free to residents of Arkansas, was sponsored by the film unit of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, and its many partners.

For more information, call Joe Glass, Film Unit Leader, at (501) 682-7676, or e-mail JGlass@1800Arkansas.com.

Capturing The Friedmans Online

THE MAKING OF A FILM'S WEBSITE

By Maya Churi

Almost every film that is released these days has its own website. Filmmakers, distributors, and studios have all learned the promotional value of the web when it comes to getting their films out into the world. One can go to a film's site and view trailers, read the credits, the reviews, and experience the "hype." But independent films are not *Harry Potter 1, 2, or 3*. Too much hype-oriented promotion and advertising can actually dilute from what makes independent film independent. But the right website can take a film to the next level, giving the audience a hint of what the experience of the film will be without inundating them with advertising.

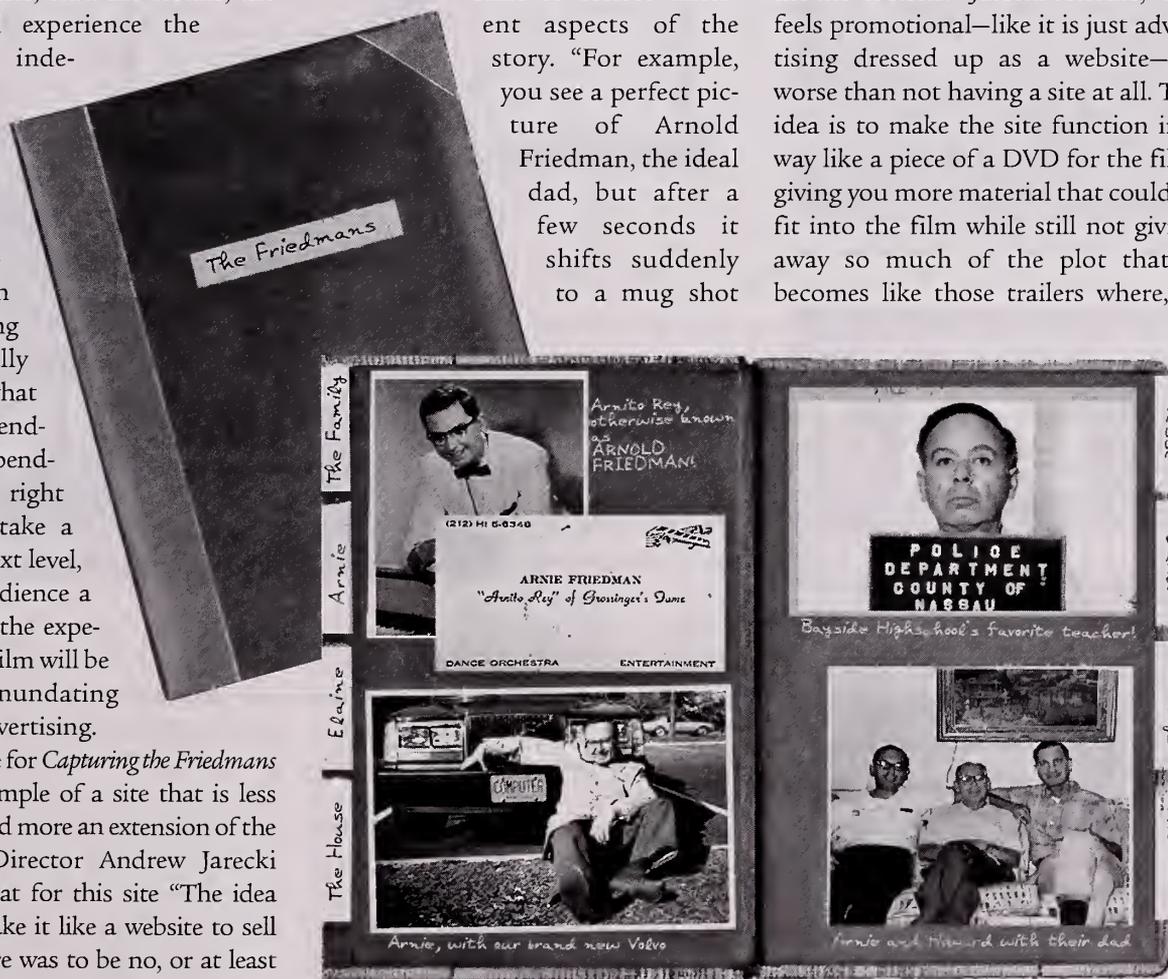
The website for *Capturing the Friedmans* is a good example of a site that is less advertising and more an extension of the film itself. Director Andrew Jarecki points out that for this site "The idea was *not* to make it like a website to sell the film. There was to be no, or at least very little, reference to normal things like the credits on the film or where it was playing or anything promotional. Rather, it was to be its own little piece of art, something to extend the viewer's

The Friedman family album on the film's website.

understanding and sense of the Friedman family." The approach to the site is simple. Since the film is about a family over the course of many years, the site is designed to resemble a photo album. But in this photo album there is audio, and the pictures change and shift to reflect different aspects of the story. "For example, you see a perfect picture of Arnold Friedman, the ideal dad, but after a few seconds it shifts suddenly to a mug shot

can change, and how one shifting image—a perfect dad instantly morphing into a convict before our eyes—tells the story."

Eugene Hernandez, editor-in-chief of *indieWIRE*, says, "I sometimes feel that promotional film websites are too focused on bells and whistles. As much as I love the internet, I quickly get very annoyed by sites that try to do too much." He continues, "The worst thing that a site can do is feel too much like an extended TV commercial. Why do sites have to be promotional? Why can't they be an extension of a film and offer a deeper insight on the movie itself?" Jarecki concurs, "If it feels promotional—like it is just advertising dressed up as a website—it's worse than not having a site at all. The idea is to make the site function in a way like a piece of a DVD for the film, giving you more material that couldn't fit into the film while still not giving away so much of the plot that it becomes like those trailers where, at



of Arnold. Sort of chilling, and it made the point that (a) not all was as it seemed in the family (and by extension in the family album), and (b) how quickly everything in our lives

the end, you feel like you've seen the whole movie in three minutes. So, the site should maintain the suspense and mystery of the film while taking the audience to new places."

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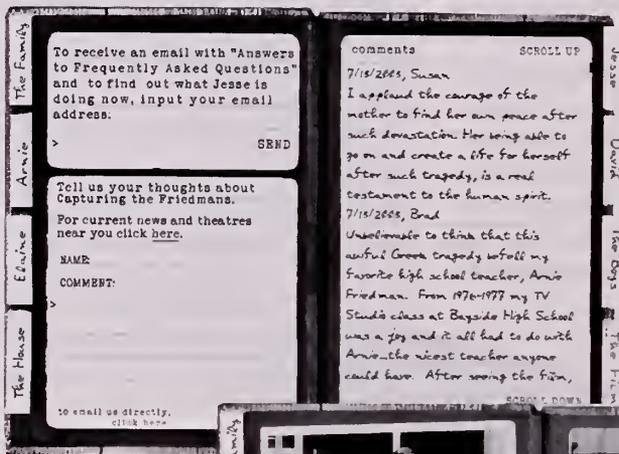
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Boogie Milivojevic, the site's designer, points out that a film website can be much more than just advertising. "When you're making a film site, you generally have much more creative freedom, at least that's the way it should be. Films themselves are works

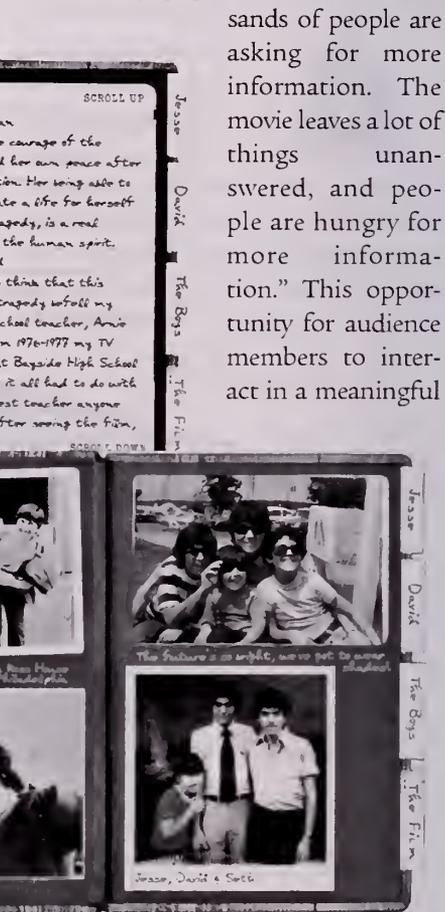
of response," he says. "It lets people write comments and read those from others, and it lets them put in their e-mail addresses "to receive some Answers to Most Frequently Asked Questions and to find out what Jesse is doing now. That is very popular now, and thou-

sands of people are asking for more information. The movie leaves a lot of things unanswered, and people are hungry for more information." This opportunity for audience members to interact in a meaningful



of art, so building the website should be a continuation of the filmmaker's craft. Andrew came up with the whole album concept, which I think is great because it allowed me to bring the whole site to the level of an interactive trailer." Jarecki explains, "Once I described the photo album idea, Boogie tapped right into it and had a million ideas immediately. Then we shared with him the many photos and other material from the film, and he started working. One of the great things about Boogie is how fast he is, and that is important because it enables you to work from prototypes he builds, and to adjust the concept and make improvements as you go."

The most important aspect of the *Capturing the Friedmans* site, for Jarecki, is its ability to get the audience talking. "Now that the film is out, the one page called 'The Film' is getting



way with the subjects has added a tremendous amount to the experience of seeing the film. Hernandez stresses, "Sites that offer the makers of a movie the opportunity to interact with website visitors are best, in my opinion. I wish more filmmakers who create sites to promote their indie work would find ways to develop an audience for their film, rather than feel like they have to create sites that rival the ones that are made by the Hollywood studios." □

To view the website, log on to www.capturingthefriedmans.com

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on an interactive web story about a gated community in Texas.

Ask the Documentary Doctor

By Fernanda Rossi



Dear Doc Doctor:

When should I start thinking of developing a marketing plan for my documentary?

How about right now? Every time you talk about your film you are publicizing it. But that does not mean you should start talking about your documentary non-stop from now on. "How are you?" is not always an invitation for an update on your film. If you are not sure whether or not you are overdoing it, look for signs from your listeners. Are they glancing at their watch every five seconds or looking glassy-eyed? Or are they asking questions and listening attentively?

Marketing your film can be a creative and adventurous journey you embark on at the same time you are nurturing and developing your film. Filmmaker Mitch Teplitzky and his documentary-in-progress *Soy Andina* (I'm Andean), come to mind as a good example. Teplitzky spent several years as marketing director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center. So it is not surprising that when he decided to make his own film, marketing was an intrinsic element of the project.

Before there was even a glimpse of a rough cut, he launched an outreach campaign with Nelida Silva, the main character of his film, and a ten-minute trailer. Each event was a fiesta that celebrated diversity and the Andean culture. Many people have attended these

events at conferences, schools, and house parties. And those same people are eagerly awaiting the release of the film—and spreading the word to others. At the fiestas, Teplitzky successfully blended fundraising and marketing.

If you, like many filmmakers, find your film all-consuming, you probably cannot imagine having the time and energy to pull off such large-scale events. If this is the case, micro-marketing, which can also have a strong impact, is probably the route for you. Think of this: Each member of your crew and each person involved in your documentary (if happy and proud of

camera informed of the progress of your film is the first step to a successful marketing campaign. If you do it creatively and in good measure, the results will surprise you.

Dear Doc Doctor:

I thought that if my film was good it would find its audience on its own, but I'm having a hard time getting my film out in the world. Does this mean that my film is bad? Or am I just a bad publicist for my film? Should I hire someone?

We have all seen bad films with great publicity succeed, good films with no publicity succeed, and films with the same combination of factors fail miserably. (But you won't get me to give you examples to save my life! I'm sure you can think of films with these various characteristics.) Good marketing is only one variable in the complex web that creates a successful film.

Each member of your crew and each person involved in your documentary (if happy and proud of his or her work) is a potential publicist for your film. Each of these people will at least invite their relatives and close friends to the premiere. That can add up to a lot of people and start a very positive word-of-mouth campaign.

his or her work) is a potential publicist for your film. Each of these people will at least invite their relatives and close friends to the premiere. That can add up to a lot of people and start a very positive word-of-mouth campaign. Everybody wants to share with an audience what they have done. This is especially true if they are showcasing their talent and skill and if they have been properly recognized for their work (in other words, paid and/or credited). Remember, to some degree it is their documentary as much as it is yours.

Keeping your relatives, friends, and all people in front of and behind the

When it comes to analyzing the reasons for your documentary's success or failure, you should never put all the emphasis on judging the value, quality, or significance of your film. Especially when you are the judge.

I think that a documentary works or doesn't because of a series of given circumstances. Timing is high on my list and targeting the right audience comes in a close second. You might argue that these are marketing decisions, and yes, they are. Whether you like it or not, you and only you are the first and real publicist of your film.



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keting strategist has the know-how, the business contacts, and a lot of experience. At the very least, you should look for a publicist who fits that description should you decide to hire one. In addition, look for a good dose of creativity in their approach, and a guerrilla spirit.

If you decide not to hire someone but have not yet shaken your self-doubt, think of the last time you convinced your friends to do something with you. And then think about all the things that you did to persuade people to get your film made. With all due respect to the publicists of the world, we all have some knowledge of how to persuade people to do things. Publicists are just better and more experienced at it. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She also leads the bimonthly Documentary Dialogues discussion group offered by AIVF (see ad on page 6). For more information, visit www.documentarydoctor.com

GreeneStreet Films

Jason Guerrasio Interviews Tim Williams

What is GreeneStreet Films?

GreeneStreet Films is a production and finance company. We mostly concentrate on films, but we do a little television as well.

When did GreeneStreet Films start?

It was begun in 1996 by John Penotti and Fisher Stevens. They both were interested in starting a company that could support artists who have a vision, commitment, and passion for filmmaking. We feel we've been successful in that, and I think it shows, as we are one of the few New York-based production companies left.

What types of projects do you seek?

It has to be something that has a good script. I think a perfect example is *In the Bedroom*. The script was just great. The director, Todd Field, had a concise idea of how to make the film. It really was just perfect for us.

Did you know Todd Field before you saw the script or did he approach GreeneStreet?

No, Good Machine passed us along his script. We had been wanting to do something with Good Machine and the script was so good we jumped right on it.

How many projects do you do on average each year?

Around two to three.

How many submissions do you receive annually?

They come in all the time and we read them constantly.

Talk a little about the review process.

First, we don't look at unsolicited

Just a Kiss Director Fisher Stevens goes over the script with actor Ron Eldard.

scripts. If a script comes to us and we all like it, the next thing we usually want to do is look at some of the work the director has done. We then talk to the director and start developing the project.

Do you fund projects in development?

The way our business is set up, we can only be involved if the project has a



producer and director already attached, and a cast [has been] put together or actors [are] interested. We aren't able to work on projects that are on the ground floor.

When you go to festivals, is it to promote your own films or are you looking to acquire?

We usually go to promote the GreeneStreet name. But we are hoping, with the start of our new international sales arm, GreeneStreet Films International, that in the future we

will start coming to festivals looking to buy films, or perhaps provide finishing funds for films that we come across and want to be involved in. But right now we are selling the name.

Are GreeneStreet and the filmmaker involved in the marketing side of a film? Does the collaboration mesh when you work with a studio?

Both GreeneStreet and the filmmaker are involved in all aspects, because it is our movie. It's a very difficult process to get a film shown and get the word out to the public; more difficult than

many may imagine. When we work with a studio, like we are doing right now with *Uptown Girls* (MGM), they're not used to working with an "outsider;" they are used to marketing their own films, but the collaboration works out. When we do something more independent, it's more challenging. A good example was marketing *Piñero*. We had to break the marketing down into different sections for it to really pay off. We starting getting the word out to the Latino communities and people involved in the world of

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poetry because we knew those would be the people most interested. Then we broadened our focus out to the main public.

Tell me a little bit about GreeneStreet's new venture, Raw Nerve.

Directors Boaz Yakin, Eli Roth, Scott Spiegel, and David J. Schow will oversee it, and its main focus will be horror films. There was a time in the



GreeneStreet Films, Inc.

9 Desbrosses St., 2F
New York, NY 10013
www.greenestreetfilms.com

Staff:

John Penotti,
cofounder, president

Fisher Stevens, cofounder

Tim Williams,
head of production

Vicki Cherkas,
head of business development

Jamie Gorden,
head of development

The Slate:

In the Bedroom,
dir. Todd Field, 2001

Piñero,
dir. Leon Ichaso, 2001

The Château,
dir. Jesse Peretz, 2001

Just a Kiss,
dir. Fisher Stevens, 2002

Raising Victor Vargas,
dir. Peter Sollett, March 2003

Uptown Girls,
dir. Boaz Yakin, August 2003

Yes,
dir. Sally Potter, TBA

Slow Burn,
dir. Wayne Beach, TBA

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1970's when films like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *The Hills Have Eyes* really touched a nerve with audiences, and we're hoping to do that, to make films that have a style of the early Wes Craven films. These four will be directing some of the projects, but they will also develop films with other filmmakers.

a different path, so I don't see that happening.

What's the most common mistake a filmmaker makes when they approach you?

I think it's when filmmakers give us scripts that are not finished. They don't cut the fat from the story, or



How many projects has GreeneStreet funded since its inception?

We've made twelve films, we've financed eight.

Was it disappointing to see Good Machine fold?

It was a shame because we loved the Good Machine label. But they had the opportunity to expand into something bigger [Focus Features]. When you have that kind of opportunity, it's hard to pass it up. It's either that or you end up like Shooting Gallery or other New York-based companies who have had to close up shop.

Could you ever see something like that happening to GreeneStreet?

Though we are similar to Good Machine in some ways, we are going in

there are grammatical errors throughout and you can tell that the person didn't put the time in. Also, you have to know the company. There are times when we get pitched a project that's similar to something we've already done. For example we've already done *In the Bedroom*, so we don't want to make it again. You'd be surprised how often that happens.

How can filmmakers make projects look more attractive?

Don't oversell the project. Let it speak for itself. Sometimes I feel like I'm in Robert Altman's *The Player* when I'm getting a project pitched to me. I don't want to feel that. The story is what I want to feel. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

Sissy Spacek in *In the Bedroom*.

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Keeping it Small, Keeping it Real

IOWA CITY'S THAW FILM FESTIVAL

By Kathryn Ramey

This April, the University of Iowa in Iowa City hosted the eighth annual Thaw Film Festival, which is dedicated to emerging film, video, and digital artists of an experimental bent. The festival follows on the heels of the grandmother of experimental film festivals, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, also located in a small Midwestern town, and also showcasing some of the best new experimental and avant-garde films from around the world. While there have been a few personnel overlaps between the two festivals over the years (and this year some films screened at both), the comparisons end there. In fact, even in the admittedly small realm of festivals that are devoted to experimental work, such as Cinematexas, Media City, the Humboldt International Short Film Festival, the Athens International Film and Video Festival, and the Telluride International Experimental Cinema Exposition, Thaw remains unusual. This is due in large part to its affiliation with the university that allows the festival to be free-of-charge, to have extensive community outreach, and, most importantly, to be dedicated to showcasing the work of emerging artists.

In addition, Thaw does not have corporate sponsors. You will find no Kodak or Avid presentations here. Funds are raised by special events within the community, with small businesses, such as the Motley Cow and Gabe's Oasis, helping out by donating supplies and hosting benefits and filmmaker and juror meals. As a result of the festival's strong relationship with the community, Thaw has an intimate, friendly feel.

Filmmakers and guests mingle with the jurors and organizers, and everybody goes into town (a three-block walk) after screenings to enjoy a hearty Midwest cheeseburger (or veggie burger, if you prefer) and beer—



lots and lots of beer.

To understand what makes Thaw so special, it's best to go back to the festival's beginnings. Lloyd Dunn, a former University of Iowa linguistics student turned multimedia maker (*The Tape-Beatles*), returned from a year in Europe in 1995 and was approached by Renee Sueppel, a friend and grad student in the university's Intermedia and Video Art Program, with the proposition that

they create a festival for experimental films. They called it Thaw, not only because it would happen in the spring, when the Midwestern winter would loosen its icy grip, but also because they wanted to celebrate their optimism about "new media" and the promise it held for lowering the barriers of entry to more commercially-centered mediums, such as film. In addition, as Dunn wrote in a recent e-mail, "The internet, and the fluidity with which people were beginning to interact using e-mail and websites, was very important in our thinking about a 'thaw'. The iceberg of big media was breaking up; we were going to build millions of active little media projects out of the remains. The computer was a possibility machine."

Sueppel and Dunn codirected the festival in 1996 and 1997, before handing over the reins to Miriam Bennett, another Intermedia graduate student, who would direct the next two festivals. During these first four years, the festival was housed in the Intermedia and Video Arts Program in the Art and Art History Department at the University of Iowa. The festival phone number was the director's home line. In 2000, due in part to an influx of volunteers from the University's Department of Cinema and Comparative Literature, and a shift in festival directors, the headquarters moved to an office space in the Institute for Cinema and Culture, where it has remained. While jurors were mainly artists, mediamakers, and theorists from Iowa City and its surrounds in the first two years of the festival, since 1998, the organizers have drawn on experimental film, video, and mediamakers and scholars from around the world.

A perusal of the programs from the last eight seasons of Thaw demonstrates two things: one, that it is the individual talents of the programming committee and the director(s) that determine the distinct character of the festival each year; and two, that

although constant changes in the constituents of the festival organizers can create different festivals—some with more of an emphasis on performance or digital work, and some like this year’s, primarily showing film and video made for the big screen—the main agenda remains the same: to focus on small, unique, idiosyncratic, and sometimes absurd projects and makers that are often neglected by larger festivals. In addition, because Thaw is, and always has been, programmed by committee, individuals push each other to really examine what makes each selection a *Thaw* selection. “On a couple of occasions we realized that we had been debating a particular work’s merits for like fifteen minutes at least, and we decided immediately that the work in question would be included simply for generating such fervent dialogue. I’d like to believe that those films and videos represent the true essence of Thaw,” former codirector Kent Lambert remarks.

This year’s festival, although primarily composed of films and videos, included the kind of eclectic programming that Thaw is known for. Film formats ranged from Super 8 to 35mm, with digital video, VHS, Beta and one CD-ROM work. There was a remarkable mix from Siegfried Fruhauf’s superbly minimalist 35mm piece, *Realtime*, to Brian Coffey’s haunting dual-projector Super 8 performance, *gatefold ephemera*. The video *4U Britney*, by Sarah Irene Skapin, celebrated the absurdity of pop culture queen Britney Spears, while the con-

tributions *Security Anthem*, from Lambert, and *RE: THE OPERATION*, Paul Chan’s video, explored the ludicrousness of recent US government policy. While there were a few works that had screened at festivals earlier in the year—Thomas Draschan’s 16mm film *Yes? Oui? Ja?*, which showed in October at the New York Film Festival’s Views from the Avant-Garde, or Robert Todd’s *Trauma Victim*, which was awarded at Ann Arbor this year—their juxtaposition with works such as Steve Reinke’s video *Amsterdam Camera Vacation*, or a video by Animal Charm, helped bring



out new aspects of their brilliance.

This was the first year that Thaw did not offer awards to specific films. “For many years now, the US has been under the sway of an ideology constructing competition as an obviously, unquestionably, good thing. I see Thaw as an event for which that isn’t the case. This year we wanted to see what it would be like if films were in cooperation, rather than in competition,” explains Louis Schwartz, a member of the faculty of the Cinema and Comparative Literature department and longtime festival collaborator. Even though there was no juried competition this year, visiting filmmakers Ip Yuk-Yiu and Niaomi Uman, and curator Ralph McKay of Sixpack Films, presented shows of their work,

or in McKay’s case, work from the Sixpack collection, and functioned as unofficial jurors, handing out their own RED, GREEN, and BLUE awards to films they especially enjoyed.

Although the festival is small, located in a fairly out-of-the-way place, and does not offer major market exposure, many filmmakers made the trek and found their efforts worthwhile. While the programming was excellent, the enjoyment of the attendees was due in large part to the efforts of festival organizers. Particularly codirector Ofer Eliasz and visitor coordinator Caitlin Horsman’s incredible efforts during the festival to keep things on track, and feed and entertain their guests. They even scheduled a “thrift adventure” with local second-hand guru John Freyer, visiting the most exceptional thrift stores in the region. And true to its college-town roots, the closing-night party was a kegger at Louis Schwartz’s house that went on until the wee hours of the morning.

This year’s festival had over three hundred applicants, nearly double last year’s count, according to Horsman. She points to this and other shifts, such as the creation of a university-based board of advisors and the move away from having a digital show, as evidence that Thaw is going through its “gawky teenage years” and beginning to develop “institutional memory” while remaining committed to the work of emerging artists. Previous codirector Jason Livingston comments, “Basically, [Thaw] is an evolving debate, and I hope it stays lively.” □

Kathryn Ramey is a filmmaker and anthropologist-in-training based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She would like to thank Sasha Waters and John Freyer for hosting her during her stay at the festival.

Facing Page: Thomas Draschan’s 16mm *Yes? Oui? Ja?* screened at this year’s Thaw Film Festival. Above: John Freyer, local second-hand guru, takes festival attendees Ralph MacKay, Brian Coffey and Sasha Waters on a “thrift adventure” in his Ford LTD.

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Some Things Stay the Same

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

By Sandy Spencer

The Human Rights Watch International Film Festival (HRWIFF), now in its sixteenth year, has never looked better. The same can hardly be said for the international human rights landscape that the festival's program addresses.

The festival was launched in New York in 1988, the first of its kind. Born out of the inspiration of Irene Diamond, a member of Human Rights Watch's board of directors, renowned for her creative work in Hollywood on *Barefoot in the Park* and *Casablanca*, HRWIFF got off to a shaky start. In 1991, the festival, reinvigorated, found a home at Loew's Cinema on 3rd Street in New York, and picked up its current director, Bruni Burres. "I'd worked as an associate producer on a couple of films that never got finished," says Burres. "I was working for a British/German distribution company in New York when the opportunity came up."

In the thirteen years Burres has been heading it, the festival has moved uptown to its current location at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater and burgeoned into an international operation. This year, in addition to the two-week-long run in New York, which fills twelve thousand seats, HRWIFF will field another primary festival in London, a thirty-five-venue US traveling festival, a high school outreach program, and a slate of fiction and nonfiction works destined for broadcast and theatrical release.

With over five hundred submissions this year alone, and fiction and Brigadier General Romeo Dallaire in Steven Silver's *The Last Just Man*.

nonfiction work on film and video in the final program representing the output of producers and directors from eighteen different countries, HRWIFF has established its credentials within the film community. But



that wasn't the case fourteen years ago. "Filmmakers were reluctant to submit their work to screen at the festival in 1991. They thought they'd be pigeonholed and didn't want their first screening in New York to be limited by the topic," Burres says.

While filmmakers' views of the festival have changed, HRWIFF has continued to hold to its mandate to "put a human face on threats to individual freedom and dignity." Year after year, different themes emerge depending on the current climate, Burres says. In 2003, the international refugee crisis and accountability for past atrocities loom large. But the primary qualification is always the excellence of the work.

And while the majority of works programmed originate in the US, Palestinian and Israeli filmmakers ranked directly behind Americans in the number of films contributed to the festival. Any significance there? No, says Burres. "We choose films that are artistically done and professionally shot, but also deal with human rights issues."

That balance between craft and the utter horror of the issue addressed is illustrated tellingly in a Canadian documentary *The Last Just Man*, by Steven Silver. The film uses extra-tight, dramatically-lit shots of its subject, Brigadier General Romeo Dallaire, a

UN peacekeeper and career soldier, as he recounts the slaughter of 800,000 Tutsis in Rwanda over the course of one hundred days, and his own inability to persuade the UN to intervene or to protect the victims from slaughter.

As the camera carefully explores the artifacts decorating the general's Ottawa home, Dallaire tell us that when he came back from Rwanda, he did a lot of talking: to friends, politicians, and on the lecture circuit. "That's what you're supposed to do," he says, "to get over it." The camera tracks over a hoe, then a machete on the General's side-table. Dallaire says that when he had trouble getting across to an audience what he had wit-

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nessed, he would put a watermelon on the podium and smash it repeatedly with the machete. Tight on the General's face again, we see the intense pain as he says: "That made the point. And that's why I failed. I made the point after, not during."

Silver skillfully reconstructs the horrifying events of those hundred days with a jumpy, fast-cut style, relentlessly building a case against the UN Security Council, and the US in particular, for their failure to react. It is great storytelling and a wrenching story. After his return from Rwanda, Dallaire, a tough and hugely resourceful leader now racked with guilt, tried twice to kill himself. The film ends with another tight shot of Dallaire's rugged face as a tear winds its way down his cheek. It's hard not to be touched.

The question of whether these works can go beyond just affecting an audience and make a wider political difference is answered briskly by Deborah Shaffer. "Of course," she says. Shaffer, an Academy Award-winner for her film *Witness to War* and recipient of this year's Irene Diamond Lifetime Achievement Award, was one of the founders of First Run Features in 1980, arguably the first US distributor of domestic independent work. She was also among the original members of the Newsreel Collective (now Third World Newsreel, whose thirty-fifth anniversary was celebrated during the festival.) It was on the streets of Washington and New York, in the protests and actions of the sixties, that Shaffer learned her craft. She reiterates Burres' criterion: "I think audiences care more about the subject than they do about the craft, but it still matters a whole lot to me. I'm personally interested in documentaries that open up a new language for documentary filmmaking."

Asylum, directed by Sandy McLeod, a former MTV producer, and executive produced by Shaffer, makes her point. Telling the story of Baba, a young Ghanian woman seeking

refuge in the US from a domineering father who tries to force genital mutilation on her, *Asylum* intercuts fast-paced narrative with cut-frame close-ups of Baba. The beat is definitely more MTV than *Frontline* and doesn't shy away from dramatizing Baba's testimony. Responding to a suggestion from an audience member at a Q&A following a screening that female circumcision might be culturally akin to male circumcision and therefore somehow acceptable, the filmmakers shot back, "This isn't circumcision. This is having your penis cut off."

The centerpiece of a pre-festival benefit, *In This World*, directed by Michael Winterbottom (*Welcome to Sarajevo*, *24 Hour Party People*), raises questions about the practice of creating these films. The piece blends fictional narrative with actual fact in a "semi-documentary" to produce a compelling account of the grueling and ultimately fatal journey undertaken by two Afghans in their search for asylum in the UK. While completely satisfying as a film, *In This World* leaves a viewer with the question: How much of this is real? Where's the line?

There is no question about the authenticity of the festival's double bill of Ditsi Carolino's *Life on the Tracks*, and Giuseppe Pettito and Enrico Pizianti's *Sanpeet*. The Italian filmmakers responsible for *Jung*, shown at HRWIFF two years ago, put their audience slap-in-the-middle of the lives of an impoverished Thai family and their tiny seven-year-old son, Sanpeet. "We called him Sanpeet (poison) so people would be frightened of him," the boy's mother says. Sanpeet competes in local kickboxing matches with boys his own age but often far his superior by weight. There are no official prizes, but there is much money to be made and lost on the betting that accompanies these all-out fights. Here, subtle craft and a dynamic little boy offset the despair weighing on his mother and the community in which she struggles to raise her family.

Amazingly, given its bleak subject, *Life on the Tracks* has a raw streak of humor running through it. The source of this humor is Eddie Renomeron, who lives with his wife and five children in a shack literally inches from Manila's suburban rail tracks. Eddie's running battles with Pen, his wife, over his drinking, and

percent of *Witness to War's* \$180,000 budget in 1984," she says. "They wouldn't do that now. . . Everybody's less willing to take a risk."

"Conditions have never been more difficult for getting these films made and seen in today's political and economic climate," she remarked in her



his wry, on-camera commentary make watching the decline of the Renomerons, from having nothing at all to having even less, almost bearable.

HRWIFF's close ties to Human Rights Watch—it is a fully incorporated extension of the not-for-profit—makes the other twenty or so heart-wrenching works in the program watchable, too. Because there is, at least, some immediate action an individual can take on exiting the theater: Join HRW and support the organization's work worldwide.

For the filmmakers, the opportunity to reach audiences beyond the festival can be a soul-gratifying return on their commitment, but, according to Shaffer, there is little help in getting work made. "PBS funded over eighty

acceptance speech at the Irene Diamond Award ceremony. "The National Endowment for the Humanities recently turned down a proposal for a series on the history of the struggle for women's rights in [the US], saying that they were not going to fund any films about 'victims' this year."

But the images, fictionalized or actual, on view at this year's Human Rights Watch Film Festival continue to disturb long after the lights go up.

With hundreds of thousands added to the list of victims of human rights abuse each year, and a stubborn refusal by the US government to consent to the jurisdiction of an international human rights court, the question still nags: Are the right people watching these films? □

For more information on the festival and its partners, or to become a member of HRW, visit www.hrw.org/iff.

Sandy Spencer is deputy director at AIVF and an occasional documentary filmmaker.

Sanpeet Petnonnoi, from *Poison (Sanpeet)*, by Giuseppe Petitto, Enrico Pizianti, and Gianluca Pulcini

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ON THE EDGE



The Strange World of "Amer



From *American Splendor*'s first shots, you know you are watching something unusual: It's Halloween, 1950, and the neighborhood runts are trick-or-treating, all done up as their favorite superheroes—except for one rebellious runt, who has stubbornly donned his street clothes. "I'm Harvey Pekar," he tells a curious neighbor. "I ain't no superhero, lady. I'm just a kid from the neighborhood. Why does everyone have to be so stupid?" And with that, he stamps a foot and turns his angry, prepubescent back on the festivities.

Marching away, the pint-sized rebel morphs into his adult self—played to slouching perfection by Paul Giamatti—as the drab Cleveland street takes on a cartoon-like frame, the image transformed into a moving comic book. For the moment, it resembles a scene from other comic book-inspired movies like *Ghost World* or any of the superhero genre that use such techniques as the thought bubble—but not for long. "My name is Harvey Pekar," a

exactly like anything we've seen before. Then again, it's a biographical film about a comic book writer made by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini, the husband-and-wife filmmaking team best known for their documentaries, so what the hell? "We knew we wanted to include Harvey in the movie, because he was such an overwhelming character," says co-writer and co-director Berman, at the Yarrow Hotel's coffee shop in Park City, just hours before winning the Sundance Grand Jury Prize. "Being that we'd worked in both documentaries and narratives, we felt a weird comfort moving between the two."

The resulting film—about the life and work of a file clerk who finds love, family, and a creative life by documenting his everyday existence in a series of comic books—moves seamlessly between biopic, documentary, and animated comic book to create a new form. But what exactly is it? Pulcini says that in a *Variety* article written during Sundance, it was called "phantasmagorical." "Phantasmagoria," Berman corrects

and Wonderful ican Splendor"

By Andrea Meyer

cartoon character tells us, as credits appear over drawings of residential streets. "Different artists draw me. But I'm also a real guy."

Giamatti walks through the cartoon version of the scene, and the narration continues: "And now this guy is playing me in a movie." Cut to a stylized, but live-action, sound stage. The guy's still talking, only now he's real and sitting in a chair answering questions. He's the real Harvey Pekar, author of the comic book series *American Splendor*, and he's being interviewed as part of the movie. And Giamatti (*Happiness*, *Confidence*) is playing him in the dramatized bits. Cut to a scene in a doctor's office that has comic book-style titles, and there's Pekar's voice again. "Here's our man. Or, alright, here's me—or the guy playing me, anyway. Only he doesn't look anything like me."

For the audience, the fun has just begun. Right off it's funny and it's self-referential, but beyond that, this documentary-meets-narrative-meets-comic-book flick isn't

him, "which I think is the best word I've ever heard. We didn't realize we were doing something that required a new name, so we didn't think about it."

In one sense, it's a biopic—a biographical picture with actors playing out a real person's life. "I love the biopic," Berman says. "But one of their big problems is that they tend to be about people who are really famous, so you bring all these conceptions into it. You see an actor that doesn't really look like the person, for example, and the story is very straightforward, informational. Bob and I are much more interested in stories about people whose names aren't household words, sort of fringe characters. You have more freedom in doing the movie because people won't go, 'Wait! What about the time when Frank Sinatra was married to Ava Gardner? They left that out.'"

Berman and Pulcini originally came to the project through producer Ted Hope, then at Good Machine, who owned the rights to Pekar's comics. "Ted Hope called us one day and said, 'I have this project that's very close to my heart and I think you guys are perfect for it,'" explains Pulcini, who also edited the film. "He started sending us

Harvey Pekar (above) playing himself and Paul Giamatti playing Harvey Pekar in *American Splendor*.

comic books. He also had this tape of Harvey's appearances on Letterman, and once we saw it, we thought this is something we could wrap our heads around." After spending a weekend with Pekar, his wife, Joyce, and daughter Danielle—hanging out, cruising around Cleveland, listening to records—the writer/directors were hooked.

As filmmakers responsible for such documentaries as *Off the Menu: The Last Days of Chasen's* and *The Young and the Dead*, Berman and Pulcini know about going into a film with no clue what they'll end up with. "That's part of what's great about the documentary process," says Berman. "You start to ask questions, and you allow the subject to lead you in a direction. We were open-minded."

That seems like a great plan, but narrative features tend to require a script, and they tend to require financial backing, which is often easier to achieve with a solid game plan. When they originally went around to potential producers pitching the project, Berman and Pulcini had no script and a fairly unusual concept. "Most places thought it was a little off-the-wall," Berman recalls. Then they pitched it to Maud Nadler, vice president of HBO Films, the division responsible for such recent HBO original productions as *Real Women Have Curves* and *If These Walls Could Talk*. "We walked out of the room, and about fifteen minutes later Ted called on the cell phone and said, 'I don't know what you guys said, but Maud wants to do this movie,'" says Berman. "It was remarkable. A huge risk and a remarkable leap of faith that HBO made."

"I had seen their documentaries and was a big fan," says Nadler. "And they understood Harvey like I thought I understood Harvey. I thought it was worth a shot. We live for strange mixes at HBO. I wasn't quite sure what it was going to be, but I figured we would figure that out in the process."

The next step toward figuring out what the film would be was writing a script, which Berman and Pulcini pulled off in three weeks. A first draft got the project greenlit by HBO and they were off and running, but they still weren't sure in which direction. "We wrote the script to give us a road map, but it didn't mean we were tied to what was on the page," says Berman. "The film was conceived and scripted to include natural breaks in the narrative, and we would write a documentary sequence and a wish list of what we would try to get from Harvey, and sometimes it was fairly close, and sometimes it was completely off."

According to the filmmakers, part of what drew them to the project was the idea of a man documenting his unremarkable daily life, before the existence of home video or reality-TV, in a medium once reserved for the remarkable. "I always wonder," says Pulcini. "With all the media and all these cameras everywhere, what really is an authentic document of what life is like? Where do you find it? Obviously not reality-TV shows, not movies. I think there's a case to be made for *American Splendor* being a really authentic document of one person's interior voice and his struggles and

his daily existence."

If the popularity of reality-TV is any barometer, audiences are interested in entering the lives of ordinary people, and Pekar is exactly that: an ordinary guy—a cranky, cynical, ordinary guy with an unglamorous job and a permanent scowl on his face—whose unlikely artistic achievement managed to bring him an extraordinary amount of attention. And *American Splendor* the movie elevates this particular ordinary guy to something of an Everyman hero. "I saw Harvey as a patron saint of every creative soul who's stuck in a dead-end job," says Pulcini. "And the fact that he found a medium in which to express himself is kind of heroic. He found a way to make his life special in a very unlikely way."

"He's a great example of these invisible Americans who are out there," Berman adds. "Many of them are self-educated, not working, working blue-collar jobs, but they're bright and have so much to offer. Harvey's one of the most well-read people I know. He can speak ad nauseum about literature, his knowledge of music is encyclopedic, but he's a working-class guy through and through. Harvey is the ultimate working-class intellectual, and we don't usually see people like that in the movies."

Judging from the response to the film at Sundance, as well as at Cannes and other regional festivals, audiences are ready to embrace Pekar's story, as unconventional as it may be. Everyone involved with the film—from the filmmakers to executives at HBO and Fine Line Pictures, the company distributing the film—is counting on it. "The audience for *American Splendor* is out there," says Nadler. "And we're going to place it in enough theaters so hopefully they will discover it. I'm banking on word-of-mouth. All I had to worry about was making a good film and then hoping it would get into a festival, and it got into the best one in the US—Sundance. As soon as we saw how people responded there, I figured we were on a pretty good road."

Festivals have been an essential part of marketing the film. "You have an audience that's interested in cinema. Oftentimes, you have the filmmakers and the talent at the festival, so you get to do a lot of interviews. To have a Q&A with the filmmakers after a screening makes you like it so much more," says Marian Koltai-Levine, executive vice president of marketing at Fine Line, explaining the decision to screen the film at regional festivals all summer. "It's something that most arthouse distributors employ as a tool, because it's not only cost-effective, but you get your talent out into the local areas. That makes a huge difference and creates a lot of good will because a lot of these markets don't travel their journalists."

Gearing up for theatrical release, the marketing of the film has shifted. For example, the trailer began to appear in theaters in New York and Los Angeles in early June 2003. It notably does not include any of the documentary segments. "Structurally and cinematically it's a very unusual

film, given that there is some documentary and some narrative information,” Koltai-Levine says. “In a trailer, it’s extremely difficult to convey two messages. The most important message is that it’s a narrative film, and number two, that it’s entertaining. We’re starting on a platform release and we roll out. You have to give it that breathing time to let it start the word-of-mouth. We believe very strongly in the reviews and in the word-of-mouth. And as everything keeps going, I think it will get better and better.”

Pulcini adds. “At times he can be so sentimental. You can get a lump in your throat reading some of his stories, and then he can be really cruel, yelling at people. And he can be completely impossible to be around. But that’s what’s wonderful. He has a whole world of emotions that are represented in his comics.”

What is perhaps most endearing about Pekar’s story is that his comics brought him not only creative satisfaction and a fan base, but it was also through them that he met his wife,



Nadler also believes that word-of-mouth is the driving force behind the marketing of this unconventional yet extremely likeable film. She also feels that Pekar’s involvement has become an unexpected bonus in building enthusiasm. “Everywhere we show it, it seems to really resonate,” she says. “I don’t know what other word explains what happens with audiences when they see this movie. They totally get Harvey. It’s mind-boggling how much everyone wants to talk to him, press specifically. We had to pull people away.”

Pekar is an unusual character whose story has led to an unusual film. His life resonates with audiences because he has had the ability to transform a seemingly ordinary existence into something transcendent. “Harvey’s world is drab,” says Berman. “It rains, it snows, forgotten warehouses, urban landscape, and yet his life is full of all these colorful characters. And Harvey has this artist’s soul. He can observe it. He can look around and see the beauty in his co-workers in the file room. That’s his artistry.”

How do the filmmakers define Pekar’s worldview? “He’s a sentimental pessimist,” says Berman. “It’s complicated,”

Joyce, and his adoptive daughter, Danielle. “Comic books saved his life,” says Pulcini. “It was through comics that he found a life. There’s something amazing about someone who expresses his entire interior life, and then through that manages to pull a family together. It’s amazing.”

Just as Pekar’s life amazes, there seems to be something amazing about the movie of his life. “This is the weirdest thing—most surreal thing,” Berman says. “Our call time on the first day of the shoot was 4:30 in the morning, and it was the height of these meteor showers that happen once every hundred years or thousand years.”

“On the news they were saying, if you can get up at 4:30 in the morning, you’ll see the meteor showers,” Pulcini explains. “And it was our call time, so we were all outside watching these incredible meteor showers.”

“You see it in movies sometime,” says Berman. “The sky is twinkling and it was like, ‘Okay, let’s start making the movie.’” Did they consider it an auspicious sign? “Either that or just something bizarre,” she says. “It was like, ‘We’re about to start doing something very unusual.’” ■

Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini, directors of *American Splendor*. Paul Giamatti and Sylvia Kauders in *American Splendor*.

Andrea Meyer covers film for Interview, Time Out New York, indieWIRE, and the New York Post. She also reports on relationships and celebrities for Glamour.



Publicity from Day One

GETTING YOUR FILM NOTICED AT FESTIVALS

By R.J. Millard

Whether it's Sundance or Seattle, Outfest or Newfest, film festivals are a powerful marketing platform for independent films. But many filmmakers, especially first-time filmmakers, do not fully take advantage of these opportunities created by festivals. Too often filmmakers make the mistake of thinking that the real work in making a film is, well, making the film. But as difficult as shooting an independent film is, it is about love and passion, or should be. The *real* work begins after the film is completed and it is time to get the project sold, covered, and most importantly, seen. You can make this job a lot easier if you start working on it long before you get into your festival.

The Complete PR Package

PRESS KIT: Complete with a synopsis, biographies on the featured actors and key creatives, a complete cast and crew list, and contact information for the press contact or filmmaker contact. Make sure the biographies have been updated from those acquired during production. Check the contractals to ensure the proper billing order for each of your cast and crew members as well.

STILLS OR SLIDES: A selection of at least two to three images taken by your still photographer on set. If you are only providing either slides or prints, provide slides. Most publications can take a color slide and turn it into a black-and-white image, never the reverse. Be sure to include a shot of the director as well. Caption each image with the names of the actors and the characters they play beginning

on the left. Choose shots that are visually interesting and have key cast members interacting. The press love pretty people.

ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT (EPK): A selection of two to three clips from the film running anywhere from thirty to ninety seconds in length. Take the best scenes between your lead cast members. The scene should begin and end within that time frame as well so it will remain intact when being shown as part of a television piece. Do not include nudity or profanity, because many press outlets cannot use this content. If you have a trailer or promotional reel of the film, you may want to include these as well, but don't give the press anything you do not want them to run.

On the set

If you're ambitious enough to write a script, raise God knows how much money, and sift through countless contracts and release forms, you also need to be ambitious enough to build money into your budget for a unit publicist and on-set still photographer. These people will be invaluable in helping you promote your film once it is finished. Too often, filmmakers decide these are either too expensive or too time consuming to worry about. But if you don't have photos or a press kit, you will seriously hurt your chances of getting press coverage later.

The photographer

Ideally, you should book a professional photographer to be on set for the entire shoot, but unless you can call in a favor, a full-time set photographer can be expensive. To save money, consider hiring the photographer for a few key days. These should be days when the main cast is working and shooting together. If you cannot afford to pay a photographer, check with local arts schools and universities. Budding photographers will often do set shoots for expenses to help build their portfolio. Avoid the compromise of having a friend with a camera show up every now and then to take snapshots. These inevitably turn out to be images more fit for the family photo album than a press kit.

A good photographer will come with a blimp to shield your camera from the sounds of the still camera. This will protect the integrity of each scene and allow you to continue working unobstructed throughout the day. If they do not have a blimp, instruct them to do the on-the-set shots during rehearsal takes. Make sure the cast is in full dress.

POSTERS/MINI-POSTERS/POSTCARDS: Take the time to hire a graphic designer to put together a key art image for your film. Many design students are looking for projects to start on if you don't have the money to hire a firm or an accomplished artist. The key is to create a single image which will position your film to an audience. Some festivals will create a display of all the film posters, and others will put the poster up at the theater where your film is playing. Either way, it is the beginning of recognition for your film. These also make great giveaways. Typical size for poster is 28" x 40", mini-posters are usually 14" x 20" and postcards are 4" x 6" or 5" x 7".

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS: These can be tacky, but effective. I still remember the wig-and-makeup kit for *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*. Look inside your movie to find something iconic and simple that represents the nature of the project, whether it is a simple Polaroid picture, a couple of sticks

It is essential to have the cast interacting and not just posing in front of the camera. There should be action in the stills for the same reason you want action in your film's shots—because it is more compelling. When shooting two actors together, make sure the photographer is able to get them in profile. There should also be 3/4 shots of each cast member. In addition, be sure to get photos of all the key creatives, including directors, producers, writers, and even cinematographers. There are publications and organizations for each of these fields, so promoting members of the off screen team is vital to broadening the appeal and coverage of your film.

When the photographer delivers the prints, it is a good idea for you to go through the shots and discard anything that is embarrassing or undesirable. Later, when you're working with higher profile casts, the actors will have kill rights over photography, so you might as well start paying attention to the photos from the start.



TIP

If you cannot afford to pay a photographer, check with local arts schools and universities. Budding photographers will often do set shoots for expenses to help build their portfolio.

The unit publicist

Yes, publicists talk a lot, and sometimes they are full of shit, but they are also really good at it. There are probably thirty or so accomplished publicists working independently in the film arena. The trick is finding one who you work well with

tied together, or a pair of handcuffs. These are certainly the most expendable items to take to a festival, but they are also the ones people really want to have.

SCREENERS: The dreaded question for every filmmaker—whether or not to provide the festival (or anyone, for that matter) a copy of your film on tape or DVD is really a matter of personal choice. The ideal situation is, of course, to have the press, the industry, and the audience see the film on the screen, but there is no way everybody can see every film. Even at Sundance, with all-day screenings and two press-screening locations, the most eager journalist can only see about 58 out of the 115 feature films in the festival. If you do not have any screeners available, you run the risk that somebody who you want to view your film will not be able to. So even if you choose not to leave screeners with the press office, it is a good idea to have a couple of tapes on hand at the festival to give out personally.

and who you feel comfortable entrusting your film to.

You need to be realistic about what a publicist can do for you while you are still shooting. If there are well-known people in your film, a publicist may be able to get the project covered by electronic outlets or specialty print publications. If there are not any names associated with the project, the main thing a publicist can offer is their knowledge of how to build a press kit. If a publicist claims to be able to get a film full of unknowns into *The New York Times*, you should seriously question if he knows what he is doing.

The level and extent of the work to be done will determine the cost of hiring a unit publicist. On one hand, a simple press kit can be written for about \$1,000. If you cannot afford this, you may choose to act as your own unit publicist and create your own press kit (see page 48). On the other hand, having a publicist on set day after day, interviewing the actors, hiring a camera crew to shoot behind-the-scenes footage, and garnering national press coverage will push your costs over the \$10,000 mark pretty quickly.

When hiring publicists, ask them what they think they can bring to the table, in addition to telling them your own expectations. If there is a great discrepancy between what you want and what a publicist can offer, you may want to meet with a couple of other publicists to get their take on your film. It may turn out that your expectations are not realistic given the number of films that are made each year and the number of pages of press available to cover film. It also may turn out that the first person you met with just wasn't entirely inspired by the material.



TIP

Think of hiring a publicist as another round of casting.

The master plan

Some seasoned filmmakers plan their production schedules around festivals such as Sundance, Cannes, and Toronto. In the US, the majority of directors are looking for a berth at Sundance, because it has a reputation as an annual feeding frenzy for acquisitions and a feast for the press. While all these festivals are obviously wonderful places to launch a film, the problem is that they can only take a limited number of films. Plus, they have become so large that even award winners can get lost in the crowd.

So depending on when your film is ready (according to whatever criteria you determine), start planning your festival run. As early as the first day of production, start looking into festivals you want to submit your film to, and ones you can pass on. Every festival is different, so you will need to tailor the strategy for introducing your film to the industry, the press, and the world to the specific festival.

The larger festivals cost upwards of \$5 million dollars to produce, which is more than many of the films featured in them. They also have a reputation to protect. Certain festivals accept certain types of films. Target the festivals you really want to be in, and push to get into those first. Do not give away your world premiere to a lesser festival until you have gotten a "no" from your A-list of festivals. *The Independent* lists festival deadlines in the magazine (see page 59) and on our website, www.aivf.org, and the *Variety* website runs a good year-round list of festivals at www.variety.com.



TIP

If there is a festival you really feel your film is right for, go the extra mile. If possible, cultivate relationships with the programmers, call in favors, and even consider hiring a producer's rep or sales agent who has a history with the festival to help grease the wheels.

Even though the profiles of some festivals may be greater than others, there is value in each and every festival. If your goal is to sell your film to a national distributor, you should go after major industry-attended events such as Sundance, Cannes, and Toronto. But do not overlook regional festivals such as Seattle, Los Angeles, TriBeCa, Hamptons, and Chicago. They attract a select number of buyers each year as well. Equally important are the niche festivals such as Frameline, UrbanWorld, Big Apple Anime Film Festival, and Los Angeles Latino, which bring in acquisitions execs looking for genre or specialized films. If you have made a film that fits into such a category, do not shy away from showing it in an event targeted to your audience. These are events where you will find people who are truly interested in seeing your work and appreciate it most. Films can speak for themselves only when they are seen.

The Path to Glory

Once you have been accepted into a festival, there is even more work to do. The festival will make the announcement of which films are playing. The first rule is to not take it upon yourself to make this announcement for them. This is guaranteed to irritate the festival personnel, which puts you in a very bad position to start asking for things. And believe me, you are going to be asking a lot from the festival publicist and press office from this time forward.

The first thing *you* will need to do is find yourself a publicist. If you hired one to do your unit work and thought they were great, find out if they are interested in working with you again and if they have ever worked the festival you are premiering at. If not, you may want to meet with a cou-

ple of other people. Do not put this off. The sooner you hire a publicist, the longer they can work on promoting your film. The size of the festival and the number of films the publicist is handling will be determining factors in both the publicist's fee and how much time they will devote to you and your project. If you are premiering at a large festival, it is possible that the best publicist for your film will be handling six or more films. In this case, you may decide that even though you have a great rapport with them, you want to go with a smaller firm or someone with fewer projects who can devote more time to you.

The next step in preparing to embark on a festival run is to put together the materials necessary to gain the greatest amount of exposure possible. Most festivals will have a list of the type and number of materials they will need from you so that they can pass them on to the press.

It's important to check in with the festival's publicist, or have your own publicist do so, to see what materials are needed and get them to the festival on time and in the hands of the right people. The press office is an important conduit between your film and the press, even if you have a publicist. Journalists will not only pick up the material you provide from the press office, it is also where they will go if they do not know how to contact you. Depending on the number of years the festival has been around and on the event's infrastructure, the press office will be either a highly organized machine or a small sweatshop of promotion and publicity for the event. As a general rule, older events have more organized press offices because they have had more practice.

At some festivals, a publicist will be assigned to each section, and at others there will be one major publicist and additional administrative staff. Figure out the structure early on and make sure you are dealing with the right person. At an event that can be screening from fifty to two hundred other films, the last thing you want to do is get lost, and it is your responsibility to prevent that, not the festival's.

Start by contacting the festival press office again and get a list of the accredited press to get a sense of who is attending the event. People who are not attending are not likely to cover the event, so it is of little use calling everyone at *Entertainment Weekly* when there are specific writers, critics, and editors assigned to cover the festival.



TIP

When contacting the press, bear in mind that since you have their information, so do the two hundred other filmmakers. Be very brief, very polite, and very interesting.

Next, plan out which press make the most sense to you for your needs. If you're looking to sell your picture, be sure to target the industry and trade press, as everyone is going to be reading them to find out (ugh) "what's the buzz?" or "what's hot?" *Variety* and *Hollywood Reporter* do special issues on many of the festivals around the world and they are the most direct line to acquisitions execs short of hiring a producer's rep. Both publications publish their special issues calendars online. Find out who the editor is and supply him or her with a brief synopsis and key cast and crew list, as well as one or two photos to consider. Ask for their assigning deadline and follow up about one to two weeks short of it to remind them of your project and see if they need anything else. The usual answer will be "no," but in the action of calling you will put the name of your film back in their minds at decision time.

If you're looking for general exposure, go the route of the bigger publications like *Premiere* or the daily newspapers. These publications are harder to get into without any celebrity cast members, but many will bring in business writers to follow trends or trail a filmmaker on the path to glory. Find out who they are and make friends with them through e-mail or by sending materials via messenger or FedEx.

A publicist will take over most of this work if you choose to hire one. This is what publicists do for a living. And since they have done it for countless films before yours, they not only know what the journalists are looking for, but also know the journalists personally. They know what to send, to whom, and when.

So, to make full use of the opportunity your festival premiere offers your film, start planning during production, set a festival plan into action, prepare all the necessary materials, hire a publicist to do the work for you, and remember, at the end of the day, it's just a film festival. ▣



TIP

Make sure the festival publicist sees your film prior to the event. They can't talk about what they haven't seen, and most of them are lucky if they get to even a handful of films.

The master plan (redux)

After all the materials have been made and the publicists have been hired, it is time to start pitching and pitching. It's necessary to start the ball rolling well in advance of the festival. By the time the event rolls around, the preview pieces that tell audience members what to see have been printed, the special issues have been distributed, and journalists have made their schedules for the entire event.

R.J. Millard is the vice president of publicity and marketing for IDP Distribution. Prior to joining IDP, Millard was the press officer for the Sundance Film Festival and the marketing and publicity director for the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival.

Building a Killer Press Kit

By Phil Hall

The press kit is the most important tool for any filmmaker seeking media coverage, but many independent film press kits are either overstuffed with irrelevant information or seriously lacking vital data.

The killer press kit does not have to be elaborate, nor does it require fancy packaging and gimmicks. All it needs is basic, clear content providing the right amount of facts and background. Let's go page-by-page and see what it takes to make the perfect press kit.

Part One: The cover. This obviously starts with the title of the film plus the name of the production company and/or distributor, the director, and (if applicable) name-value cast members. If the film has won awards or was an official selection at an A-list film festival, you can list these. If the film snagged a knockout quote from a major film critic or media outlet, you can also include that. The bottom of the page should list the contact information for the production company and/or distributor, the film's sales rep (if it is still being marketed for pick-up), and the press contact (if an outside agency is being used for the PR campaign).

Part Two: This is devoted to the cast and crew data. And yes, it is only a page. If the film has recognizable actors, lead with the cast listing. You don't need to cite every performer in the film. The actors playing the major eight to ten characters are sufficient. For the crew, include the director, producers (both executive and associate producers), screenwriter, cinematographer, editor, and the composer of the

film's music score. If the film has a special technical hook, such as funky makeup or innovative special effects, then these artists' names should also be present.

This page should also include some other key data: running time, MPAA rating or lack thereof, aspect ratio (which several industry publications request), format the film is currently in (don't be shy if the film is in 16mm or digital video), the year that production officially ended, the production company and (if it has one) the distributor, and the film's website. If the film is not in English or contains other languages, state that plus the fact that there are subtitles.

Part Three: The synopsis. Do not give a short, one-paragraph synopsis followed by a longer in-depth summary. Why tell the same story twice? Just stick with a single synopsis that runs no longer than a page and includes enough information to whet the reader's appetite without giving away the entire flow of the story and its conclusion. If the synopsis goes over a page, cut it down.

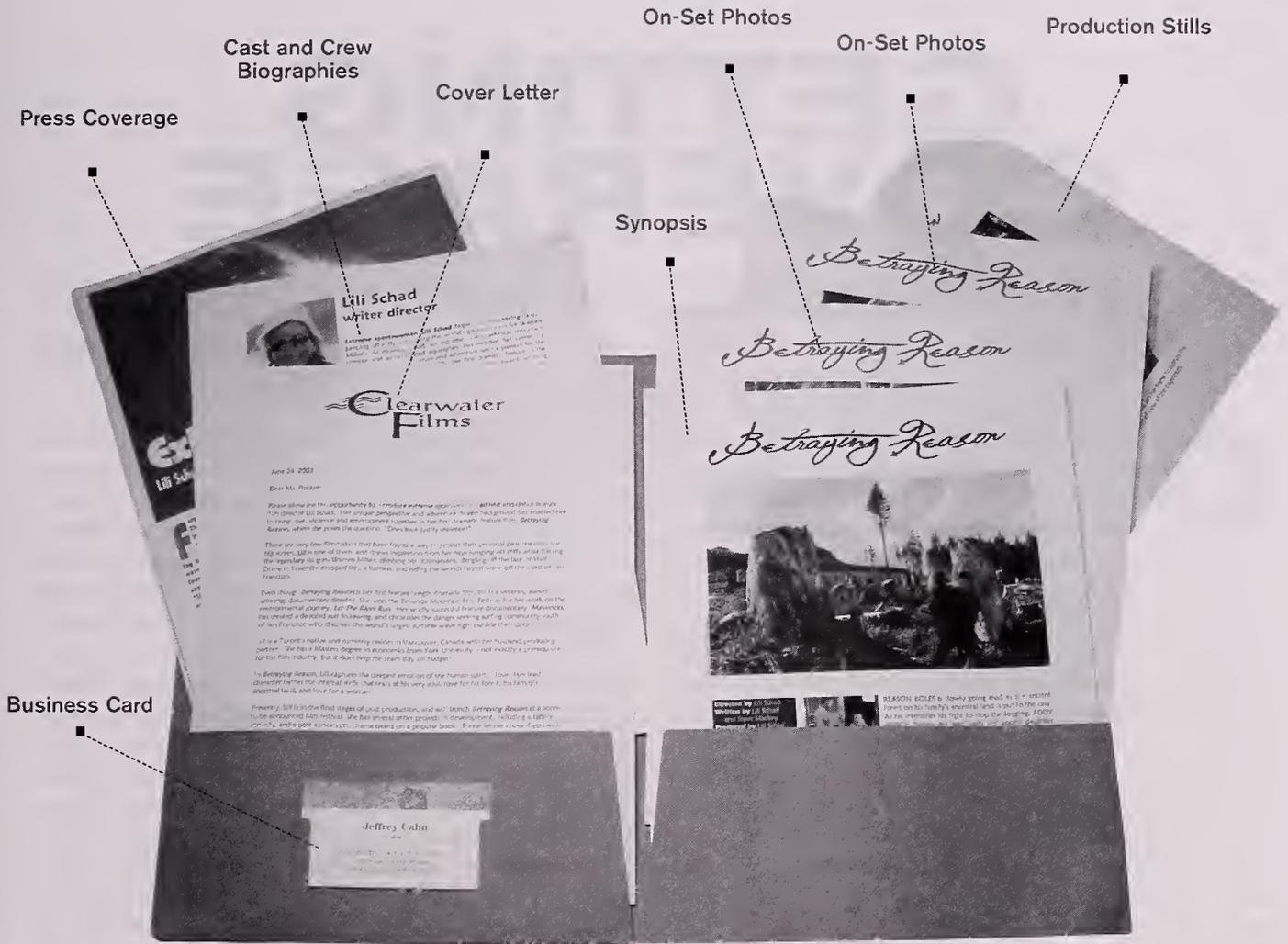
Part Four (optional): If the film has an unusual, dramatic, or amusing production history, then write a single sheet explaining this, using the heading "Production History" or "On the Making of . . .," or titles to

that effect. If the film has a rather ordinary production history, don't bother sharing it; move on to the next section.

Part Five: The biographies section highlights the career achievements of the cast and crew. If Part Two began



Cover of press kit for *Betraying Reason* with potted Douglas Fir promotional item. For more on the film's marketing, see page 80.



with the cast listings, then start this section with the cast. Biographies should not be more than a single paragraph and should not include cute notes that have nothing to do with the film, such as “this actress lives in SoHo with her five cats.” If you have someone very prominent in the film, the paragraph can obviously be as thick as it needs to be.

Whether you choose to list all of the actors from Part Two or just main stars is your choice; likewise, you may choose to include only the director, producer, screenwriter, and cinematographer for the crew biographies.

On a separate sheet at the end of this section should be the biography of the production company behind the film. If the film has an independent distributor, request that the company provide information on how they wish to be presented in the press kit.

Part Six: Press coverage and reviews. This section should not be packed with every single article or review. Only include reviews, features, and interviews from well-recognized media that praise the film (believe it or not, I’ve seen press kits with mediocre reviews of their films!). Coverage from obscure or amateur media is not a good idea,

no matter how sincere their write-ups might be. If you are photocopying newspapers or magazine articles, make sure the copies are clear, easy to read, and include the names and dates of the publications. If the photocopies are of a poor quality, it is okay to use online versions of the coverage.

Do not include: A director’s statement—the film *is* the director’s statement. Also, avoid press clips from other projects involving the cast or crew—these are not relevant to the film being presented.

And most important: Run a spell-check and then have several people proofread the press kit before handing it out. Spelling errors, missing words, and improper English in a press kit are frowned on by the professional writers and editors who need to work from this material.

And that is the press kit. Staple the pages together neatly and prepare to face the media. □

Phil Hall is president of Open City Communications (www.open-city.com), a New York entertainment public relations agency, and is a contributing editor for Film Threat and film editor for Art New England Magazine.

GETTING COVERAGE

HOW TO WIN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE PRESS

By Maud Kersnowski

One of the great truths of media is that there is no such thing as bad press, but how to get even bad press can be a mysterious process for filmmakers without giant, studio publicity machines behind them. There are filmmakers who seem to produce very little work, but are constantly finding their way into articles, while other good works are passed over. These seemingly arbitrary decisions can be based on anything from a writer championing a film they love to a press release arriving on a slow news day.

The most significant and difficult-to-define reason a film gets written about is, of course, that it is a good film. What defines a good film, a relevant film or an interesting film shifts from publication to publication. For many national consumer magazines if a film does not feature a major box office star the only reason to cover it is if it is pulling in major box office numbers. But here at *The Independent* we often shy away from movies with big stars, big numbers, and big distributors, because our mission is to give independents the information and inspiration to stay independent..

Each publication uses its criteria when deciding what to cover. According to editor-in-chief of *indieWIRE* and *IFC Rant* Eugene Hernandez, "Balance is important to me, so we try to cover a wide range of movies, from higher-profile, bigger budgeted films from the studio specialty division, to smaller, more personal films with limited distribution." But as a publication with a localized, general readership *The Village Voice* weighs different factors. Film editor Dennis Lim says, "[It's] hard to quantify what makes a film of interest—some degree of competence, but mainly originality and ambition. In terms of what we cover, films with local or political subject matter tend to have an edge, though these are by no means requirements."



Since each publication writes about independent film from its own angle, it is important to read the publications that you are asking to cover your film. Acquaint yourself with the type of articles they publish and do not publish. For example, do not contact *The Independent* asking to have your film reviewed, because we do not publish reviews. The message you are sending is that you do not know the publication and do not really care if we write about you or not. But other publications, such as *The Village Voice*, devote much of their independent film coverage to reviews.

Most publications tie their coverage to a project's release date. But this does not mean that if you are seeking distribution you cannot get your film's name in print. It just means that you need to be more strategic about how you go after coverage, and realistic. The fact that a film is in a festival or even has grabbed an award will probably not generate interest in extensive coverage. But festivals are an opportunity for journalists to see your film and write about it in the context of a festival report, and even earmark it as a film to keep an eye on. "The best place for [*indieWIRE*] to cover new films without distribution is in our festival reports. We do also publish one or two biz articles and festival lineup and winner stories each day as well. Short pitches or a notice that a film has won an award or will be featured at a particular festival can sometimes help secure a mention," Hernandez says. "Filmmakers should drop us a short email alerting us to the fact that their movie will be at a particular festival. A short pitch and screening times can be helpful, although our editors or reporters probably won't lock down their screening schedules until they are at the festival. A quick in-person hello is always a good way to remind a reporter about a screening. Typically a low-cost postcard with screening times and a brief synopsis is a good idea."

Even basic press releases and press kits that may be sent out to dozens of publications need to be written with the knowledge that the people being addressed are journalists who have seen and written about hundreds of films. You need to let them know what is news worthy about your film. News is change. News is difference. A first time filmmaker finishing a coming-of-age-story for under a million

dollars is not news. It is admirable, but it is also one of the most worn-out stories in independent film.

At most publications somebody will read your press release, but unless the publication decides to cover the film you probably will not get a response. There is simply not enough staff to answer all the emails, letters, and faxes.

If you are sending out screeners check with the publication before you spend the money on a tape and postage because different publications have different policies. Lim says, “always send a tape—no point writing an effusive press release (or worse, describing the film at length in a voice-mail message), since I’d really rather judge for myself. It’s not always possible, but I try to watch at least part of every screener that comes in.” At *The Independent* and *indieWIRE* unsolicited tapes rarely make it into VCR’s. “Unless [a screener] is requested by one of our writers or editors, save your money. Unsolicited screening tapes are typically not viewed and end up in a pile of other such tapes in our office. Eventually they will be tossed out,” Hernandez explains.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with a follow-up call or email, but be smart about it. “It is important to be persistent but not too aggressive,” Hernandez says. “While it wouldn’t be right for me to name names, we have had a number of filmmakers who feel that they are entitled to be covered in *indieWIRE*. Some have written insulting email messages to our editors as a way to convince us to write about their movies. Needless to say, that is not the best approach.”

In addition to not being a jerk, you need to be aware that publications of all types plan what will be covered in any given issue far in advance. Articles in this issue of *The Independent*, were assigned in May and we began planning the issue in March. That means that to even be considered for this issue you would have had to contact our office at least four months ago. Even daily and weekly publications schedule much of their coverage four to six weeks before the street date. “Where possible, I like to get materials a month or so ahead of time. If I get a tape the day before a film is screening (or even a week before), there’s really nothing I can do,” comments Lim.

When you meet a member of the press at a film festival or a screening this is an opportunity not only to attach a real person to your film, but also to get yourself into the journalist’s Palm Pilot. So, do not just ask for the journalist’s card but give them one of yours, preferably with the name of your film written on it.

The key to making friends with journalists is to be available when they call. Journalists may work far in advance, but they are always on tight deadlines. One sure way not to get covered is to not talk to the press. The people that you see quoted over and over again in print are not only the people

who know the field, they are also people who return the call.

When you are being interviewed be yourself, but be your best self. This is the person who is representing you in print. Arguing with a journalist, talking down to a writer because they ask questions that seem simple to you, or relentlessly pushing certain topics is not in your own best interest. Be as informative and generous as you can and you will win the hearts of reporters.

Since it is human nature to want more, the next question is probably: how do I get on the cover? And the answer depends on the publication. Many magazines plan their cover six months or more in advance and hire a photographer to shoot them. These magazines decide covers based on a number of factors, including current buzz, celebrity, sex appeal, the quality of the final photographs, and, of course, availability. If a magazine asks you to do a photo shoot find the time to do it. While a shoot does not guarantee the cover, it certainly puts you in the running.

A number of trade and specialty magazines including *The Independent* use “supplied art” for many of their covers. Most of the time these are the photos that were taken on set for the press kit (see page 48). Each publication has editorial policies that help decide what qualifies for the cover. While a sexy blonde might be the perfect cover for some publications, it will not make the cut at others. But more often than not the picture on the cover will be from the film in the feature section that supplied the best image. The “best image” is not always the most dynamic, arresting photograph.



Technical problems can knock a film off the cover. One of the most common is the lack of a strong vertical image. If you hire an on-set photographer make sure to request vertical photos be shot in addition to horizontals. Poor quality slides and prints also hurt the chances of an image making it on to the cover. If you are working on a tight budget make a couple of high quality

prints to keep in reserve, just in case. It is, also, a good idea to have all your images available in high-resolution scans since many publications will use these for everything except the cover.

Ultimately, the writers who cover independent film and video care deeply about the work they write about. At most publications a good film will find a champion in somebody and eventually find its way into the publication. “It is important to know that everyone in the film business wants to discover new talent, so if a movie is good I strongly believe that it can get attention, but it takes a strategic approach,” Hernandez observes. □

Maud Kersnowski is the editor-in-chief of The Independent.

Previous page: cover of *IFC Rant*, which is published by *indieWire*. This page: *The Village Voice*’s film editor, Dennis Lim.

THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ART IN OUR SCHOOLS.

NO WONDER PEOPLE THINK
MARTHA GRAHAM

IS A SNACK CRACKER.

Hardly a fitting legacy for the woman who, despite getting a late start at the positively elderly age of 17, became



A misconception. Not to mention an overlooked marketing opportunity.

the mother of American interpretive dance.

With verve and nearly single-handedly, Martha Graham brought her dance style into the 20th century.

She did nothing less than create an entirely new genre of dance, while shattering the expectations of audiences and critics alike with her percussive, angular movement style. She was one of the first dancers to collaborate with contemporary composers instead of using the 18th- and 19th-century compositions her predecessors favored. Her dances have been called "motion pictures for the sophisticated"; her theories on movement and kinesthetics are still vital today; and there is scarcely a dancer alive who doesn't



Ms. Graham told stories using movement. Here, she tells us how sad it is that kids aren't getting enough art.

owe a huge debt to her sharp creative mind and fierce perfectionism.

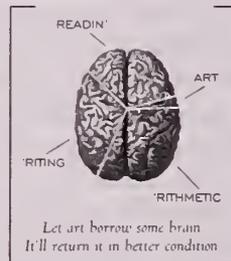
And to think she could have made it her entire life without experiencing the arts. Just like so many kids today.

Each day, more and more of the arts are being completely drained from our children's schools. Yet studies show parents believe dance and music and art and drama make their kids better students and better people. So what

can you do to reverse this trend?

Speak up now. Demand your child's fair share of the arts. To find out how to help, or for more information about the benefits of arts education, please visit us

at AmericansForTheArts.org. Otherwise, even a legacy as rich as Martha Graham's can crumble to nothing.



ART. ASK FOR MORE.



For more information about the importance of arts education, contact www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

©Barbara Morgan, from "Martha Graham: Sixteen Dances in Photographs" by Barbara Morgan.

Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

The Same River Twice

Dir. Robb Moss

(Film Forum, September 10)

"Being on the river and looking at the water made me see that in those fifteen years something had happened, that all the elements in my grown-up life had been put into play." Filmmaker Robb Moss came to this realization while taking a river trip in the mid-nineties. It had been fifteen years since he was a Colorado River guide, and the responsibilities of being a grown-up washed away the memories of living a laid-back, often naked existence on the river. This epiphany also spawned the idea to re-examine the subjects of his first film, *Riverdogs*, a documentary about his month-long river trip in 1978. *The Same River Twice* highlights five friends from the trip twenty-five years later, as they've gone from doing naked sing-a-longs around a campfire to partaking in wine-sipping dinner parties in suburban homes.

Moss spent four years recording the lives of his old friends. Two of them have been mayors of their hometowns, and most have children, except for one, who's still enjoying life as a river guide. But Moss, who teaches filmmaking at Harvard University, isn't shocked by how his friends turned out. "It doesn't seem surprising. There's no dramatic rupture between them then and how their lives turned out," says Moss. "What I like is that [they've] stayed connected to the values that were embedded in that time—belief in making a community and the environment better." As footage from *Riverdogs* plays a big part in the film's

storytelling, one observation is hard to miss—the subjects' frequent state of undress. "It was a tremendous challenge in the original film, and in this film, in how to get the nakedness right," says Moss. "It wasn't particularly sexual. It was sensual. It was beautiful. But it wasn't meant to be titillating or meaningful."



ful. But it wasn't meant to be titillating or meaningful."

The Same River Twice explores the life choices of individuals who, in their younger and more vulnerable years, lived for the moment rather than for the future. Moss hopes there can be a third installment that focuses on "the process of aging and the times they lived in."

Moss said, "I have images of everybody's children rowing us greasers down the river."

Casa de Los Babys

Dir. John Sayles

(IFC Films, September 19)

This ensemble piece explores the emotions, anxiety, and politics behind adopting a child in South America. Sayles' fourteenth feature captures six women (Maggie Gyllenhaal, Daryl Hannah, Marcia Gay Harden, Susan Lynch, Mary Steenburgen, and Lili Taylor) patiently waiting for the local bureaucracy to process their adoption requests. Through weeks of waiting, these women from different back-

grounds and beliefs share their common desire to have a child. The film also highlights the number of "unwanted children" roaming the streets of South America.

Lost in Translation

Dir. Sofia Coppola

(Focus Features, September 19)

Having explored teenage sexuality in her first film, *The Virgin Suicides*, Sofia Coppola delves into the potholes of middle-aged life in her second film. Fascinated by Japanese culture and the number of American celebrities hawking products in the Asian economic giant, *Lost in Translation* tells the story of Bob (Bill Murray), an aging movie star who spends a week in Japan to shoot a commercial. He soon has an unexpected connection with one of the only other Americans in his hotel, Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson), and the two explore Japan together, dreading the return to their dismal lives back in the States.

The Sundance Film Series:

An extension of the Sundance Institute's mission to support the work of independent filmmakers, four films will be featured in ten markets, exclusively in Loews Theaters, beginning in late August:

The Other Side of the Bed

Dir. Emilio Martínez-Lázaro

(August 29)

This lighthearted romantic comedy/musical was one of the hottest films in Spain in 2002. Intertwining the complicated love lives of two couples, director Emilio Martínez-Lázaro cleverly spices up the film by having his characters spontaneously burst into song and dance throughout the film.

In this World

Dir. Michael Winterbottom

(September 19)

Cousins Enayatullah (Enayatullah Jumaudin) and Jamal (Jamal Udin

Early river fun in Rob Moss's *The Same River Twice*.

Torabi) are ready to leave the Pakistani refugee camp they live in and join the million refugees who put their lives in the hands of smugglers each year to live in London. *In this World* highlights the pair's tumultuous journey by land, which is cheaper, though more dangerous, than by air. The two endure the treacherous rides in backs of trailers and trucks, followed by a forty-hour boat ride stuffed in a space the size of a pantry. We are there for the whole trip, as

of these prisons put money in their budgets for education. Filmmakers Alan and Susan Raymond were alarmed by these statistics and decided to spotlight one of the few programs dedicated to help inmates learn to read and write.

Learning Is For Everyone (L.I.F.E.) is a program in the New Jersey State Maximum Security Prison, where seventy-five percent of its inmates are illiterate. The program is taught by inmates who volunteer to teach fellow inmates how to read and write. "We tried to show in the film that illiteracy really does handicap people," says Alan Raymond. But should we care that these inmates, half of whom are convicted murderers, are getting the tools to advance in a world that they may only see through bars the rest of their lives? The Raymonds are ready for that criticism, and, in fact, have already gotten it. "A person walked in on an editing session, and one of the inmates was talking, and she just started talking venomously, 'Oh, I bet he'd kill me in a moment,' but I think that's good," says Alan Raymond about people

who differ with the film's message that everyone should be entitled to an education, even the incarcerated. "People should be tweaked once in a while."

The documentary also shows how inmates have learned to express their lives on paper, instead of through violence, by taking poetry classes. One of the most memorable is an inmate's poem describing how his troubles in

life have meaning after finding out from his mother that he was conceived when she was raped. "Looking at the astounding statistics, it's interesting to look at [illiteracy] in terms of its connection to the lives they lead and possibly some origins of crime," says Alan Raymond.

Caesar's Park

Dir. Sarah Price

(Sundance Channel, September 22)

While settling into her new apartment in the working-class neighborhood of Caesar's Park in Milwaukee, filmmaker Sarah Price decided to grab her camera and record her neighbors, who share a backyard with her. In the course of a couple years' worth of footage, Price develops a story of everyday middle-class American life with an entertaining cast of characters that includes an elderly, foul-mouthed neighbor, a lonely single man who loves to take pictures of tombstones, and two sisters who have lived in the same house their whole lives to take care of their mother.

The Sixth Section

Dir. Alex Rivera

(P.O.V., September 2)

Working hard in upstate New York, a group of immigrants from a small desert town in Mexico develop a "union" to raise money to support their families two thousand miles away. In the past few years, through their support, the town has received electricity, an ambulance (which one of the union members drove from New York to Mexico), and a two thousand-seat baseball stadium. This remarkable story shows how today's immigrants are redefining the American Dream. □

*Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for
The Independent.*

Sergio G. in Alan and Susan Raymond's *How Do You Spell Murder*.



Winterbottom tells this remarkable story about people who will go through hell to live a better life.

Television

How Do You Spell Murder?

Dir. Alan & Susan Raymond

(Cinemax Reel Life, September 24)

Seventy percent of inmates incarcerated in state and federal prisons in the US are illiterate. Less than one percent

What is a DDR, and is it right for you?

By Greg Gilpatrick

A new breed of tool has recently appeared on the DV filmmaking landscape. Unfortunately, these new devices do not share a common name and are known by various manufacturers as DV Direct to Edit Disk Recorder, Video Disk Unit, or Direct to Disk Recorder (DDR) which is how I will refer to them in this article. DDR's allow DV filmmakers to bypass the time-consuming process of logging and capturing footage and go straight to the editing process on a non-linear system. As simple as that sounds, filmmakers often find the purpose and process of using a DDR confusing. This guide to DDR's should clear up any misconceptions and answer the most pressing questions independent filmmakers have about these new tools.

What is a DDR?

A DDR is basically a small computer with a singular purpose—to record output from a DV camera onto a hard drive so that it can be copied onto a computer for editing. The DDR interface connects to a DV camera through a Firewire cable and to a hard disk. The DV designation of the camera here is important. The current crop of DDR's uses the DV video format like mini-DV and DVCAM.

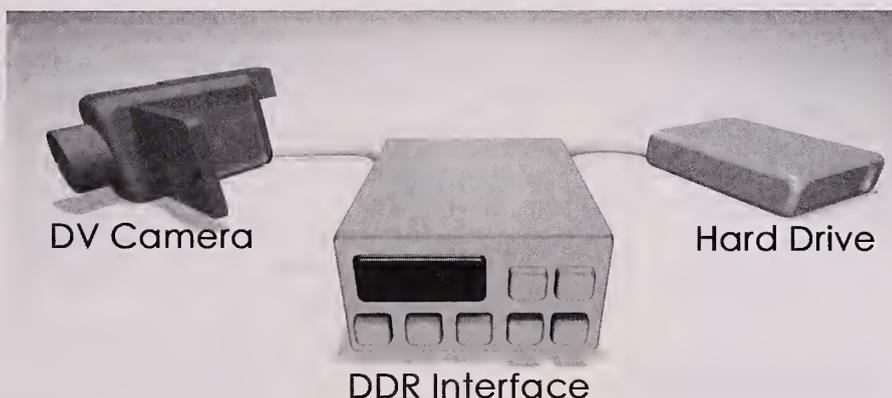
Sometimes, the DDR interface and hard drive are integrated, and sometimes they require one or more separate Firewire hard drives. Some are made to work with a specific brand or type of camera, such as Sony's DSR-DU1, which connects to their own cameras, or Focus Enhancements DR-DV5000 which is made specifically for the JVC DV-5000. Despite their differences, all DDR's do basically the same

thing—turn the output from a DV camera into something that can be read directly by a computer.

How Does it Work?

The camera

The camera processes images and sound normally, and may even record



it to tape, before it is sent to the DDR through a firewire cable. Depending on the type of camera and configuration of the DDR, you may be able to control what is saved to disk with the record button on the camera.

The DDR interface

The DDR takes the signal from the camera and turns it into a file that can be read by a computer and saves it to a hard disk. Some interfaces (like those from Focus Enhancements) can save the media in the native format of several popular editing applications, such as QuickTime for Final Cut Pro and OMF for Avid Xpress. Others only save in a format for a specific editing system, or as a generic DV file that will need to be specially imported into the editing software.

The hard drive

Images and sound from the camera

are saved onto the hard drive as a computer-readable file. Depending on the type of interface, you may be able to hook up multiple hard drives to the interface, allowing many hours worth of recording at one time.

Why would someone use a DDR?

A DDR offers many benefits, but there are certain instances when one might be especially helpful:

- The material cannot be re-shot and requires a high level of assurance that it will be captured. A DDR can serve as

a backup when there is a problem with the tape.

- Many hours of uninterrupted recording with one camera are required. By having an interface with one or more hard drives, you can record continuously for as long as the space on the drive allows.
- The material must be edited soon after it has been shot. The DDR lets you to plug into the hard drive immediately after shooting and start editing without having to log and capture the footage.

Who should use one?

Are you the type of filmmaker who will benefit from a DDR? Take our quiz and see.

How do you feel about logging your footage?

A. Logging is a valuable part of the editorial process that helps me to organ-

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in the
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ize my project and save disk space.

B. Logging is helpful, but I do little more than mark and name my clips.

C. Logging is a waste of time that keeps me from the real tasks of editing.

How much of your footage do you transfer to your computer for editing?

A. I carefully log and capture only a portion of my footage to my computer.

B. I capture most footage to my computer.

C. I capture everything from my camera onto the computer.

How important is it for you to be sure that your shots will be safely recorded?

A. I can easily reshoot my footage if a problem comes up with the tape or camera.

B. It would be annoying, but I can usually reshoot my footage.

C. I have only one chance to shoot everything, and I need to be positive I get it all right the first time.

How willing are you to use extra equipment in conjunction with your camera?

A. Extra equipment connected to my camera will slow me down and just give me another thing to worry about.

B. I like to have as little equipment as possible, but I'm willing to add to my setup if it will make a difference.

C. I have no problem using extra equipment in my setup.

Give yourself 0 points for each time you answered A; 1 point for each B answer; and 2 for C.

If you scored:

8-6 points: a DDR is probably just what you've been waiting for.

5-3: You will probably get considerable use out of one though it is probably not a priority for you.

2-0: You probably won't find a DDR useful.

Where can a DDR be used?

There are a variety of DDR's. Some are more suited for in-studio work, and others are more useful for fieldwork. A studio environment is the ideal location for the regular use of any DDR. Since the Firewire can get in the way of active videographers, most of these devices can be difficult to use for certain types of fieldwork. But there are a few camera/disk combinations that have solved this problem, such as the JVC/Focus Enhancements combination of the DV5000 camera and the DR-DV5000 DDR, or Sony's DSR-DU1, which can be mounted on the back of their professional shoulder-mounted DVCAM cameras. □

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact him, write to greg@randomroom.com.



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

The oldest and largest national moving-image media organization, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, AIVF offers a broad slate of education, information, and resource programs for members and non-members alike.

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 this card).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a national magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on legal, technical, and business matters—all geared to the working independent. Plus the field's best source of festival deadlines, exhibition venues, and funding opportunities, as well as AIVF member activities and services.

AIVF Online

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

Insurance & Discounts

Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. 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. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports dozens of 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 FIVE

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.

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Fragile Partners

KUROSAWA AND MIFUNE'S "POLITE" SECRETS

By Charlie Sweitzer

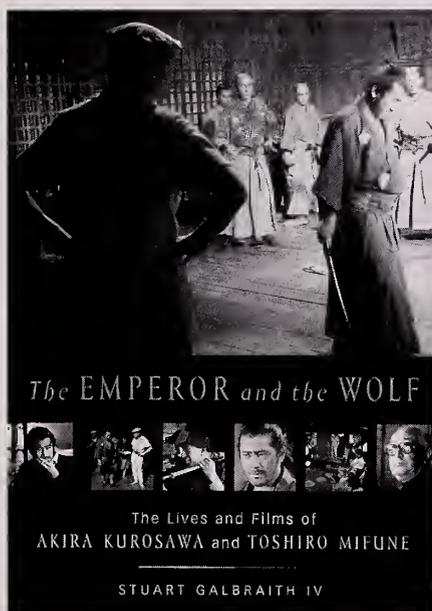
There is a lurid appeal to reading about the personal relationships between actors and directors. Artistic rapport often splinters under a production's weight, resulting in tantrums, adulterous affairs, and, in the case of Werner Herzog and Klaus Kinski, repeated death threats. But the necessity of the hysterical director/actor relationship is one of several stereotypes Stuart Galbraith IV puts to rest in *The Emperor and the Wolf: The Lives and Films of Akira Kurosawa and Toshiro Mifune* (Faber & Faber). At first glance, Kurosawa and Mifune seem to have had a healthy working relationship. Between 1948 and 1966, Kurosawa made seventeen films, sixteen of which starred Mifune. These included *Seven Samurai* (the inspiration for *The Magnificent Seven*), *The Hidden Fortress* (the inspiration, mostly, for *Star Wars*), and *Rashomon* (the inspiration for pretty much every subsequent film involving multiple points of view).

But after *Red Beard*, Mifune stopped appearing in Kurosawa's films. Or maybe it is more accurate to say that Kurosawa stopped casting Mifune. It is a mystery and the closest thing to a lurid thrill in a book whose two principles are almost unbelievably polite. (Mifune would sometimes wake up early to sweep the studio and prepare coffee for the crew.) The two never had a public falling out. Long after they stopped working together, Kurosawa would write, "The ordinary Japanese actor might need ten feet of film to get across an impression; Mifune needed only three feet." Mifune similarly admitted, late in life, "I have never as an actor done anything that I am proud of other than with him."

Galbraith interviewed many of the pair's co-workers, friends, and family (and, shortly before his death, Kurosawa

himself) and comes up with some possible reasons for the breakup, though no definitive answer. "Like many estranged relationships," he writes, the barrier between them "was built brick by brick over many years and many issues."

Since he has penned over 823 pages, Galbraith is able to examine not only



every brick, but every ounce of mortar. *The Emperor* covers not just every film Kurosawa was involved with on a creative level (including many adapted from his early and prolific days of screenplay writing), but also Mifune's extensive body of work, which includes a lot of films with names like *Samurai Assassin*, *Samurai Pirate*, and *I Bombed Pearl Harbor*.

But *The Emperor* is more than a checklist for the Mifune completist or B-movie fan. Galbraith, in his enthusiasm, has produced a crash course on the history of the Japanese film industry and studio system, with an emphasis on the distribution of Japanese cinema in the West. Kurosawa, it turns out, is responsible for

popularizing international film in the US. Before RKO picked up *Rashomon* for distribution in 1951, American audiences were not in the habit of watching movies with subtitles. Galbraith also scrutinizes the public and critical reaction to these films. Initial responses were often mixed, and perhaps tainted by national post-war sentiment. "If this book has a villain," writes Galbraith, "it's *New York Times* critic Bosley Crowther; and if there's a hero, it's the *Los Angeles Times*'s Kevin Thomas."

The irony is that Kurosawa and Mifune would eventually come to be admired most outside Japan. After *Dodes'ka-den* in 1971 (and a failed suicide attempt), Kurosawa could rarely get the Japanese studio funding he needed, and for the rest of his life would rely on support from elsewhere, including Russia (*Dersu Uzala*), France (*Ran*), and George Lucas (*Kagemusha*). Similarly, the popularity of Mifune's acting waned with Japanese audiences, and he accepted more and more roles—often as one Japanese stereotype or another—with US and European productions.

Though Galbraith follows all this with an aficionado's attention to detail, the book's heart is with the partnership between Kurosawa and Mifune. Galbraith's most viable explanation for the breakup (the conflict between Mifune's constant financial difficulties and Kurosawa's long, demanding, relatively low-paying shoots) does not hold up after hundreds of pages of testimony to the two men's respect for one another. The greatest lessons *The Emperor* has to offer are in the fragility and complexity of creative partnerships. Yuk Fujiki, who appeared with Mifune in Kurosawa's *The Lower Depths*, sums up this symbiosis well: "[Kurosawa] would voice his ideas through Mifune. Kurosawa only had to give Mifune a smile—they understood each other completely; Mr. Kurosawa's heart was in Mifune's body." □

Charlie Sweitzer is a New York-based writer and frequent contributor to *The Independent*.

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Welcome to the AIVF Festival Directory

AIVF's international film festival guide, now available on-line! Comprehensive, up-to-date, and filmmaker friendly, it's indy's best festival resource, only for AIVF members.

You can search the AIVF Festival Database using any combination of the following festival characteristics. The degree of information provided for festival profiles varies, so if you do not find what you were hoping for, you may wish to make your search less specific by leaving more fields blank.

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Festivals

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 (e.g., Oct. 1st for Dec. issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.**

DOMESTIC

ABSOLUTE TIME FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Deadline: Oct. 31. San Francisco Stage & Film seeks feature length narrative films & short films. Festival focus is (but not limited to) films written, produced and/or directed by women & people of color. Mission of fest is to present films that explore cross-cultural understanding. Films must have been produced in the past 12 months. Cats: feature. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: San Francisco Stage & Film, 2215-R Market St., PMB #251, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 401-9768; sfstagefilm@aol.com.

ANCHORAGE FILM FESTIVAL, December 12-21, AK. Deadline: October 1. The goal of AFF is to support & promote independent film & video artists & establish a dynamic showcase of compelling films that will provoke & entertain our imaginations. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: Cash Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV, S-VHS, 1/2". Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$25 (shorts); \$40 (features). Contact: Anchorage Cultural Council, 1410 Rudakof Circle, Anchorage, AK 99508; (907) 338-3690; fax: 338-3857; filmsak@alaska.net; www.anchoragefilmfestival.com.

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 16-21, MI. Deadline: Oct. 1, Nov. 15, Dec. 10 (final). Fest welcomes all cats & genres of independent filmmaking. Founded: 1963. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: \$18,000 in cash prizes awarded. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DVD, Beta SP. Preview on VHS, DVD or 16mm. Entry Fee: \$30 (early); \$35 (stan-

dard); \$40 (final). Contact: Festival, 203 E. Ann St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 995-5356; fax: 995-5396; aafilmfest@aol.com; www.aafilmfest.org.

ASBURY SHORTS OF NEW YORK, Nov. 15-18, NY. Deadline: Sept. 30. Fest combines screenings of shorts, under 25 min. in length, w/ live musical performances, comedy surprises, & celebrity hosts. Organizers also invite members of the advertising & television broadcast industries. Cats: short, any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15. Contact: Festival, 553 Prospect Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215; (917) 648-7832; fax: 369-3807; awdougherty@hotmail.com; www.asburyshorts.com.

ASHEVILLE FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 6-9, NC. Deadline: Aug. 15 (regular); Sept. 15 (stu-

location screenplays. Oct. 16-19, 2003, sub. deadline extended to Sept. for AIVF members. Next fest. date: Apr. 19-25, 2004. E-mail: script2screenfest@yahoo.com; www.barebonesfilmfestival.com.

BROOKLYN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 28-May 4, NY. Deadline: Oct. 15; Jan. 15 (late); Feb. 15 (Final). Annual fest (formerly The Williamsburg Brooklyn Film Festival), held at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, incl. O&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 (non-returnable).



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films, especially digital films—which is no surprise since it takes place in the heart of Silicon Valley. It's also only a hop, skip and jump away from Los Angeles which means lots of grinning celebrities in attendance. See listing.

dent). Cats: feature, doc, short, student, music video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$30; \$20 (student). Contact: City of Asheville Parks & Recreation, PO Box 7148, Attn: Melissa Porter, Asheville, NC 28802; (828) 259-5689; fax: 259-5606; MelissaM@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us; www.ashevillefilmfestival.com.

2ND ANNUAL BARE BONES SCRIPT-2-SCREEN FEST & SCREENWRITERS CONFERENCE in Tulsa, OK, is looking for independent screenwriters & filmmakers to enter comp. in variety of cat, incl. Best Great Train Robbery Re-make. Other cat. incl. feature screenplays, short screenplays, teleplays, short movies, movie trailers, doc, animation, actor monologues, OK

Entry Fee: \$20; \$40 (late); \$50 (final). 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.

CAROLINA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 18-21, NC. Deadline: Oct. 15. Fest held at Univ. of NC at Greensboro, fest's continuing goal is to exhibit works of independent artistry & personal vision. Fest accepts work in all genres & cats, incl. animation, doc, exp., narrative & students short. Projects of all lengths & originating on all formats accepted. Founded: 1989. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, Beta SP, VHS, 1/2", S-VHS, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$30 (student); \$40; \$50 (screenplay). Contact: Festival, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170; (336) 334-

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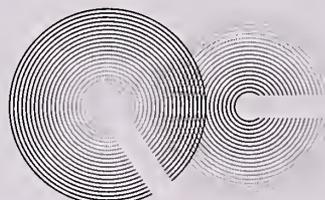
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CHICAGO ASIAN AMERICAN SHOWCASE, April 4-13, IL. Deadline: Oct. 31. Chicago's annual Asian American film/arts fest, presented by Foundation for Asian American Independent Cinema & The Gene Siskel Film Center. Seeking works by and/or about Asian Americans. Send preview tape, bio/production notes, still photo, & s.a.s.e. for tape return. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: No awards, non-competitive. Formats: all formats. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$10 (payable to FAAIM). Contact: c/o FAAIM, Box 5435, Chicago, IL 60680; (773) 562-6265; info@faaim.org; www.faaaim.org; www.siskelfilmcenter.org.

CINEQUEST FILM FESTIVAL, March 3-14, CA. Deadline: Oct 10 (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 Doc, 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, P.O. Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172; (408) 995-5033; fax: 995-5713; info@cinequest.org; www.cinequest.org.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, Jan. 9-10, 16-17, NY. Deadline: Sept. 15. 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, a "live pitch" for choreographers. Founded: 1972. Cats: Experimental, Feature, Short, doc, animation. Awards: cash prize for "Best of Festival.". Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35. Contact: Dance Films Association, Inc., 48 W. 21st St., #907, New York, NY 10010; phone/fax: (212) 727-0764; dfa5@earthlink.net; www.dancefilmsassn.org.

DIRECTOR'S VIEW FILM FESTIVAL, February 12-16, CT. Deadline: Sept. 15; Oct. 15; Nov. 1. 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 fea-

tures narrative shorts & features from established directors as well as to 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, student. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", DVD, DigiBeta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Sept: \$40; Oct: \$50; Nov: \$100. Contact: Festival, PO Box 312, South Salem, NY 10590; fax: (914) 533-0269; info@thedirectorsview.com; www.dvff.org.

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-14, FL. Deadline: Oct. 31; Dec. 5 (final). 10-day event features foreign & US 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, 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, 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32571; (407) 629-1088; fax: 629-6870; filmfest@enzian.org; www.floridafilmmfest.com.

H2O INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 13-17, NY. Deadline: Sept. 15. AKA Hip-Hop Odyssey Int'l Film Festival. The fest's mission is "to strengthen the hip-hop community by creating a home for hip-hop filmmakers to showcase, define & redefine images that depict hip-hop culture." Cats: youth media, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, PSA. Contact: Tania Martinez, Morningside Station, P.O. Box 1804, New York, NY 10026; (212) 663-0305; fax: 663-6349; Tania@h2oiff.org; www.h2oiff.org.

HOLLYWOOD BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 25-30, CA. Deadline: Aug. 31; Sept. 30 (final). Annual fest brings the work of accomplished & aspiring Black filmmakers to an environment encompassing the mainstream Hollywood community & S. California film-going 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 invitation 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; \$35 (final). Contact: Jacqueline Blaylock, PO Box 34858, Los Angeles, CA 90034-0858; (310) 712-3998; fax: 943-2326; info@hbff.org; www.hbff.org.

IFP/CHICAGO FLYOVER ZONE SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov., IL. Deadline: Oct. 3. Flyover Zone: Name given to that area of the United States between New York & Los Angeles often viewed by industry executives from 35,000 feet above the earth. Chosen films will be screened at the Annual IFP/Chicago Independent Filmmakers Conference which will take place in Nov. in Chicago. Eligible films must be 20 min. or less. Founded: 2000. Cats: short, doc, experimental, animation, comedy. Awards: All films compete for "Best of the Fest" honors in each category; \$300 top prize. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 IFP/Chicago members, \$25 for non members. Contact: Rebekah Cowing, IFP/Chicago, 33 East Congress, Room 505, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 435-1825; fax: 435-1828; infoifpmw@aol.com; www.ifp.org.

INT'L BUDDHIST FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 20-24, CA. Deadline: Sept. 15. Noncompetitive fest of films about, inspired by or related (even vaguely) to Buddhist cultures, places, personalities, issues & experience. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media, children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video, digital. Preview on VHS (PAL or NTSC), DVD. Entry Fee: \$25 (shorts); \$45 (features). Contact: Festival, PO Box 9617, Berkeley, CA 94709; (510) 985-1805; fax: 985-0185; cfe@ibff.org; www.ibff.org.

MIAMI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 30- Feb. 8, FL. Deadline: Oct. 10. Festival is dedicated to bringing the best of world cinema to South Florida. The fest has used the unique geographical & cultural position of Miami to make the fest a premiere venue for the exhibition of Int'l & US features & doc films, w/ a special focus on Iberoamerican cinema. Special events & seminars held during the fest. Entries should not be in theatrical release in US or Europe & must be a Florida

Premiere. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short. Awards: Jury Prizes, Audience Awards. Formats: 35mm, HD Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (shorts); \$50 (features). Contact: Florida Int'l University, University Park, PC 230, Miami, FL 33199; (305) 348-5555; info@miamifilmfestival.com; www.miamifilmfestival.com.

OLYMPIA FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-16, WA. Deadline: Sept. 15. Annual fest now accepting entries. For 20 yrs. the Olympia Film Society has been presenting the finest in int'l, indie, classic & fringe features, docs & shorts. CINE-X competition is two programs of experimental shorts. Founded: 1984. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, family, children. Awards: In the past, CINE-X winners have received film stock from Kodak & post production support. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, various video, DV, 1/2", 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10 (+ postage for return). Contact: Sean Savage, 416 Washington St. SE, Ste. 208, Olympia, WA 98501; (360) 754-6670; fax: 943-9100; ofs@olywa.net; www.olyfilm.org.

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L ASIAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, March 4-14, CA. Deadline: Sept. 5; Oct. 3 (final). Noncompetitive fest is the largest & most prominent showcase for works from Asian America & Asia w/ 100-110 works shown. Fest is "lively venue for filmmakers, industry & Asian communities" worldwide. Extensive local coverage by media, industry press. Also special events, panels, installations, galas. Fest sponsored by Nat'l Asian American Telecommunications Assoc. Founded: 1982. Cats: Feature, Experimental, Short, Animation, Doc, Mixed genre, music video, youth media, family, installation. Formats: Beta SP, 1", 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25; \$35 (final). Contact: Chi-hui Yang, NAATA, 145 Ninth Street, Ste 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428; festival@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org/festival.

SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 23- Feb. 1, FL. Deadline: Oct. 17, Nov. 7 (Final). Dedicated to exploring the best, new stars of Independent film, this 10-day fest presents a schedule of films, premieres, symposiums & parties. SFF strives to provide an environment that supports & encourages the filmmaker supplying essential networking opportunities & open dialogue w/ intelligent, creative & inquisitive consumers of film. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta.

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Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Feature: \$25, \$40 (final); short: \$15-\$30 (final); Student: free, \$15 (final). Contact: Mark Marvell, 635 S. Orange Ave. Suite 10-B, Sarasota, FL 34236; (941) 364-9514; fax: (941) 364-8411; mark@sarasotafilmfestival.com; www.sarasotafilmfestival.com.

SHORTS INT'L 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. Cats: animation, comedy, doc, drama, experimental, student, digital. 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.

SLAMDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 17-25, UT. Deadline: Aug. 29; Oct. 10 (final); Anarchy online section has year-round rolling deadline. 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: Slamdance, 5364 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA, USA 90038; (323) 466-1786; fax: 466-1784; mail@slamdance.com; www.slamdance.com.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 15-25, UT. Deadline: Aug. 1 (early: features/shorts); Aug. 15 (Final: Int'l shorts); Sept. 12 (Final: US Shorts); Oct. 1 (Final: features). Founded in 1985 to "recognize independent filmmaking in all of its diversity," Sundance is the premiere US competitive showcase for new ind. films. Showcase for domestic & int'l films, incl. competition of new American ind. feature films, noncompetitive program of both new American ind. and foreign feature films &

shorts. Dramatic & doc entries must have significant US financing & be completed no earlier than Oct. of previous year. For competition, entries may not open theatrically before Feb. 1 of yr. of fest in more than 3 N. American markets or be broadcast nationally. Competition entries may not play in any domestic film fest prior to Sundance. Films may play in up to 2 foreign fests. Foreign feature films (less than 50% US financed) not eligible for comp., but may be submitted for fest screening consideration & must be subtitled in English. One rep of each comp. film will be invited to attend as fest's guest. Ind feature film competition awards Grand Prize, Cinematography Award & Audience Award (popular ballot). Other awards: in dramatic cat, Screenwriters Award; in doc cat, Freedom of Expression Award. Films selected for comp. become eligible for inclusion in Sundance Int'l Show. American films selected in short film cat eligible for special award. Other special programs have incl. Latin American section & World Cinema. About 200 works selected for each fest & large audience of 75,000 incl. major distributors, programmers, journalists, critics & agents. Int'l press coverage extensive. Founded: 1985. Cats: Feature, Short, Doc. Awards: Films selected for Ind Feature Film Competition awards Grand Prize, Cinematography Award and Audience Award (popular ballot.) Films selected in dramatic cat will also be competing for Screenwriters Award & films in Doc cat will also be competing for Freedom of Expression Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25/\$35 (shorts); \$35/\$50 (features). Contact: Geoffrey Gilmore/John Cooper, 8857 West Olympic Blvd., Ste. 200, Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 360-1981; fax 360-1969; programming@sundance.org; www.sundance.org.

TUCSON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-7, AZ. Deadline: Oct. 1. Fest seeks film & video works that address issues & themes of particular interest to LGBT community. Cats: doc, feature, animation, experimental, student, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10 - Check or MO payable to Wingspan. Contact: Festival, PO Box 3013, Tucson, AZ 85702; filmfest@wingspanaz.org; www.wingspanaz.org.

URBAN LITERARY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-18, NC. Deadline: Aug. 23; Sept. 13 (final). Dedicated to the promotion of urban-independent shorts, features & documentaries as a form of art, creative expression & livelihood,

the Urban Literary Film Festival, to be held at the Carolina Theatre in Greensboro, NC, will provide the urban-theme filmmaker networking opportunities & exposure. Cats: feature, animation, doc, short, experimental. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Super 8, 1/2", S-VHS, Mini-DV. Entry Fee: \$25-\$55. Contact: Joseph Wilkerson, 825 Valley Oak Drive, Greensboro, NC 27406; (336) 379-7746; ulff@urbanliterature.com; www.ulff.org.

WINSLOW INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, October 23-26, AZ. Deadline: August 15, Sept. 12 (final). Annual fests showcases films from all genres & subject matter. Fest also features a panel discussion of visual effects pros. Founded: 2002. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Awards in all cats. Formats: 35mm, DVD, Beta. Preview On VHS. Entry Fee: \$40 (US), \$45 (Int'l); Late: \$45 (US), \$50 (Int'l). Contact: Jennifer Lee, c/o La Posada Hotel, 303 E. Second Street, Winslow, AZ 86047; (818) 219-9339; info@winslowfilmfestival.org; www.winslowfilmfestival.org.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTORS CHAIR INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 12-24, IL. Deadline: Sept. 1, Oct. 1 (final). Annual fest is the largest & longest running women's film/video fest in US. Previous fests have included over 120 outstanding works from women directors around the world, int'l guest artists, diverse programming from an inter-generational queer women's video workshop to a hip-hop extravaganza. Some works may be included in year-long nat'l tour. Participants in tour receive stipend based on number of screenings. Founded: 1979. Cats: any style or genre, installation, children, family, TV, youth media, student, music video, experimental, animation, feature, doc, short. Awards: Non-competitive film & video prizes awarded. Formats: 3/4", 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (early, WIDC members); \$30 (final). Contact: Festival, 941 W. Lawrence, #500, Chicago, IL, USA 60640; (773) 907-0610; fax: 907-0381; widc@widc.org; www.widc.org.

Z FILM FESTIVAL, December 1, IL. Deadline: Sept. 15; Oct. 15 (final). Z Film Festival (dubbed the "fest w/ 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, & the psychology of work that sneaks underneath the radar of most major venues. Run by experienced filmmakers who ooze enthusiasm about screening films & videos by D.I.A.Y. (do it ALL yourself)

artists, the Z Fest beckons the onslaught of film & video makers w/ mouths wide open for a taste of what the fringe has to offer. Founded: 2000. Cats: short, 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, DVD. Preview on VHS, DVD or mini-DV. Entry Fee: \$15 (under 25 min), \$25 (30-60 min.); final: \$25; \$35. Contact: Usama Alshaibi, 333 West North Ave #123, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 409-3890; info@zfilmfestival.com; www.zfilmfestival.com.

INTERNATIONAL

ANIMA (BRUSSELS INT'L FESTIVAL OF CARTOONS & ANIMATED FILMS), Feb. 19-29, Belgium. Deadline: Oct. 15. Since 1982, fest has been showcase for new, interesting works in animation, providing opp. to be seen by Belgian film & TV distrib. 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. Computer animation (incl. Pixel Ina prize-winners from Imagina), children's programs & short ind. animation are some fest highlights. Founded: 1982. Cats: animation, long feature, CGI, short, children, feature, experimental, music video, student. Awards: Belgian competition for best short animated film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 70mm. Preview on VHS or Bet SP. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Francoise Catahala, Folioscope a.s.b.l., Avenue de Stalingrad, 1000 Brussels, Belgium; 011322 534 4125; fax: 322 534 2279; info@folioscope.be; www.awn.com/folioscope.

CLERMONT-FERRAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 3-Feb.7, Deadline: October 17. 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 4,000 prods. Past buyers incl. Canal+, ZDF, BBC, YLE, La Sept-Arté, France 2; 2,000 plus professionals in attendance. Cats: Feature, Doc, Animation, Experimental, Short. Awards: incl. Grand Prix 4,000 E (\$3,600); Special Jury Prize; & Audience

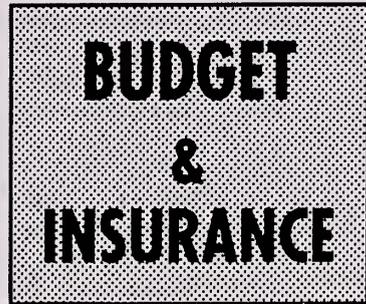
Choice 4,000 E (\$3,600), & Vercingétorix to director. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Michel Raluy & Christian Guinot (int'l), Calmin Borel (digital), La Jetée, 6 place Michel-de-l'Hospital, 63058 Clermont Ferrand, France Cedex 1; 011 33 473 91 65 73; fax: 473 92 11 93; info@clermont-filmfest.com; www.clermont-filmfest.com.

GIJON INT'L FILM FESTIVAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, November 20-28, Spain. Deadline: September 26. 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. 1st of preceding yr. & has non-comp element too; Information Section incl. 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 Euros, cash) & Best Short Film (6,000 Euros, cash); Young Jury of 50 people age 17-26 awards: Best Feature Film (6,000 Euros) & Best Shortfilm (6,000 Euros); also Best Actress, Actor, Art Direction & Script as well as "Special Prize of the Jury." Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Jose Luis Cienfuegos, Paseo de Bogona, 24-ent, Box 76, 33205 Gijón - Asturias, Spain; 011 34 98 518 2940; fax: 518 2944; festivalgijon@telecable.es; www.gijonfilmfestival.com.

HAVANA INT'L FESTIVAL OF NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA, December 2-12, 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. 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. Entry Fee: None. 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.

INT'L FILM FESTIVAL OF KERALA, December 12-19, India. Deadline: September 30. This annual fest is produced

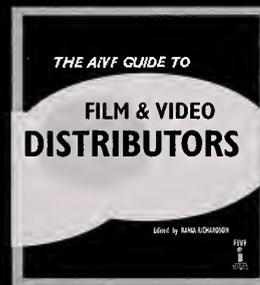
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by the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Kerala. Chalachitra literally means motion picture, & the Academy is devoted to promoting the best in the visual medium. IFFK is a celebration of the best the 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: Bina Paul Venugopal, 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.

MONTREAL INT'L FESTIVAL OF FILMS ON ART, March 11-21, Canada. Deadline: Oct. 10. The Festival heightens the public's understanding & appreciation of art, & highlights the work of artists as well as the contribution of professionals in cinema & television. FIFA encompasses the following disciplines of art: painting, sculpture, architecture, design, crafts, fashion, decorative arts, museology, restoration, photography, cinema (profiles of directors & actors, film shoots, special effects), literature, dance, music, theater. Festival not designed for experimental film or video but for productions on art-related subjects. Sections: Creative Crossroads (competition); Trajectories (panorama of recent films & videos); Focus (tribute to noted producer, filmmaker or distrib.); Reflections (films & videos by artists); Artificial Paradise (films & videos related to cinema as art form, i.e. profiles of producers, directors, actors, etc.); Time Recaptured (archival films, late artists, annivs.). Entries in comp. must've been completed in 3 yrs. preceding fest; no date restrictions on other sections. Founded: 1981. Cats: Feature, Short, Doc. Awards: Grand, Jury, Creativity, Best Portrait, Best Essay, Best Film for TV, Best Media Work, Best Edu Film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, U-matic, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL or SECAM). Entry Fee: \$40 cad. Contact: René Rozon, 640 St. Paul Street West, Ste 406, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 1L9; (514) 874-1637; fax: (514) 874-9929; admin@artifa.com; www.artifa.com.

NAMUR INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, November 13-16, Belgium. Deadline: September 10. All-short film fest

accepts films 30 min. & under. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 2 years. Cats: short, doc, animation. Awards: Three cash awards of 2500 Euros, plus additional awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, DVcam, HDcam. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. 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; www.media10-10.be.

OULU INT'L CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, November 17-23, Finland. Deadline: Sept. 15. 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 incl. 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. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Eszter Vuojala, Fest Sec., Torikatu 8, 90100, Oulu, Finland; 011 358 88 881 1293; fax: 358 88 881 1290; oek@oufilmcenter.inet.fi; www.ouka.fi/lef.

SEOUL INT'L LABOR VIDEO & FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 11-16, Korea. Deadline: Sept. 30. Annual non-competitive fest seeks works on labor movement & working people's lives regardless of any style. This year's main themes are int'l struggle against globalization, labor media, women workers & int'l solidarity, but any work on labor issues welcome. Fest is hosted by Labor News Prod. & sponsored by Korean Film Commission (KBC) & Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). Formats: Any. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Myoung Joon Kim; 011 82 11 270 7150; fax: 82 2 888-5121; LNP89@chol.com; www.lnp89.org/fest.

SHADOW DOC FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 20-26, Netherlands. Deadline: Sept. 15. Fest prides itself as a "podium for creative docs." With special interest given to works in progress: rough edits & projects in development. Founded: 2000. Cats: student docs, , doc.

Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, DVD, mini-DV. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Stefan Mayokovsky, Ceintuurbaan 13, 3rd Flr., Amsterdam, The Netherlands 1072; 011 31 206 715 982; info@shadowfestival.nl; www.shadowfestival.nl.

TORELLO MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL, November 14-23, Spain. Deadline: Sept. 20. Torelló's fest themes incl. all aspects of mountains: mountaineering (alpinism, climbing, expeditions, excursions), mountain sports (speleology, ski, sports climbing, parachuting, canoeing-rafting, adventure), mountain environment (nature protection, flora, fauna, ethnology). Entries must have been produced in previous 3 yrs. Cats: doc, short, feature. Awards: Grand Prize "Vila de Torelló" (Edelweiss of gold & 3000 Euro.) for best film; Prize Fundacio "la Caixa" (Edelweiss of silver & 1,600 Euro.) for best mountaineering film. Formats: Beta, 16mm, 35mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Joan Salarich, Anselm Clave 5, P.O. Box 19, 08570 Torelló, Barcelona, Spain; 011 34 93 850 43 21; fax: 34 93 850 43 21; info@torellomountainfilm.com; www.torellomountainfilm.com.

TRANSMEDIALE, Jan. 31-Feb. 4, 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. Entry Fee: None. 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.

VICTORIA INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Jan. 30-Feb. 8, Canada. Deadline: Oct. 17. 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", DV. Entry Fee: \$10. Contact: Kathy Kay, 808 View Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1K2; (250) 389-0444; fax: 389-0406; fest@vifvf.com; www.vifvf.com.

Films/Tapes Wanted

By Melinda Rice

Noncommercial notices and screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Commercial notices are billed at classified rates. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Oct. 1 for Dec. issue). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending.

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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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NEW DAY FILMS seeks energetic independent film and videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatri-

cal markets. If you want to maximize your profits while working within a remarkable community of committed activist filmmakers, then New Day is the perfect home for your film. New Day is committed to promoting diversity within our membership and within the media we represent. Explore our films at www.newday.com, then contact Heidi Emberling at (650) 347-5123.

TAPELIST @ DISTRIBUTION. Reach distributors, exhibitors, media and filmgoers on an exciting new distribution platform for independent film. For Filmmakers, Producer's Reps, Distributors, Festivals and IndieTheaters. www.tapelist.com.

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

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AIVF TUCSON SALON will be hosting a filmmaker mixer on Friday, September 5th at Keys Restaurant and Bar, 445 W. Wetmore Road. Tucson Filmmakers may submit a trailer or short film (up to 5 min.) on VHS to screen. Send VHS tapes to Tucson Mixer, c/o Elaine Jordan, 5755 E. River Road, apt. #2117, Tucson AZ 85750. Contact Jana at janasegal@aol.com for more information.

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, The Alternative Screen: A Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS viewing tape, press kit (any written background materials), cover letter w/ contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland,



Twenty-four Hours a Day

DUTV is Philadelphia's educational access television channel, an independent project at Drexel

University. Talk shows, community showcases, and documentaries with topics of social justice, economic rights, and diversity are scheduled with an eye to providing a nonmainstream media outlet for Philadelphia in the absence of a public access television station. Programming runs the gamut, from specific neighborhood issues to international topics. With original productions like *Marching On*, which deals with issues of economic rights from a grassroots perspective, DUTV tries to look at local issues from a global perspective. Because DUTV does not have time limitations in broadcasting, programmers have a lot of flexibility for scheduling films of nontraditional lengths. While DUTV supports the local filmmaking community, the majority of its programmed films are created outside the city. See listing.

fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 685-6242; gcrowdus@cinemaguild.com. Ask for our Distribution Services brochure.

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AMERICA'S FUNNIEST POLITICAL VIDEOS (AFPV) is a screening of humorous political short videos to take place in early 2004 in NY City and San Fran Possible future distribution/touring festival. Seeking videos of funny protests, as well as pre-produced videos on political topics, cartoons, funny & political music videos, subversive/political comedy routines, etc. Videos must be in

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BASEMENT FILMS of Albuquerque, NM, is a mobile, volunteer-run venue for experimental, underground & other under-represented forms of small-gauge (8mm, 16mm) film & video making. To screen your film work, send a VHS preview tape & any written mat. to Basement Films, P.O. Box 7669, Albuquerque, NM 87194. We pride ourselves in screening work in unique locations. Contact: (505) 842-9977; www.basementfilms.org.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos, followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. For more info call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society featuring monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, Beta-SP, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry fee: \$20; fee waived for AIVF members. Entry form & instructions at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, P.O. Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

DAHLIA'S FLIX & MIX, a weekly showcase of new film & music held at NY's Sugar, showcases fresh and previously undistributed film & video work. No guest list, cover charge or submission fee. For more information, contact dsmith@independentfilm.com or stop by Sugar any Tuesday evening. To submit your film, send a VHS or DVD copy and a brief synopsis to: Dahlia Smith, c/o Sugar, 311 Church St., New York, NY 10013.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films & videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned feature films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic

involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience (dialogue must be subtitled). Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

ECHO PARK FILM CENTER microcinema seeking submissions to screen for weekly Thursday evening cinema. Non-Hollywood documentary, animation & experimental films & videos. We do not screen feature length narratives. Filmmakers receive an honorarium. Contact: Echo Park Film Center, 1200 N. Alvarado St., LA, CA, 90026; (213) 484-8846; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.echoparkfilmcenter.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. Net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Seeking 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also seeking shorts 10 min. or fewer, to be screened at our Open Reel Hour. Send VHS tapes, summary of film & filmmaker bio to: Prolefeed Studios, Brian Standing, 3210 James St., Madison, WI 53714; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

FLICKER encompasses a Super 8 & 16mm showcase held in Asheville, Athens, Chapel Hill, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Richmond & Bordeaux, France. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you; see the website for a list of local Flickers: www.flickeraustin.com.

GIRLS ON FILM is a quarterly screening series in San Francisco that seeks short narrative, doc & experimental works of 30 min. or fewer by women of color. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. No entry fee. Send preview (clearly labeled with name, title, length, phone & e-mail) to: Jennifer Jajeh, Girls On Film,

1566 Grove Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include S.A.S.E. if you'd like your work returned. For more info, e-mail girlsonfilm-series@hotmail.com; www.atasite.org.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE, a monthly screening program of international short films, videos & digital works has been presented in 35 countries and Antarctica. Seeking short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive distribution deal. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS at New York's Anthology Film Archives seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. No entry fee or form. Send a VHS copy of your film or video w/ a brief synopsis to David Maquiling, New Filmmakers, Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10009. For more info, visit www.newfilmmakers.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS LOS ANGELES seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. Films can be any length/year of production. Films without distribution only. No entry fee. Keep press kit to a minimum: synopsis, director's bio, 1 production photo. Submissions preferred on DVD; VHS (NTSC) & Mini-DV also accepted. Send submissions to New Filmmakers, P.O. Box 48469, Los Angeles, CA 90048. For more info, e-mail newfilmmakersla@yahoo.com; www.newfilmmakers.com.

OCULARIS provides a forum for film & video makers to exhibit their work at Brooklyn's Galapagos Art & Performance Space. All works are considered for programming in the weekly series, travelling programs & other special projects. Local film/video makers can submit works under 15 min. to Open Zone, a quarterly open screening. Nat'l/int'l works & medium length works (15-45 min.) will be considered for curated group shows. For submission guidelines & other info, visit www.ocularis.net; shortfilms@ocularis.net.

OTHER CINEMA, San Francisco's twenty-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as per-

sonal nonfiction, of any length, for their weekly screening series. Please send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following your film's screening. Any length/genre. Connection to New England, whether through subject matter, filming locations, or hometown of filmmakers, helpful but not necessary. Send VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks shorts (under 45 min.) 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 & an application form, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a venue to show works & talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473. For questions call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

SPARK VIDEO: BEACON seeking work for 2003-2004 programming year, which runs monthly. Deadline: Ongoing. Early entries given preference. Videos should be under 15 min. All independent/noncommercial work accepted: experimental, doc, narrative, non-narrative, controversial, political, personal, animation, etc. International and domestic submissions are encouraged. Formats accepted: VHS (NTSC only) and Mini-DV or DVCAM (NTSC or PAL). Include synopsis, bio, CV & contact information. S.A.S.E. required for tape return. Send materials to: Joshua Katcher, Spark Video: Beacon, Fusion Media, 282 Katonah Ave. #148, Katonah, NY 10536; scoot@tele-base.net.

TIMEBASE, a new moving-image series in Kansas City, seeks innovative short films, videos, installations & web-based projects. No entry fee. Rolling deadline. Send VHS, DVD, or CD-Rom: Timebase, 5100 Rockhill Rd Haag 202, KC, MO 64110. Tel: (816)

235-1708; www.time-base.org.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

VIDEOTHEATRE, New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All kinds. No deadlines. No late fees. Year-round submission. Weekly programming in a 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. Nov. program. (Sept. 15 deadline) will feature indie shorts & features in the exploitation genre: horror, sci-fi, sex, retro, weird, etc. VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com; www.videotheatrenyc.com.

TOURING PROGRAMS

THE HIP HOP FILM FEST TOUR is an ongoing event hitting major cities & cultural centers on a global level. Organizers are indie filmmakers looking to share their visual documents of the vibrant hip-hop culture and connect with other mediamakers. Deadline: Ongoing. Visit www.hiphopfilmfest.com for more information, e-mail Info@HipHopFilmFest.com, or call (866) 206-9071 x9211.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.ArtInGeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

TRUE STORIES is a monthly sneak preview for new documentaries. Any length accepted, VHS or DVD format. No deadline, tapes held on a rolling basis until entire series is programmed. For more info contact Sean Frechette, Film Arts Foundation, 145 9th St. Ste. 101, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760 x324; www.filmarts.org/exhibition/truestories.html.

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UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept., Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

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 2003/2004 season. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact UICA Race St. Gallery, 41 Sheldon Blvd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; (616) 454-7000; fax: 459-9395; www.uica.org.

SHOWCASES

CHICAGO COMMUNITY CINEMA features the excitement of an annual film festival w/ a monthly extravaganza of a networking fest & showcase. On the 1st Tues. of each month, short films, trailers, music videos, commercials, student films & features of all genres are showcased to an audience of industry professionals. Evenings begin w/ a cocktail reception to showcase local organizations & provide a strong social networking atmosphere. Submission form avail. at website. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Chicago Community Cinema, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (773) 289-4261; www.chicagocommunity.com.

FINISHING PICTURES accepts shorts, features, 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.

FREIGHT FILM SALON seeks submissions for its Monday Night Shorts showcase series. Work can be any genre, 20 min. or fewer; must be on VHS or DVD. Will screen on 6' screen, 2 plasma screens & 4 monitors. E-mail freightfilmsalon@yahoo.com for additional info, or visit www.freightnyc.com.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

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.

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. VHS for preview. Contact: Debbie Rudman, DUTV, 3141 Chestnut St., Bldg. 9B, Rm. 4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927; dutv@drexel.edu.

WEBCASTS

ATOM FILMS seeks quality films & animations for worldwide commercial distribution to our network of television, airline, home entertainment & new media outlets, including the award-winning AtomFilms website. Submissions must be 30 min. or fewer. For more info & a submission form, visit www.atomshockwave.com.

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine that is a showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the web. Seeks works created in Flash & Director as well as traditional animations & videos fewer than 10 min. in length to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

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Notices

By Melinda Rice

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Oct. 1 for Dec. issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

SHORT FILM SLAM, NYC's only weekly short film competition, holds competitions 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. Submissions must be 30 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) during operating hours, or get in touch w/ Jim at (212) 254-7107; jim@twoboots.com.

MOBIUS ADVERTISING AWARDS, February, IL. Deadline: Oct. 1. Open to TV, cinema, in-flight, cable & radio commercials, print & package design produced, screened or aired nat'lly/ regionally/ locally after Oct. 1 of preceding year. Newly produced ads as well as previously produced, still appearing or reintroduced. Founded: 1971. Cats: TV, Advertising, Animation. Awards: Mobius Statuette & Certificate. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", Beta, DVD, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$165 (single); \$240-\$495 (campaign). Contact: Lee W. Gluckman, Jr., U.S. Festivals Association, 713 S. Pacific Coast Highway, Suite A, Redondo Beach, CA 90277-4233; (310) 540-0959; fax: 316-8905; mobiusinfo@mobiusawards.com; www.mobiusawards.com.

NEW YORK FESTIVALS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO (NON-BROADCAST) AWARDS, January 18, NY. Deadline: Sept. 14. An int'l competition for wide range of media, from "low budget productions to multimedia extravaganzas." Receives 1,300 entries from 36 countries; awards presented at ceremony attended by 900. Multi-image/business theater productions must be submitted w/ presentation book. Cats incl. Industrials, Crafts, Multimedia, Slides, Educational. Founded: 1957. Cats: doc, short, animation. Awards: Grand Award "Best of Fest" Trophy; Gold, Silver & Bronze World Medals, Finalist Certificates of Recognition. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$125-\$275. Contact: Festival, 7 W. 36th St., 14th Fl., New York, NY 10018; (212) 643-4800; fax: 643-0170; info@newyorkfestivals.com; www.newyorkfestivals.com.

VIEWNAPPY'S HOMEMADE MUSIC VIDEO FESTIVAL allows video/film artists to showcase their works in comfortable, fun environments. Monthly screening parties, & finalists will be entered in quarterly video slams where audience picks best video. All finalists' work included in touring video slams. Submissions should be music-based & 15 min. or under.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

INTERNATIONAL FILM WORKSHOPS offers 150 summer workshops from March to October, as well as 4-week summer film school & many other programs in Oaxaca, Mexico; Seville, Spain & Rockport, ME. For more info, visit www.FilmWorkshops.com, or call for their catalog toll-free: (877) 577-7700; internationally, (207) 236-8581.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV administrator, now offers an ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each month's workshop is held at MNN & features a different speaker, screening & focus; past speakers have included Sharon Greytak, Joel Katz & Sam Pollard. For more info visit www.mnn.org or call (212) 757-2670.

PUBLICATIONS

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To send work or for info, contact Rosely Torres,

Armed and Ready

Marty Oppenheimer of West Coast-based Oppenheimer Cine Rental has been putting cameras in the hands of independent filmmakers as part of a grant program over the past five years. In this time, Oppenheimer has operated a film equipment grant for filmmakers working on their own noncommercial projects. The grant currently offers a SR2 package, which includes the Arri 16SR and accessories. Training on the Arri 16SR is available in Seattle through the program, if needed. More than twenty-five films, ranging from dramatic to narrative to documentary to experimental, were aided by the grant. Oppenheimer collects tape copies of each of the films the grants have helped to create, and hopes to grow the collection. The grants are offered to students, filmmakers affiliated with media arts centers, and filmmakers independent of affiliation. The equipment has traveled from the Seattle home office as far away as Florida, D.C., Minnesota, and in its longest trip, Maine. See listing.

No deadline. Acceptable formats: VHS/DVD (preferred), Beta sp/digi, Mini-DV, Hi-8; e-mail formats: QuickTime, Mpeg, Flash, SWA. Include a short artist bio & label tapes with your name, title of work, and contact info. Send to: Viewnappy, c/o Final Cut, 118 W. 22nd St. 7th Fl., New York, NY 10011. For more info, visit www.viewnappy.com.

LAVA, 124 Washington Pl., NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108; imre@igc.org.

FELIX: A JOURNAL OF MEDIA ARTS & COMMUNICATIONS announces RISK/RIESGO. This 1st bilingual issue of Felix is curated around the idea of the political, the transgressive, the risk of making works

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GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FILMS SHOT IN NY STATE avail. for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numerous tax exemptions avail. in NY state for film, TV & commercial production. Put together by Empire State Development Corp. & NY State Dept. of Taxation & Finance, 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & TV Development, 633 3rd Ave., 33rd fl., New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

2004 IFP/CHICAGO PRODUCTION FUND offers an in-kind donation of production equipment & services valued at up to \$85,000. Applicants must be IFP/Chicago members & the film must be shot in the Midwest region, defined as Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio & Wisconsin. Deadline for proposals: Sept. 19, 2003. For an application, call (312) 435-1825, fax (312) 435-1828, or e-mail infoifpmw@aol.com. The application is available online at www.ifp.org. This is a production fund not a completion grant.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's 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 & communities. Recent production grants have ranged from \$100K to \$500K. 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.

BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS, TELEVISION, AND NEW MEDIA COPRODUCTIONS provides in-kind investments & scholarships in return for equity investments (which vary according to the nature & scale of the proj-

ect). Applicants must be mid-career or senior professionals w/ professional development needs. Deadlines: Feb. 28, June 30, Oct. 31, 2003. For more info, contact Sara Diamond, (403) 762-6696; fax: 762-6665; sara_diamond@banffcentre.ca; www.banffcentre.ca.

CABLE POSITIVE, the cable & telecommunications industry's national nonprofit AIDS action organization, provides funding for AIDS organizations & local cable systems to work together in joint community outreach efforts, or to produce & distribute new, locally-focused HIV/AIDS-related programs & PSA's through the Tony Cox Community Fund. Grants are available up to \$5,000. Contact: Jesse Giuliani, (212) 459-1547; jesse@cablepositive.org; www.cablepositive.org. Deadline: September 12.

CCH MEDIA PROGRAM PLANNING GRANTS offer outright funds of up to \$20K 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 Oct. 1. For information go to www.calhum.org.

DIY REVOLUTION is now accepting free listings/classifieds on an indie media network. DIYR is a resource aimed to unite independent filmmakers, artists, activists, musicians, media groups & writers working for a more just, authentic & progressive world working outside of a corporate paradigm. Visit www.diyrevolution.com or www.diy.com.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundation's goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote intl cooperation & advance human achievement. www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

HUMANITIES WASHINGTON supports public programs that have as their primary purpose the presentation of insights gained from the humanities. Humanities Washington offers three types of grants. Quick Grants are available year-round to small or rural organizations for program planning or implementation. Visit nych@humanities.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10K to \$30K to emerging NYC artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200K. Narratives,

docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd: (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

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.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, along w/ instruction & technical support. Commercial projects, music videos & PSA's not considered. Feature-length works also discouraged. Provides camera on year-round basis. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 weeks minimum for processing. Tel.: (206) 467-8666; fax: (212) 467-9165; filmgrant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS (PIC) COMPLETION FUNDS are provided for the final preparations of broadcast masters of Pacific Island-themed programs intended for national public television. Categories: doc, performance, children's & cultural affairs programming. PIC is particularly interested in projects that examine Pacific Islander issues such as diversity, identity, & spirituality. Full-length rough cut must be submitted w/ application. Awards up to \$50K. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Gus Cobb-Adams, Media Fund, PIC, 1221 Kapi'olani Blvd. 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814; Tel: (808) 591-0059 x16; fax: 591-1114; gcobb-adams@piccom.org; applications available at www.piccom.org.

PANAVISION'S NEW FILMMAKER PROGRAM donates 16mm camera packages to film projects, incl. graduate student thesis films, of any genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision,

6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

SOROS JUSTICE FELLOWSHIPS support individuals who further the Criminal Justice Initiative (CJI) of the Open Society Institute's mission of reducing the nation's over-reliance on policies of punishment & incarceration & restoring discretion & fairness to the US criminal justice system. Fellowships encompass a Justice Advocacy Fellowship, Senior Fellowship & Media Fellowship & award \$45,000-\$98,200. Deadline: Sept. 26, 2003. For more info & an application, visit www.soros.org/crime, or contact Kate Black, acting program officer, at (212) 548-0170; kblack@sorosny.org.

THE ARTS ON RADIO AND TELEVISION supports the development, production & natl. dist. of radio & TV programs on the arts. Projects may include high profile multi-part TV & radio series, single docs on the arts, performance programs, or art segments within an existing series. Programs targeted to youth are welcome. Application deadline: Sept. 12. For more info, visit www.arts.gov/guide/RadioTV/RTVindex.html.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area & Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must have nonprofit status/fiscal sponsorship. Send letter of inquiry and synopsis to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave., #209, San Francisco, CA 94133-3930; (415) 391-0911.

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Ads exceeding the specified length will be edited. Place ad via www.aivf.org/independent/classifieds or type copy and mail with the check or money order 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 include card #, name on card and expiration date.

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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.

ARE YOU STUCK? Fernanda Rossi, script & documentary doctor, specializes in narrative structure in all stages of the filmmaking process, including story development, fundraising trailers and post-production. She has doctored over 30 films and is the author of "Trailer Mechanics." For private consultations and workshops visit www.documentarydoctor.com or write to info@documentarydoctor.com.

AVID ON-LINE/OFFLINE EDITOR I have cut shorts, music videos, feature documentaries and television documentaries. My work has appeared in Slamdance and other film festivals, on PBS, MTV, Discovery, Bravo and the History Channel. I have inexpensive access to AVID systems offline to uncompressed, mini-DV to D-Beta, Photoshop, Final Cut, AE and DVD Studio Pro. I am an exceedingly fast editor, well-educated, world-travelled, and can find a story in anything. Please write Gabriel Johnson at jgabriel@nyc.rr.com or call (917) 586-3135 for rates, reel, resume and references.

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COMPOSER JOEL DIAMOND: NYC Studio. Credits include "The Believer" Sundance Winner, A&E, ESPN. (917) 215-3112; www.joeldiamondmusic.com.

COMPOSER KEVIN KELLER specializes in finely crafted music for documentary and feature films. Innovative, collaborative, passionate. Download free demo at www.kevinkeller.com or call (917) 520-8115 in New York; kkproductions@earthlink.net.

COMPOSER MIRIAM CUTLER loves to collaborate—docs, features. 2002 Berlin "Lost In La Mancha," Sundance/POV "Scout's Honor" & "Licensed To Kill," Peabody "The Castro," "Pandemic: Facing AIDS" & more. (310) 398-5985; mir.cut@verizon.net.

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IS YOUR GRANT PROPOSAL COMPELLING? Seasoned grant writer and proposal editor for all film and video projects. Hourly, daily or flat rate. Fast and professional. Contact Carol Stanger, (212) 369-0851; irving100@earthlink.net.

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; www.edwardsfilms.com.

MUSIC SUPERVISOR/CLEARANCE: 20 yrs experience in music business, former ESPN MD, wks on tons of docs & indies, Weather Underground, Mule Skinner Blues, Sounds Sacred; Billboard award winning sdtrk producer.brooke@rightsworkshop.com; (415) 771-2069.

NEED PRODUCER BUT THINK YOU CAN'T AFFORD ONE? Experienced professional Line Producer for Budget (detailed/topsheet), Script Breakdown, Schedule, Day-out-of-Days. Specialty low budget but high quality AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates/references.

PRODUCING YOUR OWN SCRIPT? A schedule & budget are more than just lists & numbers. Your schedule & budget should be done with the same creativity as your writing & directing. Experienced Production Mgr/Line Prod. filmguy13@mindspring.com.

STORYBOARD ARTIST: With independent film experience. Loves boarding action sequences and complicated shots. Save money by having shots worked out before cameras roll. Call Kathryn Roake. (718) 788-2755.

WEB DESIGNER WITH GOOD STREAMING MEDIA BACKGROUND to design site for your film, video or production company. Affordable prices. Call or e-mail Seth Thompson: (330) 375-0927; seththompson@wigged.net; www.wigged.net.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

50 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR VIDEO BUSINESS. FREE REPORT. Grow a successful video business in Legal, Wedding, Corporate, TV and more. <http://videouniversity.com/50web.htm>

DISTRIBUTOR AGENT SEEKING CLIENTS for video release representation. Over ten years experience. All submissions reviewed. Will return 2 page professional assessment regardless of contract offer. Will not return submitted materials. Send \$49.99 assessment fee (check, no cash) and materials to: WidowMaker Films Review, PO Box 1111, Bloomfield, NJ 07003.

WE NEED YOUR FILM. Our membership network is anxious to watch and review your selected feature or short film, any genre. Reviews compiled and posted online. Always accepted, no entry deadline. Sign up & register films at www.viewashow.com.

PREPRODUCTION

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.

MOVIE PLAN SOFTWARE: Investment Memorandum. Create document for selling your film project to potential investors and more! PC/MAC Electronic Template. Only \$39.95. Download sample at www.movieplan.net.

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 incl: Miramax, Warner Bros, Fine Line. Rewrites available. (212) 219-9224; www.su-city-pictures.com.

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**THE
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NOVEMBER 2002

The Great Money Hunt

- ❖ A fundraising primer
- ❖ Inroads to international investment
- ❖ Stories (and ideas) from the financing trail
- ❖ Legal issues with finishing funds
- ❖ Budgeting software for the filmmaker



DECEMBER 2002

The Write Stuff

- ❖ Stories from screenwriters-turned-directors
- ❖ Screenwriting competition: perks and pitfalls
- ❖ A look into the screenwriter's toolkit
- ❖ Doc Doctor: scripting a doc
- ❖ Protecting copyrights



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2003

Working & Playing With Others

- ❖ Special technology section
- ❖ Media mentors as youth guides
- ❖ Collaborations in film and sound; and sound recording basics
- ❖ Opinion: the right to public domain art



MARCH 2003

The Women Behind the Camera

- ❖ Women Make Movies turns thirty
- ❖ Women cinematographers
- ❖ Feminist film and the ivory tower
- ❖ Work of Flash artist Marina Zurkow
- ❖ Sundance sleepers



To order back issues, contact info@aivf.org,
 or send \$5/issue (plus \$2 s&h each) to:

The Independent—Back Issues Orders
 304 Hudson St. (6th fl.)
 New York, NY 10013

AVID EDITOR: Over 25 feature films. Also Trailers, Docs, TV, Reels. Fully equipped Tribeca AVID suite, FCP, DVD. Pro-tools editing & mixing. Very fast & easy to get along with. Credit cards accepted. Drina (212) 561-0829. DrinaL@aol.com.

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DO YOU TEACH VIDEO EDITING? A new instructional resource that provides all raw materials you need to successfully run your class. Students can edit a 24 min. funny short. Comes with raw footage & completed film, music, sound FX, script, and graphic elements. www.teachvideo.com.

eMediaLoft.org FINAL CUT PRO G-4 digital video with editor \$65/hr; Discounts; Production; S/8 & R/8 film transfers; VHS, Hi-8, CD-Rom, DVD, mini-DV, DV-Cam; Photos, Graphics, Labels. West Village. Bill Creston (212) 924-4893 eMediaLoft@lycos.com.

FINISH! YOUR VIDEO/FILM PROJECT! Save money and learn for yourself with semi-assisted guidance. Expert explainer will clarify all remaining steps, teach you how to do it yourself, or provide assistance. Resolve strategies, mixing plans, sync issues, etc. DV and 16mm editing, transfer, and sound mixing too. Initial consultation includes clear summary report outlining detailed "next steps," proper sequence, and why. Low intro rate. (212) 777-1180; info@editlab.com.

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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Unless noted, AIVF programs take place at our offices (see below). RSVP is required for all AIVF events: call (212) 807-1400 x301 or www.aivf.org.

AIVF BOARD ELECTIONS

PREPARE TO VOTE!

The AIVF Board of Directors elections are a great opportunity for you to participate in the future of AIVF. The make-up of the board of directors determines how we serve you, the AIVF members. Don't let this opportunity to participate pass you by this year! Only active AIVF members are eligible to vote in the elections. If your membership expires on or before October 15, 2003, 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 28, 2003.

AIVF MEDIA ADVOCACY DAY

FRIDAY, SEPT. 26, 2003

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 balancing copyright protection.

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!

Go to www.aivf.org/advocacy.html to learn how to set up or to join a delegation in your own community.



IN BRIEF: FORMING A LEGAL ENTITY

when: Sept. 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$40/\$25 AIVF members

The AIVF Producers' Legal Series helps answer legal and business questions about structuring and negotiating deals in film and television. It also introduces independents to future legal and business resources.

Every transaction in the film industry involves a choice of legal entity. This seminar will explain the reason for forming a legal entity and the legal, business, and tax aspects of the choice of the following entities: sole proprietorship, C-corporation, S-corporation, not-for-profit-corporation, limited partnership, general partnership, and limited liability company. Panelists will include an accountant and a lawyer.

Series moderator Innes Smolansky is an experienced entertainment attorney specializing in representing producers, writers, authors, directors, and animators in independent motion picture production, documentaries, television, theater, and book publishing.

DOCUMENTARY DIALOGUES: THE SOUND OF MUSIC FOR DOCUMENTARIES

when: Sept. 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Wine reception until 9:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$5 members/\$20 general

Does your documentary need music? Where exactly? Can you survive the labyrinth of music rights? Shall you license a song or ask a friend to create

an original score on a keyboard at home?

The music soundtrack might come last in the filmmaking process, but by no means is it least important or easiest to handle. Join us to learn from accomplished composers and your peers on all aspects of music and filmmaking, from how to choose and work with a composer to getting all the paperwork in place.

Guest composers Sarah Plant and Gary Pozner will join host Fernanda Rossi.

Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She writes the *Independent's* monthly column Ask the Doc Doctor. For more information, visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

reach AIVF...

Filmmakers' Resource Library

hours: Wednesday 11-9 or by appt. 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 Tuesday-Friday 2-5 p.m. EST

By internet:

www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

AIVF INDIE MIXER

when: Sept. 23, 7–9 p.m.

where: Remote Lounge,
327 Bowery, NYC

cost: Free for AIVF members – must RSVP

Join the AIVF community and staff at Remote Lounge for the perfect opportunity to network and relax with fellow independents. A great chance to meet AIVF members and other filmmakers from across the nation.

Open to AIVF members and their guests. Must RSVP to attend.

INDIE MIXER SUBMISSIONS CALL

AIVF is seeking films for our Indie Mixer at Remote Lounge on September 23. The films will be shown on multiple screens and televisions during our members party.

SUBMISSIONS:

Highly visual work of any genre. Works will be screened without sound. Entries can be a trailer, a short film, or a scene or collection of scenes.

Films or clips MUST be 10 minutes or under. Projection format are VHS or DVD only.

Deadline: Wednesday, September 10.

Drop off materials must be received by 4 p.m. Please mail to: AIVF, 304 Hudson Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10013, attn. "Indie Mixer"

Submissions will NOT be returned.

AIVF OPEN HOUSE

when: Sept. 24, 2–5 p.m.

where: New York, NY

Come discover why AIVF prides itself on being the "information clearinghouse" for independent producers. Join us at our NYC Filmmaker Resources Library which houses a

wide variety of publications for filmmakers as well as tip sheets covering topics like fundraising, grants, and distribution.

If you are in from out of town for the IFP Market, feel free to use the library computers to check your email or surf the web. Light refreshments served.

AIVF COSPONSORS:

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INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

when: Sept. 16-21

where: Austin, TX

Cinematexas in its eighth years continues to celebrate short films. Cinematexas awards \$25,000 in cash and services annually, curates retrospectives of programs of short work of international filmmakers, offers free workshops and symposiums on activist and community media; presents moving image installations from around the world, a concert series presenting some of the world's leading avant-garde musicians, and a new sidebar exploring the intersections of art, cinema, and game development.

M.A.D. PANEL

when: Sept. 17, 4 p.m.

where: The Hideout, 617 Congress Ave., Austin, TX

AIVF and Cinematexas invite you to learn more about the ongoing struggle in the fight against media consolidation. As global media empires assume a greater share of public discourse space, what can independent/co-dependent artists do to ensure that nonhomogenized voices of resistance get through?

Come share a cup of coffee with AIVF member and moderator Julie Dervin as she chats with University of Texas-Austin Professors Sharon Strover (Director of UT's Telecommunications

and Information Policy Institute) and David J. Phillips as they bring us up to speed. Learn more about media policy that affects us, broken down in plain laymen's speak.

For more information, visit
www.cinematexas.org.



IFP MARKET

when: Sept. 21-26

where: New York, NY

The IFP Market is focused on presenting works in development exclusively to industry professionals. With its most selective program yet of narrative and documentary features, shorts, and screenplays, the 2003 Market offers an opportunity for producers, distributors, financiers, agents, and others in the industry to find quality projects and connect with emerging filmmakers through screenings, networking meetings, and receptions.

For more information, visit www.ifp.org to register, or call (212) 465-8200 x226.

AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT:

FILMS AT THE LINCOLN CENTER



where: Walter Reade Theatre,
Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC
www.filmlinc.com

AIVF members may attend select series (listed below) at a discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office!

Through September 4—**The Whole Wide World: 50 Years of Widescreen Filmmaking: Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of CinemaScope**

September 5 - 30—**Latin Beat 2003!**—Presenting the best new films from Latin America.

AIVF THANKS

The Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, information services, and arts and media policy advocacy. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:



The Academy Foundation
The Caliban Foundation
City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs
Empire State Development Corporation
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
Home Box Office
The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation
The Jewish Communal Fund

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
The New York Community Trust
National Alliance for Media, Arts and Culture
New York Foundation for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Panasonic USA
Sony Electronics Corporation

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

Business/Industry Members: **AL:** Cypress Moon Productions; **AZ:** Duck Soup Productions; **CA:** Blueprint Films; Eastman Kodak Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; The Hollywood Reporter; SJPL Films, Ltd.; Ultimatum Entertainment; Video Arts; **CO:** Pay Reel; **DC:** 48 Hour Film Project; **FL:** E.M. Productions; **IL:** Screen Magazine; Urban Work Productions; Wonderdog Media, Inc.; **IN:** The Storyteller Workshop; **MA:** Glidecam Industries; **MD:** HGTV; NewsGroup, Inc.; Waltery Insurance; **MI:** 10th Street Productions; Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Michael Kuentz Communications; **NH:** Kinetic Films; **NJ:** Monkey Rant Productions; Panasonic USA; Sony Electronics; **NY:** All In One Productions; Analog Digital International, Inc.; Arc Pictures; Arts Engine, Inc.; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cataland Films; Code 16/Radical Avid; Cypress Films; Dekart Video; DNT 88 Productions; Docurama; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Forest Creatures Entertainment; Fred Siegel CPA; Greenwich Street Productions; HBO; Interflix; Karin Bacon Events; Lighthouse Creative; Lightworks Producing Group; Lowell Light Manufacturing; Mad Mad Judy; Mercer Media; Metropolis Film Lab, Inc.; Moxie Firecracker Films; Off Ramp Films, Inc.; Outside in July, Inc.; Persona Films, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Robin Frank Managment; Roja Productions; Symphony of Chaos Productions; Tribune Pictures; Wildlight Productions; **OR:** Art Institute Portland; **PA:** Janny Montgomery Scott, LLC; Schiff Media/SBS Films; **RI:** The Revival House; **VA:** Dig Productions; Kessler Productions; **WI:** Image Pictures, LLC

Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival; **CA:** Berkeley Documentary Center; Berkeley Video & Film Center; Film Arts Foundation; Filmmakers Alliance; Fireside Foundation; International Buddhist Film Festival; Media Fund; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; The LEF Foundation; The Sundance Institute; USC School of Cinema TV; **CO:** Colorado Film Commission; Denver Center Media; **CT:** New Haven Film Festival; **DC:** Media Access Project; Spark Media; **FL:** Sarasota Film Festival; University of Tampa; Valencia Community College; **GA:** Savannah College of Art and Design; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago; Community Television Network; Light Bound; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Communication; Rock Valley College; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Long Bow Group; Lowell Telecommunications Group; WGBH Education Foundation; **MD:** 7 Oils Production; Laurel Cable Network; **ME:** Maine Photographic Workshops; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Festival; **MN:** IFP/MSP; Walker Art Center; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **MS:** Magnolia Independent Film Festival; **NC:** Cucalorus Film Foundation; UNC Greensboro, Broadcasting and Cinema; University of North Carolina, Wilmington; **NE:** AIVF Salon, Lincoln; Great Plains Film Festival; Nebraska Independent Film Project; Ross Film Theater, UN-Lincoln;

NJ: Black Maria Film Festival; College of New Jersey, Department of Communication Studies; Freedom Film Society; **NY:** After Dark Productions; American Museum of Natural History; Bronx Council on the Arts; Center for New American Media; Chicks with Flicks Film Festival; Communications Society; Cornell Cinema; Council for Positive Images, Inc.; Creative Capital Foundation; Department of Media Study SUNY Buffalo; Donnell Media Center; Downtown Community Television; Electronic Arts Intermix; EVC; Film and Video Center; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Globalvision, Inc.; International Film Seminars; John Jay High School; Learning Matters; Listen Up!; LMC-TV; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Museum of the American Indian; National Video Resources; New School, Dept. of Communications/Film Department; New York Women in Film and Television; Non Profit Media Group; Paper Tiger; POV/The American Documentary; Pratt Institute; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stony Brook Film Festival; Syracuse University; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; Upstate Films, Ltd.; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Cleveland Film Society; Independent Pictures/AIVF Ohio Salon; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio University School of Film; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; **PA:** American Poetry Center; Greenworks; Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; Philadelphia Independent Film and Video Association; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI:** Flickers Arts Collaborative; Rhode Island School of Design; **SC:** Hybrid Films; South Carolina Arts Commission; **TX:** Austin Film Society; Southwest Alternate Media Project; Worldfest; **UT:** Sundance Institute; **VT:** The Noodlehead Network; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; Thurston Community Television; **WI:** UWM Department of Film; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Short Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

Friends of AIVF: Angela Alston, Desmond Andrews, Sabina Maja Angel, Marion Appel, James J. Batzer, David Bemis, Doug Block, Adrienne Brown Ryan, Michael J. Camoin, Carl Canner, Liz Canner, Hugo Cassirer, Paul Devlin, Martin Edelstein, Esq., Aaron Edison, Marlys Ernst, Paul Espinosa, Phoebe Ferguson, Karen Freedman, Nicole Guillemet, David Haas, Emily Hubley, Alexandra Juhasz, John Kavanaugh, Amie Knox, Leonard Kurz, Bart Lawson, William Lyman, Diane Markrow, Maureen Marovitch, Matthieu Mazza, Jim McKay, Diane Murphy, Elizabeth Peters, Mimi Pickering, Christina Reilly, David Reynolds, Amalie Rothschild, Hiroto Saito, Larry Sapadin, John B. Schwartz, Nat Segaloff, Robert L. Seigel, Esq., Gail Silva, Kit-Yin Snyder, George Stoney, Cathy & James Sweitzer, Rhonda Leigh Tanzman, Rahdi Taylor, Karl Trappe, Cynthia Travis, Joyce Vaughn, Cynthia Veliquette, Ph.D., Jane Wagner, Bart Weiss

member benefits

AIVF offers many benefits to our members.

For complete details, including contact information and discount codes, visit www.aivf.org. (Note: you must provide your membership number to log on.) You can call (212) 807-1400 x506 to have a Member Benefits List mailed to you.

[WWW.AIVF.ORG/
RESOURCES/BENEFITS](http://WWW.AIVF.ORG/RESOURCES/BENEFITS)

AIVF Offers

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- Airborne Express/Meridian One Corp
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- Final Draft, Inc.
- Image Design Studio (New York, NY)
- Media Services (Dmaha, NE)
- ProductionClassifieds.com

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- Drama Book Shop (New York, NY)
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- *The New York Times*
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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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon 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.net

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

Where: Redlight Café

553 Amsterdam Ave.

Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12

atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.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: Susi Walsh, (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

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Cleveland, OH:

Ohio Independent Film Festival

Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette

Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org

www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays

Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.

Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066

columbia@aivf.org

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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522

jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska

Independent Film Project

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.

Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street

Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,

www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org

www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225

portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.

(Subject to change; call to confirm)

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: Seattle Indie Network

Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 200-0933;

Wes Kim, (206) 719-6261; seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:

When: First Mondays, 6 p.m.

Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway

Contact: Jana Segal and Rachel Sharp,

tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:

Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline,

(202) 554-3263 x4, washingtondc@aivf.org

Alabama Salon Hard at Work

It's been a very busy year for the Huntsville, Alabama, Salon. Together with the Birmingham Salon, we undertook an intense letter-writing campaign to the State House of Representatives and Senate committees to help push through a film incentives bill that had stalled and was all but dead. We were successful in our efforts, and the state passed this bill into law. Not all is politics, though.

The Huntsville Salon members have completed four films, three more films are currently in production, and six are in preproduction. Look for *The Law*, *Underrush*, and *The Business*—coming to a film festival near you.

— Charles White

Taking the Extra Step

By Sean Fitzell

Given the number of movies competing for funding, distribution, and publicity, getting yours noticed may seem a daunting task. But with a little creativity—and help from your friends—you can apply some relatively low-cost strategies to get your film noticed and remembered. This month, we spoke with several filmmakers who marketed their films in unique ways—from creative press-kits to live music to interactive websites, filmmakers are taking the extra step to stand out.

The Book and the Rose

Before the film's screening at the Rhode Island Film Festival, twenty-five fresh-cut roses were sent to targeted publications a week ahead of a more traditional press kit. According to director Jeff Bemis, who came up with the plan with the help of actress (and sometimes publicist) Helene Taylor, the idea was to keep the cost down, choose specific publications, and "sort of keep in people's minds." Although it did not win the festival, the film did receive mentions in the press including an outstanding review in the *Providence Journal*.

Betraying Reason

A small Douglas Fir sapling was attached to the front cover of the press packet (see page 48) for this fictional film set in an old-growth forest of Douglas Fir trees (that really was cut down during the filming). Producer Jeff Cahn wanted to do something that people would remember and that would be connected to the message of the film. "Mission accomplished," says Cahn.

On Line

During production, several fictional websites were designed for this feature which explores the cyber-world of chatrooms. First-time director Jed Weintrob decided to launch these sites on the film's official web so that browsers could connect to the chatrooms depicted in the film. "The idea is not only about marketing the film," Weintrob says. "After people see the film they can spend some more time with the different characters of the film."

Secret Lives: Hidden Children and Their Rescuers During World War II

This documentary about Jewish children hidden during the Holocaust was given an early public screening at the Center for Jewish History in New York City—which typically only hosts music. At the suggestion of the center's curator, the film's composer, John Zorn, conducted a live performance before the screening. "It wasn't somebody's brainchild, but rather a necessity of having to show a film in a concert

series," writer-director Aviva Slesin says. "One enhanced the other." The screening at the center sold out. And the film went on to a theatrical release, strong reviews, and will be aired on HBO and Cinemax this October.

In the Mirror of Maya Deren

The premiere of this documentary about the life and work of avant-garde director Maya Deren at the Anthology Film Archives also included a live performance of the film's score, again composed by Zorn. But this time the director, Martina Kudlacek, went further than just the concert and programmed a month of events at the Archives around her film and Deren's "universe." Events included a photographic exhibition of the work of Alexander Hammid's (Deren's second husband and film collaborator), a musical tribute to Teiji Ito (Deren's third husband and film composer) featuring his scores, screenings of all Deren's finished and unfinished films, and several receptions for the artists. "I never planned all out for promotion only," Kudlacek explains. "I was aware that I had a unique chance to present my film and [have] no doubt that the whole program drew in an audience."

Stone Reader

This film's quest to learn about author Dow Mossman and his book *The Stones of Summer* took a different turn for the filmmakers when they started to publicize and screen the film at festivals. Nearing completion of the film, they contacted major publishers to get the book re-printed—but to no avail. According to one of the film's producers, Robert Goodman, it was not until an article about the movie was written in the *New York Times* that publishers took notice. In fact, sixteen publishers contacted the filmmakers after the review to discuss optioning the book. "Stone Reader was directly responsible for getting Barnes & Noble to republish the book," Goodman says. □

Sean Fitzell is an intern at The Independent.

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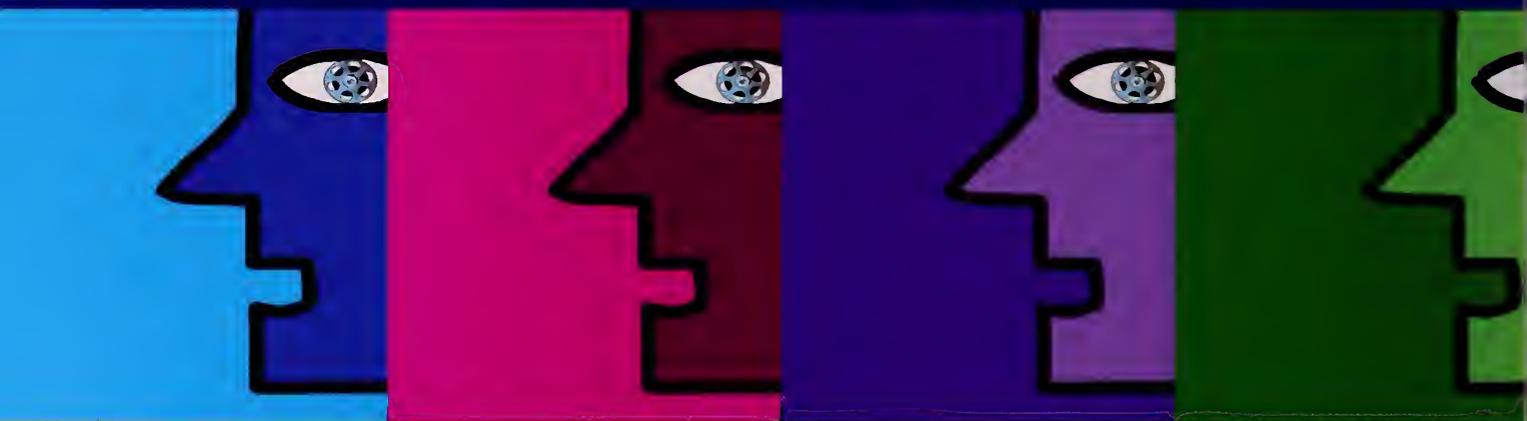
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Photos: Cathy Boudin, Betty Harris, and Cynthia Berry at a writing workshop at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York (courtesy of *What I Want My Words to Do to You*); two young boys in Baghdad displayed as part of the Baghdad Snapshot Action project (www.nationalphilistine.com/baghdad); staff of Third World Newsreel (Mark Stephen Kornbluth).

Page 5 photos: Lazaro Ramos and Marcelia Cartaxo in Karim Ainouz's *Madam Sata* (Wellspring Media); Sohail Dahdal filming young refugee for the web project "Long Journey Young Lives" (Goldie Dahdal New Media); Leon Singer as Clemente (left) and Jeremy Ray Valdez as Lalo (right) in *Foto Novelas 2* (Joanna Zamarron/ITVS); Shelly Silver's *Suicide* at the New York Video Festival (Cord Dueppe).

On the cover: Activist, playwright and performer Eve Ensler (Jeff Vespa of Wire Image.)

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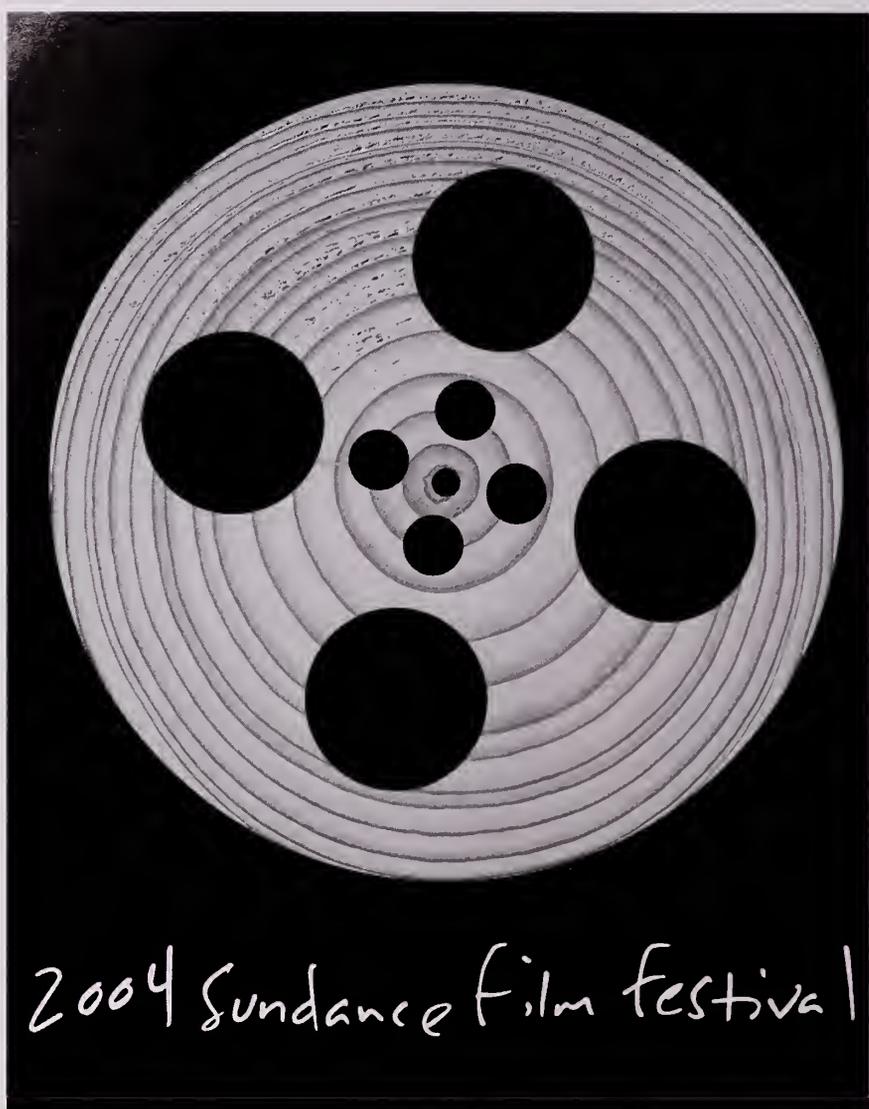
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Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

I did not set
out to create an
issue on docu-
mentaries and
activism. If I
had, I might not

have assigned the articles that you will
find in this issue. But I am extremely
pleased with the collection of pieces
presented in this, our annual issue on
documentaries. Magazines, like films,
often have a life of their own, coming
together in unexpected ways.

I first began to see that the thread run-
ning through this issue was documen-
tary and activism during an interview
with Eve Ensler, creator of the *Vagina
Monologues* and co-creator of *What I Want
My Word to Do To You* (see page 36.)
Ensler told me, "I see myself as a writer
and a performer and an activist. They
have become one. For a long time in my
life I was in great struggle because they
were at odds. I didn't know how I was
going to bring them together. And then,
over the years, they found their way into
an organized way of supporting each
other."

At their best, documentaries, and
art in general, do exactly what Ensler
described: organize our ideas and con-
cerns in such a way that they support
each other, rather than fighting each
other. This requires compassion,
openness, and a willingness to explore
truth in all its uncomfortable forms.

Documentaries, in particular,
demand that we embrace the com-
plexity and contradiction that is
truth. These projects force us to see
the world not as two sides of a coin,
but as multi-faceted. They help us to
hold in the same space the concept
that a woman can take another per-
son's life and still be capable and
deserving of love and friendship. We
are given the ability to look beyond
reports from embedded troops and

tightly edited videos of toppling stat-
ues. Documentaries deliver truth that
is nourishment, rather than processed
cheese.

In addition to the article on *What I
Want My Words to Do to You*, Ann
Lewinson interviews a wide variety of
human rights media-makers (see page
39.) And Claiborne Smith reports on
Third World Newsreel, which is cele-
brating its thirty-fifth anniversary this
year.

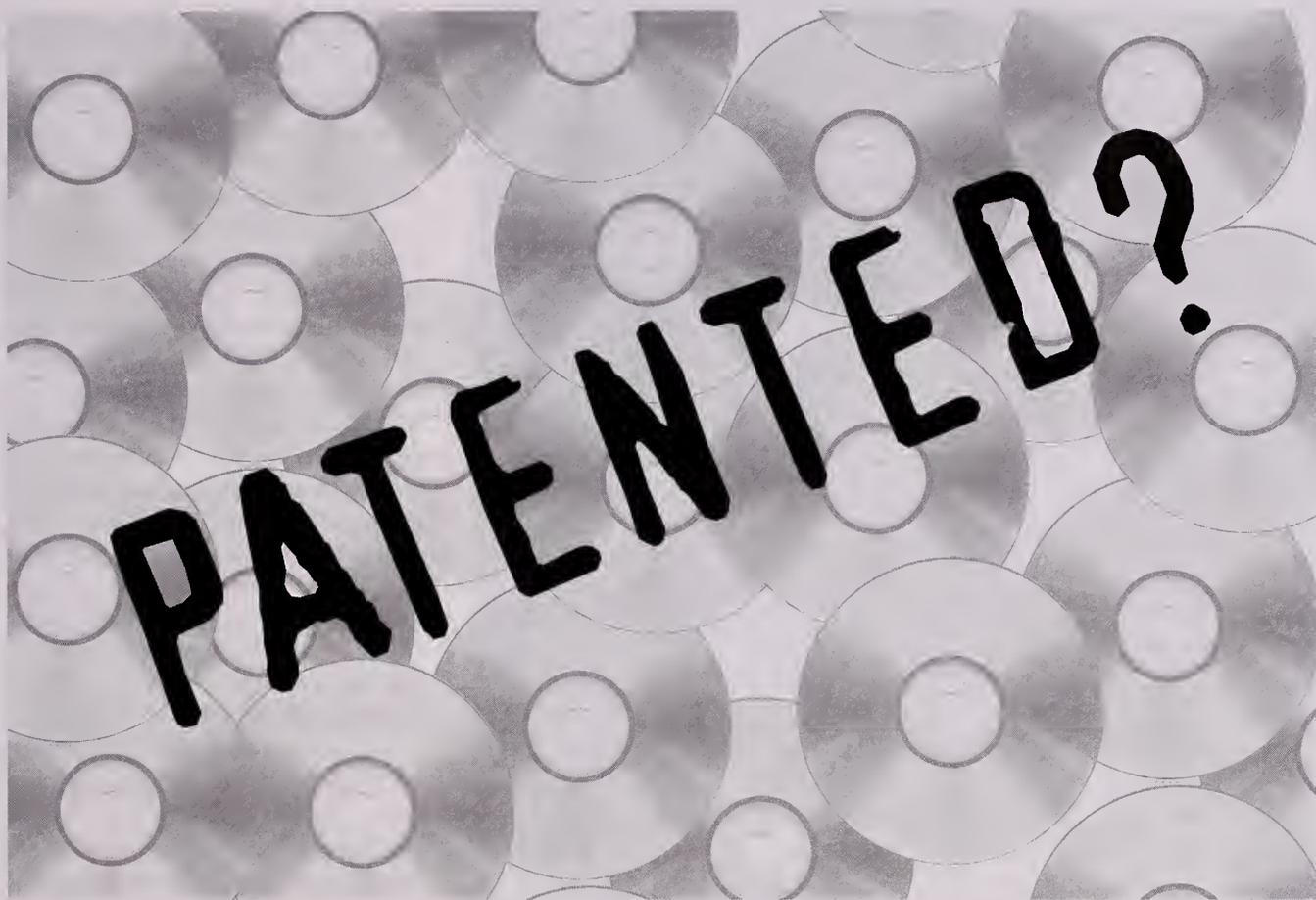
Also this month, David Alm pro-
files Sam Green and Bill Siegel, direc-
tors of *The Weather Underground* (see
page 13.) In one of the odd coinci-
dences of this issue, two of the former
members of the radical group who
declined to appear in Green and
Siegel's film are featured in *What I
Want My Words to Do to You*.

Documentary Doctor, Fernanda
Rossi, answers questions on the
importance of genre and how to
decide who gets what credits (see page
17.) You will also find Charlie
Sweetzer's coverage of the new touring
collection, *The Animation Show*, (see
page 29), and a field report on
Washington DC, by writer and resi-
dent Jeannette Catsoulis.

Our technology expert Greg
Gilpatrick reviews *Final Cut Pro 4*, the
latest release (see page 48.) Gilpatrick
also investigated a company, Multi-
Format, Inc., that is claiming to own
the patent on a key piece of DVD tech-
nology and is demanding licensing
fees from companies and filmmakers
who are distributing DVDs through
their websites (see page 9.) To round
out our technology coverage this
month, we asked documentarians
what they learned from making a
DVD of their project. Their answers
are on the back page list.

Thank you for supporting *The
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Maud Kersnowski
Editor-in-chief
Editor@aivf.org



Multi-Format, Inc. Sues DVD Distributors

By Greg Gilpatrick

A month after Mary Lance began self-distributing DVDs of her film *Agnes Martin: With My Back to the World* through her web site, she received a letter demanding she pay Multi-Format, Inc. a patent licensing fee for each DVD she sold. The letter implied that failure to pay the fee could result in a lawsuit for patent infringement.

Over the past few months a small number of distributors, as well as manufacturers and retailers of DVD video disks, have received similar letters from the Los Angeles law firm Hennigen, Bennet, and Dorman on behalf of Multi-Format, Inc. of Dumont, New Jersey. The patent in question is for a method of con-

verting 24-frame video into another format such as 30-frame NTSC. Feature length films are often stored as 24-frame video to increase their visual quality and to save space, but they must then be converted to 30-frame when played on a DVD. DVDs created from content already in 30-frame formats are not affected by the patent.

The conversion takes place when the DVD is played, but Multi-Format is seeking to collect a license fee for every DVD disk, player, and computer rented and sold through a complaint filed in federal court by Multi-Format against eleven retailers, including Wal-Mart, Radio Shack, and Target. According to Multi-

Format's lawyer, Alan Block, "Infringement occurs when the end-user views the material." Instead of suing every person who watches a movie on a DVD, Multi-Format decided to go one "step up the chain to the retailers who provide the DVDs to the end-users," Block explains.

So far, Multi-Format has contacted a small portion of DVD distributors and retailers ranging from corporate giants to self-distributing filmmakers like Lance. The letter she received appears to be addressing distributors who have indemnification agreements with a retailer named in the lawsuit. This clause could make the distributor liable for the license costs of Multi-Format's patent. According to Block, the letter's intent is "to inform people of the status of the proceedings and prepare for any indemnification agreements they have with these retailers." But Lance, who only sells DVDs through her website, has no contract with any retailer.



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When asked directly about the letter received by Lance, Block admitted that his firm was sending letters to people “not connected to the defendants” in their suit. Block explained “letters were sent to anyone that manufactures, distributes, or sells DVDs.” Furthermore, Block said that letters were sent to people whose DVDs used formats not covered by the patent and even people “selling only VHS and not DVDs.” Block explained “We did the best we could but we can’t know specifics about each DVD [or business].” The letter reads, “Multi-Format filed a patent infringement lawsuit against eleven retailers of DVD disks, DVD players, [and other DVD-related products].” It continues, “We are writing to inform you of . . . [the] lawsuit and to give you the opportunity to discuss licensing opportunities.” For each DVD sold, Multi-Format asks for three cents.

But most of the information in the letter received by Lance and other distributors refers to Multi-Format’s suit against the retailers. Even the October 15, 2003 deadline mentioned in the letter refers to the date by which the retailers being sued, not the distributors, must “consider Multi-Format’s claims and . . . business proposals.” There is no date after which recipients of the letter who do not agree to Multi-Format’s license will be sued. Block confirms that Multi-Format has “no plans to sue anybody else at this time.” But according to Robert Siegel, *The Independent’s* legal columnist who read the letter, “there is the inference that [Multi-Format] will sue, but they don’t come right out and say it.”

Whether or not the patent does apply to DVD, and whether DVD distributors and retailers will have to pay the license, are questions that will not be answered quickly. Sean Bersell, Vice President of Public Affairs at the Video Software Dealers Association (VSDA), says patent infringement “is not a simple issue like a slip and fall lawsuit where its immediately obvious whether they have a good case or not. This type of thing takes months to look into.” In response to Multi-Format’s letters to retailers that the VSDA

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represents, Bersell says they have “hired expert patent counsel to investigate whether a retailer is liable for contributory infringement of Multi-Format’s patent.”

At press time in September, the eleven retailers had not agreed to Multi-Format’s proposal. If the retailers do not agree to the terms and Multi-Format goes ahead with the lawsuit, it will be a significant legal test of Multi-Format’s patent watched by many in the burgeoning DVD industry. In the meantime, those who receive letters from Multi-Format will have to choose whether to pay the fee or wait for the outcome of the lawsuit. When asked how many companies had paid to license the patent, Block replied “no one, yet.”

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant.

Global Film Initiative’s MoMA Show

By Claiborne Smith

Since its inception in January of this year, the Global Film Initiative (GFI) has functioned under a stark irony: the worldwide financial domination of the American film industry is the very thing that limits Americans from seeing movies from other cultures. To counter that reality, Noah Cowan, a former distribution executive and Toronto International Film Festival programmer, and Susan Coulter Weeks, a corporate marketing executive and community organizer, established GFI to bring films made in developing countries to America.

GFI plans to annually award grants of up to \$40,000 to filmmakers in developing nations, and acquires up to ten finished films made in the developing world that are rooted in local cultures. Along with distributing the best of those films at cultural institutions in the US, GFI has also created an educational outreach program to introduce high school and college students to GFI films.

In its first exhibition, GFI is partnering with the Museum of Modern Art to present “Global Lens: New Cinema from the Developing World” at MoMA’s Gramercy

Theatre in Manhattan, November 13-30. The lineup of ten films from Brazil, Cuba, India, Algeria, Palestine, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Iran, and the Philippines will then travel to other cultural institutions across the US.

“A powerful, authentic narrative can foster trust and respect between disparate cultures and mitigate the social and psychological impact of cultural prejudice,” the nonprofit’s mission statement reads. “In recent times, no medium has been as effective at communicating the range and diversity of the world’s cultures as the cinematic arts.”

For more information, see www.globalfilm.org

Restoring Harlan County U.S.A.

By Claiborne Smith

Barbara Kopple’s 1976 documentary Harlan County USA—the landmark American documentary long in need of preservation—has finally found a patron. The nonprofit New York Women in Film & Television will not only earmark its own funds, but, as part of its new initiative called the Legacy Project, will also solicit money from organizations to restore the film.

Since 1995 NYWIFT has donated money for “the preservation or restoration of American films in which women held significant creative positions.” The Women’s Film Preservation Fund has historically bestowed cash grants of up to \$10,000 (and in-kind, post-production services at the New York post-production house Cineric) to individuals, film archives, educational institutions, and media arts centers. More than fifty short and feature films have benefited from the Fund, including the only two surviving shorts of the 300 made by pioneer director Alice Guy-Blache.

But over the years, NYWIFT members and staff felt that “the choices that were being made were favoring films that didn’t really highlight women’s work,” says NYWIFT executive director Terry Lawler. “We felt like we could offer these funds to



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various firms that do preservation work, and that we could get women's films on the top of the list of films that need to be preserved."

The Legacy Project, which was born out of these desires, will be able to contribute more money to the restoration of women's films by soliciting donations from various organizations in the film industry.

Cabin Creek Films, Kopple's production company, originally applied to the Women's Film Preservation Fund seeking \$48,000 for the restoration of *Harlan County USA*, which depicts the coal miners' strike in rural Harlan County, Kentucky in 1973.

"The film was starting to fade," says Susan Lazarus, the co-chair of the Women's Film Preservation Fund, and a freelance post-production supervisor for both feature and documentary films. "The stock is not stable from the 1970s, and before things get out of hand, it's good to make an archival master that can be stored properly and won't deteriorate," she explains. Forty-eight thousand dollars is "much more money than we ever give," Lazarus says. But because Kopple is a two-time Oscar winner (in addition to *Harlan County USA*, she won the Oscar in 1991 for *American Dream*, about rapid economic decline in the nation's heartland), the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was quite eager, Lazarus says, to pitch in to restore Harlan.

Lazarus estimates that the total cost of restoring the documentary will be less than \$100,000 (NYWIFT also opted to restore the film's soundtrack, thus increasing the cost of the restoration above the \$48,000 that Cabin Creek had originally requested). The Academy has pledged to fund the hard costs of restoring the film with the collaboration of DuArt Film Laboratories, Cineric, and Kodak.

NYWIFT's deadline for proposals (by individuals or nonprofits seeking funds for the preservation of films in which women performed key creative roles) is October 31. □

For more information, see www.nywift.org

Claiborne Smith is an intern at The Independent.

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Meet the Weathermen

SAM GREEN AND BILL SIEGEL

By David Alm

If you ask most people under thirty who the Weathermen were, you're not likely to get much of a reaction. And that's exactly what Bill Siegel and Sam Green are hoping to change with their latest collaboration, *The Weather Underground*, a feature-length documentary that premiered at Sundance last January, and opened this summer in Chicago, New York, and San Francisco.

The film chronicles a group of extreme-left American dissidents, whose protests against the Vietnam War led to their paradoxical rise to notorious obscurity during the 1970s. Going "underground" in 1970, the early twenty-somethings severed ties with everyone they knew—including their families—and orchestrated bombings of evacuated government buildings across the U.S., garnering some of them spots on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list. They were so extreme, in fact, that certain members of the Black Panthers even thought they were nuts. And since giving themselves up in 1980—though some remained underground, committing even more violent acts, leading to the deaths of policemen and a few of themselves—many of the former radicals have become upstanding members of the system. One teaches law at Northwestern University, another owns a bar in New York, and one of the group's most outspoken founders teaches math at a community college in New Mexico. Some have even published books about their decade spent in America's shadows, building bombs and living off of spaghetti with garlic-butter. So why do so few young people

know about the Weathermen today?

"We started working on the film in the late 1990s, which just seems like such a silly time now," says Green, as the two directors sit in a musty, old bar on Chicago's North Side one hot afternoon in August. "People were really into alternative music and culture, but no one was into politics."



Still, Green stresses the ongoing relevance of their story. "I think that the film is important right now because it raises questions and issues that are still in the air. Why do people resort to violence in pursuit of social change? Is violence ever justified? Can it be effective? How do we, as a society, define terms like 'violence' and 'terrorism'?"

Though most of the film was shot before September 11th, the moral ambiguity of these questions could not be more resonant with the state of America today. "Even though they definitely misread the world and did some things that were problematic, there's something in what they did

that moves me," says Green. "And I think that young people today can deal with that kind of ambiguity and salvage something positive from it."

However, both directors see *The Weather Underground* as a much-needed history lesson. "To a lot of people, [that era] is just a tombstone with memories attached to it, but not to us," Siegel adds. "[This film] is a vehicle through which to get ideas about capitalism and the sixties out to younger people."

But don't get the wrong impression. The two filmmakers are not two aging boomers, harping on about the

sixties and how they wanted to change the world, but actually members of their target audience. Siegel, who is forty, received his BA in history from the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1986. Green, thirty-seven, studied social science at the University of Michigan and graduated in 1989. And both came upon the subject of their latest film academically—through books. The decision to actually make *The Weather Underground*, however, is more difficult to trace.

Their acquaintance began one evening in 1990, when Siegel, then a graduate student at the Columbia School of Journalism in New York,

John Jacobs (left) and Terry Robbins at the Day of Rage, Chicago, 1969.

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A special four-week hands-on filmmaking workshop will be offered this winter at the Columbia University School of the Arts Film Division. The International Film Institute of New York will conduct an intensive program in filmmaking with the support of Columbia University Faculty, Alumni, and working professionals in the motion picture and television industry. All students will complete a final project by the end of the course.



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crashed a party at Green's apartment on the Upper West Side. A few months later they met again—this time by chance—in the Columbia University library, where Siegel was working on his thesis and Green, a recent college grad, was making photocopies about Mohammed Ali for a Japanese company that was producing a film about the legendary boxer. Siegel took an interest in this project, and before long they were both on the payroll, performing some of the lowliest tasks in the filmmaking hierarchy.

"Our job was to just go out there and get as much information as possible," Siegel says, which appealed to his historian sensibility. "It was so fun doing that research. There was so much potential to just investigate history—I love doing that." Green, meanwhile, fell for the excitement of the work. "It was an amazing experience for us at that time because we were getting paid to read books and watch films and travel around and hang out with Ali," he beams. "And we thought: Wow! If this is documentary filmmaking, this is all right!"

The project also introduced the young filmmakers to some of the industry's less glamorous aspects. "At some point, we stopped getting paid," Siegel admits. "But we got to be really good friends working on that film and we discovered a mutual affinity for storytelling and documentary filmmaking and radical politics. And I'm sure at some point in there the Weathermen came up."

Yet it would be a while before they would work together again. After losing their livelihood, and faced with a recession nearly as bad as today's, Siegel and Green left New York. (This exodus would ultimately prove as fortuitous as their initial meeting.) Siegel returned to Chicago and Green enrolled at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. He focused on documentary production and studied under the late Marlon Riggs, whose emotive style—especially apparent in

his 1989 essay film about gay black identity, *Tongues Untied*—would soon influence Green's work.

In his directorial debut, *The Rainbow Man* (1997), a forty-two-minute piece about a homeless man from LA who achieved his fifteen minutes during the 1970s and 1980s by appearing at thousands of televised sporting events in a



giant rainbow wig, Green developed his penchant for evocative journalism. "One thing that really inspires me with film is just getting a feeling," he says. "And the reason I like documentary so much is because it's real—and because it's real it has a very significant power that dramatic films don't have."

After completing that film, Green was doing research for another project on Betty Page at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., and found himself leafing through a report on the Weathermen. Lingering on a page of mug shots, he was "struck," he says, "by the emotion in their faces." When he returned to California, he started to learn about the revolutionaries first-hand. He knew right away that he wanted to tell their story, and called Siegel to ask if he'd like to collaborate again—only this time they'd be directing the project, and quitting wouldn't be an option. Siegel—who was working at the Great Books Foundation, a non-profit for education and lifelong learning—was all for it. They soon embarked on the three-year process of completing the film.

"First we had to see if it was even

possible," says Green of the frustrations they encountered. "Most foundations are not necessarily going to be comfortable funding a film about a group of kids who were committed to the violent overthrow of the U.S. government. Secondly, we had to see if there were any former members who would even talk." And once those problems were solved, they confronted an even more complex dilemma: how to capture the emotion of the Weathermen's story while maintaining their journalistic integrity. Plus, they had almost no footage of the group from its ten clandestine years of activity.

"It was like we had this visual black hole at the center of the project," Green says. "It really forced us to be creative visually." And the film *is* creative, as much as it is informative. *The Weather Underground's* impact comes largely from its ingenious combination of music (an eerie, ambient score commissioned from Amy Dominguez and Dave Cerf), multiple formats (DV, 1 inch, Super 8, High 8, 16mm, 35mm, and even Beta), slow-motion, loops, and old newsreels. "So the film has a certain collage-like, patchwork feel that I actually tried to accentuate," says Green. "I like that look. It feels rough and textural the way that history should."

Future collaborations are, for now, uncertain. Siegel continues at his post with the foundation and Green at his—teaching documentary production and history at various colleges in the Bay Area. And of course both will keep promoting their film. "I think this is a crucial time for people to be either remembering or discovering that it is more than okay to dissent," Siegel says. "And that there are times when it's necessary. This film documents one of those periods." ■

For more info, see www.upstatefilms.org/weather/

David Alm writes for Artbyte, RES, Silicon Alley Reporter, and The Utne Reader. He has assisted documentary films and contributed to books on web design and digital filmmaking. He lives in Chicago and can be reached at almdavid@hotmail.com.

The Weather Underground filmmakers Sam Green and Bill Siegel.

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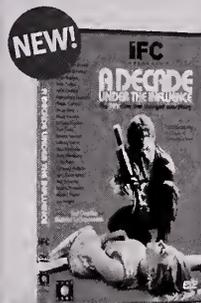
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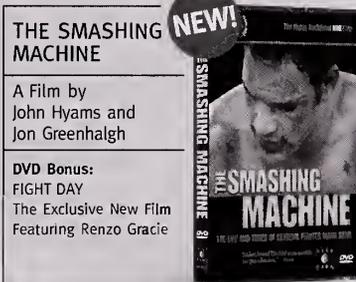


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Ask the Documentary Doctor

By Fernanda Rossi



Dear Doc Doctor:

I cannot figure out the genre of my film. Is knowing the genre crucial to making a film or is it only for selling it that I need to know that?

The first question you need to answer is: why are you asking this question? The reason behind your question is key because when it comes down to creative endeavors, a lack or excess of knowledge can be productive. What you choose to know and when you choose to know it is what makes your filmmaking experience either nirvana or sheer hell. Knowing the genre is important, but not the most important information you need when you are starting the creative process. But the idea of knowing or not knowing certain things about your film is something worth discussing.

Let's first explore the "lack of knowledge." Not knowing can be a great engine that will propel you forward for a long time. We all instinctively seek to know, have answers, grasp the unknown. Not knowing the genre, who the main character is or the ending, will give you something to look forward to, something to explore. Not knowing the genre could be a good thing. You will seek answers beyond self-imposed boundaries. That's a great opportunity to innovate in the field.

There is also some danger in the "not knowing." That is when no

answer seems to satisfy us. If you find yourself researching for several months and looking for elusive results, then that lack of knowledge that was once an engine becomes a burden, an excuse for procrastination. There is nothing like having to watch yet another film to "really understand" the concept of genre or read another book on filmmaking to avoid facing the creative process, the material itself.

Excessive knowledge has its pros and cons too. Knowing everything about your film, genre, storyline, characters, and interviewees might give you a sense of control. You feel calm

What you choose to know and when you choose to know it is what makes your filmmaking experience either nirvana or sheer hell.

and comfortable about taking the next step, confident that nothing was left to chance. Not one stone has been left unturned. In short, you know that every decision is an educated choice. That lends your film an air of professionalism and thoroughness. But knowing too much can also leave little room for spontaneity and change.

You probably realize by now that tight boundaries are not conducive to creativity and that a complete lack of rules does not help either. It is in the balance between this knowing and not knowing where filmmaking takes place. Consequently, a flexible frame of reference is the best option, whether it is genre, style or storyline. Fortunately in documentary filmmaking, unlike in other disciplines, many questions can remain unanswered—at least for a while—except

for one: Why are you making this film and not any other one?

Dear Doc Doctor:

I just finished my film and now I need to put together the credits. I don't know where to start, not even for my own credit. Do I list myself for every single job I had? How about other people?

Credits can be the source of many hurt feelings and arguments that take place exactly twenty-four hours after the premiere or sometimes the same night because this is when some of the crew discovered for the first time how the producer/director really felt about their work.

A good rule of thumb to avoid conflict and be fair is: Be generous with others and tightfisted with yourself. A credit is sometimes the only thing you can offer somebody who worked on your project. So, offer it freely and

abundantly. Credit everybody! No matter how little they have done or how badly they did their job. But be sparing with the credits you give yourself. You may feel like you did it all in spite of having been surrounded by other people, but that is how your crew feels too, which is a good sign. It means they were all very focused and committed.

If you worked alone, absolutely alone, then there is nothing wrong with stating that clearly in the beginning. But contributing to somebody else's job does not mean you have to share that credit. Being in the edit room with an editor feels like editing, but it is not. Looking through the camera viewfinder—when the DP lets you—feels like shooting, but again, it is not. It is collaboration, which is the nature of the creative work. Unless you have actually shot or edited alone



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for an extended period of time, do not rob your crew of their title.

Credits are not the place to set the score straight or wield power. Filmmaking is about negotiation and equal relationships. The short-term pleasure you might have derived from voicing your feelings through what you think are fair credits will have long-term consequences. Not because of what your crew will do to you, but because of what they will NOT do. They won't put your film in their reels, they won't recommend it . . . the list of what they won't do is much longer and more harmful than any lawsuit they might threaten you with in the midst of their frustration and disappointment.

It is understood that when you hire someone one of the things you talk about is how he or she is going to be credited. Lots of things happen between that conversation and the finishing of a film. People often take on more responsibility than their original title reflects. The cameraperson got a steadycam for free. A PA scouted locations. The editor also designed the postcards and gave you a contact to the acquisition department of a network. So, how do you decide what these people's credits should be? Ask them! After all, it is their work, time, and talent we are talking about. As with every aspect of the process, listen first and decide later—if possible by mutual agreement. There are so many credits to choose from: co-producer, associate producer, editor, associate editor, second camera. The list and your imagination is endless. Fortunately, there are no credit police, just peace of mind. And remember that credits are one place where you can be generous without impacting your budget. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com.

Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She also leads the bimonthly Documentary Dialogues discussion group offered by AIVE. For more info, visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

Beyond the Beltway

INDEPENDENT FILM IN WASHINGTON, DC

By Jeannette Catsoulis

Between the pomp of the Kennedy Center and the stately elegance of the Smithsonian, a diverse group of organizations, filmmakers, and creative personalities is proving there's more to DC than snipers and bad policy decisions. Herewith is a sampling of the best, the brightest, and the quirkiest.

SilverDocs

The most recent—and the ritziest—addition to DC's already-lively festival scene is SilverDocs, an all-documentary festival launched in June 2003 by the American Film Institute in partnership with the Discovery Channel. Creatively positioned to exploit the ethnic and social diversity of the metropolitan area, along with its policymakers, journalists, and think tank members, the five-day event attracted more than 10,000 enthusiastic festival-goers. “We didn't expect to draw that many people,” comments inaugural director Nina Gilden Seavey, filmmaker and founder/director of the Center for History in the Media at George Washington University. “We had standby ticket lines and packed houses at 11 a.m.”

Attendees stuck in ticket lines could marvel at a sidewalk demonstration by skateboard wizard Tony Hawk or simply admire the festival's glamorous home: the beautifully-restored AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center, located in the DC suburb of Silver Spring, Maryland. With 49,000 square feet of luxurious seating and state-of-the-art projection capability, the theater's three screens showed seventy foreign and domestic films culled from

more than 1,000 submissions. Discovery's role is strictly that of sponsoring partner. “We never had any conversations with Discovery about programming,” Seavey explains. “That would have cast an aspersion on the AFI and on the fest itself.”

While SilverDocs will embrace all forms of independent documentary, this first year's emphasis was on a more traditional style of storytelling, such as the sold-out opening night selection, Richard Schickel's *Charlie: The Life and*

nation over the 2000 vote-counting controversy. Both films were followed by a discussion of faith in politics led by Mark Halperin of ABC News and Bush strategist Mark McKinnon. “A brand new fest has to decide what it can be,” Seavey says, “and we decided to use the strengths of the DC area to not just show films, but use them as a platform for dialogue. That's our trademark.”

For more information visit www.silverdocs.com

Visions/Bar Noir

Located in the heart of tony Dupont Circle, this first-run art house and bar/restaurant has been a popular local destination since its opening in 2000. “Our concept was to create multiple profit centers that would allow us to



Art of Charles Chaplin. Also popular were an evening devoted to the groundbreaking documentaries of NFL Films, and a symposium honoring four-time Oscar winner Charles Guggenheim, which was attended by former Secretary of State Madeline Albright and historian David McCullough.

Not surprisingly, politics played a major role with back-to-back screenings of Ron Frank and Ann Benjamin's *Only in America*—which follows the career of Joseph Lieberman—and *We Wuz Robbed*, Spike Lee's howl of indig-

reach out to the community in creative ways,” programmer Andrew Mencher explains. “We want people to hang out here and have fun.”

Visions screens a wide range of international titles as well as several special programs designed to cement local relationships, such as *Out at Visions*, a weekly program of gay and lesbian films. “We see this program as a way to be a good neighbor in a predominantly gay neighborhood,” says marketing manager Heather Huston, who also oversees Local Filmmaker Night each

Steve Sabol is interviewed as part of Silverdoc's NFL Films event.

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Tuesday, which offers screening space to filmmakers and community organizations in exchange for selling fifty tickets at \$7 each. "If they can bring in an audience, then we take a chance," says Mencher, adding that the filmmaker receives 30% of any sales over \$350. So far the arrangement has been extremely successful, particularly with events such as the 48 Hour Film Project, where teams compete to produce a movie in just two days.

At a time when independently-owned theaters are rapidly disappearing, Visions' 2001 box office of over \$800,000 is a healthy figure for a twin theater with fewer than 300 seats. Those numbers are the result of a serious commitment to grassroots marketing. "Only about half our films are reviewed in the *Washington Post*," points out Mencher, who, along with Huston, works hard to promote programs like the African Film Festival to targeted local communities. "People will often choose our venue just because of the work we put into it."

For more information visit www.visionsdc.com

Georgetown Independent Film Festival

Now in its third year, this primarily short film festival showcases provocative documentary, narrative, and experimental films in a converted warehouse in the historic Georgetown district. Founded by local businessman and self-described "serial entrepreneur" Eric Sommer, the fest is the direct result of his disaffection with mainstream cinema. "I wanted to see a movie one weekend and realized that all the art houses had closed," he explains. "So I thought, 'I'll do a film festival!'" A couple of months later I had 100 hours of film stacked in my office and I knew this was serious."

With the help of local filmmakers—whose representation remains a priority of the festival—and many local businesses, Georgetown 2002 screened seventy-three films to an audience of 4,900 and hosted an evening with John

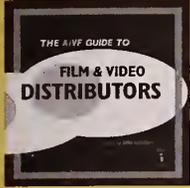
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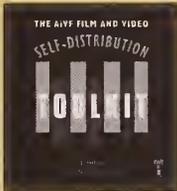
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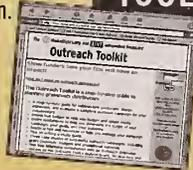
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Waters. "We survive by making partnerships," says Sommer, who recently did just that with The Venice International Short Film Festival. The two festivals now have a reciprocal agreement to screen selections from each other's programs, and this year Venice will sponsor the Georgetown appearance of two Italian directors.

"DC has some of the most intellectually sophisticated audiences in the country," comments Sommer, who is also developing his own independent distribution company, Wonderland Pictures. "We have a responsibility to bring them thought-provoking films."

More info at www.georgetownfilmfest.com

Resources - By Sean Fitzell

DC Independent Film Festival

The festival is a competition for all formats: features, shorts, animation, documentary. In conjunction with the festival, the DC Independent Film Market and DC Independent Film Seminar allow filmmakers to sell their films and learn aspects of the film business from leading professionals, respectively. The festival also sponsors events throughout the year, including fundraisers, screenings, and discussions. For more info, contact the DC Independent Film Festival; 2950 Van Ness Street, NW, Suite 728, Washington, DC 20008; info@dciff.org or www.dciff.org

DC Asian Pacific American Film Festival

This annual festival focuses on Asian and Pacific American communities and encourages creative development from, for, and about those communities. In addition to the festival, this nonprofit organization sponsors arts education opportunities for youths and adults, raises public awareness, and promotes discussion and exploration of the cross-cultural exchange between East and West. For more info, contact APA Film, Inc.; P.O. Box 18405, Washington, DC 20036; apafilm@apafilm.org or www.apafilm.org

Reel Affirmations Film Festival

This Washington, DC annual festival is dedicated to presenting the latest and best gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender films from around the world. Events during the festival include opening and closing night parties and the women's filmmaker brunch. Reel Affirmations also sponsors the Pride Film Festival, monthly screenings, and monetary support for selected filmmakers. For more info, contact Reel Affirmations; PO Box 73587, Washington, DC 20056; phone: (202) 986-1119; info@reelaffirmations.org; www.reelaffirmations.org

DC Office of Motion Picture and Television Development (MPTD)

As part of the local DC government, the MPTD provides information and resources for filmmakers shooting in the nation's capital. The MPTD also sponsors an annual screenwriting competition in conjunction with the DC Commission on the Arts. For more info, contact the DC Office of Motion Picture and TV Development; phone: (202) 727-6608; 441 4th St. NW, Suite 760, Washington, DC 20001; www.film.dc.gov

Humanities Council of Washington, DC Film Collection

This private, nonprofit organization is affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities and promotes cultural and educational programs for, and about, Washington, DC. The council maintains a collection of nearly one hundred films dealing with the life and history of the capitol, which are available on loan for research, teaching, and cultural events. For more info, contact the Humanities Council; phone: (202) 387-8391; <http://wdchumanities.org/film.cfm>

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Center for Social Media

Located in the School of Communication at American University, the Center is a rich resource for independent filmmakers and anyone interested in media as a tool for public engagement. Directed by Communication

Professor Pat Aufderheide (a contributing editor of *The Independent*), the Center's activities include research projects and public events, conducted both independently and in collaboration with other organizations.

"We have a wealth of material written by filmmakers and distributors, including information on rights issues and strategies for using media effectively," says Aufderheide, who is currently examining the problem of public access to socially-engaging documentaries and the difficulty of keeping them in the marketplace. Another major aspect of the Center's research is the thorny question of intellectual property in a digital environment—how to foster creativity while maximizing public access to films. "We're interviewing filmmakers all over the country about their problems acquiring and maintaining rights to finished films," Aufderheide explains, "with a

view to pinpointing the most useful positions to adopt."

Locally, the Center is most noted for organizing a number of public events. For example, this fall it will sponsor a panel of award-winning filmmakers for the third annual DC Labor Film Festival—which the Center helps curate—entitled "Lens At Work: Labor Filmmakers and the Challenges of Storytelling." □

For more information visit www.centerforsocialmedia.org

Jeannette Catsoulis is a freelance writer living in Washington, D.C. She was Director of Programming for Georgetown Independent Film Festival from 2001-2002, and remains a programming advisor to the festival. She can be reached by email at cine.phile@verizon.net.

Skating wizard Tony Hawk was the subject of a documentary at SilverDocs.



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Wellspring Media

Jason Guerrasio interviews

Wendy Lidell & Marie Therese Guirgis

What is Wellspring Media?

Lidell: It's one of the only independent film distributors that has the capacity to distribute theatrically, on television, domestically, internationally, and on home video. It's the successor company to Winstar and Fox Lorber.

Guirgis: We also have a department that co-produces documentaries between acquisitions and international sales, so basically we raise financing for largely domestic projects by means of pre-selling them to international broadcasters for documentaries, sometimes for series. We haven't done it for fiction films.

When and why was Wellspring created?

Lidell: It was created in the early 80's. It was initially an international sales company for American independent filmmakers and then it added its home video arm and in '98, the theatrical. The beauty of the company [is it's] so multi-faceted. It can provide one-stop-shopping for the filmmaker as we can drive revenue in all the different markets. We're not talking about blockbusters. Releasing it in any one market will not pay back the production cost, but if you can combine revenue streams from all those different markets—you make a little bit internationally, you make a little bit theatrically—and combine them then there's something really valuable and enables us to return meaningful revenues to the producers.

Through all the change has the mission of the company stayed the same?

Lidell: I think it's always been a commitment to the best quality work. I think the way that that's implemented

has continued to evolve and gotten better and better.

What types of films do you seek?

Guirgis: We always seek the same kinds of films, which are high end, very independent, high quality, art films, be they fiction or non-fiction. So, they can be films from already famous filmmakers



to emerging filmmakers, but films that have a really strong vision and a strong voice that will likely be embraced by the critical community and are likely to stand out from the pack.

How do you find films?

Guirgis: Traditional film festival routes [and], because of our reputation, we have relationships with filmmakers and producers overseas as well as here [in the States]. For video we work with other distributors who don't have their own video division and we release their films. We [also]

initiate certain projects like *Devil's Playground* that we did with HBO and had at Sundance last year.

What festivals do you attend?

Guirgis: The most important festivals for where we find what we'll release theatrically are Cannes, Toronto, Sundance, and Berlin. Those are the top four.

Are there any second tier festivals that you attend annually?

Guirgis: There are certainly festivals that we don't attend but that we look at: Slamdance, Seattle, San Francisco,

and Chicago. Then internationally there's Rotterdam, Hot Docs. We go to Full Frame.

What does a documentary need to have to grab your attention?

Guirgis: For domestic theatrical distribution, I would say a subject matter that people have never seen before, so it generates a lot of press, or a very audience friendly, uplifting film. It needs to have something that's outstandingly unusual or extremely well-directed because theatrical releasing is so tough for docs.

Alexander Sokurov's *Russian Ark*.



Lidell: Those [that] work best theatrically tend to have a dramatic arc and work as a narrative, the same way that a drama does, but it just happens to be reality based. *Harlan County*, *Capturing The Friedmans*, *Spellbound*, *Hoop Dreams*, those have an inherent dramatic arc.

What do you look for on the television side?

Guirgis: For television we look at docs for international television, so it's harder to describe what works. It's easier to say what's harder [to sell]. The political/social docs do not work overseas

because it's a topic that people aren't familiar with unless it's something really unusual like *Devil's Playground* or some American phenomena that is so American that it's perceived by people overseas as kind of exotic.

How many films do you acquire per year?

Lidell: For theatrical it's six to eight releases a year.

Guirgis: We know we have to fill those six to eight slots but we might acquire twelve films in a year.

How many of those are documentaries?

Guirgis: Not many for domestic theatrical distribution. We acquire many documentaries to sell internationally.

How should filmmakers approach you with their projects?

Guirgis: The most effective way, especially for domestic release, is to

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attempt to get into some of the bigger film festivals just because it's hard for us to acquire something, especially if it's an unknown entity, without exposure to a film festival. Also, try to contact producers' representatives; they really help sell films. They can call our attention to a film that we otherwise might not pay that much attention to. A lot of people just submit their films [to us], but it's harder that way. We certainly look at everything and get back to people, but we don't pay as much attention to those as we do films that are in festivals.

How do you work with the filmmakers when preparing their films for release?

Lidell: We don't like to be tied contractually, but usually the filmmaker can inspire us to take the film in the right direction. Usually our filmmakers are foreign so [suggestions] are by phone or e-mail [but] at the end of the day I feel I can sell the film better than the filmmaker can. My job is not to portray the film in the way the filmmaker would, but to get as many people into the theater to see the film as I possibly can.

What advice can you give filmmakers seeking distribution?

Guirgis: For American filmmakers, to really explore the foreign film festivals because there are a number of cases of American films that were rejected here, but noticed abroad. Sometimes films that are a little more experimental will be appreciated more by foreign festivals and foreign audiences and then they get attention here. *George Washington* is a perfect example of that.

Lidell: I think the mistake that many documentary filmmakers make is to think that they are going to have a theatrical doc so they make it ninety minutes, even though the subject and the material is only good for thirty

minutes, or sixty minutes, or fifty-eight minutes, or forty-five minutes. Stretching it out in the hopes for a theatrical release, at the end of the day will backfire because the film won't be the best it can be. There are more eyeballs to be found on American television than American theatrical for a well-made documentary so I would really want to persuade documentary-makers to keep seeing theatrical as the gold ring. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



WELLSPRING

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Facing page: Valerie Lemerrier in Claire Denis' *Friday Night*.

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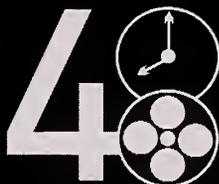
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Meet the Refugees

“LONG JOURNEY YOUNG LIVES”

CHALLENGES WEB AND FILM CONVENTIONS

By Carmin Karasic

In 2001, the Australian Film Commission-Australian Broadcasting Corporation New Media Documentary Online was established to fund innovative documentaries specifically produced for internet broadcasts. One of the most provocative of these projects was “Long Journey Young Lives”—which satisfies the notion of a motion picture narrative, yet competently meets the usability expectations of an excel-

sists of refugee children from Sri Lanka, Iraq, and Cambodia who were five to ten years old as refugees, and between eight and eighteen when the documentary was created. The other group is Australian school children, who ranged in age from nine to eleven when the documentary was shot.

Like Philip Noyce’s 2002 film *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, this documentary is set in Australia and addresses children’s desperate journeys. But unlike

one, anywhere in Australia, who doesn’t have a firm opinion on the subject. We had to find a way of presenting the refugee experience in a fresh way, without getting bogged down in predictable emotionalism and the political rhetoric from both sides. It came to us in a flash; ‘children’ was the answer. Only child refugees and Australian school kids could present and explore this sensitive issue in a totally fresh and unencumbered way.”

Both of “Long Journey Young Lives” principals have worked in multi-media and documentary. Goldie, the project’s director, writer, and narrator, is one of Australia’s leading documentary filmmakers, responsible for *Nobody’s Children*, *Out of Sight*, *Out of Mind*, *The Big House* and has won AFI, Human Rights,



lent web presentation. The web film challenges conventional documentary forms with a digital blend of appropriate audio, optimized visuals, expertly structured information, internet technologies, and poignant content.

The site’s “loading percentage” icon is a symbolic barbed wire. Once loaded, the screen divides into four sections: homeland, journey, detention, and reflection. Two separate groups of children dot each area, and their positions highlight a subtle border cutting through each section. One group con-

Noyce’s film, which portrayed one Aborigine woman’s true story, “Long Journey Young Lives” features several young asylum-seekers who each describe his/her journey. Asylum-seekers give first-hand accounts of the violent conflicts in their homelands and their dangerous journeys to an Australian detention camp. Australian children give their uninhibited opinions about asylum seekers and Australian refugees.

Director David Goldie told the Australian Broadcasting Company, “The issue of asylum-seekers in this country has polarized the population. It’s virtually impossible to find any-

ATOM, three Logies and many international awards. He and Sohail Dahdal, interaction designer and cinematographer, co-produced the award-winning work. The documentary was commissioned and funded by AFC/ABC and won the Australian National Youth Media Awards 2002 for best online feature and was presented at the Stuttgart Winter Film Festival and the International Film Festival, Rotterdam. Dahdal worked in multimedia more than ten years as a producer, interaction designer, and senior software engineer. He has designed projects for World Expo 2000 in Germany and for the United Nations-sponsored Palestine

Sohail Dahdal (left) and David Goldie filming *Escape to Freedom*.

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SchoolNet program. His work also includes large projects for companies such as Qantas, Austrade, and the Australia Postal Service.

"Long Journey Young Lives" can be experienced in autoplay or interactive mode. In both versions, children share their memories and opinions via short video clips. Watching their faces while hearing them talk adds a visceral quality

tion choices include transcripts, the current number of refugees worldwide, and extra information on just about everything in the documentary. One very handy bit of data is the number of children visited while clicking through the site. Most websites don't provide feedback on how much of the website remains unexplored. This web film encourages you to listen to each



that most websites do not attempt. It is difficult to dismiss the issues in a detention camp while listening to the children who lived there. Their comments are both intimate and thought-provoking.

Dahdal seamlessly integrates web-based audio and hypermedia. According to his CV, his passion lies "with interactive films and combining the cinematic experience with the interactive online digital experience." The user interface and information architecture for "Long Journey Young Lives" is clearly the work of an experienced web development team led by a hypermedia visionary. The website's design enhances the interactive experience by suggesting where to start and how to proceed. Dahdal expertly guides visitors through the site.

Besides several children waiting to share their views, additional informa-

child, and the transcripts are useful because many of the children speak English with heavy accents, or speak too softly or quickly to understand.

"Long Journey Young Lives" deftly pushes the boundaries of information and communication technology. Consequently, there are a few minor technical glitches. Waiting for media downloads is to be expected, but the website offers alternative versions for media with limited internet connectivity. Many of the extra information links are "dead links," but that's inevitable with so many links to other sites. These are just facts of life online. □

See the film at www.abc.net.au/long_journey/index_flash.html

Carmin Karasic is a digital artist and professor of New Media at the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University. She is also the assistant director and webmaster of Boston Cyberarts, Inc. She can be reached at carmin@bostoncyberarts.org.

David Goldie of New Media.

PHOTO: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF GOLDIE DAHDAL; NEW MEDIA; IMAGE FACING PAGE, COURTESY OF MIKE JUDGE

The Animation Show

By Charlie Sweitzer

Additional reporting by Dan Blank

Typically, the Academy Award for best animated short is little more than Oscar party joke fodder—after the comic possibilities of best sound effects editing and Jack Nicholson reaction shots are exhausted. “Nobody has any clue as to what they’re seeing, or where they can see shorts like that,” says animator Don Hertzfeldt. “Animated shorts haven’t really gotten to the point where people in Kansas can just go to their local theater and check them out.”

Hertzfeldt is trying to change that with the Animation Show. In conjunction with *Beavis and Butt-head* auteur Mike Judge, he is co-creator and co-curator of the touring animation festival, whose programming spans most of the spectrum of animation, from crude pencil tests to stop motion to CGI to paint-on-glass animation. The collection, which premiered in September at New York’s

Mulch. In the fall of 2001, Hertzfeldt and gonzo animator Bill Plympton organized a “mini-mini-tour” to exhibit their own work. It was at a sold-out show at the Alamo Drafthouse in Austin, Texas, that Hertzfeldt met Mike Judge.

“He was impressed,” says Hertzfeldt. “He liked the fact that it was grassroots. He used to go to these animation shows in the seventies, when they were everywhere, and I went to some in the late eighties, too, when I was about thirteen. We both had memories of how these shows used to be, and how cool they were, and how cool it would be to make one like that again.”

Without these sorts of festivals, Hertzfeldt says, filmmakers making animated films have few screening options. “You’re almost lucky to get it on the internet,” he says. “Mike and I are kind of Nazi film purists. We like

new discoveries, and a handful of hard-to-find oddities. But unlike Spike and Mike’s perennial gross-outs, there is no unifying theme, aside from the fact that these are all shorts Hertzfeldt and Judge would like to see on the big screen.

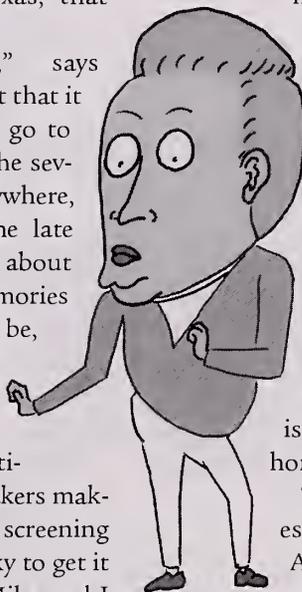
“That might be the only selfish bone of Mike or me in the whole thing—we actually get a venue to show our stuff in,” says Hertzfeldt, who has animated a brief introduction, intermission, and outro for

the show. Though they all feature puffy, nondescript characters similar to those in *Rejected*, the pieces mark a departure—albeit a minor and forgivable one—from his trademark super low-fi two-dimensional style, with “high tech” flourishes like stop motion horses and *Star Wars* lasers.

The Judge pieces are especially idiosyncratic. Along with *Office Space*, the short which later

grew into the live action movie of the same name, he has several early shorts and pencil tests on display, which run from the fully developed (a Hank Hill/Mr. Anderson-esque character watches a commercial for a health food store) to the oblique (an effeminate man does a very brief, effeminate dance). Judge explained in a Q&A session after the August 15 Los Angeles show that, as an animator, he’s often at a loss for venues for this kind of goofy, purely “for fun” work. Not everything, he said, can be developed into a pitch for Fox.

The Animation Show’s centerpiece is a restored sequence from Ward Kimball’s *Mars and Beyond*. Animated in 1957 for the Walt Disney-hosted *Disneyland* television show, *Mars* is an unusually somber turn from the man famous for animating Jimminy



“We kind of want to be the good guys and put on a show that’s not about the bottom line so much as getting these [films] out there.”

Lincoln Center after a couple August warm-ups in Austin and Los Angeles, will be hitting almost forty cities in the next year.

Hertzfeldt attracted a cult following several years ago with *Rejected*, a bit of hand-drawn animation that’s allegedly a series of rejected ads for products like Kelp Dip and Bean Lard

stuff in proper theaters. These are students and professionals—not only are there limited resources, but they’re kind of getting bullied by the few [animation] outlets that are available. We kind of want to be the good guys and put on a show that’s not about the bottom line so much as getting these out there.”

The program is the cinematic equivalent of a mixed tape from Hertzfeldt and Judge: some old favorites, lots of

Mike Judge’s “Dancing Guy” is an Animation Show icon.



IRAN, VEILED APPEARANCES
by Thierry Michel (SFIFF 2003)

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Cricket and the “Pink Elephants on Parade” sequence in *Dumbo*. Kimball imagines the red planet’s inhabitants as bizarre and frightening monsters which eat rocks and sand, or concentrate the sun’s light into a deadly heat-ray.

“It was our first restoration,” says Hertzfeldt. “We got the colors looking really rich. . . . At Disney they were complete sweethearts. You hear horror stories about how difficult they are with their archives, but they were completely cooperative. I’ve been telling people I’m going to ask for *Fantasia* next time.”

The other older selections include Tim Burton’s often seen (but rarely screened) *Vincent* and Richard Golezowski’s stop motion *Ident*, made by Britain’s Aardman Studios in 1989—or, as Hertzfeldt puts it, “back before Aardman was, you know, *Aardman*.” The piece has more in common with Steven Soderbergh’s *Schizopolis* than *Wallace and Gromit*: Long, worm-like creatures inhabit a maze and speak entirely in abstract dialogue. “It’s probably my favorite Aardman short,” says Hertzfeldt. “It’s just weird and Freudian and surreal, and not what you’d expect from them.”

Like *Ident*, most of the Animation Show’s offerings come from other countries. “There really is no market in the United States for shorts,” says Hertzfeldt. “It seems to be because television is government owned and operated in most parts of the rest of the world, [so] they buy shorts to show between programming. . . . That’s honestly where most of the exciting new shorts are being made now: Canada, Europe—everywhere but the States.”

Animator Don Hertzfeldt, and Don at work on *The New Film*.

One of the most startling of the international shorts is *The Rocks*, made by German animators Chris Stenner, Arvid Uibel, and Heidi Wittlinger.



Through a slick combination of stop motion and CG, the rise and fall of human civilization is played out at lightning speed with two rocks as protagonists. Another film which incorporates digital enhancements to traditional animation is Koji Yamamura’s *Mt. Head*. Just as the modern day fable is told with an older Japanese aesthetic, so are the digital manipulations applied to traditional two-dimensional drawings.

If the tour—which the organizers are trying to schedule in all fifty states—goes well, Hertzfeldt hopes the Animation Show will become a yearly institution. A DVD of this year’s program is in the works, with material that did not make the cut for the theatrical festival. “I’m hoping that eventually we won’t be the only game in town,” says Hertzfeldt. “It only helps the filmmakers if we can create a market and create some competition.” □

For more information and tour dates, visit www.animationshow.com

Charlie Sweitzer is a Los Angeles-based writer and filmmaker. He is currently working on a live action short and a screenplay.

Tape Heads

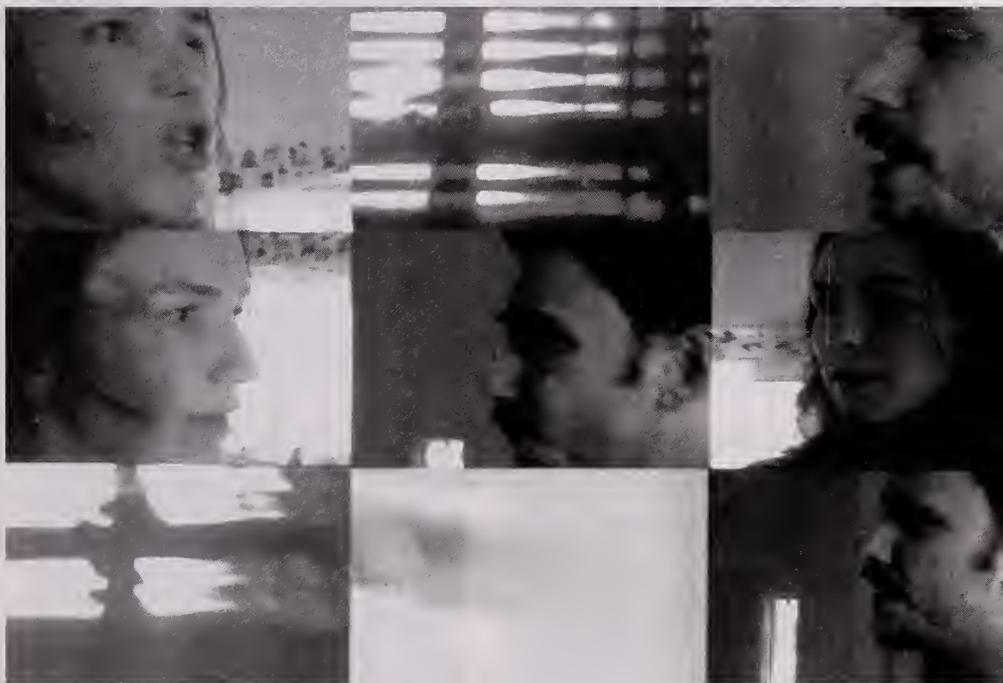
THE NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL

By Claiborne Smith

You could tell from even a quick glance at the program guide of the 2003 New York Video Festival that there was something strange and new that the festival's curators were itching to reveal. For starters, the phrase "annual sales of \$11 billion and rising," describing the video game industry, doesn't appear frequently in most festival program guides—even festivals that take place in the financially heady environs of Lincoln Center. The curators placed the "Game Engine" program, a "live video" and lecture featuring some of the leading creative forces in the video game industry, up-front and center—on the festival's opening night. "This is something where we thought, 'Yeah, this *is* a genre,'" says Marian Masone, the managing director of Lincoln Center's film festivals. "It's these guys—and one or two gals—who are just really going in this interesting direction and it's moving image. There are all these different aspects of moving image that aren't film, and that's what we go for."

Video has always been heavily defined by what it is not: it is not film. It is cheaper than film and makes fewer technical demands on the user, but in the common assessment, those advantages do not matter as much as the way it looks. Video, even digital video, has a more tenuous grasp on shadow, light, and color than film. It often does not seem capable of displaying the rich, romantic nuances of film. For confirmation of this, all you had to do was listen to some of the videomakers whose work appeared at this year's festival. In *London Orbital*, a 76-minute medita-

tion on the M25, the world's largest bypass road, Chris Petit and Iain Sinclair disavow the medium (or maybe just anticipate the viewer's sensibility): "Tape is flat and over-



bright," the narrator says at one point. "Tape is anti-image." At some of the Q&A's after the screenings, several of the videomakers acknowledged that they would have preferred to work in film if they had the money.

Despite these misgivings, though, the presence of lush, vibrant and ethereal videos at the festival presented a kind of bulwark against the perception that video is the ugly stepchild of film. In Darrin Martin and Torsten Zenas Burns' *Learning Stalls*, the videomakers appear to be undergoing the eerie insertion and removal of objects from their stomachs until they unveil the mystique by revealing "the new types of processing effects and

improvisational processing," as they said in the Q&A, that they employed to suggest those trippy anatomical occurrences. Seoungcho Cho's *Orange Factory* features a bouncing orange light making unfamiliar shapes as it traipses over deserted roads and the water's edge; the imagery seems obvious and banal at first but becomes transfixing and beautiful.

It is easy to see why festival organizers included *It's Not My Memory of It*, a

politically and aesthetically fascinating video from the Speculative Archive for Historical Clarification, a group of artists who take the potentially esoteric subject of declassified government documents and create gripping videos about them. If there's any justice in this world, *It's Not My Memory of It* will be screened at many more venues than the New York Video Festival. The opening sequence is composed of a series of shots of a declassified document being shredded and reassembled to form a cohesive whole. The images—and the entire rest of the video—moves with the incantatory rhythm of a Saul Bass sequence while prodding the viewer to question gov-

A still from Julie Talen's *Pretend*.

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Julie Talen's *Pretend*, a split screen
tale of two young sisters desperate to
keep their parents from splitting up,
and Shelly Silver's mordant, life-
affirming *Suicide* thankfully garnered
huge crowds. Those videos, among
others, corroborate Masone's assess-
ment that festival organizers look for
work "that speaks to you, that maybe
is something new and different, and



although it's odd to say about video,
but kind of a classic work."

Working from a total of 800 sub-
missions, the curators spotlighted
fresh newcomers, as well as seasoned
veterans (Steve Reinke, Donigan
Cumming and Alfred Guzzetti.) The
videos were placed in themed showcas-
es such as "Intimations of Mortality"
and "Personal Anthology"—some of
which were more cohesive than others.

In a festival of nearly fifty videos,
it's inevitable that the latter would
occur. The uneven "Me and My
Camera" program, for example, con-
sisted of five longtime video artists
considering the role that video plays
in their lives. Video has long been a
terrain for experimental narrative
techniques hatched by restless artists
who are frustrated by the endemic
assumption that narrative fluidity,

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and the pleasure it induces, are virtues. But once-startling innovations sometimes become hackneyed conventions, resulting in shopworn experimentalism (endless on-camera self-analysis, for example) that doesn't actually risk experimentation.

One trend at this year's festival was Modernist campaigns such as Smith and Cummings' that attempt to subvert mainstream narrative expectations and offer something new and intriguing

aristocratic mother explained that she wasn't talking to her son because he had made fun of the Catholic church with his outrageously decadent wedding. Next up was a fabulously wealthy man who is always hosting politicians and stars in his showy house on the edge of Mexico City. He is accused by the inquisitors of being a bisexual. (He responds that he has a twin brother and that *he* might be the bisexual.) Sitting next to Cuevas was a saucy star-



ing in place of those expectations. Another was Modernist campaigns that actually succeeded. The Mexican videomaker Ximena Cuevas, who appeared on a now-defunct talk show *La Tombola*, created a video about the experience that is also called *La Tombola* and which was included in the "Me and My Camera" program. The format of the show dictated that four newsmakers or noted personalities would sit across the stage from several autocratic inquisitors who were basically allowed to ask whatever they wanted, but preferably something that would get a rise out of the subjects and the audience. On the night that Cuevas was on the show, she rolled her eyes as a pious,

let who displayed her private parts at the slightest provocation.

Then without warning, before she can be grilled, Cuevas tells the host that she is "incredibly bored" by the whole show. Poised and determined, she stands up, takes her video camera out of a small briefcase, turns it on, and points it at the camera in the television studio. "I want people to be interested in their own lives," she repeats like a mantra as stunned silence surrounds her. Cuevas' seven-minute video and the defiant, poetic act she performs during it, speak more about her relationship to her camera—and to her culture—than any amount of long-winded verbal self-analysis. □

See www.filmlinc.com/nyvf/nyvf.htm

Claiborne Smith graduates from NYU's Cultural Reporting and Criticism program in December and is an intern at The Independent.

Facing page: a still from Shelly Silver's *Suicide*. This page: *Learning Stall*, by Darrin Martin and Torsten Zenas Burns.

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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Bus 174

dir. José Padilha
(THINKFilm, October 24)

High-speed car chases and bank robberies equal instant ratings for twenty-four hour news channels not only in the US, but also around the world. Each country has its own OJ slow speed chase and North Hollywood shootout that captivates the country's media and viewers. In Brazil it was a bus hijacking in June 2000, which is now known to locals as "Bus 174".

For Brazilian filmmaker José Padilha, who watched the tragic event unfold on TV at a gym just blocks

Bus 174 is probably the most well documented hijack ever and that Sandro, the hijacker, was a survivor of the Candelária street kids massacre. How did this person go from being a victim at Candelária to being the perpetrator of Bus 174? That question drove me through the film."

The documentary's drama hinges on Padilha's combination of TV footage of the hijacking with the story of Sandro's tumultuous life as a street kid. But he says the network footage was hard to come by. "It took me a month or so to get [the TV networks] to let me watch it, one year to convince them to let me copy the tapes and another to get



away, the initial reaction to the hijacking was the same as that of everyone else: shock. "It was probably the most intense television experience I ever had," says Padilha via e-mail from Rio. As the ill-prepared police, aggressive media, and clearly unstable hijacker boiled over on the screen in front of him, Padilha felt that a great story was unfolding. "Two things led me to the film," Padilha explains. "The fact that

the releases," he says. "It was a risky production because I shot and edited the film before getting the releases." Making its rounds through the festival circuit, *Bus 174* left a memorable impression on audiences worldwide. Padilha's fondest memory was at Sundance when he was asked how he was able to "stage all that?" His response: "I could not, even if I tried."

The Event

dir. Thom Fitzgerald
(THINKFilm, October 3)

This film, which follows the police investigation of the assisted suicide of a man dying of AIDS, takes on two topics that are more often the fodder of maudlin made-for-TV-movies than well-crafted theatrical releases. Under the direction of Thom Fitzgerald (*Hanging Garden*) the cast, which includes Olympia Dukakis at her best and a stunningly cold Parker Posey, explores different sides of the issue of helping a loved one die.

Elephant

dir. Gus Van Sant
(Fine Line Features, October 24)

Van Sant continues the improvisational/experimental storytelling of his previous film, *Gerry*, in *Elephant* by exploring the different viewpoints of several suburban high school students on a day that ends in a revengeful bloodbath by two of the school's outcasts. *Elephant* was awarded the Palme D'Or and Best Director award at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Pieces of April

dir. Peter Hedges
(United Artists, October 17)

Reluctantly agreeing to make Thanksgiving dinner for her family, April (Katie Holmes) soon realizes that her oven does not work. She is forced to call upon the help of her neighbors in her apartment building, who until now have been total strangers. Although she was never on good terms with her mother (Patricia Clarkson), she soon gets into the holiday spirit and comes to terms with why this Thanksgiving is so important. This is Hedges' directorial debut.

Above: José Padilha's *Bus 174*. Facing page: a young Rodrigo Cortinas (Carlos Sanchez) holds his son Mario in *Foto-Novelas 2*.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, PHOTO DIGITAL; FACING PAGE: MORRIS GOEN / ITVS

He is best known for writing the novel *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*.

Television

Foto-Novelas 2

dir. Carlos Avila

(Independent Lens, October 21)

In 1997 Carlos Avila created four supernatural half-hour dramas for ITVS in the style of the Latin American graphic novels he loved as a boy. *Foto-Novelas* highlighted the



emerging talents in the Latin community while entertaining audiences and critics alike with its fantasy-twist on ordinary life. "It occurred to me this might be a really wonderful way of telling Latino stories to an American audience," Avila says.

Foto-Novelas 2 continues Avila's fascination with the supernatural, a subject that has always intrigued him. "I just remember watching *The Twilight Zone* and always being in love with the concise but startling storytelling," Avila explains. The two stories (Avila wrote four, but only had the funding to produce two) show the Latin American traditions of family and reli-

gion blended with a paranormal hook. "It's a combination of American influences as well as some of the magical realist authors from Latin America," Avila says.

Though the special is airing in conjunction with Latino Heritage Month, Avila hopes PBS will consider programming more Latino-based shows throughout the rest of the year. "It is a little bit of a concern that [Latino] programming is not interspersed throughout the year," he says. "The dream would be to have Latino programming on the air all the time on PBS, but there's the upside of having people's awareness heightened when this time of year rolls around."

Second Hand Stories

dir. Christopher Wilcha & John Freyer
(PBS, October 14)

After buying a dilapidated 1978 ambulance off eBay for \$2,500, Christopher Wilcha and John Freyer embark on a road trip to discover rare items they find at yard sales, military auctions, surplus centers and talk to the people that own them. This hilarious journey hits its peak when the ambulance breaks down and in order to continue the journey, the guys have to conduct an emergency garage sale of all the trinkets they have accumulated.

War Photographer

dir. Christian Frei
(HBO 2, check local listings)

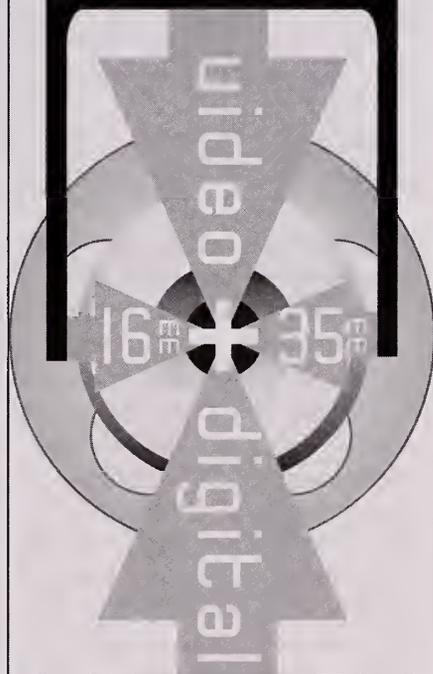
This acclaimed documentary follows war photographer James Nachtwey as he travels to the most violent and impoverished areas of the globe. Armed with only a few cameras and his wits, Nachtwey ignores the chaos around him so he can capture the moment, whether it is a gunfight in Palestine or a village burning to the ground in Kosovo. With the footage from a micro-cam attached to Nachtwey's still camera, viewers can experience the intensity of Nachtwey's life. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

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"What I Want My Words to Do to You"

VOICES OF WOMEN IN MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON

By Maud Kersnowski

The documentary, *What I Want My Words to Do to You*, tracks a writing group led by playwright/activist Eve Ensler, creator of *The Vagina Monologues*. The film examines the lives of fifteen women through a series of exercises that are part self-help, part creativity enhancers. Write about a scar on your body. Write about something you have never explained. Write something starting with the phrase: "What I want my words to do to you . . ." But these women are not the typical students, teachers, and aspiring writers that populate most writing groups. They are students. They are teachers. They are aspiring writers. They are also inmates in the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, a maximum security prison for women.

These are not women who have been wrongly convicted. They are not martyrs. They have not committed

things and still be human. It recognizes that people can have the strength to take responsibility for their actions and not be defined solely by those actions. As Ensler says at the beginning of the film, "There is the mistake. It is one moment; it is ruined; it cannot be changed. Then, there is the woman."

Ensler was first introduced to Bedford Hills ten years

I wish with my words to give you glimpses of the life I lived, of the life I am living. —Betsy Ramos

ago when she was researching an ill-fated script that she had been hired to write for a Goldie Hawn vehicle. It had the working tag-line: "Martha Stewart Goes to Prison." The day after the studio passed on the final draft of the Hawn script, Ensler received a call from actress Glenn Close, who asked her to write a script about, of all things, Bedford Hills. While she was researching that script, Ensler began leading the writing group. "It was really an aside because I was so moved by the women,"

Ensler says. "I spent weeks interviewing women and completely got hooked by these women. I was moved by them; transformed by them."

The Close project never made it to the screen either. The only film that Ensler has made about Bedford Hills is one

Facing page: Inmates Judith Clark and Keila Pulinario with playwright Eve Ensler at a writing workshop at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York.

A guy I grew up with who I thought was my best friend: How can I ever forget him? I can't. Because he's the reason I'm in prison today. —Keila Pulinario

crimes that most people can identify with, like marijuana possession. These are women with long-term sentences, some even life. They have committed crimes that most of us would prefer to believe that we are not even capable of. Many have been responsible for the death of another person. Rooted in a world where the daily papers prove that violence begets violence, this film does not excuse these women's crimes. It recognizes that people can do horrible



that she never thought of making, *What I Want My Words to Do to You*. The film, which has won a string of festival honors beginning with the 2003 Sundance Freedom of Expression Award, was the brain child of Judith Katz, who, before becoming the executive producer of this film, scouted New York theater for film studios. The first time Katz went to Bedford Hills was to attend a staged reading of the group's writing—which was performed by actresses

and the prison performance. As in all prisons, access was limited due to security. "It was very generous of the prison to allow us to film. There are very few prisons that would allow that. The superintendent, who is one of the most progressive in the country, "worked very hard to make programs that they don't have at other prisons," Ensler says. "I am really grateful."

... not truly being known by anyone. It gave me a sense of freedom. I was free to change my image according to what I believed others would be attracted to. Yet, my own mystery locked me in hell. —Nora Moran

including Close, Mary Alice, and Rosie Perez. (They also performed the work at Lincoln Center as a benefit for the prison's college program.)

"My walking into this experience changed my perception of everything instantly. I don't think I've ever felt such a thunderbolt of change," Katz recalls. "I kept talking to people about my experience in the prison and saying I wished I had a camera until finally it dawned on me—bring a camera."

Because of Ensler's relationship to the Bedford Hills' Superintendent, Elaine Lord, Katz was able to get approval from Albany to bring a camera into both the writing group

Ultimately the people who had to agree to the camera's presence were the fifteen women on which the whole film rests—the writers themselves. These women permitted the filming of the deeply personal and private process of exploring their lives through writing—which often involves confronting the crime they committed and examining

how they can continue living while taking responsibility for their actions. "They all decided they wanted to do it." Ensler says. "I think they're very interested in people in the world knowing that they've changed. They've become other people. They don't want to be summed up and erased and forgotten."

It would take many more years. Far more terrible actions on my part, bringing far greater tragedy before I learned that so many of my actions were hardly worth the cost for the attention they brought. — Judith Clark

The footage consisted of about forty classroom sessions, a single day of planned shooting, the performance in the prison (featuring Mary Alice, Glenn Close, Hazelle Goodman, Rosie Perez, and Marisa Tomei), and a rehearsal with Ensler and the actresses. The footage was turned over to playwright Gary Sunshine—whose plays have been produced at New York Theater Workshop, Cherry Lane Theater, HERE Arts Center and published in *The Best American Short Plays*, and editor Madeline Gavin—who has edited films including *Manic*, *Sunday*, *Signs and Wonders*, and the award-winning *Inside Out*.

Like many documentaries, although the footage was compelling, it was also flawed. The classroom scenes were shot with a single camera and lacked turn-arounds, forcing the editors to fake most of the reaction shots. And worse, there was no narrative. Nobody was physically going anywhere. But, as often happens in art, the limitations forced the film to grow in ways it never could have with the perfect shots and the perfect storyline. “If you could have anything [you wanted on a project], you couldn’t do anything,” Gavin observes. “I always end up being thankful for what I don’t have.”

“We had to seduce a structure out the footage,” Gavin explains. The two mapped out an emotional trajectory for the film based on the writing exercises. A structure was created for the film consisting of four parts. The first explores the women as victims. The second shows them as victimizers. The third examines their struggle to be (and

film into a bad, made-for-cable-movie. To create the right balance, Gavin and Sunshine produced multiple cuts, including one where the actresses did not appear until the performance at the end of the film. “It was so painful, it was almost unwatchable,” Katz recalls.

Will my story help you to see me as what I am now? Instead of what I was then? Will it help you to understand that life changes for me as it does for you? Or will it remain a scar on your conscience, to remind you of someone you want to forget? –Roslyn Smith

In another cut, the actresses were more prominent. “The balance was tipping. We were too involved with how the actors felt about the women,” Gavin explains. “It started to feel like we were leaning on the celebrities. It was absurd.”

The famous faces have been whittled down to the bare minimum in the final cut, which will air on December 16 as part of *POV* on PBS. As the actresses are reading on stage, the camera lingers on the writers’ reactions, while the cuts of Rosie Perez are crisp. “We took our signals from the actresses, from their generosity,” Sunshine explains. “Keeping them to a minimum is what these actresses wanted.”

Several of the actresses are still involved with Bedford Hills, volunteering time when they can. Katz now runs a theater program in prison. And Ensler is committed to continuing with her group until all of the writers are released. “They are part of my interior landscape now. They’re my friends. But also I’m interested in their growth and their evolution and what they’re thinking,” Ensler says.

“For so many years I’ve been on the other side of the equation, where I’ve spent so much of my life with survivors of violence and abuse,” Ensler says. “It was really a profound experience going to Bedford to be with people who are perpetrators of it, and to see how close those two things really live. To see how easily you go from being perpetrated to being a perpetrator. How quick that line is. How fast it is. [We have to] examine the roots of it, by looking at what makes people become terrorists. What makes people shoot someone? . . . Why, rather than looking at the core roots of violence, do we instead just go and bomb people and shoot people and hurt people more?”

What Ensler, Gavin, Katz, and Sunshine want this film to do to you is not only make you see women in prison as people, but to encourage you to look at the roots of violence in your daily life, in your government, in the world we are all creating. □

Maud Kersnowski is the editor-in-chief of The Independent.

If only there were a place where the living and the dead could meet to tell their tales, to weep, I would reach for you, not so that you could forgive me, but so that you could know that I have no pride for what I have done, only the wisdom and regret that came too late. –Kathy Boudin

be seen as) whole people who are not defined by their crime, but who take responsibility for it. The last, the performance at Bedford Hills, mirrors the writers in the audience as the work is read. Folded in with all the elements of the previous three sections is hope—not only hope for the inmates, but hope for the view that they will see the world differently. Punctuating and breaking up the scenes of the writing group is footage of the actresses and Ensler rehearsing the performance piece. “Our mandate was to make it something that we hadn’t seen before rather than a cliché,” Sunshine says.

The actresses posed their own special problem. All of them are headliners in their own right, names and faces that will attract an audience and that could easily turn the



Creating Awareness

THE DIFFICULT BUT REWARDING WORK BEHIND HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTARIES

By Ann Lewinson

For some documentary filmmakers, getting a few grants and a conspicuous berth in a film festival or two are the signs of success, but when the goal is to create awareness of an issue and possibly effect real political change, preaching to the choir is just not enough. Free speech has gotten lost in the shuffle of media consolidation, and whether you're a journalist, an activist, an artist, or all of the above, getting the story out is harder than ever.

"Like every other independent in the United States, we have an extraordinarily difficult time getting our stories on the air," says Jon Alpert, television journalist and founder of New York's Downtown Community Television Center who's been taking heat—and collecting Emmys—for over thirty years. "I

Clockwise: Gabrielle Weiss films a Bolivian soldier; two scenes from *Bridge to Baghdad II*.

interviewed Saddam Hussein in '93, couldn't get it on the air."

This is not to say that Alpert's work is not getting broadcast; during the week in August when he spoke with *The Independent*, he had two documentaries premiering on TV: *Latin Kings: A Street Gang Story* on HBO and *Coca and the Congressman* on PBS. HBO had passed on the second project, about the rise to power of the indigenous people of Bolivia after 500 years of subjugation, but Wide Angle picked it up—with a few alterations. "Here's an interesting comparison: we have a documentary on HBO, it's told the way we want to tell the story, and we also have a documentary on the Wide Angle series. But this PBS program requires a narrator, they want to dub over some of the people speaking instead of putting subtitles, and so we had to accept certain restrictions in the way in which we tell stories. So there are trade-offs that you have to make. If you're lucky enough to have a program that's going on HBO, the trade-offs are probably the least of any broadcast

smooth topple, the only head rolling was a bronze Saddam's.

Alpert insists that he does not take sides. "Nobody knows what my politics are—I'm not even sure what my politics are, because the calculus keeps changing as you go all over the world and you see things. I was in Venezuela and I was being harangued by somebody, and I said, 'You don't have the slightest idea what I'm thinking. I haven't made my mind up because I just got here.'"

When Alpert followed Masuda Sultan, a young Afghan-American, back to her homeland for *Afghanistan: From Ground Zero to Ground Zero*, which was shown on *Now with Bill Moyers* last year, he didn't know what he was going to find. "We had no idea that we would be standing next to this village that had been blown to smithereens and nineteen members of her family had been killed," he says. "I certainly didn't think that the American government was telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and news reporters were having a lot of dif-



opportunity and one can support [oneself] making HBO programs. All the other places you can sometimes just barely cover your costs and other times you starve yourself."

Alpert had a long run at NBC until the first Gulf War. "I came back with footage that showed that there was very extensive collateral damage. It was going to be the lead story on the *NBC Nightly News* and run the next two or three days on *The Today Show*, when three hours before airtime the president of *NBC News* killed the story. We never recovered from that. Even though people said [about me]: 'he's opinionated, he has his own point of view,' they were broadcasting our point of view on *NBC News* for thirteen years."

Alpert's relationship with NBC had been fraught with accusations of bias. "Everybody knows that there isn't anything that is truly objective," he says. "You want to strive to make sure that something is truthful, but if, in a false search for objectivity you remove all the passion and personality from a program, that certainly counts us out, because I don't want to make that kind of television."

NBC had other complaints as well. One particularly flagrant offense occurred when Alpert shot a restaged flag-lowering ceremony at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul because he had missed it. That may have been a heinous journalistic crime in 1989, but this year, when MSNBC edited two hours of footage of a Saddam Hussein statue being pulled down into one

ficulty getting access to Afghanistan, so there certainly was an information gap that we were trying to fill, but I'm not sure that I was interested in getting myself blacklisted again."

Alpert returned to Baghdad this year. "We wanted to go to Iraq because when we watched television we felt that something was missing. We were ready to blast Iraq back to the Stone Age with only a narrow spectrum of information and with tremendous propaganda coming from our government. So the very act of us going over there, looking for something else, might be seen as being subjective but it was the opposite—we were trying to rectify a situation in which there wasn't a complete spectrum of reports. We've always been in that situation. When things were happening in Central America, we were the only people on television that were showing certain things that had been hidden from the American people, in the Philippines, in Vietnam after the war and in Cambodia, and it's a tremendous responsibility for a little community TV center. In the beginning we weren't ready for it. We're ready for it now but we really don't get the same broadcast opportunities that we had back in the old days, and that's a shame."

Above, left: Sierra Leonian women marching in *Operation Fine Girl*; center, female refugees from *Rise: Revolutionary Women Re-envisioning Afghanistan*; right: man beating Afghan women. Facing page: Saddam mural in Baghdad from *Bridge to Baghdad I*.

Alpert shot two films in Iraq, *Bridge to Baghdad I and II*. “The first one was an attempt to have young people talk to each other—Americans and Iraqis prior to the war—and I will admit under oath that one of the things we were interested in exploring was an alternative to bombs. The second program we couldn’t get back into Iraq during the war, the borders closed down too fast—we found the same kids and we discovered what had happened to them during the war and what was

answer. “The press isn’t always the best way to pressure a government or a power broker into change,” says Gillian Caldwell, the Executive Director of Witness. “There are some governments that are completely non-responsive to outside pressure. There are many governments in Africa that react very negatively against Western press. It’s seen as imperialist or colonialist. Burma’s another one. There are others for whom it’s very important. A country struggling to find entry



happening now.” You won’t see *Bridge to Baghdad I and II* on American television—even though *New York* magazine and NPR’s “On the Media” did stories on why nobody was willing to broadcast the first program. Both ended up on the web on Worldlink at www.worldlinktv.org. “Worldlink and Free Speech TV are options, but Worldlink pays \$1,000 an hour; Free Speech a couple hundred dollars an hour. Independents cannot survive.”

In situations where survival really is a matter of life and death, broadcast opportunities are only part of the picture. When Witness was founded in 1992 by the musician Peter Gabriel with the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights and the Reebok Foundation to give video cameras to people to document human rights violations in their communities, one of its goals was to get its footage on television news. But it turns out that getting your footage on CNN is not always the

into the European Union may be quite sensitive to highly publicized reports about human rights abuses because a clean human rights record is going to be part of the analysis for entry into the Union. Each government has a different pressure point.”

Today, video shot by Witness’ partners is being used as evidence in national courts and regional tribunals, before truth and reconciliation commissions, and to support written reports to United Nations treaty bodies that challenge a country’s allegations of compliance with human rights treaties and conventions. Excerpts from Witness videos are also shown on its website, www.witness.org, along with information on how viewers can get involved in each issue. Video cameras also have been found to have another function in the post-Rodney King era—as a deterrent. “Oftentimes the video cameras themselves are actually used to deter violence and

abuse, to monitor security force or police conduct as it's happening, when people are protesting or operating in particularly tense environments," says Caldwell.

Witness gives camera lessons to groups like the Women's Commission of UCIZONI (Union de Comunidades Indigenas de la Zona Norte del Istmo) in Oaxaca, Mexico, Movimento dos Sem Terra (MST) in Brazil, and the Interfaith Movement for Peace, Empowerment and Development (IMPEDE) in the Philippines. Then Witness edits the tapes. In situations where hidden cameras are essential, Witness' partners are taught how to be as inconspicuous as possible.

When the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) wanted to document rights violations during the reign of the Taliban, Witness trained the women in Pakistan, and then the camera was smuggled into Afghanistan. It was "a pretty life-threatening enterprise overall," says Caldwell.

Although Witness' training materials encourage its partners to be "objective," you won't see a developer defending the displacement of indigenous people in the name of economic developments or an American manufacturer extolling the benefits of NAFTA in a Witness video. When you're providing voices for the voiceless, the truisms of journalism are superceded by the demands of advocacy.

The extent of human rights violations documented by Witness' partners—from atrocities committed during the Guatemalan civil war to indentured servitude in sweatshops in the US territory of Saipan—is so overwhelming that Witness, which has sometimes had as many as thirty active partnerships at a time, is now focusing on eight to ten projects. "We're looking for the key projects worldwide on a broad range of human rights issues where we really think we can generate a meaningful difference within a one to three year time frame," says Caldwell. "The rest of our time will be spent on seeding video advocacy, training people all over the world, not just human rights organizations but environmental groups, civil rights groups. A much broader population can be using video as part of their campaign."

One ongoing focus is on the plight of internally displaced persons throughout the world. Members of the Columbian collective MINGA are working on a video about people who have been displaced by Plan Columbia and the US War on Drugs. Another ongoing project on the oppression of Burma's Karen ethnic minority has already produced two

videos, *No Place to Go*, made in collaboration with human rights organization Burma Issues, and *Fueling Abuse: Foreign Investment and Terror in Burma*, produced with the Burma Humanitarian Mission and students at Bard College's Human Rights Clinic. *Operation Fine Girl: Rape as a Weapon of War in Sierra Leone*, produced and directed for Witness and Oxygen Media by Lilibet Foster with Sierra Leonian activist Binta Mansaray, has been screened throughout the country, breaking the silence in a nation where half the women were raped by rebel soldiers in the '90's. "We're doing a lot of outreach and education in Sierra Leone to encourage women who have been stigmatized by rape or by having what they call a 'rebel baby' to speak out and to try to create more of a sense of acceptance within the

community for those women," says Caldwell. The video has also been shown to staff members of both Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and their Special Court.

When words have failed, images still have power. "It's obvious that a picture's worth a thousand words," says Caldwell. "I think there's starting to be a broader skepticism about moving images because people get concerned about digital manipula-

tion and there's much more user-generated media out there. People understand that any image can be packaged, but at the same time the power of the moving image is more a reflection of an increasingly moving-image, media-driven universe. More and more people are getting their information from television, as opposed to print. That's why it's so important that non-profit human rights organizations get adept at speaking that language."

Media artist Paul Chan found out that a picture really is worth a thousand words when he spent a month in Baghdad last winter with the Iraq Peace Team, which the Chicago-based, twice-Nobel Peace Prize-nominated group Voices in the Wilderness started last year to increase their presence in Iraq. "They were actively looking for media people, art people, creative people to try to remember this place as much as they can, to document as differently as they can, before it goes to shreds," says Chan. One of the original members of NYC IndyMedia, Chan had spent four years working with anti-globalization groups, but "I wasn't a journalist, I didn't speak Arabic, and the geopolitics of the Middle East was something I was still learning. The details of Resolution 1440, or how many children died in Iraq during the sanctions, was something that was still new to me."



Chan, whose videos include the satirical *Now Let Us Praise American Leftists* and *RE:THE_OPERATION*, for which he also made desktop icons of bloodied members of the current administration, also does artwork and installations. "I'm in both worlds, the media world and the art world. But what I realized, day two, is the thing that I use in both these worlds, words, were completely meaningless. Maybe I just don't have the experience in the interviewing process to draw things out of people, but even seeing journalists working there, I realized that the pressure-cooker atmosphere of Iraq before the eve of a war made it so that there was little to no nuance in what you said. If you asked a US official or a journalist what was going on, if you asked Iraqi mothers and fathers how they felt about the war, they would essentially tell you what you expected them to say. There was no way to get anything new out of the words that were in the air in Iraq. As an artist I had to find it in other moments that would escape the general discourse that was so heavy and burdensome in the air. So, rightly or wrongly, I didn't interview anyone. I interviewed one person and then I was watching people and I was writing and I realized words weren't going to do me any good. And so you try to capture as many images and fleeting moments as you can, on camera, and you try to make sense of the senselessness."

When the big picture is incomprehensible, the parts can illuminate the whole. "As a creative person, I think one of the things you stick to are details, and so you look for details that move you, or are contradictory, or make complicated the picture that people have been feeding you. I remember the eight-year-old shoeshine boy at our hotel who didn't have shoes, who'd play soccer on the banks of the Tigris with a bunch of other kids who also didn't have shoes. I remember Coffee, the monkey in our hotel. One of the shop owners owned him and every other night the peace activists would conspire to see if we could buy Coffee off of the shop owner to set it free. And then coming down one day for breakfast and seeing Coffee not only sleeping but dreaming, with the rapid eye movement underneath his eyelids—I thought it was one of the most moving things I had ever seen. What does a monkey dream on the eve of a war?"

At press time, Chan said the footage he shot would



Facing page: kids in front of bombed truck from *Bridge to Baghdad II*. Above: Walid from *Bridge to Baghdad II*.

probably be used in a single-channel piece, but you may have already seen photographs from his trip to Baghdad on the streets of your city—snapshots taken by Iraqis of each other. "Digital still cameras will make you more friends in foreign lands than anything I've ever seen in my life," he says, "because you can just take a picture and show it to them in the back of the camera and instantly there's a crowd and everyone wants to talk to you." Chan's friends in New York suggested that the photos should be made into missing-person posters, like the homemade fliers that papered New York after September 11. The fliers were posted on Chan's website, nationalphilistine.com, so that anyone could download them. "The response from people was really enormous, before the war and even during the war," he says. "In New York there were two nights a couple months apart where artists, activists, writers spread out to cover the five boroughs with thousands of these simple fliers." Three people were arrested. "The fact that three people were arrested that were simply posting up pictures of Iraqis around New York gave it a sense of urgency, that this is in fact dangerous and ergo it must be done."

The poster nights also helped to combat the sense of disempowerment that many people felt during the war. "I think it helped that people could still do political action in a way that was subtle, complicated and moving," says Chan. "With simple fliers you can make people think or feel for just a microsecond on the F line or walking down Broadway. This small action became a constellation of other actions, large and small, a global chorus of people saying no to this insanity, this epic tragedy, this tragi-farce."

Taking the message to the streets is not the answer for everyone—certainly not when your livelihood depends on making films—but the current climate of 24-hour, "fair and balanced" news has enforced a paradoxical lack of diversity. "Everything comes out homogenized and pasteurized, in terms of style and sometimes in terms of substance," says Alpert. But for filmmakers who are committed to global change, the path of greatest resistance can be the most rewarding. ■

Ann Lewinson has written about the arts and popular culture for Stagebill and Citysearch.com. Her fiction has appeared in P.S. 1's Special Projects Writers Series.



Newsreel's Second Act

CARRYING THE TORCH AFTER 35 YEARS

By Claiborne Smith

The office of Third World Newsreel (TWN) is probably not too different from any other office that houses a nonprofit distribution company specializing in documentaries that take a leftist and radical perspective. It is a small office where the air conditioning is used sparingly to keep costs down even though Manhattan is sticky in July. This is an office where the term “agit-prop” is neither archaic nor ironic.

But there is something even more unique about this office than the fact that it houses one of the few distribution outlets in the United States for avowedly leftist films. There are ghosts in this office. They are ghosts who have been invited in and do not so much haunt the place as remind the people who work here of their political fore-

bearers. Thirty-five years ago, a group of activists in New York founded Newsreel, a collective of leftist and radicals who captured the dissent, anger, and hope of the late sixties and early seventies on film. Now many of those films are on shelves in TWN's office. The early Newsreel members tended to think of themselves not as filmmakers, but as activists whose mode of political organizing happened to be documentary films—provocations not meant to be viewed while munching popcorn. “Our films remind some people of battle footage: grainy, camera weaving around trying to get the material and still not get beaten, trapped,” Robert Kramer, a Newsreel member, told *Film Quarterly* in 1968. “Well, we and many others are at war.” The solidly straightforward titles of the Newsreel films (*Columbia*

Revolt, *Black Panther*, *The Woman's Film*, *Garbage*, for example) belie the purposefully shocking political urgency they convey. Newsreel films open with an image of the word "Newsreel" flashing in tune to a machine gun firing. At least until 1971, Newsreel was an effective propaganda machine with networks of collectives and an efficient distribution system across the nation.

As one of the descendants of Newsreel, today's Third World Newsreel has evolved into a different organization.



model of forming this cachet of makers and work to go out and shoot short films and videos and get it out there."

Of all the collectives that were formed in the late sixties, only the New York and San Francisco chapters survived; San Francisco Newsreel is now called California Newsreel. It is still located in San Francisco, with an emphasis on documentaries about Africa made by Africans and on African Americans. Unlike Third World Newsreel, which produces documentaries and educates filmmakers in an



As the political climate in the country changed, so did the efficacy of radical documentaries meant to incite action among viewers. In its late sixties heyday, Newsreel had collectives in New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago, Atlanta, and Ann Arbor. But the activists who established Newsreel always had differing political aims and came from disparate backgrounds. In the early Seventies, "factionalism based on differences of privilege and access enjoyed by collective members" typified Newsreel, according to an article by film scholar Michael Renov. "Members split themselves into 'haves' and 'have-nots,'" Renov writes. The haves used a Steenbeck to edit with and the have-nots were stuck with "an old Moviola." Third World Newsreel grew out of the Third World Cadre, one of the splinter groups that formed within Newsreel, and eventually inherited the films (and debts) of Newsreel.

But the Newsreel ideal is still present at TWN. "We still try to do agit-prop type films around political and social issues," says Executive Director Dorothy Thigpen. "When 9/11 happened, we immediately put out a call for work and facilitated making shorts about the response to 9/11 from communities of color or marginalized communities that weren't being heard on TV. That was a project where we just felt it was our charge going back to the old Newsreel

annual film production workshop, California Newsreel focuses on ensuring that the greatest possible number of people see its films. "The politics of film is really in distribution," California Newsreel's director Larry Daressa says.

TWN documentaries (there are also a number of narrative features the nonprofit distributes) address "issues relevant to people of color or people who are doing not necessarily subversive things but things that are an alternative to mainstream media in challenging political issues," Thigpen says. Emblematic recent TWN productions include *A Litany for Survival: The Life & Work of Audre Lorde* and *The Women Outside: Korean Women and the U.S. Military*, both of which aired on P.O.V. "Our work always has to address or present a positive image of people of color and present a challenging view that engages whoever's watching it," Thigpen says. TWN films make people "think about issues, whether it's gay/lesbian, immigration or labor issues, or things that are going on in other countries that the U.S. has a hand in.

College and high school classes are the principal audiences for the nearly 400 films in Third World Newsreel's catalog, which are both rented and sold by the nonprofit.

An oral history seemed to be the most effective approach for capturing the thirty-fifth anniversary of this entity that has been Newsreel and is now Third World Newsreel; the comments on the next pages are from former Newsreel members, current Third World Newsreel staff members, and students in TWN's annual film production workshop.

Facing page: Third World Newsreel members Dorothy Thigpen, Afua Kafi-akua, Herman Lew, Dan Fernandez, J.T. Takagi. Above, left: Huey P. Newton Trial, 1969; right: Newsreel members Bev Grant and Roz Payne at an alternative media conference in Ann Arbor, 1969.



Deborah Schaffer, Newsreel member, documentary filmmaker, and Oscar recipient for *Witness to War* (1985): I had been at a small, conservative women's college and was having increasingly strong feelings against the war [in Vietnam], and so I went to Ann Arbor in 1969. SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] was going a little bit crazy at the

time and people were organizing to go to Chicago for the Days of Rage. That really didn't interest me at all as a way to get involved in the anti-war movement. I had seen some Newsreel films that summer and, through some old friends, I had met Newsreel people in Detroit who were doing something about the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. I thought the films were very effective. I organized an Ann Arbor chapter of Newsreel. The people in Detroit gave us a copy of half a dozen films and a group of us went out almost every night to dormitories and labor unions and churches and high school classes—wherever we could—and organized mostly against the war but other issues too. And that was my first taste of it. I still had no thought of making films. I wasn't studying filmmaking.

Roz Payne, Newsreel member, archivist, and history teacher: We weren't making those films for history. Now they're old archival films. We were making those films because we wanted to use them for organizing to make change in the country.

Schaffer: When I moved to New York in 1970 and worked for Newsreel for over a year, there was just a lot of ferment and excitement all the time. I remember going to a Young Lords demonstration with a couple of people and somebody had been trained as a camera-person and had been to cinema school in Rome. At one point, he handed me the camera and said, "Here, you shoot." That's how we learned filmmaking, and it was a pretty great way to learn.

Payne: As the group got large, people began having diverse interests of what they wanted to make films on. And we divided up into groups. I was in what was called the Third World Cadre group. My group consisted of a very few people.

We basically focused on the Panthers and Young Lords and other racial issues. People would get an idea—there'd be a garbage strike and somebody would say, "Well let's go film it." They'd start filming the garbage strike and the next thing you knew, there would be a film about it.

Everybody's story was different. Some people hated it; for some people it was the worst time of their life! They could-

n't take the oppressive meetings and [those] who spoke all the time. In fact, we even had a collective of people who called themselves something to the effect of, People Who Don't Speak at the Meetings. And they had a position paper. We had criticism and self-criticism sessions of the group where you'd sit around, say thirty to forty people in a circle, and somebody would have done something that really upset somebody and that person would start off and then other people would add to this. Some of it was very heavy-duty and if you didn't have tough skin or tough politics you could have been lost in that mush somehow. For me, it was the best time of my life.

When I use these films in my classes, it's really interesting for students to see what happened politically, which may still to this day be happening in their community.

Dorothy Thigpen, executive director, Third World Newsreel: I think what stands out is back in the day when they were just going out and shooting reversal film with little editing, now we've come to a place where if you look at the productions over the past ten years or even when it turned into Third World Newsreel, TWN started doing hour-length and not conventional but straightforward documentary, a little more polished. Even at the discussion at Lincoln Center [at the 2003 Human Rights Watch Festival], there were a couple of people from that time who were disappointed and upset that it wasn't done better. They were saying, "There's no lower thirds, the camera work's not good, so it may not be looked upon as serious work," but it's very serious work. It's just not as slick. The young people thought it was great.

Dan Fernandez, marketing director, Third World Newsreel: Doing marketing for Third World Newsreel is almost like political organizing because on the one hand we still want to maintain a certain relationship with the grassroots organizations that TWN originated out of, but on the other hand, we're also a business and we also want to expand our institutional relationships with public and cable television and colleges and universities and that requires a different kind of outreach. It's a distribution company that also has certain interests in critical social issue media—we're trying to build a more consistent brand identity that, on the one hand, is consonant with our original political origins, and then on the other hand, bespeaks of a more institutionally-based, professional film distribution company that people can look to for quality programming. The task has been to try to integrate those two kinds of identities into a single brand identity.

J.T. Takagi, documentary filmmaker and longtime TWN staff member: There's always going to be this contradiction in being a radical media group living in a capitalist society



that has to somehow pay the rent, pay salaries, things like that. So that's one issue there: where do you get your funding? And knowing that we're not a group that is either going to seek corporate backing or be solicited for such since all our mission statements are against the major corporations.

Afua Kafi-Akua, distribution director, Third World Newsreel: What people are requesting the most are documentaries that are under fifty minutes because that's how long classes tend to be. They tend to really like straightforward docs more than experimental, except in Cinema Studies and the rare professor who has vision enough to see that the students will look at something about the economic situation in Mexico that's done experimentally and actually be more entertained and maybe get more out of it.

One Thursday night last summer, the students of TWN's film production workshop met to watch the dailies from the first film they had shot the weekend before. Their assignment was to make a seven-minute non-sync film, either a documentary or a narrative short. By vote, the students had decided to shoot Khary Jones' script, about "a black guy who kills Elvis" and they divided the script into sections which were shot by groups of students. Jones, who left the Ph.D. program in English at Columbia to attend the workshop, was hoping the larger idea in the script—"What does it mean for someone who's never done anything finite in his life—essentially an arm-chair philosopher—to do one of the most terminal actions?"—would come through in the finished film.

Khary Jones, workshop student: It's the first thing I've written that is getting produced. I guess as a filmmaker I was put in my place, outside of the parts I was directing, in not having a say in how the thing would look. For it not to be what we wanted it to be kind of makes your heart break a little bit.

Kristin Lesko, workshop student: And especially since there's so many directors doing it in such an experimental way, it will be interesting to see how our visions mesh together.

Jones: Or how they didn't.

Amy Tallchief, workshop student: Right now, we're going to say, "Okay, now I see what you're saying about, 'You have to make sure that you pull the focus.'" Because I was looking at [the dailies] and I was thinking, "Oh my gosh!" And then it's always the lighting, always the lighting, so now we can see how much light we didn't have. I guess it is humbling because it's a lot of work. You almost wish it would go faster. You wish that you would shoot it, look at it, and then go re-shoot it, but it doesn't work like that; there's too much involved. There's all this equipment and all these people, but we work really well as a team, all of us. That's one of the things that

surprised me a lot. You get a lot of strong personalities together and sometimes we all worked really well together.

Herman Lew, workshop director and head of the undergraduate film and video program at City College of New York:

It's really kind of trial by fire. No matter how many times you go out and practice, it's when you're actually going out and shooting a project is where it all kind of comes together. In order to call yourself a filmmaker or videomaker, you have to have a film or a video, and I would say for 95% of the people who come through the workshop, this is their first time to make something. We weed out the ones who want to be the next music video producers. It may be the first time that a lot of students are working with other people of color from a different community really side by side in a creative environment as well. That's quite different from having a philosophical camaraderie with somebody; you must actually work with somebody and deal with somebody in terms of who they are—maybe based on their sexual orientation, maybe based upon their ethnic makeup, the kind of communities they come from. So there's a real blending of people. So the workshop, it's the real deal in terms of coalition, people working together, trying to do something.

Takagi: What we get really excited about is that although we keep our workshop in small groupings of eight to ten people each year, virtually all of them stay in the field and stay active in some kind of community work. One thing we're confident of as we go into the 21st century is that an organization like ours is and remains necessary and that we carry on the legacy of activist filmmaking, of connecting the work that we make with the communities that it serves, that part of our mission statement is that if you make films about people, that you're involved with them so that it's not an exploitative, anthropological view of "those activists there." We believe that filmmakers have a responsibility to the actual work—besides the film work—and that as long as there are communities that are not being served by media in any way, a group like ours is showing a really important need by bringing people into the community of makers of putting the tools of media-making into people's hands, almost like a kind of virus affecting everybody else. □

See www.twn.org for more information.

Claiborne Smith is an editorial intern at The Independent and a graduate student at NYU's journalism school in the Cultural Reporting and Criticism program.



Herman Lew



Khary Jones

Final Cut Pro 4

A SOLID UPDATE THAT DOESN'T QUITE LIVE UP TO THE HYPE

By Greg Gilpatrick

Digital non-linear video editing has crept into the life of nearly every filmmaker. From independents on shoestring budgets to high school students making video reports, editing with computers is the norm. Much of the credit for the popularity of non-linear editing goes to Apple's Final Cut Pro (FCP). Apple's savvy marketing and pricing of FCP has brought non-linear editing to the masses. It is no longer the sole province of those with stratospheric budgets and a technical support staff. Certainly, Final Cut Pro is not the only, or even the best, editing solution, but its offer of professional editing tools at a relatively inexpensive price has forever changed the dynamics of the editing world. Since version 1.0, each upgrade of FCP has brought significant features that made each new version a welcome improvement that was well worth the cost and trouble.

So, it is disappointing to find FCP 4 a feature-laden upgrade that ultimately fails to meet the level of excellence of its predecessors. Final Cut Pro is still an excellent editing program, but for those happy with their FCP 3 system, this update may not be worth the trouble and cost. Filmmakers with specific needs, such as those editing with 24P video or film content, may see this upgrade as crucial but most should evaluate whether they actually need these new features before they upgrade.

First Impressions and Installation

Right out of the Box, FCP 4 feels like a professional application that will live

up to its \$1000 (\$400 upgrade) price tag. The outside of the box slips off to reveal a handsome slipcase to house the manuals and disks. Since version 2, FCP has come with a hefty stack of manuals and training material. This new version continues the tradition with three thick manuals and a smaller tutorial book. These books are simi-



lar to the ones shipped with FCP 3, with one exception. FCP 3 included a small volume dedicated to the new features of that release. That manual helped experienced editors get up to speed on the new program quickly. It is a disappointment that this version does not include a similar book to cover all of FCP 4's new features. Even more disappointing is the lack of printed manuals for some of FCP 4's most touted new features—the Soundtrack, LiveType, Compressor, and Cinema Tools applications. Instead these manuals are only available in PDF-format files. Considering that FCP 4 comes with a paper version of its thirty-page software license, it seems that Apple also could have

included at least an introduction to these new tools in paper format.

A glance at the minimum system requirements reveals that FCP 4 is the first version of the program to cut off older technology that could run previous versions of the program. G3-based Power Macs are no longer supported. FCP 4 also requires a DVD-ROM drive since all the software disks are DVD-ROMs, rather than CD-ROMs. Considering that Apple sold PowerMac G4s with CD-RW drives unable to read DVDs as recently as two years ago, this is a strange choice.

Beyond the new hardware requirements, this is also the first major update of FCP that will run only on Mac OS X—and only on OS X10.2 “Jaguar.” (It is unclear when FCP 4 will be certified to run on the new version 10.3 “Puma.”) Although there are people who have already made the switch to Mac OS X, there are many others still firmly and comfortably entrenched in the world of Mac OS 9. Though Mac OS X is a technically superior operating system in many ways, it can be difficult and expensive to switch. In fact, the cost of OS X and upgrading other software could end up being more than the price of FCP itself.

As with the previous versions of FCP, the installation process is simple and painless. The FCP installer automatically installs the ancillary programs (LiveType, Soundtrack, Compressor, and Cinema Tools), but awkwardly places them among all the other applications instead of inside a single folder for FCP. Some people might miss these programs altogether if they do not go out of their way to look for them.

FCP 4 uses an updated file format for its project files. When opening a project from FCP 3, version 4 updates the file—rendering the file useless in FCP 3. If you think you still might need to edit your project in FCP 3 for any reason, be sure to make a back-up copy before opening it in version 4.

IMAGE: COURTESY OF APPLE COMPUTERS

What's New

The number 300 gets a lot of marketing play with FCP 4. That is the number of new features Apple claims are in the update. And I believe them. There are a multitude of new tools, applications, formats, windows, and interface elements in this release. It would be easy to write off most of these improvements and say that quantity does not equal quality, but for the most part, these new features are well implemented and helpful. Many of the new features are interface changes throughout the program. For example, most of the windows now have a shelf at the top to store shortcuts to tools and commands that you specify. A new keyboard shortcut editor allows you to define your own keyboard commands. The general look and feel of the program has been updated to make it appear more modern and simple. Yet these changes are not necessarily intuitive. It took me a few minutes to figure out how to work the new Source and Destination buttons in the timeline.

Audio is one large area of improvement for this upgrade. A new audio mix tool mimics the layout of an audio mixing console and records your adjustments to it as your video plays in real-time. Still, FCP's new audio mix tool pales in comparison to the one in Adobe's Premiere Pro, which offers the ability to mix 5.1 surround sound. In addition to the new audio support inside FCP, Apple includes two extra programs for handling audio: Peak Express for mixing audio and Soundtrack for creating music. FCP also now supports Apple's Audio Units plug-in format for sound filters, though there are hardly any AU format filters available at this time.

Editing for the most part is the same as it was in FCP 3, but there are several areas of improvement. The Trim Edit window allows you to set its buttons to automatically move the edit point anywhere from 1 to 99 frames. The Trim Edit window also

adds a feature for dynamic editing where you can specify an edit point while the clip is playing. The Viewer and Canvas window can now be joined together so two clips can be played in sync. One of the features that will help people working with content shot on film is that FCP finally makes it easier to sync up and combine separate picture and sound clips.

Many of the effects and color correction tools have also been improved. A new window allows for a quick check of what a graphics composition will look like. Another window allows two clips to be compared side by side, making color correcting between different clips easier. The timeline window adds keyframe editing for easier editing of motion effects. A neat new feature is the ability to vary the speed of your clip. Using that feature, you can speed or slow down playback inside of one clip instead of specifying only a fixed setting, as was the case in previous versions of the program.

The Ancillary Programs

Some of FCP 4's most touted features are a suite of separate applications intended for the creation of animated titles, original music, film cut lists, and DVD and internet media. Usually, extra programs included with editing software are buggy and limited tools for people on constrained schedules. But at least one of these tools is a joy to use and instantly empowering as a creative tool—SoundTrack. The other three ancillary programs, LiveType, Compressor, and Cinema Tools, also do their job at least reasonably well and should fill the needs of editors who want to expand their abilities without investing in expensive dedicated tools like After Effects or Cleaner. Again, the lack of printed documentation seriously hinders how useful these programs are out of the box, forcing people to either guess their way through the programs, read the manuals in the uncomfortable on-screen format, or print out the PDFs

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onto huge cumbersome stacks of paper. SoundTrack, at least, is worth the effort.

SoundTrack is a music loop-editing program. It allows the user to layer a series of audio loops to create music and sound design elements. To accommodate SoundTrack's workflow, FCP 4 offers a new Scoring Marker that can mark moments in a video, which can then be used inside soundtrack as music cues. Inside the FCP 4 box is a DVD's worth of music and sound effects loops that can be layered over each other. The music loops cover a wide range of instruments and styles, so there is more opportunity to create something distinctive. Soundtrack stands so well on its own as a separate application that Apple has started to sell it on its own for \$299.

Less impressive but still a promising tool is LiveType, a text animation program for creating graphics and titles. LiveType allows for the quick and relatively easy creation of text animation. Far beyond FCP's regular title tool, LiveType can create bouncy, flashy, and lively text movement along with a series of animated fonts that vary from burning letters to letters made out of gold to letters vanishing into smoke. Though LiveType's results look professional, they are also bland and will undoubtedly be overused as FCP 4 proliferates.

As a tool for turning out video and audio files for the web and DVD, Compressor does not do much more than FCP already did on its own. The main difference is that Compressor adds MPEG2 DVD video export, and it does a fine job of that. Not surprisingly, Compressor only churns out web video in Apple's Quicktime format, which is fine for limited use, but a serious web video application would export in at least one other format like Windows Media or Realplayer. Compressor is no replacement for Discreet's Cleaner 6. It does an adequate job if you do not prepare media for the web very often. Those eyeing

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Compressor to churn out video for DVDs can also find it as part of the less expensive DVD Studio Pro 2 (\$500/\$200 upgrade).

Cinema Tools used to be sold as a stand-alone \$1000 package but it now comes for free with FCP. Cinema Tools allows FCP to edit film or video that was shot at 24 frames per second by removing 3:2 pulldown, the process that allows 24 fps film or video to be recorded to 30 fps videotape. Cinema Tools also generates negative cut lists,

also allow them to keep their video in 24P format so that they can more easily transfer to film in the end.

Conclusion

Unlike its previous upgrades, this update to Final Cut Pro is not a revolution but an evolution. If features and performance were the only measures of a software product's success, this upgrade would be a winner. For some people, such as those working with 24P video cameras or looking for better



which is essential for anyone who wants to edit film in FCP and have their edit conformed into a film print. (You should check with your negative cutter to see if they have experience working with negative cut lists from FCP and Cinema Tools.) One nice feature of Cinema Tools is that it can add 3:2 pulldown back in on the fly so that you can view your 24 fps edit on a video monitor via Firewire. The inclusion of Cinema Tools will most likely increase FCP's appeal for people using DV and High Definition cameras that shoot with 24 Progressive (24P) format. It will

audio tools, the extra features in this update will make it a must-have. For others, particularly those who shy away from technical challenges, the requisite upgrade to Mac OS X will make this update more trouble than it is worth. But for most users, the new features will be welcome, but not awe-inspiring. The significant drawbacks to this package are its muddled documentation and forced upgrade to Mac OS X. If those problems do not bother you and the new features sound appealing, FCP 4 is probably worth the cost. ■

For more info, see www.apple.com/finalcutpro.

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact him, write to greg@randomroom.com.

Final Cut Pro 4's interface looks similar to the previous version but has changed in many subtle and significant ways.

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Festivals

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 (e.g., Nov. 1st for Jan/Feb. issue).** Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.

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DOMESTIC

ABSOLUTE TIME FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Deadline: Oct. 31. Presented by San Francisco Stage & Film seeks feature length narrative films & short films. Festival focus is (but not limited to) films written, produced and/or directed by women & people of color. Mission of fest is to present films that explore cross-cultural understanding. Films must have been produced in the past 12 months. Cats: feature. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: San Francisco Stage & Film, 2215-R Market St., PMB #251, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415)401-9768; sfstagefilm@aol.com.

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 16-21, MI. Deadline: Oct. 1, Nov. 15, Dec. 10 (final). Fest welcomes all cats & genres of independent filmmaking. Founded: 1963. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: \$18,000 in cash prizes awarded. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DVD, Beta SP. Preview on VHS, DVD or 16mm. Entry Fee: \$30 (early); \$35; \$40 (final). Contact: Festival, 203 E. Ann St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 995-5356; fax: 995-5396; aafilmfest@aol.com; www.aafilmfest.org.

BLACK MARIA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, January-June, NJ. Deadline: November 20. 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 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: 200-3490; blackmariafest@aol.com; www.blackmariafilmfestival.com.

BROOKLYN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 28-May 4, NY. Deadline: Oct. 15; Jan. 15 (late); Feb. 15 (Final). 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,

narrative & students short. Projects of all lengths & originating on all formats accepted. Founded: 1989. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, Beta SP, VHS, 1/2", S-VHS, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$30 (student); \$40; \$50 (screenplay). Contact: Festival, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170; (336) 334-4197; fax: 334-5039; cfvf@uncg.edu; www.carolinafilmandvideofestival.org.

CHICAGO ASIAN AMERICAN SHOWCASE, April 4-13, IL. Deadline: Oct. 31. Chicago's annual Asian American film/arts fest, presented by Foundation for Asian American Independent Cinema & The Gene Siskel Film Center. Seeking works by and/or about Asian Americans. Send preview tape, bio/production notes, still photo, & s.a.s.e. for tape return. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: No awards, non-competitive. Formats: all formats. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$10 (payable to FAAIM).



The Sunshine State

Eugene Hernandez, editor of the daily film industry bible, *IndieWIRE*, called the Florida Film Festival, "the best regional festival I have ever attended." So it's no surprise that the festival, now in its thirteenth year, has been on the up and up. Held at the Enzian Theater, central Florida's only full-time, nonprofit cinema, the fest logs large attendance numbers and hosts premieres, retrospective screenings, and panels. The 2003 highlights included the North American premiere of Amy Hobby's *Coney Island Baby*, and an opening night, outdoor screening of James Foley's *Confidence*.

doc, experimental, short, animation. 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 (non-returnable). Entry Fee: \$20; \$40 (late); \$50 (final). 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.

CAROLINA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 18-21, NC. Deadline: Oct. 15. Fest held at Univ. of NC at Greensboro, fest's continuing goal is to exhibit works of independent artistry & personal vision. Fest accepts work in all genres & cats, incl. animation, doc, exp.,

Contact: c/o FAAIM, Box 5435, Chicago, IL 60680; (773) 562-6265; info@faaim.org; www.faaaim.org; www.siskelfilmcenter.org.

CHLOTRUDIS AWARDS SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 11, MA. Deadline: Sept. 30, Oct. 31 (final). Compete in the Short Film category of Boston's own Chlotrudis Awards, a non-profit organization that honors & supports independent film. Cats: short. Awards: Best Short Film. Formats: DVD, 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2" preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15; \$25 (final). Contact: CASFF, PO Box 605, Reading, MA 01867; (781) 526-5384; fax: 942-9106; filmfestival@chlotrudis.org; www.chlotrudis.org.



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The oldest and largest national moving-image media organization, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, AIVF offers a broad slate of education, information, and resource programs for members and non-members alike.

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 this card).

The Independent

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*, a national magazine filled with thought-provoking features, profiles, news, and regular columns on legal, technical, and business matters—all geared to the working independent. Plus the field's best source of festival deadlines, exhibition venues, and funding opportunities, as well as AIVF member activities and services.

AIVF Online

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

Insurance & Discounts

Businesses across the country offer discounts on equipment and auto rentals, stock and expendibles, film processing, transfers, editing, shipping, and other production necessities. 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. Members also receive discounts on classified ads in *The Independent*.

Community

AIVF supports dozens of 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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CINEQUEST FILM FESTIVAL, March 3-14, CA. Deadline: Oct 10 (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. Cats: Feature, Short, doc, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Maverick Spirit Award, Best Feature, Best Doc, 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: 995-5713; info@cinequest.org; www.cinequest.org.

DC INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL & MARKET, March 4-11, DC. Deadline: Nov. 15; Dec. 15 (final). Fest's mission is "to present a yearly event where industry professionals & the general public come to see the latest, most exciting films from the United States & abroad." Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, animation, doc. Awards: \$50,000 in cash & prizes. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$10 shorts (up to 30 min.); \$20 features. Contact: c/o MediaFusion, 2950 Van Ness St. NW, Ste. 728, Washington, DC 20008; (202) 537-9493; fax: 686-7168; dcindiefilmfest@aol.com; www.dciff.org.

DIRECTOR'S VIEW FILM FESTIVAL, February 12-16, CT. Deadline: September 15; October 15; November 1. 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. Founded: 1999. Cats: short, feature, doc, student. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", DVD, DigiBeta, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: sept: \$40; oct: \$50; nov: \$100. Contact: Festival, PO Box 312, South Salem, NY 10590; fax: (914)533-0269; info@thedirectorsview.com; www.dvff.org.

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-14, FL. Deadline: Oct. 31; Dec. 5 (final). 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, HD. Preview on

VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (short); \$35 (features); \$15 late fees. Contact: Matthew Curtis, Program Dir., 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32751; (407) 629-1088; fax: 629-6870; filmfest@enzian.org; www.floridafilmfestival.com.

HAZEL WOLF ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, March 18-21, WA. Deadline: Sept. 15; Oct. 20 (final). 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 on the tape; s.a.s.e. optional), DVD, 1/2". 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.

HI/LO FILM FESTIVAL, April, CA. Deadline: November 1 (early); December 1 (late). Non-competitive fest "celebrates films w/ high concepts & low budgets for the adventurous & disenchanted." Festival seeks films that cannot be found at the multiplex: films that are more smart than slick, that privilege ideas over commerce; that prove freak filmmaking has more to do w/ brains than wallets. Any genre, any subject, any length—bring it on! Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: super 8, 35mm, 16mm, digital, Hi8, 3/4", VHS, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (early); \$20 (late). Contact: Festival, Box 170309, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 558-7721; or info@hilofilmfestival.com; www.hilofilmfestival.com.

INDEPENDENT BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 23-26, GA. Deadline: Oct. 31. Fest will "highlight pioneering filmmakers who are defining the new direction of independent film as well as bringing the indie film community together for networking, deal-making, opportunities to meet financiers, distribution deals, politicking w/ attorneys, accountants & other filmmaking pros." Cats: script, feature, short. Formats: 35mm, 1/2", DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35; \$45. Contact: Daymon Bradford, 570 Park Ave, Atlanta, GA 30312; (678) 458-3683; dbradford@indieblackfilm.com; www.indieblackfilm.com.

INT'L PUBLIC TELEVISION SCREENING CONFERENCE(INPUT), May 23-28. Deadline: Nov. 7. Next conference will be held



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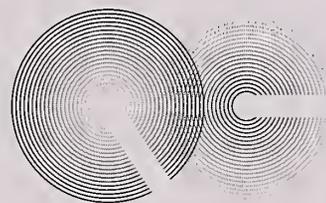
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in Barcelona, Spain. Organized in 1977, INPUT is a prestigious intl screening venue for public television programs & their makers. Extremely open to innovative work & independents, since conference is focused less on what public television is than on what it might eventually become. Independents, station producers, programmers, buyers, commissioning editors, etc. get together for a week to screen & discuss provocative programs from around the world. Submitted US entries go through a two-stage selection process; first in the US & then in Potsdam, Germany. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) is providing professional development grants to the conference for US producers whose program is selected & to a limited number of US public television program makers. Founded: 1977. Cats: TV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Terry Pound, South Carolina Educational Television, 1101 George Rogers Blvd., Columbia, SC, US 29201; (803) 737-3484; fax: 737-3435; pound@scetv.org; www.input2004.org.

MIAMI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 30- Feb. 8, FL. Deadline: Oct. 10. Festival is dedicated to bringing the best of world cinema to South Florida. The fest has used the unique geographical & cultural position of Miami to make the fest a premiere venue for the exhibition of Int'l & US features & doc films, w/ a special focus on Iberoamerican cinema. Special events & seminars held during the fest. Entries should not be in theatrical release in US or Europe & must be a Florida Premiere. Cats: Feature, Doc, Short. Awards: Jury Prizes, Audience Awards. Formats: 35mm, HD Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (shorts); \$50 (features). Contact, c/o Florida Int'l University, University Park, PC 230, Miami, FL 33199; (305) 348-5555; info@miamifilmfestival.com; www.miamifilmfestival.com

NEW ENGLAND FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 22-27, MA. Deadline: Oct. 31; Nov. 14 (final). The fest is competitive regional fest devoted to new works by any independent video or filmmaker who is a resident or student in New England states: CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, upstate NY, north of & incl. Westchester County. (residency required for eligibility). Also open to any undergraduate or graduate student who has completed his or her works while attending a New England college or University, or any undergraduate or graduate who maintains New England residency while attending college

elsewhere. Student entries must have been completed while a student. Cats: doc, experimental, animation, feature, short, student, any style or genre. Awards: Up to \$15,000 in cash & services is awarded. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DV, Mini-DV, DV Cam. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$40, \$55 (final); \$30 (student); \$10 (any additional entries). Contact: Boston Film / Video Foundation, 119 Braintree St., Ste 104, Allston, MA 02134; (617) 783-9241; fax: 783-4368; festival@bvf.org; www.bvf.org.

NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, March 10-16, NY. Deadline: Nov. 15; Dec. 1 (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, short, feature. 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, mini-DV. Preview on VHS/DVD. Entry Fee: \$30; \$35. Contact: Kendra Gaeta, 195 Chrystie Street #503, New York, NY 10002; (212) 614-2775; fax: 614-2776; info@nyuff.com; www.nyuff.com.

PORTLAND INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 13-28, OR. Deadline: Oct. 31. Noncompetitive fest focuses primarily on new work from outside the US, but American features, docs & shorts included. Fest screens nearly 100 films from over 30 countries. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: Best of Fest, Audience Award (for both feature film & short) & Best New Director Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25. Contact: Bill Foster, NW Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 294-0874; info@nwfilm.org; www.nwfilm.org.

ROCHESTER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 1-3, NY. Deadline: Nov. 29, 2002 (early); Feb. 14 (final). Annual fest is the longest-running film event dedicated to the art of short film & video. 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.

SAN DIEGO LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, March 11-21, CA. Deadline: Nov. 30. The longest running annual Latino/Chicano film & video fest in S. CA. Award-winning films/videos from throughout the US, Mexico, Latin America have been screened. As in previous years, fest will incl. screenings throughout San Diego & Tijuana community, discussions w/ filmmakers & catalog of all work screened. Looking for works by Latinos &/or about the Latino experience. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (shorts); \$25 (Features). Contact: Ethan van Thillo, c/o Media Arts Center San Diego, 921 25th St., San Diego, CA 92102; (619) 230-1938; fax: 230-1937; sdfff@sdlatinofilm.com; www.sdlatinofilm.com.

SAN FRANCISCO INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 5-15, CA. Deadline: Nov. 1. 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: Jeff Ross, 530 Divisadero St. #183, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 820 3907; fax: (413) 638-1124; info@sfindie.com; www.sfindie.com.

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L ASIAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, March 4-14, CA. Deadline: Sept. 5; Oct. 3 (final). Noncompetitive fest is the largest & most prominent showcase for works from Asian America & Asia w/ 100-110 works shown. Fest is "lively venue for filmmakers, industry & Asian communities" worldwide. Extensive local coverage by media, industry press. Also special events, panels, installations, galas. Fest sponsored by Nat'l Asian American Telecommunications Assoc. Founded: 1982. Cats: Feature, Experimental, Short, Animation, Doc, Mixed genre, music video, youth media, family, installation. Formats: Beta SP, 1", 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25; \$35 (final). Contact: Chi-hui Yang, Exhibition Dir., NAATA, 145 Ninth Street, Ste 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428; festival@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org/festival.

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 15-29, CA. Deadline: Nov. 12. 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 recent features, archival presentations, retros & special awards & tributes recognizing individual achievement; & 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. 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.

SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 23- Feb. 1, FL. Deadline: Oct. 17, Nov. 7 (Final). Dedicated to exploring the best, new stars of Independent film, this 10-day fest presents a schedule of films, premieres, symposiums & parties. SFF strives to provide an environment that supports & encourages the filmmaker supplying essential networking opportunities & open dialogue w/ intelligent, creative & inquisitive consumers of film. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Feature: \$25, \$40 (final); short: \$15-30 (final); Student: free, \$15 (final). Contact: Mark Marvell, 635 S. Orange Ave. Suite 10B, Sarasota, FL 34236; (941) 364-9514; fax: (941) 364-8411; mark@sarasotafilmfestival.com; www.sarasotafilmfestival.com.

SLAMDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 17-25, UT. Deadline: Aug. 29; Oct. 10 (final); Anarchy online section has year-round rolling deadline. 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: Slamdance, 5364 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA, USA 90038; (323) 466-1786; fax: 466-1784; mail@slamdance.com; www.slamdance.com.

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST FILM FESTIVAL, March 12-20, TX. Deadline: Nov. 3 (early); Dec. 1 (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 last 2 years & must not have previously screened in Austin, TX. 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: Matt Dentler, Sr. Programmer, P.O. Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 467-7979; fax: 467-0754; film@sxsw.com; www.sxsw.com/film.

STANDING ROCK SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 1, OH. Deadline: Oct. 3. Fest is open to all filmmakers & videographers worldwide w/ original work. Seeking works 20 min. or less in length. Cats: short, any style or genre. Formats: DVD, 8mm, 16mm, Hi8, Video. Entry Fee: \$25; \$15 Ohio residents. Contact: Jeff Ingram, 257 N. Water St., Kent, OH 44240; (330) 673-4970; info@standingrock.net; www.standingrock.net.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 15-25, UT. Deadline: Aug. 1 (early: features/shorts); Aug. 15 (Final: Int'l shorts); Sept. 12 (Final: US Shorts); Oct. 3 (Final: features). Founded in 1985 to "recognize independent filmmaking in all of its diversity," Sundance is the premiere U.S. competitive showcase for new ind. films. Showcase for domestic & int'l films, incl. competition of new American ind. feature films, non-competitive program of both new American ind. & foreign feature films & shorts. Dramatic & doc entries must have significant U.S. financing & be completed no earlier than Oct. of previous year. For competition, entries may not open theatrically before Feb. 1 of yr. of fest in more than 3 North American markets or be broadcast nat'lly. Competition entries may not play in any domestic film fest prior to Sundance. Founded: 1985. Cats: Feature, Short, Doc. Awards: Films selected for Ind Feature Film Competition awards Grand Prize, Cinematography Award & Audience Award (by popular ballot.) The films selected in dramatic cat will also be competing for Screenwriters Award & films in Doc cat will also be competing for Freedom of Expression Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, Video. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25/\$35 (shorts); \$35/\$50 (features). Contact: Geoffrey Gilmore/John Cooper 8857 West Olympic Blvd., Suite. 200, Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 360-1981; fax: 360-1969; programming@sundance.org; www.sundance.org.

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THAI LINKS: NEW YORK THAI FILM FESTIVAL, April 2-4, NY. Deadline: Oct. 6; Oct. 27 (final). Works directed, produced, or principally acted by Thais or Thai diaspora or films w/ Thai related subject matter are eligible. Work must have been completed after Sept. 30 of previous year. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, youth media, student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Entry Fee: Short/student: \$15; features: \$25 (add \$15 for final deadline). Contact: Asian American Arts Alliance, 74 Varick Street, Suite 302, New York, NY 10013; fax: (212) 941-7978; thaitakes@thailinks.org; www.thailinks.org.

TUCSON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-7, AZ. Deadline: Oct. 1. Fest seeks film & video works that address issues and themes of particular interest to LGBT community. Cats: doc, feature, animation, experimental, student, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10 - Check or MO payable to Wingspan. Contact: Festival, PO Box 3013, Tucson, AZ 85702; filmfest@wingspanaz.org; www.wingspanaz.org

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTORS CHAIR INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 12-24, IL. Deadline: Sept. 1, Oct. 1 (final). Annual fest is the largest & longest running women's film/video fest in U.S. Founded: 1979. Cats: any style or genre, installation, children, family, TV, youth media, student, music video, experimental, animation, feature, doc, short. Awards: Non-competitive film & video prizes awarded. Formats: 3/4", 16mm, 35mm, Beta, 1/2", Beta SP, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (early, WIDC members); \$30 (final). Contact: Festival, 941 W. Lawrence, #500, Chicago, IL, USA 60640; (773) 907-0610; fax: (773) 907-0381; widc@widc.org; www.widc.org.

WORLDFEST HOUSTON INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 16-25, TX. Deadline: Early: Nov 15; Reg.: 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. 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.

Z FILM FESTIVAL, December 1, IL. Deadline: Sept. 15; October 15 (final). Z Film Festival (dubbed the "fest w/ teeth") is a traveling fest based in Chicago. Founded: 2000. Cats: short, 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, DVD. Preview on VHS, DVD or mini DV. Entry Fee: \$15 (under 25 min), \$25 (30-60 min.); final: \$25; \$35. Contact: Usama Alshaibi, 333 West North Ave #123, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 409-3890; info@zfilmfestival.com; www.zfilmfestival.com.

INTERNATIONAL

ANIMA (BRUSSELS INT'L FESTIVAL OF CARTOONS & ANIMATED FILMS), Feb. 19-29, Belgium. Deadline: Oct. 15. Founded: 1982. Cats: animation, long feature, CGI, short, children, feature, experimental, music video, student. Awards: Belgian competition for best short animated film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 70mm. Preview on VHS or Bet SP. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Françoise 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.

CLERMONT-FERRAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 3-Feb.7. Deadline: October 17. 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 4,000 prods. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Michel Raluy & Christian Guinot (int'l), Calmin Borel (digital), La Jetée, 6 place Michel-de-l'Hospital, 63058 Clermont Ferrand, France Cedex 1; 011 33 473 91 65 73; fax: 473 92 11 93; info@clermont-filmfest.com; www.clermontfilmfest.com.

FILM EXCHANGE - NSI'S CANADIAN FILM FESTIVAL, March 2-6, Canada. Deadline: Nov. 14. Formerly Local Heroes, this Canadian Film Festival has a new name-- FilmExchange: NSI's Canadian Film Festival. Canada's largest film fest is dedicat-

ed to Canadian films, & bringing Canadian filmmakers & audiences together to exchange stories, ideas & experiences.. Cats: Short, Feature. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: Bill Evans, Festival Coordinator, Nat'l Screen Institute of Canada, 206-70 Arthur St, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3B 1G7; (204) 956-7800; fax: (780) 425-8098; filmexchange@nsi-canadaca; www.nsi-canada.ca.

GOING UNDERGROUND- BERLIN INT'L SUBWAY SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 28-Feb. 4, Germany. Deadline: Oct. 15. Films for competition may be no longer than 90 sec. The may be silent & free of extreme violent or obscene content. Cats: short. Formats: Beta SP, DigiBeta, DV-Cam, Mini-DV. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, Tempelhofer Ufer 1A, Berlin, Germany 10961; 011 49 30 693 29 59; interfilm@interfilm.de; www.interfilm.de/interfilm/frame_underground_en.html.

IMMAGINARIA INT'L LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 26-29, Italy. Deadline: October 30. Fest has been organized 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", Beta SP (PAL). Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, Via Calori 13, Bologna, Italy 40122; 39 051 642 4276; info@immaginaria.org; www.immaginaria.org.

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 incl. 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, feature, doc, short. Awards: non-competitive. Formats: All formats accepted, 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. 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.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS ON ART, March 11-21, Canada. Deadline: Oct. 10. The Festival heightens the public's understanding & appreciation of art, & highlights the work of artists as well as the contribution of professionals in cinema & television. FIFA encompasses the following disciplines of art: painting, sculpture, architecture, design, crafts, fashion, decorative arts, museology, restoration, photography, cinema (profiles of directors & actors, film shoots, special effects), literature, dance, music, theater. Festival not designed for experimental film or video but for productions on art-related subjects. Entries in comp. must've been completed in 3 yrs. preceding fest; no date restrictions on other sections. Founded: 1981. Cats: Feature, Short, Doc. Preview on VHS (NTSC, PAL or SECAM). Entry Fee: \$40 cad. Contact: René Rozon, 640 St. Paul Street West, Ste 406, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 1L9; (514) 874-1637; fax: (514) 874-9929; admin@artfifa.com; www.artfifa.com.

MOVING PICTURES CANADIAN FILM TOUR, Year round tour, Canada. Deadline: Nov. 1. Annual fest tours 14 cities w/ a selection of Canadian features, documentaries, co-productions & short films. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Caroline Coutts, 103-1076 Richards St., Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 3E1; (604) 681-4549; movingpictures@telus.net; www.movingpictures.nisa.com.

NANTES FESTIVAL OF THREE CONTINENTS, Nov. 25 - Dec. 2, France. Deadline: October 1. Founded in 1979, Nantes 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: None. Contact: Philippe & Alain Jalladeau, Directors, 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; festival@3continents.com; www.3continents.com.

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 22-Feb. 1, Netherlands. Deadline: October 1 (Shorts & Docs); November 1 (Features). Largest fest in Benelux w/ reputation for programming innovative, experimental new works alongside more commercial prods. 100+ features have world, int'l or European premieres; 345,000 attendance in previous years. Cats: Doc, Experimental, Feature, Short, animation, installation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta, CD-ROM. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Programme Dept., Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, Netherlands; 011 31 10 890 9090; fax: 890 9091; programme@filmfestivalrotterdam.com; www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com.

THESSALONIKI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 21-30, Greece. Deadline: Oct. 10. First & second features only for competition section. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Fest Coordinator, 40 Paparrigopoulou St., Athens, Greece 11473; 011 30 210 645 36 69; fax: 644 81 43; info@filmfestival.gr www.filmfestival.gr

TRIANGLE TELEVISION LGB INTERNAT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, February, New Zealand. Deadline: October 31. Triangle was New Zealand's first free-to-air, non-commercial UHF television channel that reaches about 85% of Auckland's population. Founded in 2001. Cats: feature, documentary, 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). Entry Fee: no entry fee. Contact: Hans Versluys, PO Box 78-034, Grey Lyn, Auckland, New Zealand; hans@tritv.co.nz; www.tritv.co.nz.

VICTORIA INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Jan. 30-Feb. 8, Canada. Deadline: Oct. 17. Founded: 1995. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DV. Entry Fee: \$10. Contact: Kathy Kay, Festival Director, 808 View Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1K2; (250) 389-0444; fax: (250) 389-0406; www.vivf.com.

SEE NOTICES: AIVF.ORG

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DISTRIBUTORS

AQUARIUS HEALTH CARE VIDEOS, the leader of documentary films that focus on powerful life challenging situations is seeking additional programs to add to our award winning collection. Our strong, targeted marketing program will help you to increase awareness. We look forward to previewing your film. Please send your film to Aquarius Health Care Videos, 266 Main St, Suite 33B, Medfield, Ma 02052, (888) 440-2963, leslie@aquariusproductions.com, www.aquariusproductions.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: can be reached (800) 99-YOUTH x. 210.

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maximize your profits while working within a remarkable community of committed activist filmmakers, then New Day is the perfect home for your film. New Day is committed to promoting diversity within our membership and within the media we represent. Explore our films at www.newday.com, then contact Heidi Emberling at (650) 347-5123.

THE CINEMA GUILD, leading film/video/multimedia distributor, seeks new doc, fiction, educational & animation programs for distribution. Send videos or discs 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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MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING

AMERICA'S FUNNIEST POLITICAL VIDEOS (AFPV) is screening humorous political videos in early 2004 in NY and San Fran. Poss. future distribution/touring festival. Seeking videos of funny protests, as well as pre-produced videos on political topics, cartoons, funny & political music videos, subversive/political comedy routines, etc. Deadline: Nov 1, 2003. \$5 entry fee per submission, 3 submissions per entrant. For entry forms and more info, go to www.AFPV.net. E-mail us at justin@AFPV.net, or call (718) 388-3554.

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, The Alternative Screen: A Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. Send 1/2" VHS viewing tape, press kit, cover letter w/ contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, LA, CA 90028. Tel: (323) 466-3456 x115; fax: 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

BASEMENT FILMS of Albuquerque, NM, is a mobile, volunteer-run venue for experimental, underground & other under-represented forms of small-gauge (8mm, 16mm) film & video making. To screen your film work with us, send a VHS preview tape & any written mat about it and yourself to BASEMENT FILMS, P.O. Box 7669, ALBU, NM 87194. We pride ourselves in screening work in unique locations, so if you

have a suggestion for your work in this regard, make a suggestion. Contact: (505) 842-9977, or www.basementfilms.org.

CAPE COD FILM SOCIETY SCREENING SERIES of Brewster, MA, seeks experimental, documentary & fiction films & videos. Films can be any length, genre or style, but should fit into one of these 7 categories: war, women filmmakers, race & identity, religion, Cape Cod, masculinity or grief. Please send work on VHS, DVD, or mini-DV w/ filmmaker bio & suggested category. Also indicate your availability to appear with your work for Q&A. Send to: Rebecca M. Alvin, Belly Girl Films, Inc., PO Box 1727, Brewster, MA 02631-7727; bellygirl@earthlink.net.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. For more information call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

DAHLIA'S FLIX & MIX, a weekly showcase of new film & music held on Tuesdays at NY's Sugar, is seeking submissions. Showcases fresh and previously undistributed film & video work, as well as DJs spinning great music. No guest list, cover charge, or submission fee. For more info, contact dsmith@independentfilm.com or stop by Sugar any Tuesday evening (doors open 7pm, screenings begin 8pm). To submit your film, please send a VHS or DVD copy and a brief synopsis to: Dahlia Smith, c/o SUGAR, 311 Church St, New York, NY 10013.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min, to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience (dialogue must be subtitled). Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St, 4th fl, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental video for our ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more

info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.

DOCUCLUB is seeking submissions for its In-the-Works program, a monthly documentary rough-cut screening series in New York City. If you urgently need constructive feedback and want a chance to network with your peers, visit www.docuclub.org for details, or contact Liz Ogilvie: (212) 874-1878.

ECHO PARK FILM CENTER microcinema seeking submissions to screen for weekly Thursday evening cinema. Non-Hollywood documentary, animation & experimental films & videos. We do not screen feature length narratives. Filmmakers receive an honorarium. Contact: Echo Park Film Center, 1200 N. Alvarado St., LA, CA, 90026; (213) 484-8846; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.echoparkfilmcenter.com.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, any genre, to be screened at our 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

FLICKER encompasses a Super 8 & 16mm showcase held Asheville, Athens, Chapel Hill, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Richmond & Bordeaux, France. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you. See the website for a list of local Flickers: www.flickeraustin.com.

FREIGHT FILM SALON seeks submissions for its Monday Night Shorts showcase series. Work can be any genre, 20 min. or fewer; must be on VHS or DVD. Will screen on 6' screen, two plasma screens & four monitors. Send e-mail to FreightFilmSalon@yahoo.com for additional info, or visit www.FreightNYC.com.

GIRLS ON FILM is a quarterly screening series in

San Fran that seeks short narrative, doc & experimental works of 30 min. or fewer by women of color. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. No entry fee. Send preview (with name, title, length, phone & e-mail) to: Jennifer Jajeh, Girls On Film, 1566 Grove Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include S.A.S.E. if you'd like your work returned. For more info, e-mail girlsonfilmseries@hotmail.com; www.atasite.org.

THE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER'S SHOW-CASE is a monthly film series dedicated to supporting the independent voice in video & film production. Open to independent video & filmmakers of any genre. Call for entries for the 2003-2004 film series will continue through the duration of the season. Also seeking quality films to showcase at www.FilmSeven.com. For more information, contact filmseven@aol.com; Tel: (866) 266-8435.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc, seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in Urban Mediamakers magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE, a monthly microcinema screening program of int'l short films, videos & digital works seeking submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Fran, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS at New York's Anthology Film Archives seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. No entry fee or form. Send a VHS copy of your film or video w/ a brief synopsis to David Maquiling, New Filmmakers, Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10009. For more information, visit www.newfilm-makers.com.

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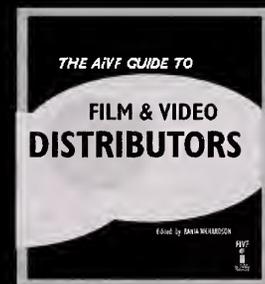
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OTHER CINEMA, San Fran's 20-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length, for its weekly screening series. Send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following film's screening. Any length/genre. Connection to New England, whether through subject matter, filming locations, or hometown of filmmakers, helpful but not necessary. Send VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks shorts (under 45 min.) 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 & an application form, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473. For questions call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

SPARK VIDEO: BEACON seeking work for 2003-2004 programming year. Deadline: ongoing, early entries given preference. All independent/non-commercial work under 15 min. is accepted. Int'l submissions encouraged. Formats accepted: VHS(NTSC only) and MiniDV or DVCAM (NTSC or PAL). Include synopsis, Bio, CV and contact information. SASE required for tape return. Send materials to: Joshua Katcher - Video Programmer, Spark Video: Beacon, Fusion Media, 282 Katonah Ave. #148, Katonah, NY 10536; scoot@tele-base.net.

TIMEBASE a new moving image series in Kansas City, seeks innovative short films, videos, installations & web-based projects. No entry fee. Rolling deadline. Send VHS, DVD, or CD-Rom: Timebase, 5100 Rockhill Rd Haag 202, KC MO 64110. Tel: (816)235-1708; www.time-base.org.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

TRUE STORIES is a monthly (Feb-Sept) sneak preview for new documentaries that challenge traditional forms. Any length accepted, VHS or DVD format. No deadline, tapes held on a rolling basis until entire series is programmed. A modest honorarium is paid and maker should be in attendance. Screenings take place in the Screening Room of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the 3rd Wed. of the month. For more info contact Gail Silva, Film Arts Foundation, 145 9th St. Ste. 101, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760 x315 www.filmarts.org/exhibition/truestories.html.

VIDEOTHEATRE New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All kinds. No deadlines. No late fees. Year-round submission. Weekly programming in a 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. Oct. 15 deadline for Dec. program. Dec. theme: "No-Budget Indies from Around The World" & "A Tribute To Indie Mavericks Who Told Hollywood To F**K OFF!" Contact VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com, or www.videotheatrenyc.com.

VIEWNAPPY'S HOMEMADE MUSIC VIDEO FESTIVAL: Monthly screening parties, & finalists entered in quarterly video slams. Music based submissions, 15 min. or under. No deadline. Acceptable formats: VHS/DVD (preferred), Beta sp/digi, MiniDV, Hi-8; email formats: Quicktime, Mpeg, Flash, SWA. Include a short artist bio & label tapes with your name, title of work, and contact info. Send to: Viewnappy, c/o Final Cut, 118 W. 22nd St 7th Fl, New York, NY 10011. For more info, visit www.viewnappy.com.

TOURING PROGRAMS

RUNNING FREE, a touring collaborative video installation presented by Montreal's View 72, seeks shorts (5 min. or fewer) of a single person running continuously. Format must be mini-DV, but send VHS for a preview to Immaculate_conception@view72.com; www.view72.com.

THE HIP HOP FILM FEST TOUR is an ongoing event hitting major cities & cultural centers on a global level. Organizers are indie filmmakers looking to share their visual documents of the vibrant Hip Hop culture and connect with other media-

makers. Deadline: Ongoing. Visit www.hiphopfilmfest.com for more information, email Info@HipHopFilmFest.com, or call (866) 206-9071 x9211.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send application (available at www.ArtInGeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY HISTORIC SITE in PA seeks artists for 2004 season exhibition at the site. Some funding avail. for media arts. Deadline: Nov. 6. To request an application, or schedule an orientation tour, contact Brett Bertolino at (215) 236-5111 ex. 12, or at bb@EasternState.org, or you can visit www.easternstate.org.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

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. tape return to: Squeaky Wheel, 175 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201; (716) 884-7172; squeaky@pce.net

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. 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.

FASTSHOOTERS is accepting short feature films, animations and videos to assemble in a TV-broadcast-length collection for pitch to networks. All mediums and genres. For more information: www.fastshooters.com.

FILMFINDS, KSC-TV's new showcase of independent films, now seeks work for broadcast in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Only feature-length narrative films considered. Work must have played in at least 2 juried film fests & cannot have had a wide

release or previously been broadcast on network TV. For more info & a downloadable appl, visit www.mnfilm.org; filmfinds@mnfilm.org.

INDIE FILM SHOWCASE, the award-winning Twin Cities cable showcase, accepts ongoing submissions. Programs run 7-8 p.m. every Saturday & Sunday for a month. No fees. Send your work in any format (Beta, 3/4, Mini, DVCPro, the 8's, 1/2") & S.A.S.E. to: Indie Film Showcase, 2134 Roth Pl, White Bear Lake, MN 55110. For a release form & more info, visit www.proletariatpictures.com.

SOUTHERN LENS: Broadcast on the 1st Thurs. of each month, the series is one of SCETV's highest rated local programs. If you are a Southern independent filmmaker or have produced a film about the South, we want to consider your film for the 2004 schedule. Deadline Dec. 1, 2003. Southern Lens is open to programs in any genre, including drama, documentary, docudrama, animation or innovative combinations. Contact Craig Ness at 803-737-3424, ness@scetv.org, or Amy Shumaker: 803-737-3433, shumaker@scetv.org for a submission form, or with any questions. Materials can be sent to: Craig Ness; Southern Lens; South Carolina ETV; 1101 George Rogers Blvd.; Columbia, SC 29201.

WEBCASTS

TURBULANCE is a project of New Radio and Performing Arts, Inc., a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that commissions net art works by emerging and established artists. Proposals can be in the form of text in the body of an email, or an attached RTF file. Email proposals to: newradio@si.rr.com. For more info, visit www.somewhere.org.

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine that is a showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the web. Seeks works created in Flash and Director and traditional animations & videos fewer than 10 min. in length to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

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Notices

By Melinda Rice

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., Nov. 1 for Jan./Feb. issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

THE CHRYSLER MILLION DOLLAR FILM FESTIVAL is accepting submissions in Oct. 2003 for its 9-month competition. Filmmakers should submit a short film for consideration. Finalists develop and produce an original short film during the contest, based on which the winner is announced. For more information, visit www.chrysler.com/filmfest or www.hypnotic.com.

SCRIPTAPALOOZA TV, Television Writing Competition, is noted as "One of the Best" by Entertainment Weekly Magazine. We accept 1 hour Spec Scripts, 1/2 Hour Spec Scripts & Original Pilots. The winners in each category will be considered by Scriptapalooza's outstanding list of participants. Deadline for submission is Nov. 17, 2003. Winners will be announced Feb. 17, 2004. Visit www.scriptapaloozaTV.com for details or call (323) 654-5809.

THREE MINUTE THRILLER CONTEST: Tucson Association of Ind. Video and Filmmaker (AIVF) challenges Filmmakers and Videomakers to make a thriller, horror short, or science fiction short (or spoof) that is 3 min. or less in length. Films should be shot specifically for the Three Minute Thriller contest between Aug. 1-October 13. The deadline is Oct 13. The entry fee: \$13. No X rated flicks/nudity. All submissions must be on VHS or mini DV format for screening. Entries will be screened on Halloween, Oct. 31st when the winner will be announced. Winners will receive a portion of the entry fees, as well as recognition of winning this "spirted" award. For more info: JanaSegal@aol.com, or call (520) 325-9175.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

ACTION/CUT FILMMAKING SEMINARS offered Oct.-Nov. Course benefits directors, writers, producers, actors, DPs, editors, anyone interested in maximizing their creative partnership w/ the director. Substantial discount to early birds & students. Contact: (800) 815-5545; www.actioncut.com.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV administrator, offers ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each workshop is held at MNN & features a different speaker. For more info visit www.mnn.org or call (212) 757-2670.

PUBLICATIONS

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AM. FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To send work, contact Rosely Torres, LAVA, 124 Washington Pl., NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108; imre@igc.org.

GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR NY FILMS avail. for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numerous tax exemptions avail. in NY

OTHERZINE, the e-zine of Craig Baldwin's Othercinema.com, seeks written works fewer than 1,000 words, including interviews, filmographies, alternative histories, criticism & theory. Previously published work welcome, though work previously published on the internet is not eligible. Text formats: MS Word, ASCII text & HTML. Submit to: noellawrence@sprintmail.com; www.othercinema.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

2004 OAH ERIK BARNOUW AWARD is given annually in recognition of outstanding reporting/programming on network or cable TV, or in documentary film, concerned with American history, the study of American history, &/or the promotion of history. Winning film(s) or video program(s) will be screened and the award(s) will be presented at the 2004 annual meeting of the OAH in Boston, Massachusetts, 25-28 March. The producer(s) of the winning film(s) or video program(s) will receive a certificate(s) and \$500. Films & video programs released Jan. 1, 2003 through Dec. 31, 2003 are eligible for entry. Films and videos selected as honorable mentions will be shown at the annual meeting, along with the Bamouw winner, as part of the OAH Screening History film series. Entries must be submitted on 1/2 inch video



Three Minutes of Spooky (Spoofy)

The Tucson, AZ AIVF Salon is turning up the spook in a Halloween competition for filmmakers. "The main reason for [the contest]," according to Tucson Salon director Jana Segal, "is to motivate independent filmmakers to work together to make movies." The salon's website, www.gusadelic.net/aivf, offers tips for shooting

the three-minute horror flicks for less than \$100. The shorts must be made specifically for the Thriller Contest. On Halloween, the flicks will be shown, and there will be costumes and a haunted house. See listing.

state for film, TV & commercial production. Put together by Empire State Development Corp. & NY State Dept. of Taxation & Finance, 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & TV Development, 633 3rd Ave., 33rd fl., New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

cassette. One copy of each entry must be received by each committee member and the OAH by 1 December 2003. For more info, visit www.oah.org/activities/awards/bamouw.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's 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 & 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@bell-south.net; www.jvm.com/davis.

BLACK DOCUMENTARY COLLECTIVE (BDC) provides people of African descent working in the documentary film & video field with the opportunity to network professionally, promote each others' work, exchange ideas in order to generate productions & advocate on issues impacting black documentary makers. They hold works-in-progress screenings, project seminars, participate in the IFP Film Market & have special sessions with funders for independent producers. For more info, email BlkDocCol@aol.com.

CREATIVE CAPITAL: Artists' foundation, committed to supporting individual artists is accepting applications. Download from www.creative-capital.org; for more info, call (212) 598-9900. Deadline: Oct. 31.

EXPERIMENTAL TV CENTER offers grants & presentation funds to electronic media/film artists & organizations. Appl. reviewed monthly. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Program Dir., ETVC, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341; www.experimentalcenter.org

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP FOR FILMMAKERS: Film Forum, a nonprofit cinema, efficiently administers filmmaker grants, retaining 5% of all monies from foundations, corporations, individuals (but not government sources). Budget must be a minimum of \$100,000 & filmmaker must have a track record. Send brief project description to: Film Forum Fiscal Sponsorships, 209 West Houston Street, New York, NY 10014. No calls, faxes, e-mails.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundations goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote intl cooperation & advance human achievement. www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

HUMANITIES WASHINGTON supports public programs that have as their primary purpose the presentation of insights gained from the humanities. Humanities Washington offers three types of grants. Quick Grants are available year-round to small or rural organizations for program planning or implementation. Visit nych@humanities.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd; (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION provides partial support to selected doc series & films intended for nat'l or intl 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 FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CULTURE offers the Ronnie Heyman Prize for an Emerging Visual Artist. Applicants should have a body of work reflecting the Jewish experience or addressing issues in the Jewish community & have worked no longer than 10 yrs. in their field. Work accepted in painting, illustration, sculpture, photography & multi-media. Prize: \$2500. Deadline: Nov. 6, 2003. Contact us by e-mail: Grants@JewishCulture.org, Tel: (212) 629-0500 ext. 215, or visit www.jewishculture.org.

PUFFIN FOUNDATION supports the creation and presentation of new artistic works to the public. In particular, the Foundation intends to foster & encourage younger artists & those whose projects find funding difficult because of the projects' genre &/or social philosophy. Awards are \$1000-\$2500 to projects incl. short films & videos. Grant proposals for 2004 are accepted from Oct. 1-Dec. 31, 2003. For more info, visit www.puffinfoundation.org.

U.S. - MEXICO FUND FOR CULTURE grants economic support to projects that reflect the artistic & cultural diversity of Mexico and the U.S. & that enrich cultural exchange & promote lasting ties among artists, scholars, independent groups & cultural institutions. Application should incl. a plan for evaluating & documenting the process, results & impact of the project. Special attention will be given to projects that propose innovative ways to understand and conceptualize art in any of the artistic disciplines. Deadline: Dec. 12, 2003. Visit www.fidemexusa.org.mx.

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Classifieds

Deadline: First of each month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., November 1st for Jan/Feb issue). **Contact:** (212) 807-1400, x221; fax: (212) 463-8519; classifieds@aivf.org.

PER ISSUE COST: 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, x241.

FREQUENCY DISCOUNT: \$5 off per issue for ads running 5+ times.

Ads exceeding the specified length will be edited. Place ad via www.aivf.org/independent/classifieds or type copy and mail with the check or money order 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 include card #, name on card and expiration date.

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ARE YOU STUCK? Fernanda Rossi, script & documentary doctor, specializes in narrative structure in all stages of the filmmaking process, including story development, fundraising trailers and post-production. She has doctored over 30 films and is the author of "Trailer Mechanics." For private consultations and workshops visit www.documentarydoctor.com or write to info@documentarydoctor.com.

AVID ONLINE/OFFLINE EDITOR: I have cut shorts, music videos, feature documentaries and television documentaries. My work has appeared in Slamdance and other film festivals, on PBS, MTV, Discovery, Bravo and the History Channel. I have inexpensive access to AVID systems offline to uncompressed, mini-DV to D-Beta, Photoshop, Final Cut, AE and DVD Studio Pro. I am an exceedingly fast editor, well-educated, world-travelled, and can find a story in anything. Please write Gabriel Johnson at jgabriel@nyc.rr.com or call (917)586-3135 for rates, reel, resume and references.

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ABC, NBC, Natl. Geographic, Lifetime. Full Prod. Studio in NYC area. www.illuminatemusic.com.

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COMPOSER MIRIAM CUTLER loves to collaborate - docs, features. 2002 Berlin "Lost In La Mancha", Sundance/POV "Scout's Honor" & "Licensed To Kill", Peabody "The Castro," "Pandemic: Facing AIDS" & more. (310) 398-5985; mir.cut@verizon.net.

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FELLOWSHIPS & TEACHING AVAILABLE: The MFA program in Film/Video/Digital Production at the University of Iowa in the Department of Cinema & Comparative Literature offers full fellowships and teaching support to qualified applicants to its 3-year MFA program. For more information on how to apply, visit: www.uiowa.edu/~ccl or call (319) 335-0330.

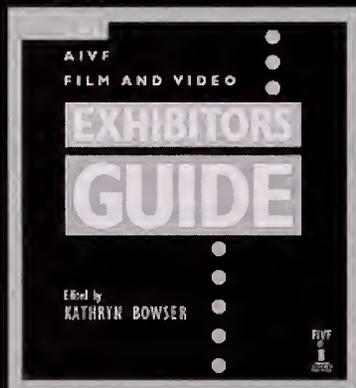
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FINAL CUT PRO G-4: digital video with editor \$65/hr; Discounts; Production; S/8 and R/8 filmtransfers; VHS, Hi-8, CD-Rom, DVD, mini-DV, DV-Cam; Photos, Graphics, Labels. West Village. Bill Creston (212) 924 4893; eMediaLoft@lycos.com; eMediaLoft.org.

FINISH! YOUR VIDEO/FILM PROJECT! Save money and learn for yourself with semi-assisted guidance. Expert explainer will clarify all remaining steps, teach you how to do it yourself, or provide assistance. Resolve strategies, mixing plans, sync issues, etc. DV and 16mm editing, transfer, and sound mixing too. Initial consultation includes clear summary report outlining detailed "next steps," proper sequence, and why. Low intro rate. (212) 777-1180; info@editlab.com.

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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October



IN BRIEF: COPYRIGHT AND THE LAW OF IDEAS

when: Tues. Oct. 7,
6:30-8:30 p.m.
where: AIVF
cost: \$40/\$25 AIVF
members

Series Fees: 5 sessions pass \$100 for AIVF members; \$160 general public; One Session \$25 AIVF members; \$40 general public. Advanced purchase is highly recommended. Register on-line at www.aivf.org/store or call 212/807-1400x301.

The AIVF Producers' Legal Series helps answer legal and business questions about structuring and negotiating deals in film and television. It also introduces independents to future legal and business resources.

This session presents an overview of copyright law as well as right of publicity, privacy, defamation, and trademark. The goal is to give filmmakers the legal background and tools to better protect themselves and their work and to avoid infringement of third party's rights. Panelists will include a lawyer, writer, and producer.

SELLING OR BUYING RIGHTS TO A BOOK, PLAY, SCREENPLAY OR LIFE STORY

when: Thurs., Oct. 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
where: AIVF
cost: \$40/\$25 AIVF members

Series Fees: 5 sessions pass \$100 for AIVF members; \$160 general public; 1 Session \$25 AIVF members; \$40 general public. Advanced purchase is highly recommended. Register on-line at www.aivf.org/store or call 212/807-1400 x301.

This session presents the business and legal side of the deal making involved in selling or buying rights to the underlying literary property, such as a book, short story, a play, an original script, an original idea or true life story for a film project. Panelists will include a lawyer, agents and producers.

Series moderator Innes Smolansky is an experienced entertainment attorney specializing in representing producers, writers, authors, directors, and animators in independent motion picture production, documentaries, television, theater, and book publishing.

MEET AND GREET: MEET THE PRESS



when: Thurs., October 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
where: AIVF
cost: \$20/\$10 AIVF members

Are you trying to get your film noticed by the media? What are the steps to approaching them? Join AIVF and the film editorial staff from various publications for a panel discussion on independent films and the press.

Maud Kersnowski, editor-in-chief of the *Independent Film & Video Monthly*, will moderate the discussion on how editors like to receive information, what they consider newsworthy, how to approach and work with reporters, tips for press releases and interviews, and general tips on dealing with the news media. Panelists include Eugene Hernandez, Editor-in-Chief of indieWIRE, Dennis Lim of the Village Voice, Andrea Meyer (Interview, Glamour) and other panelists TBA.



AIVF CO-PRESENTS: FRAME BY FRAME

The 6th Annual
HBO Documentary Series
when: October 16-23
where: The Screening
Room, 54 Varick St.,
New York, NY

HBO's Sixth Annual Frame By Frame Documentary Series presents films of both established and emerging non-fiction filmmakers, celebrating and highlighting the documentary genre.

A week of over twenty HBO and Cinemax Reel Life premieres, and critically-acclaimed America Undercover programs, will be showcased. The series includes special Meet the Filmmaker events (co-

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hours: Wed. 11-9,
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Tue., Thur., Fri. 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
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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

presented by AIVF; these are featured screenings presented by their makers and followed by a discussion—see list), plus a Q&A session with HBO Documentary staff. Don't miss your chance to see these docs on the big screen and to support your fellow filmmakers!

tickets: Tickets to individual screenings are \$5 and are available at the Screening Room box office on the day of the show.

series passes: Avoid being turned away from a sold-out screening: buy a series pass! Passes guarantee your seat up until 15 minutes before showtime. Full Showcase Pass (access to all screenings and discussions): \$50 (\$30 for AIVF members) Passes are sold by AIVF: (212) 807-1400, x301.

program schedule: Programs run from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

For a complete program schedule and descriptions of films, see www.hbo.com/framebyframe



HBO DOCUMENTARY BUYERS PANEL

when: Sun., October 22, 3 p.m.

where: The Screening Room, 54 Varick St.

cost: \$10 public, \$5 AIVF members

A panel of HBO documentary staff discuss 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

EVENING PROGRAMS: MEET THE FILMMAKERS

when: weeknights during the Frame by Frame Series, 7–9 p.m.

Throughout the Frame by Frame Series select screenings 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 (schedule subject to change):

Fri. Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. Cynthia Wade, Heidi Reinberg and subject Sue Sternberg present *Shelter Dogs*

Sat. Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. John Cadigan and Katie Cadigan present *People Say I'm Crazy*

Sat. Oct. 18 at 9 p.m. Jamie Johnson presents *Born Rich*

Sun. Oct. 19 at 7 p.m. Lisa Gay Hamilton presents *Beah: A Black Woman Speaks*

Mon. Oct. 20 at 9 p.m. Andrew Jarecki present *Capturing the Friedmans*

Wed. Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. Lindsey Crystal presents *My Uncle Berns*

Thurs. Oct. 23 at 9 p.m. Arlene Donnelly Nelson and subject, artist Spencer Tunick, present *Naked World*



AIVF CO-SPONSORS: HOT SPRINGS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

when: October 24–November 2

where: Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas

The 12th Annual Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival has a world-class lineup of films and filmmakers with some eighty-five films representing 14 countries on topics ranging from civil rights to Alzheimer's disease. The festival will showcase Ken Burns, Harry Thomason, Ken Mandel and other documentary filmmakers.

For more information, visit www.docufilminst.org



STARZ DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

when: October 9–19

where: Denver, CO

The Starz Denver International Film Festival presents approximately 175 films over 10 days and plays host to more than 100 film artists. New international feature releases, independently produced fiction films and documentaries, animation, experimental works, children's programs and short subjects are included in the festival.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS: INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS RECEPTION:

when: Fri., October 17, 9 p.m.

where: Post Modern Company, 1734 Walnut Street. Denver, CO

cost: Present printed invitation for admission.

The annual Independent Filmmakers Reception is an VIP reception honoring the guest filmmakers (directors, actors) of the 26th Starz International Film Festival. In addition to the festival guests, attendees include members of AIVF and SAG, critics, festival sponsors, and Film Society Board members.

For more information, visit www.denverfilm.org/diff_main.cfm.

**AIVF CO-SPONSORS:
FILM ARTS FESTIVAL OF
INDEPENDENT CINEMA**

when: October 30 - November 2
where: San Francisco, CA

Since the Festival began in 1984, it has been the focal point of Film Arts' efforts to provide San Francisco residents an opportunity to view and discuss works by local film and video artists. The Festival pays tribute to the remarkable talent and diversity of our community. Through thematic programs, FilmArts is able to exhibit diverse and "odd length" works that individually have little chance of being screened theatrically.

For more information, visit www.filmarts.org/festival0

Hawaii International Film Festival

**HAWAII INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**

when: October 30 - November 9
where: O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i (Big Island), and Molokai

The 23rd Annual Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) is a statewide festival that has more than a dozen screening sites on four Hawaiian Islands. In addition to a full slate of feature films, documentaries and short subjects, HIFF conducts seminars, workshops, special award presentations and receptions. HIFF specializes in films from Asia, the Pacific Rim, and North America. International guests include movie stars, filmmakers, press/media, and film industry professionals.

For more information, visit www.hiff.org.



RESFEST

when: September-December

where: 14 domestic and foreign cities

RESFEST is an annual, global film festival dedicated to showcasing the year's most innovative short films, features, music videos and animation in a multimedia environment of screenings, live music events, parties and intimate conversations with visionary filmmakers.

**North American Tour Schedule
Sept. 18-21—San Francisco, Palace
of Fine Arts**

Sept. 24-28—Los Angeles, Egyptian
Theatre

Oct. 3-5—Washington, DC,
National Geographic Society

Oct. 10-12—New York City, Tribeca
Performing Arts Center

Oct. 24-26 —Toronto, Royal
Cinema

Nov. 6-9—Chicago, Museum of
Contemporary Art

For more information, visit www.resfest.com.

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where: Walter Reade Theatre,
Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC
www.filmlinc.com

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October 4—November 100 Years of
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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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon 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

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.org

Dallas Salon's New-Old Theater

In November, Dallas Salon members will have the chance to screen their works-in-progress at the Margo Jones Theater at the famous Magnolia Lounge. The lounge, which was built in 1936, was one of the only air-conditioned buildings of its day. Under the direction of Margo Jones, the lounge became America's first professional theater-in-the-round. From 1947-1955, Jones staged eight-five plays (including one by then-unknown playwright Tennessee Williams), and hosted the world premiere of *Inherit the Wind*, by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. Salon members think the lounge is the perfect space to unite local filmmakers and foster discussion about new work.

—Laura Neitzel

Austin, TX:

Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
austin@aivf.org

**Boston, MA: Center for
Independent Documentary**

Contact: Susan Walsh, (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: Michael Hill,
(303) 442-8445 x100; 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

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, (256) 895-0423
huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

**Lincoln, NE: Nebraska
Independent Film Project**

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

When: First Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
(Subject to change; call to confirm)
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: Seattle Indie Network

Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 200-0933;
Wes Kim, (206) 719-6261; seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:

When: First Mondays, 6 p.m.
Where: Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway
Contact: Jana Segal and Rachel Sharp,
tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:

Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline,
(202) 554-3263 x4, washingtondc@aivf.org

If you wish to start a salon in your own community, please call (212) 807-1400 x236 or send e-mail to members@aivf.org

AIVF THANKS

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides a variety of programs and services for independent moving image makers and the media community, including *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, information services, and arts and media policy advocacy.

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



The Academy Foundation
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The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation
The Jewish Communal Fund

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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:

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Nonprofit Members: **AL:** Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival; **CA:** Berkeley Documentary Center; Berkeley Video & Film Center; Film Arts Foundation; Filmmakers Alliance; Fireside Foundation; International Buddhist Film Festival; Media Fund; San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; The LEF Foundation; The Sundance Institute; USC School of Cinema TV; **CO:** Denver Center Media; **CT:** New Haven Film Festival; **DC:** American University, School of Communication; Media Access Project; Spark Media; **FL:** Florida State University Film School; Sarasota Film Festival; University of Tampa; Valencia Community College; **GA:** Savannah College of Art and Design; **IL:** Art Institute of Chicago; Community Television Network; Light Bound; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Communication; Rock Valley College; **KY:** Appalshop; **MA:** CCTV; Documentary Educational Resources; Emerson College, Visual & Media Arts; Long Bow Group; Lowell Telecommunications Group; **MD:** 7 Oils Production; Laurel Cable Network; **ME:** Maine Photographic Workshops; **MI:** Ann Arbor Film Festival; **MN:** IFF/MSP; Walker Art Center; **MO:** Webster University Film Series; **MS:** Magnolia Independent Film Festival; **NC:** Cuccalorus Film Foundation; Duke University, Film & Video; UNC Greensboro, Broadcasting and Cinema; University of North Carolina, Wilmington; **NE:** Great Plains Film Festival; Ross Film Theater, UN-Lincoln; **NJ:** Black Maria Film Festival; College of New Jersey,

Department of Communication Studies; Freedom Film Society; **NM:** University of New Mexico; **NY:** After Dark Productions; American Museum of Natural History; Bronx Council on the Arts; Center for New American Media; Chicks with Flicks Film Festival; Cinema Arts Centre; 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; EVC; Experimental Television Center; Film and Video Center; Film Forum; Film Society of Lincoln Center; Film Video Arts; Firelight Media; Globalvision, Inc.; International Film Seminars; Learning Matters; Listen Up!; LMC-TV; Manhattan Neighborhood Network; National Black Programming Consortium; National Museum of the American Indian; National Video Resources; New School, Dept. of Communications/Film Department; New York Women in Film and Television; Non Profit Media Group; Paper Tiger; POV/The American Documentary; Pratt Institute; Squeaky Wheel; Standby Program; Stony Brook Film Festival; Syracuse University; The Bureau for At-Risk Youth; Witness; Women Make Movies; **OH:** Cleveland Film Society; Independent Pictures/AIVF Ohio Salon; Media Bridges Cincinnati; Ohio University School of Film; Wexner Center for the Arts; **OR:** Media Arts, MHCC; Northwest Film Center; **PA:** American Poetry Center; Greenworks; Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; Philadelphia Independent Film and Video Association; Scribe Video Center; Temple University; University of the Arts; WYBE Public TV 35; **RI:** Flickers Arts Collaborative; Rhode Island School of Design; **SC:** Hybrid Films; South Carolina Arts Commission; **TX:** Austin Film Society; CAGE, Dept. of Radio and Film; Southwest Alternate Media Project; Worldfest; **UT:** Sundance Institute; **VT:** The Noodlehead Network; **WA:** Seattle Central Community College; Thurston Community Television; **WI:** UWM Department of Film; **France:** The Camargo Foundation; **Germany:** International Short Film Festival; **India:** Foundation for Universal Responsibility; **Singapore:** Ngee Ann Polytechnic Library

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Reincarnating Your Film on DVD

By Claiborne Smith

Completing the already difficult task of placing your documentary in theaters no longer means that your work as a documentary filmmaker is through. As the five filmmakers below explain, the DVD format allows documentarians to revisit their footage and create striking ways to re-connect with audiences.

Life and Debt had been well-received both in its theatrical release and P.O.V. broadcast, so with the DVD I felt there was an opportunity to push the “militancy” of the project a bit further. It was extremely rewarding to have an outlet for all the magnificent insights from Michael Manley (former Prime Minister of Jamaica) that could not fit into the film. It also allowed the opportunity to include a tribute to the anti-globalization movement by collecting photos from protests around the world, paying homage to the innocent lives which have been tragically lost. And finally the print fold-out allowed for a listing of sources for additional information, action-oriented campaigns. One thing that I learned is that lots of written text on a DVD may not be so effective, and that in terms of the film itself, we had to undertake a 16 x 9 transfer, so my advice is to do a 16 x 9 pass when you originally transfer the film to tape.

—Stephanie Black’s *Life and Debt* was released on DVD in June 2003.

One of the pleasures of making the DVD was immersing myself in Bob’s humor again. *Sick* was a film that was rich with material to edit from; there were about twenty other scenes that could have been included in the film. We chose about eight or nine of those to put on the DVD. We also included a number of Bob Flanagan’s performances and created a Flash Game (played on a computer) in which you win by giving pain to Bob. In addition, we shot a follow-up with the young woman in the film who visited Bob through the Make-a-Wish Foundation as her final wish. She is now married and owns a horse stable—but she is still dying. It is very moving and compelling fifteen-minute short film. She comes across as a young Bob in a way—with the same wisdom and humor and pain.

—Kirby Dick’s *Sick: The Life & Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist* was released on DVD in September.

In documentaries, everybody wants to know what happened to the characters. For the first time, with DVD, filmmakers have a mass medium that can share the follow-up across the

globe. For the *Trembling Before G-d* DVD, I am creating a featurette called *Trembling on the Road*, about the movement of the film in the world. Every DVD I have seen tells a film’s making of story, but never the impact. While *Trembling* itself witnessed the lives of a few underground pioneers coming to visibility, the DVD tells the story of how we spent the past two and a half years shaping the film as a cultural trigger. We have people in the film who appear in silhouette. In the DVD they are out of the closet. We have scenes of our Mormon-Jewish Dialogue at Sundance and the first Orthodox synagogue screenings. If I had known the kind of wild high-impact life *Trembling* would have had, I would have filmed every distribution moment with the DVD in mind. But thankfully we filmed plenty. DVD has radically transformed the way documentarians never have to finish their story.

—Sandi DuBowski’s *Trembling Before G-d* will be released in a 2-disk set on October 21.

It’s important to “kill your darlings” (but to back them all up on a disc somewhere!). There were less “deleted scenes” that we thought we wanted to include—there was a lot of additional material that was very interesting, but it is fascinating in its unedited, raw form—so I think the process has reinforced our editorial choices in a way.

—Stephen Kijak (Kijak and Angela Christlieb’s *Cinemanía* will be released on DVD on October 7.)

Working on documentaries always means delving into a number of possible stories, with many left on the cutting room floor. In producing the DVD versions of my films, I revived material that I’ve lamented giving up in the pursuit of a tightly-edited film. It’s like revisiting old friends and creating a new kind of program—a bit of this and a bit of that. There are still aesthetic concerns to be sure, but it was liberating to toss away the yoke of traditional narrative restraints.

—Arthur Dong (DVD boxset of Dong’s documentaries *Coming Out Under Fire*, *Licensed to Kill*, and *Family Fundamentals* will be released in November.)





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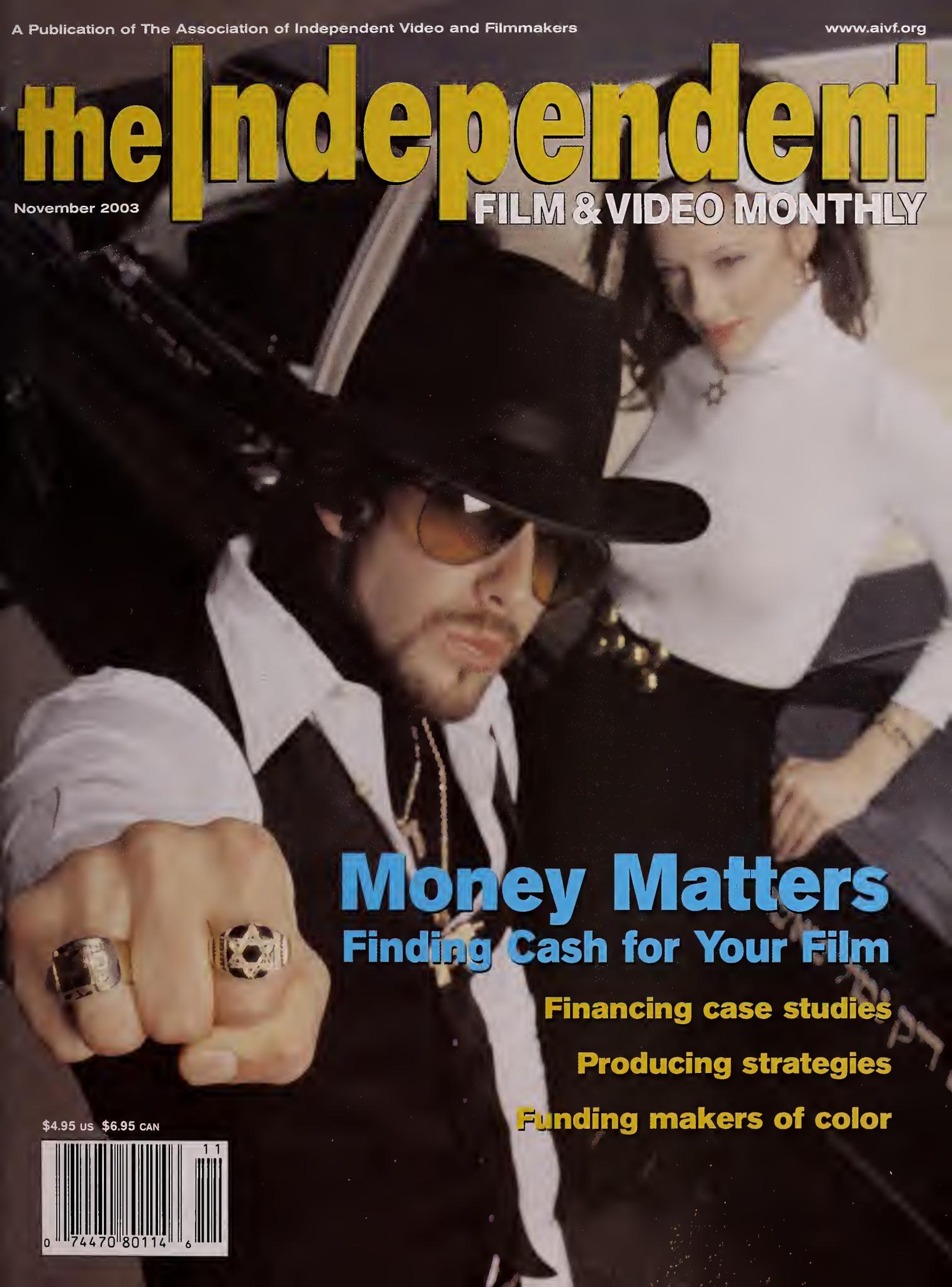
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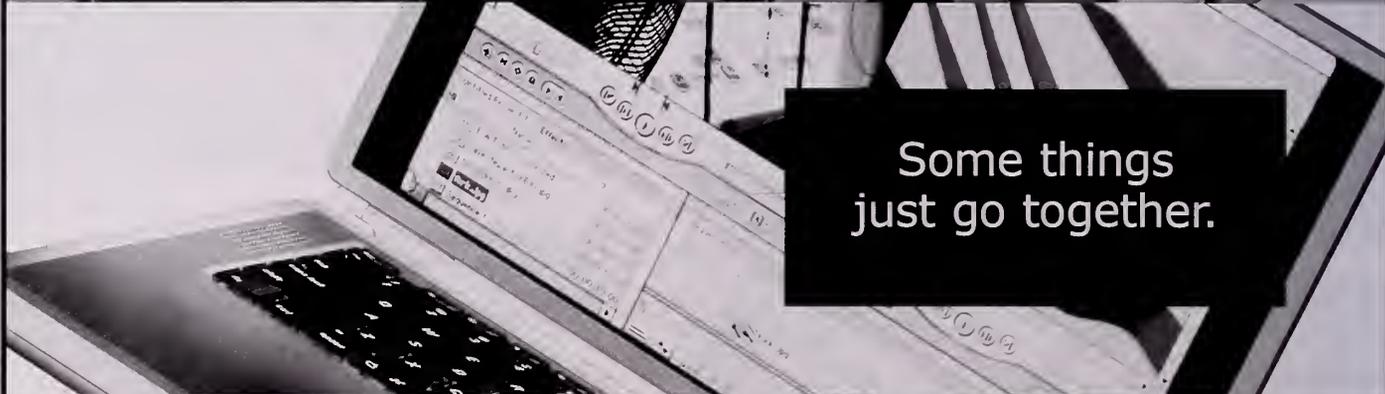
A guide to film funders that cater to specific interest and minority groups.
[by Sean Fitzell]



Photos: DMX and director Ernest Dickerson on the set of *Never Die Alone* (Dale Robinette/ContentFilm); the furry lead of *A Dog's Life: A Dogumentary* (Gayle Kirschenbaum); (left) Shaolin monk, Ulysses, and (right) Shaolin monk, Shi Xing Hong, perform kung fu at NASA in Houston, Texas (Martha Burr/ITVS).

Page 5 photos: Joshua Long Gone (left) and Horizontal John from the documentary *Long Gone* (David Eberhardt); *Flaubert Dreams of Travel but the Illness of his Mother Prevents It*, 1986, The Wooster Group & Ken Kobland (Electronic Arts Intermix, New York); court room in family court, Providence RI, from Picture Projects' *360degrees.org* (Pictures Projects 2001); Megan in Liz Garbus' *girlhood* (Tony Hardman/Moxie Firecracker Films).

On the Cover: *The Hebrew Hammer* stars Adam Goldberg and Judy Greer strike a pose (Rick Giles).



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Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,
This month, we at *The Independent* are examining financing and funding because this continues to be a key problem

for independent filmmakers. There are of course a number of excellent books on the topic. Two of the more recent contributions to the field are reviewed in this issue, Morrie Warshawski's new edition of the classic *Shaking the Money Tree* and *The Art of Funding Your Film: Alternative Financing Concepts*, by Carole Lee Dean (see page 29). But the nature of a magazine allows us to examine this topic from multiple points of view.

Charlie Sweitzer interviewed five filmmakers about where they found backing for their films (see page 40). In many cases the resources that get a film made do not even translate into dollar signs. Donated (or begged) goods and services can be more valuable than the checks, as Gayle Kirschenbaum, director of *A Dog's Life: A Dogumentary* discovered. As producer Eric Koivisto found out, your own business skills can be the most valuable asset. But the essential ingredients to raising the money for a film continue to be courage, faith, and stubbornness.

John Schmidt of ContentFilms would probably add that a touch of madness doesn't hurt either. This month Schmidt contributes an article on the evolution of production companies from one-offs to mini-majors (see page 36). This article should be required reading for not only aspiring James Schamus's but also for anybody working (or hoping to work) in independent film, because it offers insight into the inner working of companies that produce films.

On the other end of the spectrum is funding through non-profit sources. Over the past months rumblings have come through my office from a number of

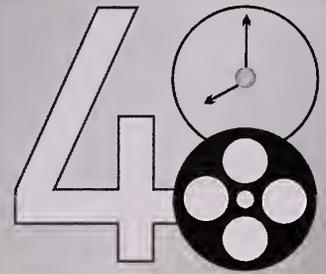
sources about the inequity of funding for makers of color. This is not a new problem. Traditionally underrepresented mediamakers have always been aware that they were not receiving an equitable slice of the funding pie. But in the past few months there has been increased energy behind these questions. Perhaps the renewed voice is in response to ITVS's recently released information about their diversity initiatives and workshops to help raise the percentage of makers of color (see page 9). This is a complex topic that deserves an issue of its own, but we decided to get the conversation rolling with two articles this month. Filmmaker Michele Stephenson contributed an expanded first person piece based on her experience and conversations with funders and makers about the state of minority funding (see page 13). And to help mediamakers target funders who are particularly interested in traditionally underrepresented makers, we created a list of organizations that actively seek and support their projects (see page 45). Due to space, the number of organizations and the amount of information we could list was limited. For more information or to alert makers to other funding sources please see our website at www.aivf.org/archives/0311/0311_fitzell.html.

I am sorry to say that this is the last issue of *The Independent* I will be editing. Working with you as readers, writers, and members has been a wonderful experience for me. I greatly appreciate all the support, input, and good will you have extended to me during my tenure as editor.

As of the December issue, Rebecca Carroll will be taking over the magazine. I feel confident that she will bring *The Independent* to exciting new places, and I hope you will embrace her as warmly as you did me.

Thank you for supporting *The Independent*.

Maud Kersnowski
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ITVS' Diversity Initiative

THINK TANKS INSPIRE DISCUSSION AMONG FILMMAKERS OF COLOR

By Alyssa Worsham

As part of their ongoing outreach to underrepresented communities, ITVS's new think tank program brings together ten to twenty producers/filmmakers from the same minority group to share ideas and discuss the challenges they all face as producers of color. "These think tanks are part of ITVS's ongoing attempt to listen to communities and their needs. These outreach programs are designed to promote awareness about public television opportunities," says Claire Aguilar, director of programming at ITVS.

African American and Native American feedback sessions were hosted by ITVS in 2001 and 2002, respectively. This September, ten attendees of the Arab Film Festival in San Francisco participated in the third, and their diverse backgrounds and experiences afforded a unique insight into the problems faced by Arab Americans (although some participants did not identify with that

title). Jamal Dajani, a producer, summarized some of the panel's concerns. "We are listed as Caucasian, not recognized as a minority group. So we don't have our own avenues for education opportunities, aid, distribution. Once we conquer all these difficulties and complete an excellent piece of work, then we can't get our work distributed because it's too Palestinian, etc. You are lucky if 5,000 people see your work going the festival route. One showing on PBS gets you millions."

Lillian Jimenez, an ITVS board member, considers the think tanks "absolutely essential—an important step for ITVS to deal with relationship building. In some ways, the think tanks will expand and strengthen relationships with ethnic communities, and in other ways, like with the Middle Eastern community, the relationship can begin. All communities of color deal with misrepresentation, but the Middle Eastern community faces an extraordinary disadvantage after Sept. 11."

ITVS is in a unique position to help, since sixty-five percent of its program-

ming pertains to issues faced by ethnic minorities, and an additional sixteen percent covers disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, and class issues. The think tanks, however, are just part of a variety of ongoing outreach activities devised by ITVS. A recent internal study conducted by ITVS found that only thirty percent of their producers over the last ten years have come from communities of color, despite ITVS's commitment to diversity, and they want to improve these numbers. ITVS nearly doubled their diversity initiatives during 2001-2002, and since then they have seen an increase in the number of culturally diverse applicants and grant recipients.

For example, career seminars were held in 2002-2003 at Columbia and Howard Universities, schools that have a high concentration of minorities in their film schools. During these seminars, students were informed about the opportunities available in public television and encouraged to request

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applications and funding. Case studies of former independent producers for ITVS were cited to give students a better idea of the process. Also in September, the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP), hosted a proposal writing workshop at the offices of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF). A case study of Carlos Sandoval's grant application for *The Farmingville Project*, a documentary about the murder of two Mexican day laborers in Long Island, provided some helpful guidelines.

ITVS's mentorship program, which began in 2000, pairs ITVS filmmakers of color with either a mentor, or mentee, of color. In addition to these programs, ITVS currently hosts panels across the country, such as "Proposal and Funding Success: Possibilities from ITVS" in San Francisco.

As the number of ITVS diversity initiatives grows, so do the opportunities and support for minority filmmakers. But part of the goal of the think tanks is to provide an internal support system, a network of guidance and aid within a specific community. As Dajani told his peers, "We need to look in the mirror—we have wealth and resources, but [we] don't come through for one another."

indieWIRE in Print

Early next year, *indieWIRE* will launch *indieWIRE: Monthly*, a new print publication that will focus on domestic and international film festivals. More in-depth festival coverage has already debuted on *indieWIRE*'s website, and a preview edition of the print magazine will be distributed at film festivals and industry events throughout this year. *indieWIRE: Monthly* will include director interviews, feature stories, information about upcoming films, and coverage of important festivals. The color tabloids will be shipped to approximately ten to fourteen festivals per month.

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reached, who would like to take advantage of our broad coverage of independent film," says Brian Clark, a managing member of *indieWIRE*. In addition, *indieWIRE*, in partnership with indieFILMMAKER.org, will release a comprehensive printed festival guide. The guide is part of a larger joint venture between the two organizations, which will also involve content sharing and the marrying of *indieWIRE*'s On Scene Coverage and www.indieFILMMAKER.org's festival database. *indieWIRE: Guide* will premiere at the Sundance and Slamdance film festivals this year, and 60,000 free copies will be distributed throughout the January-March season.

For more information see www.indiewire.com

MediaRights' Youth Initiative

MediaRights.org has launched YMDi.org, a youth initiative website designed to help young filmmakers develop and showcase their work. All types of media are welcome—flash, radio, interactive websites, as well as film and video. Membership is free, but the real incentive for YMDi.org users is the toolkit—a step-by-step guide to producing and distributing media, which advises filmmakers on how to get their work seen on the festival circuit, public or cable access television, or even on cable television.

"We also provide information on copyright and legal issues, because they often determine whether someone will pick up your film or not," says Kibra Yohannes, program director for MediaRights.org. "All of these details can be overwhelming for inexperienced filmmakers, so Media Rights.org aimed to make the site as user-friendly and informative as possible."

For example, the budget section of the toolkit is interactive, allowing users to plug in their goals and costs, and in return receive percentage breakdowns and advice based on their

specific needs. "Budget distribution can help filmmakers decide whether to spend money on promotions like postcards, or to cut costs by making DVDs on their computer," explains Yohannes. More worksheets are available for help with marketing, promotional materials like websites, press releases, and outreach partnerships. One section is devoted to identifying and locating a specific audience, and building a buzz that attracts it.

YMDi.org is divided into five sections: 1) "Media," where users post their films with photographs, descriptions, and crew lists; 2) "Spotlight Media" streams short films or trailers for feature films; 3) "Toolkit" (see above); 4) "Instructors of Youth Media" is a guide for educators with lesson plans from Project Looksharp and Media Literacy; 5) "Talk" is a posting board for news articles and announcements about jobs, internships, festivals, and contests. Coinciding with the launch of YMDi.org is the "See Change, Make Change" contest for the best youth-made media. Contestants are evaluated not only by the quality of their work, but by their distribution planning—for which the winner will receive \$1000.

"We really want young filmmakers to keep the end result in mind," says Yohannes. "They should think about distribution before they start shooting because distribution issues will inform the production process. The toolkit—and the website—are designed to stress those concerns from the beginning." □

For more information see www.YMDi.org.

*Alyssa Worsham is an intern at
The Independent.*



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A Level Playing Field?

FINDING FUNDS FOR MEDIAMAKERS OF COLOR

By Michele Stephenson

I was asked to write an opinion piece on the current state of funding for minority filmmakers. As a producer of African descent of both narrative and documentary films, I have had some experience with finding money for film projects (*The Keeper* 1997, *The Killing Zone* 2003, *Faces of Change* 2004). Yet upon deeper reflection, I realized that my fundraising methodology was anything but conventional. I never had the luxury of getting development funding, followed by production funds that allowed me to pay my bills. Of course, I have written many

I also had other questions nagging in my mind that I had to ask. Were there numbers out there to let us know how funds were being distributed between minority and majority communities? If so, who had them and were they public? Also, did aggregated stats exist indicating which racial groups were getting money to tell their communities' stories?

What became quickly obvious was that a deep discomfort existed around the issue. Only a small number of funders and grantees even returned my calls. Once the topic was mentioned, deep sighs of frustration and/or resig-

Everyone I spoke to departed from the same premise—the overall funding situation was dismal, whatever your gender, race, or ethnicity. The foundation community has not recovered from the post-9/11, post stock market decline of the past two years. But, dire funding climate aside, there is an underlying ambivalence about engaging in diversity work and actually feeling good about it. Our communities are getting hit the hardest. Funders, I was told, are now less willing to “take risks” on projects or individuals they perceive to be “risky.” They resort to funding individuals and projects they are most “familiar with.” These less-risky ventures unconsciously carry a racial price tag.

In the post-9/11 funding climate, it quickly appeared that funders have three major concerns: 1) they want to be assured that the proposed project

... it would be wishful thinking to leave it all up to funders or even to the non-governmental media service organizations. We as filmmakers of color need to get involved with our constituencies and community groups.

grant proposals. For a number of projects, I had exhausted the grant application process. But the time and energy required to sort through applications and later rejection letters seemed to take too much away from the filmmaking itself. The projects could get made through this traditional route, but it took a long time. And I was impatient.

So as a filmmaker with marginal success in the grant writing arena, I decided to make some phone calls and ask questions to tackle the topic given to me. The pragmatic side of me hoped that I might learn something to increase my chances of getting funding in the future—knowledge that could take me from a marginal to a mediocre grantwriter. But, given my activist background and training,

nation were heard over the phone. People spoke in whispered tones. I was left with the unnerving feeling that what we were discussing was taboo and may have damaging legal consequences. Some funders did not have any figures. Others, although optimistic and happy with their funding ratio of filmmakers of color, acknowledged that there was much more to be done to obtain truly “equitable” results. Creative Capital was one of the most open and proactive foundations trying to make its pool of grantees as diverse as possible. The foundation's director, Ruby Lerner, agreed wholeheartedly that shedding more light on the process and its weaknesses and/or strengths could only serve to bring about greater positive change for the funding allocation process.

will be completed. Too many projects were funded in the past that never saw the light of day; 2) they want to make sure that the finished product will get seen on television; 3) they want to know that the project will have some sort of impact on its audience. All of these elements make it virtually impossible for any newcomers to get their projects funded—let alone new filmmakers of color.

Among some of the more concrete issues raised (which may be obvious to many reading this piece) was that grantees' proposals had to be “well written” and “articulate.” There was simply no way out of that. And that requirement eliminated from the get-go a large number of applicants of color, as well as white applicants. In some cases it even eliminated appli-



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cants of color with major experience. They could be great filmmakers of color with a track record, but they just did not know how to write a grant proposal. Although funders acknowledge that a well-written proposal did not guarantee that the applicant is a good filmmaker, it seems to be the only "level playing field" from which to judge applicants. As one grantee told me, while funders attempt to set up a "level playing field" by requiring well-written proposals, they were in fact perpetuating the very inequalities that existed in our larger society. He explained that, by default, those with the better education and writing skills, or those who could afford to hire a grant writer, had the best chance of getting funding. Some organizations such as the Jerome Foundation and ITVS are trying to narrow that gap through workshops and other ways of providing assistance to communities of color in the grantwriting process.

Some funders are attempting to overcome the obstacles by making sure that people of color play a major role at every step of the selection process. For example, when coming to speak to our communities, having a black or Latino face representing the foundation helps solicit more proposals. And hiring staff of color who know their communities and can reach out to their peers eliminates the impression that funders are only paying lip service to the diversity objective. In addition, foundations need to make sure that their panel of judges is diverse. These steps may not necessarily guarantee a diversity of grantees, but they will at least allow for a wider pool of possibilities from our communities.

In spite of the multiple layers of complexity that exist when discussing funding to minority racial groups, there are solutions out there that both grantees and funders can implement to make the system more equitable. The landscape is not completely hopeless. As filmmakers there are things we can do. We simply need to be realistic



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about how we achieve our funding goals and understand that it is a long and arduous journey. First, don't give up the day job, or even a potential alternate career. That other source of employment can sustain us in this long journey to realizing our vision. It can also be a potential source of support and funding—friends and colleagues are often less demanding and more willing to help than foundations. Second, don't forget family members for financial support—especially on that first project. Their unconditional love can come in handy, too. Third, and this is probably stating the obvious, we need to develop relationships with potential mentors and experienced filmmakers in our com-

We as filmmakers of color need to get involved with our constituencies and community groups. Our projects often interconnect with community activism and outreach objectives. Because our visual stories can often serve multiple purposes, pairing up with community and grassroots groups can provide sources of funding not usually earmarked for media projects. Our communities are our audiences and often most faithful supporters. They should be one of the first groups we turn to.

Ultimately who gets the funding to tell our stories in mainstream media and public television is out of our immediate control. So we need to be creative in our approach to funding

Once the topic was mentioned, deep sighs of frustration and/or resignation were heard over the phone. People spoke in whispered tones. I was left with the unnerving feeling that what we were discussing was taboo and may have damaging legal consequences.

munity who have been through it all. Because the foundation world increasingly thrives on name recognition, attaching experienced filmmakers makes our proposals stronger. We also need guidance on making our proposals the strongest they can be. We cannot be afraid of having those with more experience see and critique our work. The survival of our projects depends on these relationships.

If the foundations' commitment to diversity truly exists, then the creative solutions will come. ITVS is partnering with service organizations such as AIVF to sponsor workshops that will get the ball rolling. But it would be wishful thinking to leave it all up to funders or even to the non-governmental media service organizations.

and find support within our communities to fund and help distribute our work. In the meantime, foundations can be well served if they take a hard look at their numbers and analyze their commitment to supporting the diversity of voices and visions that exist. Only through an honest and transparent dialog can our rich creative stories be brought to a wider audience. □

For more information about funders seeking to support diverse mediamakers see page 45.

For more information on ITVS's diversity initiatives see page 9.

Michele Stephenson is a documentary and narrative film producer of African and Latino descent.

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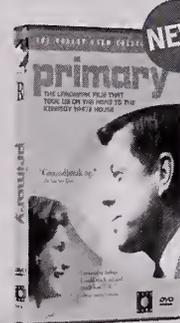
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Jack Cahill & David Eberhardt

SEVEN YEARS ON THE HOBO TRAIN

By Sean Fitzell

First-time documentary filmmaker Jack Cahill still remembers learning hobo sign language from his third grade teacher. What seemed superfluous at the time, Cahill put to good use during his seven years hopping freight trains with collaborator David Eberhardt to film the documentary *Long Gone*, which chronicles the lifestyle of modern hobos.

Shot in cinema verite style, the film neither romanticizes the freedom of the tramps, as they prefer to call themselves, nor sensationalizes the substance abuse and violence that typified media coverage of hobos during the nineties. Instead, it offers an insider's glimpse of that world through the eyes of seven tramps, and hints at the wanderlust of the filmmakers.

"I was definitely a train fan as a kid," Cahill says. Railroad tracks ran across his neighbor's yard, and he drew pictures of trains in school. While attending Loras College in Iowa, Cahill researched and wrote about hobos. He read extensively on the subject but was most intrigued by Jack London's story, *The Road*.

With a degree in marketing (and an English minor), Cahill worked as an advance agent for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Feeling burnt out, he decided to hop trains for a summer before looking for a new job. "I ran away from the circus to join the hobos," he says. The following summer, he went back out on the rails.

Cahill then moved to New York, where he learned darkroom techniques working in a film lab and

taught himself photography by reading books and experimenting. He later learned filmmaking in the same way. During his third summer riding rails, he brought a camera and photographed the sites and peo-



ple he encountered, intending to produce a book. Cahill soon heard about another guy doing the same, David Eberhardt. "Your reputation really precedes you out there—especially if you're a guy with a camera," Cahill says.

Eberhardt hopped his first freight train at the invitation of a friend, as a media arts student at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. He brought a camera and was gone for

the summer. He says he had "all these romantic ideals about it." Despite the tempering of his initial enthusiasm, Eberhardt was amazed by the vistas of the Western Rockies seen from a box-car. "When you can sort of travel around the country at will with no money, it makes it really hard to stay in one place," he says.

Eberhardt met groups of tramps along the way, and they always befriended him. He began photographing tramps in 1990, and lived as they lived—jumping trains, panhandling, and harvesting dumpsters.

When he returned to the rails in the summer of 1991, Eberhardt brought a video camera. He began shooting a student film project called *The Highline*, completed in 1994, which provided Eberhardt with valuable experience and connections. For example, Eberhardt contacted singer-songwriter Tom Waits for permission to use a song, which he got personally from Waits, and the two remained in contact. Waits later introduced Eberhardt to Don Hyde, who became one of *Long Gone's* executive producers. The songwriter also provided original music for *Long Gone*, and his attachment to the film helped with raising funds and getting the film noticed.

After Eberhardt finished school, he and his would-be photographic rival Cahill met through an older tramp and mutual friend, Joshua Long Gone—who also provided the title of their film. Initially the film was going to be about Long Gone and his traveling partner Horizontal John. Cahill and Eberhardt secured funding for the shoot and set out with a rental van equipped with a Super 16 camera package and cinematographer Greg Yolen. This first shoot lasted about three weeks and yielded some of the most striking images in the film, including a long shot that tracked Long Gone and Horizontal John riding on the back of a train.

But the project soon encountered problems. Horizontal John died a few months after they finished filming. "When one of your two subjects dies, everybody kind of runs for the hills," Cahill now jokes about the project's funds falling through. The filmmakers knew they did not have enough footage for a feature-length film, and initially considered shaping what they had into a short. But neither was satisfied with that idea.

Instead, they decided to continue the project with other tramps they knew. They chose Dogman Tony and New York Slim, compelling tramp leaders with something to say. Later they included the younger generation of train riders. Cahill and Eberhardt

and color. The variety of film stocks and ten cameras used gives scenes different textures. To save money, they filmed interview sequences on DV and conserved film stocks for cinematic action and scenery. They carried their equipment—all 100-150 pounds—with them, jumping trains and traveling with and as tramps. Shoots lasted from several weeks to a few months at a time and covered twenty-two states and parts of western Canada.

In the seven summers and three winters of filming, Eberhardt figures they spent a solid two years on the rails and traveled more than thirty thousand miles. They collected more than two hundred hours of footage,



were on their own, without funding or a crew, following new subjects, and never sure what story they had.

"It always varied because of money. That was always the deciding factor," Cahill says about the shoot. A little bit of everything was used in the film—16mm, Super 16, Hi 8, 35mm, and digital video—in black and white

were arrested once, and got three tickets for trespassing.

After years on the rails with the tramps, editing the raw material presented a new set of challenges. They often struggled with what to include in the film. "It's really tough to be objective about a friend when you're showing their life," says Cahill. During the process, he asked himself, "Did I serve them well? What are they going to think of this? How have I affected their life?" He admits there were times the cameras were turned

Facing page: Joshua Long Gone and his dog, Stupid, from *Long Gone*. This page: Jesse and Stonie, on a "48er," are the new generation of railriders.

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off in their friends' interest. Despite the intimate details revealed about their lives in the film, the tramps that have seen it, including Dogman Tony and New York Slim, felt their story had been told well and told honestly.

Not only tramps have responded to the film. At its premiere at this year's Slamdance International Film Festival, *Long Gone* won awards for best documentary and best cinematography. It was also well-received at festivals in Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis, and Nantucket. "We are in the courtship dance with the distributors," Cahill says, and things look promising for *Long Gone*. Actress Holly Hunter championed it and hosted screenings in New York and Los Angeles, giving the film an additional boost.

The future for the filmmakers is also bright, but since they both value personal freedom, they will likely be



apart when *Long Gone* runs its course. Cahill has been working on his photography from the rails to complete

the book he intended to do years ago. He also has other film ideas in the works, documentary and narrative. "I'd like there to be a little commerce in my next art," he jokes, noting "the biggest drag about making these things is not having the money to actualize them." He also wants his next project to be more focused and of shorter duration than *Long Gone*. And Eberhardt has been planning to live on the Mississippi River on a boat to document his next subject. On the river he says there is a community of drifters with even more freedom than the tramps riding the rails. And Eberhardt says, "I thought it would be a really cool way to spend three years of my life." ■

Sean Fitzell writes about jazz for a number of publications and is a graduate student at NYU's school of journalism.

New York Slim, featured in *Long Gone*.

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Alyce Myatt

ONEWORLD TV'S REBEL WITH A CAUSE

By David Alm

After thirty years of strategic planning and program development for some of America's largest media organizations, Alyce Myatt is a true veteran of her trade. And like others who possess great talent, savvy, tremendous ambition, and that rare combination of moxie and skill, (few though they are), she is also unpredictable and inclined to take risks that some people might consider foolish.

Take her latest move last May, from the comfortable and prestigious post of vice president of programming at PBS, to multimedia editor at a fledgling startup, OneWorld TV, which was just over a year old. Representing the sole U.S. employee and one-third of the entire full-time staff, Myatt couldn't have strayed further from PBS headquarters' stratified complex in Alexandria, Virginia, where her position was like a beacon for media professionals worldwide. In other words, what others might spend their lives hoping to attain—Myatt left, for a job with as little security as any internet startup. Again, though, that rare combination of moxie and skill can easily turn risk into great success.

Launched in the spring of 2002, OneWorld TV is the latest branch of OneWorld International, a London-based nonprofit. Founded in 1995 by Anuradha Vittachi, a Sri Lanka-born documentary producer, and Peter Armstrong, who worked for twenty years with the BBC, OneWorld International is a network of more than 1,500 non-governmental organizations dedicated to informing the world of global news, without the bias of the corporate media.

OneWorld TV allows both amateur

and professional filmmakers to upload short documentaries to its website, which are then categorized along with films on similar topics. Categories include child labor, war, HIV/AIDS, and even water. So far, it's doing very well. In its first year, the site's online community grew to almost 3,000 members from fifty-seven countries. Today, with low-bandwidth footage in fifteen different languages and instructions for adding subtitles, OneWorld TV can potentially



reach anyone with dial-up access to the internet. Not bad for a startup.

Still, for someone whose previous credits include production, writing, and direction for mainstays such as *20/20*, Nickelodeon, CBS, the Smithsonian, and New York's Channel 13, Myatt's new job might seem like an anomaly within an otherwise conservative career. That is, until you learn that she actually helped build many of those mainstays from scratch, and that if they are now household names, it's because of her.

"Jobs are jobs are jobs," she says with a certain rebellious confidence. "Whether I'm working for OneWorld, PBS, or MacArthur, what's really important to me is having good relationships with the filmmakers. We only come this

way once, so it really matters what each of us does and not what the company is. It's not so important who I work for. I am who I've always been, and I take that wherever I go."

Fortunately for her, many companies want her precisely for that reason—particularly startups hoping to establish themselves in the hyper-competitive media space where television programs, magazines, and websites rise and fall in the blink of an eye. "I'm very comfortable out there in the unknown," she says, suggesting that her post at PBS had grown too comfortable. "Because of how PBS was created and funded, it's confined to a certain way of approaching its material. Personally, I wanted to rise to the challenge of carrying out a new space on the internet."

In that new space, filmmakers decide what to shoot and what to post. No review board stands in the way. The OneWorld community, which ranges from a Mexican seamstress who has made a film about the poor living conditions in her town to a Filipino farmer who has documented the financial ramifications of a failed crop, determines the work's relevance. But relinquishing control does not faze Myatt, nor does she worry that such an open policy will encourage people to post offensive material. "If you put something up that isn't considered valuable, no one will click on it," she says with conviction.

Myatt first met her new employer last fall, when OneWorld TV's producer, Jo Hill, came to Alexandria to meet with PBS executives about posting material on the site. During one of their conversations, Hill mentioned that OneWorld was looking for a multimedia editor, and Myatt didn't hesitate. She recognized that such a position would afford her the kind of flexibility and autonomy her previous position couldn't.

As multimedia editor, Myatt is responsible for building the site and overseeing its editorial content—tasks that capitalize on her training at more than two-dozen jobs. But the position also draws on her own experiences. "I

Media maverick, Alyce Myatt, edits non-corporate news outlet, OneWorld TV.

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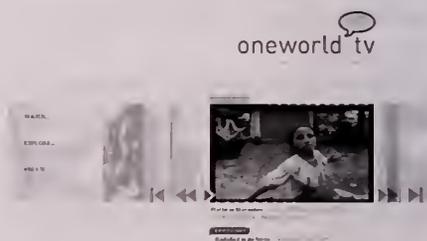
was raised in a very opinionated family," she says of her upbringing in Montclair, New Jersey. "Everyone read the news and paid attention to what was going on, and everyone always had an opinion." How she translated that into a career in documentary and news development is simple. "I watched a lot of TV," she laughs.

After studying mass communications at Emerson College in Boston, Myatt dove immediately into production work at the Westinghouse Broadcast Company, where she remained for three-and-a-half years. She spent the following twenty-one years building her resume in brief stints at media organizations in New York City and Washington D.C., gradually amassing enough experience to start her own consulting firm. In her six years as president of Alyce Myatt & Associates, she further honed her skills and began adding cross-media and new media initiatives to her repertoire. Each move made her more valuable to the next employer, and all seem to have led to her new position at OneWorld TV.

As an independent outlet, OneWorld also allows Myatt to finally break away from corporate media, which couldn't make her happier. "In this country, where do we get our information? People are reading *The Guardian*. It's just crazy!" And though OneWorld TV is not entirely original—there are predecessors such as Cameraplanet.com, which launched in early 2000 and streams amateur documentaries—OneWorld TV is unique in that the site's content is thematically grouped, allowing viewers to watch multiple films on the same topic from diverse perspectives.

"With the consolidation of media ownership, I think it's critical that people have access to information, and that information should be reliable," Myatt says. "OneWorld functions without having some broadcast distributor deciding if it's worthy, or sexy, or if it'll boost ratings."

Myatt, and her two London-based colleagues Jo Hill and Rachel Stabb, are currently working on expanding the OneWorld TV community so that organizations and individuals might engage directly with each other based on location, interest, or simply common languages. They also plan to develop OneWorld TV's association with the 1,500 NGOs that comprise OneWorld International, allowing both communities to share information and to further the nonprofit's goal to loosen the corporate media's stronghold on global news. Other initiatives include hosting workshops and giving



presentations at schools, film festivals, and social/political forums around the world. They also plan to increase the site's technical infrastructure so that mediamakers can begin uploading video, audio, images, and text from their mobile phones.

But however ideal the fit between Myatt and OneWorld TV, she is still the same unpredictable maverick who has left numerous seemingly ideal jobs time and again. "I just go with things as long as it makes sense to do them," she says. Nevertheless, she and OneWorld have found a fortuitous match in one another—partly because they both operate with one of Myatt's life philosophies. "Take chances because no one can ever say you're wrong." ■

For more information, see www.tv.oneworld.net

David Alm writes for Artbyte, Silicon Alley Reporter and The Utne Reader. He can be reached at almdavid@hotmail.com.

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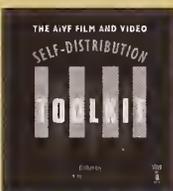
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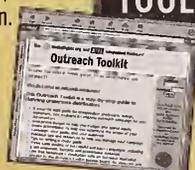
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Picture Projects

THE BIG PICTURE ON A SMALL SCREEN

By Maya Churi

Art and politics have always walked side by side. They don't walk in unison and they won't hold hands, but where you find politics you will always find art. Over the centuries, the incongruous nature of the two living, breathing forces has instigated some of the most critical

Cornyn is the co-founder and director of Picture Projects, a New York City based interactive studio. She has created such works as 360degrees.org; perspectives on the U.S. criminal justice system; SonicMemorial.org; a cross-media documentary of the World Trade Center and the neighborhood surrounding it—before, during, and after September

geography, class, and ethnic backgrounds are very often on different sides of difficult issues, otherwise unable to know of, let alone understand, diverging perceptions. It is clear that despite our acute awareness of what has and will for some time and for some people constitute a digital divide, the internet, (to the reverse of television), is already the public space, the agora of now, where everyone has a voice and where all voices can be heard.”

To do this effectively, Cornyn incorporates art, documentary, journalism, and oral history with interactive design. She uses video, audio, and digi-



and influential changes in society, and revolutionized the way we perceive the world around us. In an age where the word “democracy” has taken on almost antithetical definitions, art has one of its biggest challenges yet.

For the past eight years, Alison Cornyn has been confronting these challenges head on. With her online work and installations, she is constantly provoking us to take a close look at the mechanics of our society, and insisting that we participate in democracy not just in the voting booth, but also where we eat, sleep, live, and breath. But her work is not only political—it is also stunning. Cornyn has planted her feet firmly at the intersection of design, art, and politics by creating some of the most impressive work on the internet today.

Above: A North Carolina prison's execution chamber, from Ronald Frye's story on 360degrees.org. Right: Co-founder and director of Picture Projects, Alison Cornyn.

11th; akaKURDISTAN.com: an image-based archive for Kurdish history; and Re:Vietnam: Stories Since the War. “What motivates me is a deep sense of injustice. I identify deeply with those who do not have a voice and who need a space where they can share ideas and experiences and can forge long and short-term communities that are strategic and/or supportive. It has been essential for me to put in communication people who are likely never to meet, and to team up people who are often from radically different horizons and very different ethnic, racial, and social castes.”

Cornyn's work makes clear that it is not just the act of telling stories that will change the political arena; how the story is told, the format in which it is developed, and the medium by which it is presented all play into our perception of our environment. “Because these projects are online, the spaces created are especially appropriate for bringing together people who, separated by

tal technologies to create entirely new environments that encourage dialogue and community building with engaging visuals. “The beauty of storytelling on the web is that it can provide a home for multiple perspectives, diverse voices and first-person contributions. Sometimes (often) it is more representative of a situation to present frag-





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ments of stories, rather than a singular linear narrative. In the case of 360degrees.org, we are able to present one person's story and to look at one issue from the experiences and stories of five or six people involved. Often their views are different or contradictory. A visitor to the site may choose to hear from any one or more of the storytellers. And they can choose who they want to hear from first. In 360degrees, we pair each person's voice with a QuickTime VR image of his or her primary space—prison cell, living room, courtroom, office, etc. We wanted visitors to the site to be 'in the shoes' of each of the people talking, as well as to acknowledge the strategies of surveillance and control used in the panopticon."

If there is one thing that Cornyn makes so abundantly clear through her work it is that how the story is told is as important as the story itself. By embracing the internet with all of its flaws, and all of its promise, she is helping to create and define an entirely new storytelling structure. And that structure never veers far from her ultimate aim, democracy. "Democracy as defined in the constitution is a process; it is something to be invented every day, reinterpreted in the light of new technologies, new realities, and broader participation. It is because of the possibility of the creation of that democratic process that I am interested in the internet. Rather than seeing it just as a big searchable space, or as a shopping mall of idiosyncratic personal interests, what I want to develop for it is a strategic vision that does not deal with the superfluous or the trivial in each of us, but on the contrary, maps out processes of decision making and information sharing that go beyond the superfluous to address deep societal issues." Cornyn continues, "I'd like to transform Picture Projects into a cultural space that can truly be of serv-



ice to diverse communities. In short, to have a coherent practice that builds channels, brick by brick, community by community—developing art, design, and technology in innovative ways—such that my fellow citizens have a real alternative option from the top-down processes we often experience today, (whether it be in politics or the media), where somebody tells them what to think, what their truth should be, what their real needs are—so the process can be, in fact, inverted." □

Alison Cornyn's next project, Food For Thoughts, will explore the politics of food. Her other projects can be found at: www.picture-projects.org; www.360degrees.org; www.sonicmemorial.org; www.akakurdistan.com; www.pbs.org/pov/stories/

Screen shots from Picture Projects' politically interactive online projects.

Maya Churi is a writer/filmmaker working on an interactive web story about a gated community in Texas.

The Standby Program

Jason Guerrasio Interviews Maria Venuto

What is Standby?

It's a nonprofit media arts service organization that has been in existence since 1983. We provide post-production services to artists and nonprofits, provide technical consultation, and do publications to serve the media arts field.

Why did Standby start?

Basically, it was a small group of artists/editors who started the whole thing. It began in the eighties. The editors worked at a place called Matrix Video in New York, and they were interested in getting artists to come in and work on their projects with the high-end tools Matrix Video had. The editors made arrangements with the management to bring them in after hours.

How did you get other production houses involved in letting artists use equipment during off hours?

The founders had one foot in the artist world and one foot in the commercial editing world, so they had connections to other facilities, and they were able to cultivate other relationships. A lot of the people who were involved in Standby were freelancing and had affiliations with commercial houses other than Matrix Video. Through the years, we've gained relationships with the facilities, including the big ones like Editel and Broadway Video. One thing we're known for is training junior editors. From the commercial studio's perspective, letting junior editors work with us is a good way for them to get exposure to different types of projects.

Cynthia Wade's *Shelter Dogs* was produced through the Standby Program.

What does a filmmaker have to do to be able to make use of your services?

There's a one-page application form and basically any project that's independent, meaning no commercial backing, is eligible. It's pretty open. We just want to make sure that it's not something that has commercial money because then it threatens the relationship we have

How many projects do you do on average each year?

Yearly, it's anywhere from fifty to seventy projects. The scope of what we provide varies. Sometimes it's just duplications. Sometimes it's the full thing with transfers, editing, and sound post-production. Most recently, we've started doing preservation services, so we can re-master old formats.

You said Standby has a publication project?

Yes, it's called *FELIX: A Journal of Media Arts and Communications*. It's a series of



with the facilities. They don't want to give low rates to commercial projects. We do ask them to set up an account with us because we handle all the money. The filmmaker is sort of setting up a little bank account with us, and then we handle all the billing. In a nutshell we're brokering time.

books published irregularly by Standby. Each issue concerns itself with a particular theme, and features articles by established and emerging media makers.

The company just celebrated its twentieth anniversary. What are you doing to celebrate?

We kicked off a screening series at

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MoMA in October, which surveys the work that's gone through the program for the last twenty years. Some of the films screened were: Skip Blumberg's *Flying Morning Glory*, Tony Oursler's *The Life of Phillis*, and Cathy Cook's *Beyond Voluntary Control*. In November, the series will move to the Pacific Film Archives in Berkeley, CA.

What were some of the most memorable projects or filmmakers to request your services?

A lot of them are included in the program. Jem Cohen's *Lost Book Found*, Dara Birnbaum's *Damnation of Faust*. We worked a lot with Juan Downey which was interesting.

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What do you think has kept filmmakers coming back to Standby for the past twenty years?

I think that we provide them with

ideas about how many hours of editing time they need to do their project. People have to be somewhat patient because there is a pos-



access to tools they might not otherwise get access to, at rates they can afford. Some filmmakers who come to us are just starting to make films and it's all new to them. So to make the process of going to a big commercial facility less intimidating, we go through consultation with them. Another reason we guide them through it is so they're doing it in a cost-effective way. It's helpful to have somebody who knows the process and the different things to look out for.

What is the most common mistake a filmmaker makes when they approach you?

The common mistake that everyone makes is not allowing enough time to complete their project; not providing for enough hours; having unrealistic

sibility of getting bumped. Those who are very nervous because they have hard deadlines with little flexibility find the program less pleasant to use. We try to advise people as to how long things take. If they have unrealistic ideas about how long things really take, we try to enlighten them.

Are there common misconceptions filmmakers come in with?

Quite frequently we get people who think they can do things in real time. For example, with sound or video edit, for every minute of program you need an hour of edit time, and people think that's outrageous. It's not always that much, but it's a safe ballpark figure, and there are people who think they need an hour to complete a fifty-minute project. That's just not the case. □

John Kelly in Charles Atlas' 1991 video, *Son of Samson & Delilah*.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

Will free thought survive?



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Ask the Documentary Doctor

By Fernanda Rossi



Dear Doc Doctor:

I stopped working my regular job a year ago so I could finish my documentary. Now I'm broke and the documentary is still not finished. If I go back to work I will have the money but not the time to finish my film. Is there any way out of this conundrum?

It is easy to believe the old Liza Minelli song that "money does make the world go round," but the truth is, money does not—ambition does. What money can do is drive artists more than a little insane. So much so that this friction that many artists perceive between art and money, inspired creativity guru Julia Cameron (*The Artist's Way*) to write the book *Money Drunk, Money Sober*. According to her, "Money is the most cited block."

When I work with filmmakers, one of the exercises I give them is to list the possible obstacles to the completion of their film. And Cameron is right; money is usually the first one on the list, regardless of how many grants or donations the filmmaker has received.

I'm always surprised at how many filmmakers describe themselves as "broke," and at the same time look down on those who either make a living by other means, or who earn high salaries by making films. In these filmmakers' eyes, the first ones are not "true artists;" the second are "sell-outs." It seems that in order to be a

real artist, one must make some money with one's own films, but not so much as to raise suspicion of integrity. The romantic myth of the struggling, suffering, and broke artist is appealing because so many renowned artists were indeed struggling, suffering and broke. Those qualities, however, are not necessary in order to create. In fact, they are detrimental.

The first step to artistic financial freedom is to stop identifying yourself as "broke," whether broke means "without disposable cash" or "in serious debt." You are not broke, you are

ideas." Those ideas can go from white elephant raffles at house fundraisers to using accumulated airline mileage as payment for your crew, from in-kind donations to barter. And yes, you can also go back to your regular job or a new one outside the business. That just means your film won't get done as quickly as you hoped, but it will get done.

Dear Doc Doctor:

I shot my documentary in mini-DV, so my tapes were cheap. Still, my post-production ended up being very expensive. How can that be? How can I make post-production cheaper? Post-production is expensive; digital technology gave us the illusion of cheap. The reality is that digital technology is cheaper than film—not cheap. You got your first batch of mini-DV tapes at \$6 or \$8 a pop. What

I'm always surprised at how many filmmakers describe themselves as "broke," and at the same time look down on those who either make a living by other means, or who earn high salaries by making films.

"momentarily lacking resources." This may sound equally bad, but it is easier to solve. All you need to overcome your temporary lack of resources is something you already have: creativity. It will also help to have a calculator, a calendar, basic algebra skills, and above all absolutely no expectations of riches generated by your film. (It's better to play it safe.)

If this sounds simple that's because it is. When I ask those filmmakers, who seemed to have made their films out of thin air, how they made them, they always answer something along the lines of: "I sat down, listed every single thing I needed to finish my film and started to come up with

a deal! You shot more, and since it was so cheap, you shot some more and then some more. Until one day you had one hundred tapes. That's \$800 worth of tapes. That's still less expensive than film, but it's also still \$800.

Then post-production came and you didn't want to handle your masters while editing, so you dubbed everything. If you dubbed to Beta SP, then it probably cost about \$2,000 in tapes. Or you decided to dub to mini-DV to keep cost down. That's another \$800 for the tape store. Ka-ching! The dubbing house, mini-DV to mini-DV, 100 hours at \$25/hours . . . \$2500. Ka-ching! Or maybe you decided to cross your fingers that nothing would

happen to your masters, and you digitize everything directly without protection dubs. It took roughly three weeks to digitize 100 hours of footage. The editor and the manufacturer of hard-drives said in unison, "Kaching!" while your MasterCard with eighteen percent interests rate whispered in your ear, "Finishing your film: Priceless."

The moral of the story is that if your post-production budget got out of control, it is most likely that you were shooting out of control. Gushing tape is the first culprit of post-production cost; the second is endless editing. If you are shooting verite style or shooting time-sensitive subjects, you will probably have to shoot generously, but you also need to budget generously. We gush tape or spend endless hours in the cutting room because we didn't take the time to think. Thinking is really cheap, but for some reason most people consistently resist doing it. I guess it's because thinking doesn't look productive, while being in front of the computer does, even if it's to move the mouse aimlessly.

If you take just one day to fully think and outline the film you want to make, you will save weeks and weeks of editing. Creating a structure for yourself doesn't mean that you are trapped. Nor does it mean ignoring your editor's suggestions or dismissing whatever stories or subplots that might emerge while editing. An outline or structure means having a foundation to build on. It means getting started with a plan, a direction, and a focus. Getting in the habit of solving problems and making decisions outside the cutting room will cut your cost. And that really is priceless. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com

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

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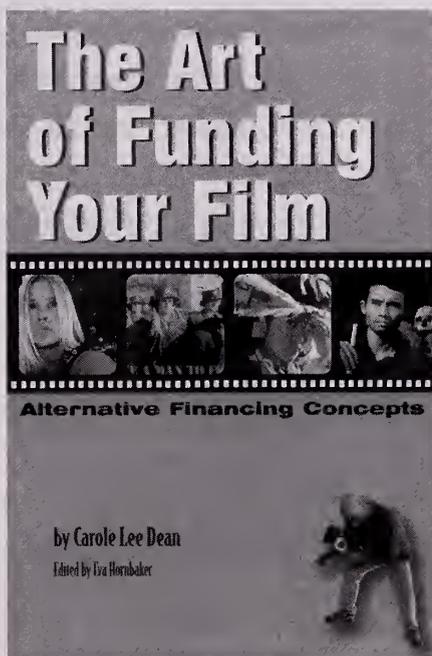
The Art of Funding Your Film: Alternative Financing Concepts, by Carole Lee Dean, edited by Eva Hornbaker, Dean Publishing (2003)

Okay, I have to admit that when my editor passed me a copy of Carol Lee Dean's *The Art of Funding Your Film*, I was more than a little apprehensive. For anyone who, like me, has spent numerous hours in the filmmaking aisles of bookstores, the idea of yet another "how to make your own movie by raising the money yourself without leaving your couch" book is just a bit much. And to be honest, I've read my fair share of them—some good, some God awful. But the main question was whether *The Art of Funding Your Film* was going to add up or not.

First off, I wondered: who is Carol Lee Dean? Her bio notes that she's an entrepreneur, filmmaker, writer, philanthropist, international speaker, and nutrition advocate. (Yeah, I know, I did a double take on the last one too.) But to be fair, Dean is the creator of the Roy W. Dean Grant Foundation (see page 47), which provides goods and services grants for filmmakers. Plus she's responsible for coining the term "short-ends" when she started her first business, Studio Film and Tape, back in 1968, which resold leftover studio film stock to filmmakers. So she has reasonable indie street cred.

Her book is laid out much like many other books in the same genre: chapters dedicated to various methods of fundraising—starting with the most basic question of why we want to make a certain film. But where the book strays from the usual formula, much to its credit, is that Dean does

not spend too much time going over the same tired points. Instead, she makes some very astute observations based on her experience on a given topic, providing a brief introduction to the topic and then quickly transi-



tioning to a conversation with an "expert" in the field. These experts range from entertainment law guru Mark Litwalk to fundraising expert Morrie Warshawski.

Dean does not shortchange us by giving a few random quotes either. She dedicates a whole chapter to an interview with each person. Some interviews prove more useful than others; for example the interview with filmmaker Xackery Irving, a previous winner of the Dean Grant, in the opening chapter "Commit or be Committed," didn't reveal anything that I hadn't heard before about the tenacity required to make a film independently. But Dean's twenty-page

conversation with marketing consultant Patricia Ganguzza about branding and product placement is a delightful eye-opener about a topic rarely dealt with in similar books.

Art is embedded with Dean's quirky, down-home, writing style along with quotes from everyone from Sai Baba to Carl Jung, which can be a comfort if that's your thing. Even if it's not, I suggest grinning and bearing it, since the information conveyed is practical and useful. And ultimately, what this book manages to do, and do well, is dole out tough doses of reality with tender morsels of support—a rare art in itself.

Shaking the Money Tree, Second Edition, by Morrie Warshawski, Michael Wiese Productions (2003)

I distinctly remember the first time that I heard about Morrie Warshawski's *Shaking the Money Tree*. It was the mid-nineties and I was still in film school. I was impressed by the fervor with which my professor spoke about the book, referring to it as an essential tool in fundraising for independent work. Almost a decade has passed since the book's first publication in 1994, during which time it went through several printings, and finally went out of print in 1998. So, the book's second edition is a welcome sight to filmmakers everywhere.

To begin with, it is a pleasure to see that Warshawski understands how dramatically the landscape of public fundraising has changed since *Money Tree's* first inception. He presents us with a completely revamped, reworked book, including a new layout that reflects a more logical progression. Warshawski wisely begins the book with a chapter entitled "Laying the Foundation," in which he asks the reader to take a moment to look at his or her career and do two simple things: create a "mission statement" (why are you a filmmaker?) and a "vision statement" (where do you real-

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istically envision your filmmaking life in three years?). Although it may sound a bit touchy-feely, Warshawski correctly and clearly explains how these two simple, yet overlooked facts are the building blocks of everything to come, from networking to grant-seeking to ultimately producing your

strategies and advice for approaching funders—especially foundations and government agencies. Here, we are presented with a very different picture than the one most filmmakers think of when interacting with such funding entities. The common assumption is that a strong proposal and grant

For anyone who, like me, has spent numerous hours in the filmmaking aisles of bookstores, the idea of yet another “how to make your own movie by raising the money yourself without leaving your couch” book is just a bit much.

project. You have to know who you are and where you want to go in order to find a way to get there.

From that point on the book dives into funding resources: individuals, government agencies, foundations, corporations, small businesses and non-profits. Before digging deeper into some of these resources, Warshawski suggests we ask ourselves a few questions about our project. Why must this story be told? Who is the intended audience? What is the timeline, from research to distribution? As an initial answer to the last question, Warshawski suggests a three-year plan and provides a visual chart which breaks the plan down into quarters. This may come as a shock to some readers, but, as he puts it, “fundraising is unpredictable and never comes together as quickly or as easily as we would like.”

Warshawski dedicates one chapter to each of the two main funding sources: private/individual donors and government agencies/foundations. In each chapter, he outlines game plans, avenues of approach, case studies of existing projects, and positive, as well as not so positive, war stories from his years consulting clients. Both chapters come with an array of

application are the keys to getting funded. Warshawski argues that those elements are only a minor part of the whole scheme to win the attention (and eventually the cash) from these funding sources.

The book concludes with a sixty-page sample grant proposal for a project funded by the National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH), which is one of the more stringent funding sources and has one of the more complicated grant applications. Even though the book is filled with examples and case studies of docs and so-called “non-commercial” work, the information imparted is invaluable for *any* filmmaker working outside the traditional, multi-million dollar funding system. Warshawski sends us off with “Morrie’s Maxims”: twelve points that he reiterates throughout the book, simply and directly. And that is what *Shaking the Money Tree* is all about: giving the reader a roadmap for the jungle of fundraising, one that is not overwhelming nor impossible to follow. □

Bo Mehrad is a New York based writer and director. He also edits the Festival listings section of The Independent and is an information services associate for AIVF.

Small State, Big Fest

RHODE ISLAND FOCUSES ON FILMMAKERS

By Jason Guerrasio

Since its inception seven years ago, the Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF) has been known for putting the filmmaker first. Unlike many “can you top this” film festivals, RIIFF’s small town atmosphere provides a forum for filmmakers to interact with their peers, other film-lovers, and industry folk—all of whom are focused on the films, not the hype.

“We built our [festival] to be a networking opportunity,” says George Marshall, RIIFF Executive Director. “It cuts out that competition crap. I’d rather have people collaborate and work with each other to learn new ways of using the language of film.”

Marshall created the festival in 1997 along with Flickers Arts Collaborative—a film society that started in the 1980s and now arranges screenings and exhibitions throughout the state. Marshall is also a teacher at Rhode Island University, although he says that the festival is “something that started as entertaining and fun and evolved into a full time job.”

The inaugural festival brought in 2,000 people in three days, but RIIFF really came into its own the following year when Rhode Island natives, the Farrelly brothers, premiered *There’s Something About Mary*. “One of the board members is good buddies with the Farrelly’s father,” says Marshall. “So Bobby [Farrelly] shows up the first year and sees the crowd and says, ‘I’m going to bring my next movie here.’ We spent a year dogging him, making sure he kept his promise.”

The success of that festival provided the Woonsocket Theater (where the

festival had been held) with enough money to undergo restoration, which forced the festival to move out and to their current home, Providence’s Columbus Theatre. Built in 1926, the Columbus, which seats 1,492, has vaudeville-like stained-glass archways, a mural on the ceiling, and a Wurlitzer Organ—now used for horror films. It also used to be a porno theater, and most locals still know it as that. When the festival first moved in, “everyone



was looking over their shoulders, wondering who was going to see them come in,” says Marshall. But Marshall and theater owner Jon Berberian have tried to play down its shady past. “We told people: now you can admit you’ve been in the building.”

This year’s festival screened 184 titles from forty-two countries and thirty-two states, one of which qualified for the Academy Award short film category. It opened with six short films, including the U.S. premiere of Hirofumi Nagaike’s *Flying*, and the world premieres of Steve Zankman’s *Autopsy Room Four*, based on a short

story by Stephen King, and Tony Rogers’ *The Cook*. But Dominique Monfery’s *Destino* and Kenneth Branagh’s *Listening* were the crowd favorites. The animated *Destino* is the completed version of a project that Walt Disney commissioned in 1946 as a sequel to *Fantasia*. For decades, the uncompleted film collected dust until two years ago, when Roy Disney commissioned Monfery to complete it. The seven-minute short received the Grand Prize for Best Animation. *Listening* marks Branagh’s second time directing a short. With very little dialogue, it illustrates a romantic encounter at a spiritual retreat. For *Listening*’s screening, the Columbus was packed to the rafters and organizers had to turn away close to a hundred people.

A big chunk of programming went to the eighty-two shorts that screened throughout the five days. Some of the standouts were Paolo Ameli’s *Mud Red*—based on the true story of an English soldier’s encounter on the battlefield with Adolf Hitler when he was only a grunt in the German army. Also screened was Rachel Johnson’s *The Toll Collector*, about a young girl’s dream to be a ballerina told through stop-motion animation. Dean Yamada’s *The Nisei Farmer*, which won Best Short and will get Oscar consideration, depicts an Asian couple’s conflict over a reparation payment that they received for the injustices suffered by Japanese Americans during World War II.

The absence of distributors at this year’s festival didn’t deter participants. Greg Pak’s feature, *Robot Stories*, won the Best Feature Award, and he is currently looking for distribution. He says, “I’ve shown some of my shorts here in the past, and the festival has had a good reputation among filmmakers. Even though distributors and producers aren’t here, you still get reactions from the audience, and that’s important.”

One of the few films shown that actually had a distributor was Audience Award winner *Zero Day*,

Paul McGann in Kenneth Branagh’s crowd favorite, *Listening*.

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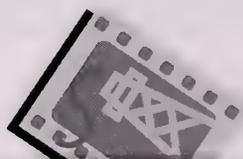
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which was picked up by Avatar Films. This anatomy of a school shooting played only regional festivals during its run, and is a perfect example of why filmmakers shouldn't give up hope for distribution if they don't get into a major fest. "I feel a big reason we got picked up was because we only played regionals," says director Ben Coccio, who believes the film's success at regional festivals enticed distributors.

Although one of the festival's historical downfalls is lack of industry interest, this year's co-sponsor, marketing and research company filmBUZZ, may change that. Specializing in audience reaction to independent films, filmBUZZ is hired by festivals, distributors, and producers to collect and report the "buzz" of films. In this case, filmBUZZ reports the films that were the most popular to distributors who they believe may have interest in the film. Along with audience reaction, the company uses audience surveys to provide RIFF with information that supports the festival's main revenue sources, sponsorships, and ticket sales.

"Why isn't Samuel Goldwyn here, or IDP, or Lions Gate?" asks president of filmBUZZ, Greg Kahn. "We're trying to get their attention about festivals like these that are under the radar of most distributors." filmBUZZ also spoke at a forum about marketing and distributing films.

In the spirit of letting as many filmmakers as possible show their work, RIFF shared their spotlight with the Providence Film Festival, Providence Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, and KidsEye International Film Festival, which premiered crowd favorites including Susan Bell's *The Patchwork Monkey*, Boris Ivanov's *Princess Castle*, and KidsEye Grand Prize winner Ellen-Alinda Verhoeff's *Abbie Down East*, about a young girl's heroics to rescue her mother and younger sister from a

lighthouse during a vicious storm. Glenn Holsten's documentary, *Jim in Bold*, was a favorite at the Providence Gay & Lesbian Festival. The film follows three friends who embark on a road trip across the country to speak to young gay teens; interwoven with this is the life story and poetry of Jimmy Wheeler, who committed suicide at age eighteen.

The festival ended at nearby Brown University with "A Conversation with Seymour Cassel," who was honored with the RIFF Lifetime Achievement Award. In an *Inside the Actor's Studio*-type atmosphere, Cassel sat down to talk about his career, most notably his Oscar-nominated performance in John Cassavetes's *Faces*.

"The biggest problem with the plethora of film festivals is that they're too exclusive," says Marshall. "Instead of festivals trying to be the next Sundance, we should be figuring out what we can do as a group to grow and support the filmmakers out there. Otherwise [these kinds of films] disappear." RIFF addresses this by swapping films with Australian festival Ausfest and the Manleu Short Film Festival in Barcelona, Spain. Marshall also hopes to build a partnership with a theater in Connecticut, which plans to host a teen focus film festival.

With attendance for the festival up fifteen percent from last year and close to 18,000 tickets sold, RIFF shows that you don't have to program lavish events and book notable movie stars to make a profit. One local teen summed it up when he explained why he chose to go to the Columbus on a Saturday night, instead of the local multiplex. "I'd rather watch these films where the filmmakers bust their asses to make it, than the Hollywood ones that were made by a few guys sitting in front of a computer." ■

For more information, see www.riffilmfest.org.

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.



Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical *girlhood*

Dir. Liz Garbus
(Wellspring, October 31)

While filming her Academy Award-nominated documentary, *The Farm: Angola, USA*, Liz Garbus noticed that the prisoners kept returning to one topic: their experience in the juvenile

justice system. In an attempt to understand why most juveniles failed to stay out of jail, she started documenting the boys at the Waxter Juvenile Facility in Maryland, and quickly realized that the girls there were far more interesting. One twelve-year-old girl in particular inspired her to create *girlhood*. “Shanae came up to me and said, ‘People always come here and do something on the boys. When is someone going to do something on the girls?’”



As Garbus spent more time with Shanae, she found that her preconceived notions of kids in juvenile facilities were way off. “There were these two girls for three years, as they tried to overcome their pasts and lead productive lives. “It wasn’t just their struggle to get out of the juvenile system,” says Garbus. “It’s really their struggle to grow up.”

During the filming, the girls were released from the cramped confines of Waxter and moved to Baltimore, where they had to deal with the family turmoil they left behind. Here, Garbus realized that the juvenile system was no longer the main plot of the film. “Having done *The Farm* and listening to all these people in the system talk about how they became a better criminal through the juvenile system, I had a point of view that the juvenile system is not working,” says Garbus. “As I explored, I found it became less the narrative direction of

Liz Garbus’ *girlhood* features Shanae, pictured here at age twelve, who was imprisoned in Maryland for murder.

the film. The film became more about these personal odysseys.”

The Cooler

Dir. Wayne Kramer
(Lions Gate, November 14)

In the heart of Las Vegas, the Shangri-La casino houses the best “cooler” in the world. His luck is so bad he can make anyone throwing red-hot dice turn into ice cubes. Bernie Lootz (William H. Macy) is not proud of his talent, but when you have to pay off a large debt to the last hard-nose casino owner (Alec Baldwin) in Vegas, it’s a living. On the verge of being debt-free, Lootz prepares to get out of Sin City, but after falling hard for a cocktail waitress (Maria Bello), his luck gets worse.

My Architect

Dir. Nathaniel Kahn
(New Yorker Films, November 12)

Legendary architect Louis Kahn spent most of his life building monumental creations that redefined architecture in the second half of the twentieth century. But his private life was less than commendable—as we learn in this documentary by his son, Nathaniel Kahn, who is the offspring of one of his father’s many long-term, extramarital affairs. In an attempt to explore the contradictions between his father’s career and his father’s lust for women, Nathaniel travels the globe, viewing his father’s buildings, speaking to people who knew him and, most importantly, connecting with the father he barely knew.

Television

Last Dance

Dir. Mirra Bank
(Sundance Channel, November 10)

“It’s not what you know, it’s who you know” is a cliché that often describes how to get into the film business. For Mirra Bank, it also applies to how she got into the subject of her documentary, *Last Dance*. Because of her intern, who

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happened to be the niece of Michael Tracy, one of Pilobolus's artistic directors, Bank was offered entry into the fascinating world of this experimental dance company. And when Bank discovered that Pilobolus's next production was slated to be a collaboration with legendary children's author Maurice Sendak (*Where The Wild Things Are*), she knew immediately that "this was great material for a verite film."

Bank's crew was given total access to the creative developmental process, which involved Sendak, the artistic directors of Pilobolus, and the dancers. The film follows every step of this often heated, nine-month collaboration between the Pilobolus Dance Theater and Sendak's Night Kitchen Theater, as they transform a haunting holocaust legacy into a theater piece. "[It] was a high-wire, moment to moment, heart in your throat [experience]," Bank says. "That made it both extremely nerve-wracking, and very energizing for everyone. It was like, is the whole thing going to go up in flames, or isn't it?"

Sendak's masterful storytelling was the basis for the collaboration, but the groups' inability to compromise almost brought the production to an

Matt Kent and Otis Cook of Pilobolus in
Mirra Bank's *Last Dance*.

abrupt halt. With only a few months left before their American Dance Festival performance, they pressed on. "They were obligated to present something so everybody was operating without compromise—artistically, but also with great urgency, to create a piece they could stand by," Bank explains.

While recording the tense squabbles, Bank learned that "real, good work never comes out of some form of politeness. It only comes out of fighting for it. And if your work isn't good, then you have to be ready to accept another idea; but at least you fought for your idea rather than deferring to everyone else."

Naked World

Dir. Arlene Donnelly Nelson
(HBO, November 2)

Controversial photographer Spencer Tunick has spent his career photographing large groups of naked people. His most ambitious project to date involves photographing nudes in all seven continents. Filmmaker Arlene Donnelly Nelson, whose documentary *Naked States* chronicled Tunick's journey throughout the U.S., returns for Tunick's latest effort to shatter the stereotypes of public nudity.

Secrets of the Dead

Dir. David Hickman
(PBS, November 12)

After last year's Emmy Award-nominated season, *Secrets of the Dead* begins its fourth season by examining one of the greatest, and most tragic, engineering feats of World War II. In order to link Thailand and Burma by rail, the Japanese Army ordered POW's to construct a mammoth railway, which wound up costing \$100,000. The series, which has devoted episodes to the Titanic and Stonehenge, investigates the railway's extraordinary construction and the deaths that occurred along the way. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for
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THE BLOOD, SWEAT AND DEALS
BEHIND PRODUCING FILMS

By John Schmidt

Ed Pressman and I started ContentFilm two years ago, and we have produced eight films in that time with more on the way. My last job was co-president of October Films, where we acquired or produced over sixty films before the sale to USA Films, and before that I was the CFO of Miramax from 1989-92 where it seems like we did sixty films a year. From all this I've come away with some knowledge of independent film finance, and I'd like to share some of it here.

It seems to me that despite the endless variety of financial structures for independent film, you can break it all down into three models—the single picture deal, the portfolio approach, and the integration model. I'll talk about each one. In fact, the history of various companies, such as October, Miramax, and New Line, is really the story of how they progressed through these three models, and their ultimate success, at least financially, has been determined by how successful they navigated these phases. As an independent producer, you need to know what each production/distribution company is looking for, and I mean both creatively and financially, because the movies that get made are the ones that cross both those hurdles.

THE SINGLE PICTURE DEAL PASSION MEETS MADNESS

At the Toronto Film Festival this year, I saw Mario Van Peebles's film, *How to Get the Man's Foot Outta Your Ass*. This should be required viewing for indie producers. It tells the amazing story of Mario's dad, the legendary Melvin Van Peebles, and how he made the original blaxploitation film, *Sweet Sweetback's Baad Asssss Song* outside of the studio system in 1971, when there was no such thing as outside the studio system. It is the textbook case of the single film deal.

Melvin had a dream, an inspiration—to make a feature film about a black hero for a black audience with a black soundtrack by a multi-racial crew. And as Bill Cosby says at the end of the movie, “Melvin had a great dream, and the first thing you have to do when you have a great dream . . . is wake up.” Melvin woke up to the reality of self-financing. He cobbled the money together from his own pocket, from donations of film and equipment, and finally from a \$50,000 loan from Cosby. He bounced a \$500 check to the unknown musicians who were laying down the score—

Adam Goldberg in *The Hebrew Hammer*.

some dudes who called themselves Earth, Wind & Fire. He opened it in Detroit, after everyone had passed on the film, by telling the Goldberg brothers he'd buy them each a new suit if *Sweetback* didn't outgross the B-movie they had on the marquee. And then he promoted the film himself on the radio. It worked. It hit a nerve, and he created a whole genre that lives to today in such films as *Foxy Brown* or our film, *The Hebrew Hammer*, which is a homage to *Sweetback*.

Melvin made it happen with passion and a touch of madness—nothing would deter him—and today we see indie filmmakers do this all the time. The single picture deal is a one-off, a roll of the dice fueled by passion, madness, or both. It's the single cell amoeba or better yet, bacterium, in the evolutionary cosmos of film that extends all the way to the woolly mammoth of the studios. And when the bacterium spreads because it has the right stuff, then you've got *sex, lies, and videotape* or *Memento* or *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*—a beautiful thing to behold, a film that spreads around the world from a tiny beginning and enters the culture. (It also inoculates the culture against anything else like it becoming successful, but that's another story.)

So when you raise the money, there's no pitch you can honestly make other than, "You may not see a penny back, but this is why I want to make this film." Or as Mario said to Cosby, "This is why this film *has* to be made." Sure, you can build a business model, you can point to comparable films, put together a nice investment document, but fundamentally it's all guesswork. The only time that changes of course is when a single picture is pre-sold in some market. That usually means some name talent is attached or it's a genre film for a narrower market than theatrical, and as such, you've already advanced to a multi-cell organism.

THE PORTFOLIO APPROACH KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

The portfolio approach is next and requires a higher level of sophistication and experience. That's what we're doing at ContentFilm. With a certain amount of success under your belt in the single picture deal scenario, you'll be ready for the portfolio approach. It is the deployment of a larger pool of capital into a slate of films that will be managed centrally and exploited through different distribution platforms around the world. It requires a business model that can anticipate the hits and misses that might occur in the portfolio, and can analyze the sensitivity to those outcomes. It requires a deep knowledge of distribution and the realistic values that may be assigned to the films in the various markets and territories worldwide. It requires an awareness of classic deal terms and the traps that

can drain any future value out of the portfolio. It requires production discipline to drive the films to completion on budget, and it requires the creative genius for assembling an original and powerful group of films, well-directed, well-cast, and well-scored.

That's why we've hired such talented people at ContentFilm, because Ed and I don't know any of that stuff.

Seriously, Douglas Tulley on the business model, Michael Roban on the deals, and on the creative side, Sofia Sondervan in New York, and Alessandro Camon in Los Angeles are the reason we're off and running so well. We raised equity financing two years ago from a group led by Syntek Capital, and we've supplemented that with a bank facility with WestLB bank in New York. We've invested that money in eight feature films to date, we've kept our overhead down, and we're selling the films successfully around the world. We are extremely proud of the films, and I don't think it's a stretch to say they might not have been made if we hadn't been here.

So what happens under the portfolio approach? If the films sell, you get to stick around and make more films. If they don't, *sayonara*. So what do Ed and I look for? A script that knocks us out somehow. We can get knocked out loudly (*Never Die Alone*), or quietly (*Undertow*), or humorously (*Rick, Hebrew Hammer*), or sadly (*The Guys*), or creepily (*Love Object*). Next the director has got to have the goods. The director can be a first-timer like Wayne Kramer or Jim Simpson, or a veteran like Ernest Dickerson, but we have to believe he's got the vision to pull it off. Finally, the last hurdles—who's going to buy it? Who's the audience for the movie? If the movie doesn't work out, what are the values we can fall back on?

From all these discussions inside the company comes a portrait of the film as an economic proposition—production and selling costs against the worldwide revenue potential spread over time. And not only must it look profitable, but it must take care of its share of our overhead. So if we make five or eight films a year, and make some money on each one, we'll cover our overhead and have a steady-state production company, a machine that creates new copyrights every year and builds a library. If one of the films kicks out a few extra million by over-performing, that's great, but it doesn't change the basic mindset. The mantra of ContentFilm and

other portfolio companies like Killer, Hart/Sharp, and GreeneStreet, has got to be "keep the lights on." Manage cash, expect productions to go over budget, expect payments from sales to be slower than your worst assumption, model it out as if your big film sells for 0.5x instead of x. Keep the lights on. If you can pull this off, you'll be ContentFilm. If you can pull it off for a long time, you'll be Working Title. You'll be Ron Livingston in the final

CONTENTFILM PROJECTS

Party Monster (2002)
The Guys (2002)
The Cooler (2002)
The Hebrew Hammer (2002)
Love Object (2002)
Never Die Alone (2003)
The Undertow (2003)
Rick (2003)

scene of *The Cooler* raising his drink and saying, "Gentlemen, the future looks very bright indeed."

With a certain measure of success in the portfolio approach, you will achieve longevity and volume, and those two beautiful words will lead inevitably to integration, which is the next phase. It is the siren song that calls the successful producer to the rocky shores of distribution and lures his happy boat toward the ravenous shoals of P&A and theatrical overhead.

THE INTEGRATION MODEL

THE FINAL FRONTIER

These are the voyages of the Starship New Line, Miramax, or Dreamworks—the combining of an ongoing production capability with the ownership and management of distribution channels around the world. It calls for a business model of the most sophisticated and far-reaching structure. It calls for a capital strategy that is no longer based on simply a portfolio of films and their performance, but on an integrated view of many businesses—film, video, television, music, merchandising, and distribution apparatuses in different territories. It requires equity, debt, and access to the complex financing

plans are an illusion, aren't they? All that matters is what's so."

At the mature stage of the integration model, you're a major corporation raising hundreds of millions, so this is probably of limited relevance to most of the readers of *The Independent*. But smaller production companies can take steps into the integration model in careful ways—Hart/Sharp started its own video distribution company, and ContentFilm has started its own foreign sales business.

EVOLUTION

FROM BACTERIA TO MIRAMAX

I find it fascinating that so many companies have moved through these phases and arrived at their destiny largely based on how they managed each step. Bingham Ray and Jeff Lipsky started October Films with a single film: *Life Is Sweet*. I joined them six months later to put together the package that would move us into a portfolio company with the means to acquire many films and roll them forward into a real business. After some success, Universal gave us integration and that entity evolved into Focus Features.

Harvey and Bob Weinstein started with single picture deals, and then spent years learning the theatrical business,



vehicles that are in constant metamorphoses around the world. Financing emerges from a macroeconomic view of content creation, delivery pipelines, information exchange, and corporate value. And if you're truly blessed, or maybe truly self-deluded, you arrive at that Zen-like frame of mind that is embodied in a recent quote by David Geffen, which caused great hilarity in our offices. "The future is an illusion. Business

promotion, and the ancillary markets by living picture to picture, (*Secret Policeman's Other Ball*, *Playing For Keeps*, *Working Girl*), and thus gaining the keenest survival instincts out there. When I arrived, Harvey and Bob had just raised their first outside money, and they were crossing over to a portfolio company. The first portfolio—*Thin Blue Line*, *Pelle the Conqueror*, *Scandal*, *My Left Foot*, *sex, lies, and*

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, COURTESY OF JANET TRACY KEISER/CONTENTFILM; FACING PAGE, DALE ROBINETTE/CONTENTFILM

videotape, and *Cinema Paradiso*—changed the independent world forever. But when the portfolio had a dry spell, and it did in 1991-1993, they gained integration and security by selling Miramax to Disney for \$50 million. Now they've built a business that might be valued at over a billion dollars, but it's owned by Disney's shareholders.

the brilliance of the writer, the vision of the director, and the genius cast you're putting together. You know all that, and you're ready to deliver it with conviction and passion.

Believe me, if you add to all that a quick synopsis of the film's economic goals and how it fits with the financial profile of the company you're pitching, you will be on a differ-



New Line went further and became the most completely evolved indie in the business. Bob Shaye started in 1967 with single picture deals like *Reefer Madness*, moved into portfolio financing on the strength of the Freddy Krueger franchise, raised outside money, and then evolved into an integrated company. He built international sales, home video, and television distribution into wholly-owned businesses, and added key players like Michael Lynne. They raised money by going public and issuing debt, and grabbed library deals, like Nelson, that fed the integrated machine and strengthened it. When they sold their company to Ted Turner, it was worth \$400 million because they successfully navigated the transitions and built a mature business.

WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

TAKING A MEETING

When you take a meeting with a producer or financier, you're ready to tell him or her about the story of the film,

ent plateau. It might be as simple as "I know you make movies for the budget I'm talking about, and I know this film can sell!" Or it might be a complex and seasoned analysis of the soft money component, gap financing from a bank, deferred compensation for the talent, minimum video units that will ship, etc. Both these approaches show you have a good grasp of the money and that you care about the return on investment; that you'll drive the film toward that goal, and maybe even tie your own compensation to it. After all, you're asking them for large amounts of their cash, and you're promising to return in several months with something on celluloid (or digibeta anyway). It's pretty amazing that *any* films get financed when you stop and think about it. So be considerate of these poor people who have nothing better to do than give their money away—have a really good idea of how to get their money back to them. Because if you do, they'll give you more! And they'll tell their friends, and soon you'll even have banks giving you money! ▣

For more information, see www.contentfilm.com

John Schmidt, a founding partner of October Films, is president of ContentFilm.

Facing page: Nikki and Kenneth (Desmond Harrington) in bed in Robert Parigi's *Love Object*. This page: DMX stars as King David in *Never Die Alone*.



Courting Cash

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS DIVULGE THE CRAFTY WAYS THEY PAY THE BILLS

By Charlie Sweitzer

Lots of things pile up after a shoot. For Steve Gentile, producer of *Loaded Gun: Life, Death, and Dickinson*, the end of post-production brought a surplus of bills and lots of beer.

"When we were premiering at the Museum of Fine Arts [MFA] here in Boston, they said, 'Hey, can we help?'" recalls Gentile. "And I said, 'It's so expensive to go with the MFA's catering, can you provide the spirits?'"

He laughs. "And, well, they came through. I couldn't believe how much they donated."

Afterwards, the filmmakers still had several unopened cases of wine and untapped kegs. These, with the bills that were still coming in, gave Gentile an idea. "We went around

a couple venues in New England. We'd screen the film, and after it was done, roll out the wine, the keg, and some cheese. I think we charged sixteen bucks a head."

Financing independent films is tougher than ever. A rickety economy can mean strapped foundations, hesitant donors, and brutal price tags on equipment, rentals, and crew.

But with a little creative thinking, it is still possible to get your independent film made. This month, *The Independent* speaks with filmmakers who have approached paying the bills in a variety of different ways. Some worked with foundations; some had creative ways of attracting crews and talent; some just came up with entirely new approaches to fend off the repo man. More than anything else, these are

people who combined creativity, business savvy, and stubborn optimism, and came up with cash.

"We didn't make a *lot* of money," says Gentile of the mini-tour. "I don't know how great a story that really is. We didn't sell any organs or anything. But the *spirit* of that kind of donation—I don't know how to explain it, really. It's just a nice thing to do. It was a way of raising money at the last minute that I didn't think we could do."

HEART OF THE SEA

Sometimes, the impetus—and cash—that carries a project to the next phase comes from an unlikely place. "I've never had to look for funding before," says Charlotte LaGarde, co-director of *Heart of the Sea*. "It's really an interesting way to approach filmmaking. I spent about eighty percent of my time working on this film, raising money."

LaGarde started working on her documentary about legendary female surfer Rell Sunn in November 1997. A woman who had appeared in *Swell*, LaGarde's prior documentary short about surfing, sent her "\$1,000 on the spot" when she learned that LaGarde planned to interview Sunn. "She said, 'You've got to go do that!' So that paid for our trip, and let us stay there for ten days."

Although other chance encounters would shape the final film, much of the fundraising took the mundane form of churning out grant proposals. LaGarde estimates that she applied for over fifty grants. Only sixteen actually panned out.

The first to yield results was the Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) fund, which was developed to promote films by and about native Pacific Islanders. *Heart of the Sea* received PIC funding, with the condition that they find an executive producer who already had a film on PBS. (This is a requisite of any film with PIC funds.) LaGarde contacted Janet Cole, executive producer of POV-screened documentaries *Promises* and *Regret to Inform*. "When I applied to PIC my budget was not even \$190,000," says LaGarde, "but when Janet came on, we went up to \$300,000, partly because I had to pay her. It was interesting how suddenly the prices were up for everything."

With assistance from PIC (and Janet Cole) secured, other funding came easier. "Because we were already in bed with PBS, we applied to the Independent Television Service [ITVS]," says LaGarde. Though the film was rejected twice for ITVS's Open Call funding, it did qualify for ITVS's LInCS (Local Independents Collaborating with Stations) fund. Ultimately, more than half the budget came from either ITVS or PIC.

Most of the rest came from private donations. "It's all luck, actually," LaGarde says. Once, while on a plane to

Hawaii, she recognized one of the subjects of *Surfing for Life*, a documentary on senior citizens who surf. "I just approached her. I said, 'Hey, I saw you in *Surfing for Life*—what a great film—I was wondering if you knew Rell Sunn,'



and she's like, 'Of course!' and starts crying. So I said, 'We'd like to ask you some questions about Rell,' and the next thing you know, we become friends, and blah blah blah—and she's the one who got us in with the Campbell family." (The Campbell family preside over the Estate of James Campbell, a large Hawaiian private trust.)

Ultimately, the film received \$55,000 in private donations. A graphic designer friend of LaGarde's made a brochure, which the filmmakers distributed. "I sent it to just a few, selected people in Hawaii, who I knew had money," she says. "I closed my eyes with some of the places where we got money," she admits, laughing. "I didn't always agree with their politics, but as long as they had no requirements on the content of my film, I just went with that."

LaGarde did encounter difficulties, though, with some large corporations. Quiksilver, a large surf-themed clothing manufacturer, offered to give the production \$10,000 on the condition that they have their name in front of PBS. "And I'm like, there's no way! My budget is \$403,000—get in line! If you give me \$150,000—yeah. But you're not. And they're like, we've never given that much money to a film. And I said, look at the films that you're funding—they're all shot on Hi-8 by a bunch of teenagers that don't get paid, and they're cut very quickly on Final Cut, with their friend's band playing all over it. *This* film is going to be shown on PBS, which is the biggest audience you can have in the US [for a film like this]." Quiksilver ultimately did contribute \$10,000 to *Heart of the Sea*, and LaGarde is working with them on an outreach program.

One especially fortuitous meeting occurred on the first day of postproduction. "At our first lunch at Skywalker Ranch, we met a sound editor," LaGarde says. "She just happened to be really into surfing. She doesn't even surf—she doesn't even like swimming—but she knows more about surf culture than I do! She said, 'I want to be your sound editor, and I'll make you a deal'. . . . And not only was she doing work for us, but she had access to all the sound files at

Facing page (clockwise): Tracy Tragos holds her father's portrait in *Be Good, Smile Pretty*; Sabrina Lloyd as Sarah in *Dopamine*; a cop with Shih Tzu diva, Chelsea, star of *A Dog's Life: A Dogumentary*. This page: Rell Sunn surfing in *Heart of the Sea*.

Skywalker! So we had water sounds from Titanic, and *Cast Away*—all sounds we ordinarily wouldn't have had access to.”

Chance encounters aside, LaGarde credits much of her fundraising talent to pursuing many different possible donors. “Diversify—that’s the most important thing,” she says. “Go into huge foundations, medium foundations, small foundations, individuals. Don’t spend too much time on corporations. They don’t give too much, and it takes them a huge amount of time to get back to you.”

“And bullshit a little—it doesn’t hurt!” she says, laughing. “Don’t give the same proposal to everybody. Really rewrite it to fit their guidelines.”

DOPAMINE

Not every producer new to indie film is also new to fundraising. For Eric Koivisto, executive producer of *Dopamine* (the first film to go through the Sundance Writer’s and Producer’s Workshops and festival and be distributed by Sundance Films), approaching donors with a business plan was not all that different from his prior work in business and advertising. “[But] this was some of the



most intimidating documentation I’ve ever seen in my life,” he says, “and this is coming from somebody who worked at Microsoft.”

Koivisto, director Mark Decena and Timothy Breitbach used to work together at an ad agency, where Koivisto was the “account guy” to their creative team. He has also worked a variety of corporate jobs, but after his last job, for Microsoft “ran its natural course,” Koivisto says he decided “it was time to go do something a little bit more creative and about the heart, rather than corporate and business concerns.”

The trio’s collaboration was natural. “Mark and Tim and I have worked together for a long time, and they’re some of the most business-savvy creative professionals I’ve ever met,” Koivisto says. “You need to pay attention to both the business and creative aspects associated with the film . . . I’m as interested in the creative process as I am in the business process. But you need to maintain your objectivity, and need to make sure you’re answering business questions with business issues, and you’re not answering business ques-

tions with emotions. Because everybody’s got emotions.”

And there were a lot of questions to answer when the film’s major investor (who “basically was going to write us one check to pay for the entire thing”) pulled out two weeks before the film was scheduled to begin shooting.

Left with no backers, Koivisto devised a new funding strategy. He broke the film’s budget in two, and began raising only enough money to finish shooting and get an offline rough cut. “It’s nerve-wracking, because all of a sudden you’re half-pregnant,” he says. “But it was kind of a smart way to do it, too, because we had quite a few people who said, ‘Listen, get this thing in the can, and if you do, you’ve got \$500,000 from me. But if you don’t get it into Sundance—why should I invest?’ It was a pretty good business metric.”

Koivisto makes a distinction between “regular” investors, AKA friends and family, and what he calls “sophisticated money.” “Sophisticated money is industry money,” he says, “from someone who has invested in film before. Their business is to try to secure the best possible position and the best possible terms for their investment. When they’re dealing with first-time filmmakers, and they know that they represent the money that is going to get your film done, they start to be pretty harsh. They start asking for first position out, or a greater percent of the return.”

He adds, “Film actually fits a high-investment profile. If you look at film, and you look at the time when we were raising money [in 2001 and 2002], people were looking for recession-proof, non-equity investment opportunities that were a little bit more like a hedge. It’s all highly speculative, but some people need high-risk returns that aren’t necessarily associated with the stock market.”

At press time, Koivisto was negotiating international distribution; (the film was released theatrically as part of the Sundance Film Series.) And he had started working on his next film as executive producer, a feature by Robert Humphreys, *Dopamine*’s director of photography. As much as he learned from his (in the end) positive experience with *Dopamine*, he is finding that asking for cash is still fundamentally awkward.

“I’m back in fundraising mode,” he says, “and it’s as hard as it was the first time.”

A DOG’S LIFE

Director Gayle Kirschenbaum has never planned a fundraiser quite like this, but then again, there probably never has *been* a fundraiser quite like this. Attendees will enjoy an evening at Biscuits and Bath, a Manhattan spa that caters exclusively to pets. The evening will feature, in addition to a screening of Kirschenbaum’s feature, *A Dog’s Life: A Dogumentary*, a pet portrait artist, a pet psychic, a song about Chelsea (the Shih Tzu star of Kirschenbaum’s film), and a red carpet “with newspaper on top for our four-legged guests.”

"I really could use fundraising advice," Kirschenbaum says. "I could tell you how to make a movie with no money, but fundraising advice I could use."

A Dog's Life is the result of a massive amount of in-kind work and good, thrifty production prowess on Kirschenbaum's part. "Very few people got any money, because I just didn't have it," she says. "One person got a little for the [website], but just a very little."

The film "probably couldn't have been made" anywhere except New York City. "I'm at home in New York," says Kirschenbaum, who worked for several years in Los Angeles



as an agent and producer. "To me, this is a community where people help each other. I don't mean to rag on L.A., but L.A. is very competitive. At least from my experience, people are less willing to give you a contact."

After selling another pitch to HBO, Kirschenbaum relocated to New York to begin work on her "dogumentary," which she aptly describes as "*Sex in the City* meets *Best in Show* meets *Lassie*." Her crew was largely culled from want ads online.

"I always say, if it wasn't for Mandy, the film wouldn't have gotten done," she says, referring to Mandy's International Film and TV Production directory (www.mandy.com), which, up until very recently, let filmmakers seeking crews post want ads for free. (They now charge a small fee.) "I got volumes of resumes, and was always up front with people about the situation, that I couldn't afford to pay them . . . I don't promise something I can't deliver. People take money from other people all the time, and they know they're never going to get the money back. So what I've offered people in exchange is to give [people working on the film] an opportunity they didn't have before. There are people that shot on film that never shot [before]. No one would give them an opportunity to shoot, to do something that they *want* to do."

Volunteers on the film ranged from college students

Facing page: Bruno Campos as Winston, John Livingston as Rand and Sabrina Lloyd as Sarah in *Dopamine*. Left, a scene of devotion from *A Dog's Life*; right, Don McKellar as Matt and Olympia Dukakis as his mother in *The Event*.

transcribing interviews to some in-kind camera work and consultation from Albert Maysles, co-director of seminal documentaries *Gimme Shelter*, *Salesman*, and *Grey Gardens*. "The cameraman who was working with me initially had a friend who was working there [at Maysles's office]," says Kirschenbaum. "Albert's a very available guy. His door is always open. I called him up and told him I was making this film, and there was no problem. He was totally open to it." Kirschenbaum was also able to save significantly on editing and post.

"Due to the fact that I didn't have money for an editor, I was forced to edit it myself," she says, explaining that she literally just sat down with the Final Cut Pro manual and figured the program out in small steps. "[As a filmmaker], you learn stuff on your own. I'm not a computer whiz, but it's not brain surgery to learn how to do these things yourself. And your passion is infectious with other people. If you believe in what you do, people will come onboard to help you."

THE EVENT

Sure, it seems poetic that director Thom Fitzgerald, a dual citizen of the United States and Canada, made his most recent feature, *The Event*, a gallows comedy about AIDS, both in and with funds from his two countries. But more than anything else, combining these worlds makes solid financial sense.

"I think American and Canadian producers could actually learn from each other, interestingly enough," he says.



"Americans have such a fantastic entrepreneurial spirit that Canadians don't. . . . While making a movie in Canada is about putting all these different funding sources together, and selling them all on the idea that it's both a job creation project, as well as a cool movie."

He adds, "It's sometimes fascinating to see how various levels of government can't work together."

With its government-subsidized film industry, and what Fitzgerald calls "those famous Canadian tax credits," (Nova Scotia film production companies get refundable

corporate income tax credits), Canada has much to offer filmmakers. And, despite its unsentimental focus on euthanasia and AIDS, *The Event's* content raised few eyebrows with Canadian donors.

"I've been pretty lucky, speaking as an artist," Fitzgerald says. "One thing about the agencies and crown corporations [Canadian government agencies] is that they, by and large, don't make critical assessments of the projects. I'm not sure if the Nova Scotia Film Development Corporation even read the screenplays. The question is, how many jobs are you creating for Nova Scotians? How much money is this film going to pump into the economy?"

Fitzgerald was initially refused by Telefilm Canada, a Canadian federal cultural agency, which had contributed to his earlier films, *The Hanging Garden* and *Beefcake*. "They said they would participate if I changed the story location to Canada," he says. "But while we were in prep in Manhattan, Nova Scotia [Film Development Corporation] was sending down a contingent of movie producers to try and forge co-production relationships between New York and Nova Scotia. Their interpretation of what a 'Nova Scotian' was was a lot looser than what Telefilm Canada's interpretation of what a 'Canadian' film was."

Sometimes, these differences of opinion can stymie a production. Fitzgerald says that on *The Hanging Garden*, there was a dispute between SODEC, Quebec's agency for cultural equity financing, and Telefilm Canada, another investor in the film, about terms of ownership and recoupment. "A philosophical difference," Fitzgerald says. Eventually, Telefilm Canada increased its own investment and effectively bought out Quebec. "Which is fine," Fitzgerald says, "but it's really surprising that these two government agencies, which were set up specifically to work together, aren't able to do so."

Bureaucratic disputes and delays posed such problems for *The Event's* production that Fitzgerald was forced to take some rash actions. "[During pre-production] we actually came to our wit's end and just started shooting," he says, "without having the money contracted to finish. Three days of rushes were compiled and sent around before a company called ThinkFilm thought it looked promising enough to purchase the rights in Canada and abroad." (Coincidentally, ThinkFilm is a company with American and Canadian offices.)

He pauses and sighs. "It was a *very* risky proposition."

But it was a risk that paid off. With the help of a handful of American investors, (Covington International and Flutie Entertainment get major billing), Fitzgerald was able to finish the film. He credits much of the project's momentum to the enthusiasm of the crew and their passion for the film's often-taboo subject. "We didn't pay for the cameras. We paid virtually nothing for lighting and

grip," he says. "The idea that it would be a high-quality project that people would need to be associated with [was important]; nobody making the film was doing it for profit. It was very touching."

BE GOOD, SMILE PRETTY

Perhaps the biggest thing to remember about fundraising, however, is to stay flexible and keep one's ears open. Odd problems—and anyone who has been on a film shoot knows that filmmaking often seems like nothing more than a string of increasingly odd problems—require odd solutions.

"The most valuable thing I solicited," says Tracy Doz



Tragos, director of the documentary *Be Good, Smile Pretty*, "was advice." Tragos says an especially valuable bit of advice came from Hank Rogerson, codirector of *Homeland*, who told her to steer clear of throwing lavish fundraisers. "He said that when all the expenses were added up, he only made \$35 [with his big party/fundraiser]," Tragos says.

But garage sales, she says, make sense for a couple of reasons. "When you say that it's for a film, people aren't as inclined to nickel-and-dime you. And it's also, frankly, a good sort of weird publicity thing. I got a great piece in the local paper."

The most practical advice Tragos received also might sound the most obvious, but it is invaluable. "I was trying to figure out what to put at the end of the trailer," she says. "And my editor and I were worried that [whatever message we came up with] would sound too much like a ransom note, like, 'Please send money now!'" A friend told her that she had to break down and simply not hesitate to "rattle the cup."

"And I have to say that it's my least favorite part of the whole process, but you can't be shy about it. If somebody says, 'Wow, this sounds like a great project, how can I help?', you can't pass up the opportunity to say, 'Well, you could write a check.'" □

Charlie Sweitzer is an LA-based writer and director. Most recently, he directed the book-on-tape version of the authorized biography of Eminem. His email address is charliesweitzer@yahoo.com.

Don Droz holding his daughter, Tracy, two weeks before his death in Vietnam, from *Be Good, Smile Pretty*.

Playing Niche

FUNDING SOURCES THAT CATER TO SPECIFIC INTEREST AND MINORITY GROUPS

By Sean Fitzell

Securing funds as an independent producer is often the most difficult and crucial aspect of successfully completing your vision. Money is out there for film and video projects from the government, nonprofits, corporations, private foundations, and individuals. If your project deals with issues of social concern, you may be able to draw from a number of different sources that advocate social change and/or stories that serve underrepresented communities. These sources may support filmmakers from, or stories about, those communities, which include African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender persons, and women.

The following is a list of just a few of the funders who are committed supporting filmmakers in these communities.



Corporation for Public Broadcasting— Minority Consortia

For more than twenty-five years, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) has been mandated by Congress to increase the diversity of programming on public television. CPB has complied with this directive primarily by providing development and production funds through five independent service organizations that develop projects to represent their communities. (CPB also acquires and distributes programs of interest to ethnic and racial minorities for broadcast on national public broadcasting stations.)

National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC)

NBPC funds film and video projects that depict the “experiences of the African Diaspora” and offer a unique and realistic view of black America. Both fiction and non-fiction projects are considered.

Grants: Development \$5,000-\$80,000.

Outreach: Average \$35,000.

Deadline: Contact NBPC.

Contact: NBPC 145 E. 125th St. Suite 3R,
New York, NY 10035, (212) 828-7588
Fax (212) 828-7930 www.nbpc.tv.

Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB)

LPB develops, acquires, and distributes original programming that addresses issues of the Latino population. All types of projects are considered: documentary, drama, comedy, shorts, animation, or mixed genres—in all stages of production. Student films, foreign-based and commercial projects are not eligible.

Grants: Development \$5,000-\$100,000.

Deadline: Contact LPB.

Contact: LPB 6777 Hollywood Blvd. Suite 512,
Los Angeles, CA 90028
(323) 466-7110, Fax (323) 466-7521
info@lpbp.org or www.lpbp.org.

Iran, Veiled Appearances, directed by Thierry Michel, funded by the Sundance Institute's Documentary Fund.

Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT)

NAPT supports media projects, including radio, web based programs, and television programs tailored for PBS broadcast, with content about or pertaining to Native American issues. NAPT also provides training opportunities, promotes information technologies, and builds partnerships to develop and implement telecommunications projects with tribal nations, Indian organizations, and native communities.

Grants: Open call \$50,000-\$100,000; Shorts up to \$25,000; Completion up to \$25,000.

Deadlines: Contact NAPT.

Contact: NAPT 1800 No 33 St, Lincoln, NE 68583 or PO Box 83111, Lincoln, NE 68501, (402) 472-3522 native@unl.edu or www.nativetelecom.org.

National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA)

Since 1990 NAATA has provided more than \$2 million to fund more than 150 projects that deal with the contemporary issues and changes in Asian American communities. Projects in development are not eligible.

Grants: Production \$20,000-\$50,000; Completion \$20,000.

Deadlines: Contact NAATA.

Contact: NAATA 145 Ninth Street, Suite 350, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 863-0814, Fax (415) 863-7428 mediafund@naatanet.org or www.naatanet.org.

Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC)

PIC funds the development of film and video projects by and about Pacific Islanders, including descendants of the indigenous peoples of Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and other Pacific islands.

Grants: Open call \$20,000-\$50,000 (production), 15,000-\$20,000 (development); Completion up to 50,000; Short Film Initiative up to \$10,000. The Travel initiative varies.

Deadlines: Contact PIC.

Contact: PIC 1221 Kapiolani Blvd, Suite 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814, (808) 591-0059, Fax (808) 591-1114 www.piccom.org

Independent Television Service (ITVS)

ITVS also receives funds from CPB. It looks for proposals that increase diversity on public television and present a range of subjects, viewpoints, and forms. The Local Independents Collaborating With Stations (LInCS) Fund provides matching funds for

partnerships between public television stations and independent producers.

Grants: Open call funds range from \$40,000-\$350,000. LInCS funds range from \$10,000-\$75,000. Completion funds range from \$5,000-\$60,000.

Deadlines: Contact ITVS.

Contact: ITVS 501 York Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 (415) 356-8383, Fax (415) 356-8391, itvs@itvs.org or www.itvs.org.

Showtime's Black Filmmaker Showcase

For ten years during Black History Month, Showtime has aired emerging African-American filmmakers on the Black Filmmakers Showcase. Three to five films are featured each February. The winning film receives a production grant for a short film to premiere during a later Showcase.

Grants: The winner receives a \$30,000 production contract.

Deadlines: The deadline was July 30, 2003.

Contact: Showtime's Black Filmmaker Showcase, Monique Randall, 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1500 & 1600, Los Angeles, CA 90024 www.sho.com/filmmaker_showcase/bfs02_index.cfm.

Showtime's Latino Filmmaker Showcase

For the last four years, Showtime has aired projects by up-and-coming Latino filmmakers on this program during Hispanic Heritage month, September 15 to October 15. The network solicits submissions throughout the year. The winner also receives a production grant for a short film to premiere on Showtime.

Grants: Winner receives a \$30,000 production contract.

Deadlines: May 15, 2004.

Contact: Sandra Avila, Showtime Networks Inc., 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1600, Los Angeles, CA 90024 sandra.avila@showtime.net or www.sho.com/latino filmmakers showcase.

Sundance Institute's Documentary Fund

The Sundance Institute acquired and committed to continuing the Soros Documentary Fund after it closed in 2001. It primarily funds "cinematic" documentaries that deal with contemporary issues of human and civil rights, freedom of expression, and social justice. It is open to American and foreign filmmakers, and

underrepresented communities are encouraged to apply.

Grants: Development up to \$15,000. Work In Progress average \$45,000-\$60,000. The maximum combined



grant \$75,000.

Deadline: None.

Contact: Sundance Documentary Fund, 8857 West Olympic Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211
sdf@sundance.org or www.sundance.org.

Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media

Named for the influential actor, singer, athlete, poet Paul Robeson, this program supports media activism and grassroots organizing by funding the pre-production and distribution of social issue film and video projects by local, state, national, or international organizations and individual media producers. All genres are considered, but they must address critical social and political issues in clear and creative ways. Grants are for pre-production or distribution; production is not funded.

Grants: \$5,000-\$20,000.

Deadlines: Applications accepted April 15 to May 15.

Contact: The Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media, Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, Suite 500, New York, NY 10012, (212) 529-5300 x307, Fax (212) 982-9272, trinh.duong@fex.org or www.fex.org.

Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation

This general art foundation offers a variety of fellowships. Each year the foundation chooses a specific discipline to focus on; in 2004-2005 it will be "New Media," which includes interactive, film, and video.

Grants: These vary according to the type of project.

Deadlines: Contact Mid-Atlantic.

Contact: Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, 201 N. Charles Street, Suite 401, Baltimore, MD 21201 (410) 539-6656, Fax (410) 837-5517
www.midatlanticarts.org.

Jerome Foundation

The foundation focuses on new work by emerging artists. Grants are for projects in their formative stages. In addition to film and video, Jerome also considers online and interactive media projects. Only artists who live and work in Minneapolis or New York City may apply. Students are not eligible.

Grants: Vary. First-time recipients must have a budget under \$75,000. There is no ceiling for past grantees.

Deadlines: There are no deadlines for submission.

Contact: Jerome Foundation, 125 Park Square Ct., 400 Sibley St., St. Paul, MN 55101-1928 (651) 224-9431, Fax (651) 224-3439
www.jeromefdn.org.

LEF Foundation—Moving Image Fund

LEF supports work in the visual arts, performing arts, new

media, literary arts, architecture, and design in the New England region and California. The Moving Image Fund is a three-year initiative by the Foundation's New England office to support film and video projects in the region. The fund supports all genres, such as animation, narrative, documentary, and experimental. The fund is looking for work of all genres that is artistic and compelling to a wide audience. Students are not eligible for grants.

Grants: Development up to \$5,000; Production up to \$25,000; Distribution up to \$5,000.

Deadlines: Contact LEF.

Contact: Lyda Kuth, Director, LEF New England, PO Box 382066, Cambridge, MA 02238-2066
www.lef-foundation.org/lef_funding/ne_funding_guidelines.htm#MovingImageFund.

National Foundation for Jewish Culture

Created in 1996, the Fund for Jewish Documentary Filmmaking supports documentaries that deal with Jewish contemporary issues, history, culture, and identity. The fund is for works-in-progress. Projects must be of standard broadcast length and intended for public broadcast. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

Grants: \$50,000 or fifty percent of the budget, whichever is less. Most grants are between \$20,000 and \$30,000.

Deadlines: March 4, 2004.

Contact: The National Foundation for Jewish Culture, 330 Seventh Avenue, 21st Fl., New York, NY 10001, (212) 629-0500, Fax (212) 629-0508
Grants@JewishCulture.org or www.jewishculture.org/film/film_fund.html.

The Roy W. Dean Film and Video Grants

The Roy W. Dean Film and Video Grants offers three awards each year, two in Los Angeles and one in New York City. Applicants do not have to live in these cities to apply. There are also writing, editing, and film grants available for residents of New Zealand. The fund is looking for films that are "unique and make a difference to society." (See page 29.)

Grants: Up to \$50,000 in goods and services each. New Zealand grants vary according to availability of services.

Deadlines: New Zealand: February 15, 2004; New York: April 30, 2004; Los Angeles: June 30.

Contact: From The Heart Productions, 1455 Mandalay Beach Road, Oxnard, CA 93035-2845
CaroleEDean@worldnet.att.net or www.fromtheheartproductions.com. □

For more information, see www.aivf.org/archives/0311/0311_fitzell.html

Sean Fitzell is a graduate student at NYU's school of journalism.

Facing page: Shaolin monk, Shi De Shan, from *Shaolin Ulysses: Kungfu Monks in America*, funded by ITVS.

Product Placement

GETTING NAME BRANDS ON THE SET

By Innes Smolansky

Ever since the first James Bond film featured Sean Connery driving an Aston Martin, companies have been actively looking to get their products into films. E.T.'s love of Reese's Pieces candy is credited with increasing the candy's sales by sixty-five percent. Ray-Ban's sales jumped fifty-five percent after Tom Cruise donned their sunglasses in *Risky Business*. And in the latest Bond film,

young, sophisticated, hip, and discriminating. Even if they are not the primary consumers of the product, winning them over can be very important for the product makers in the long term. The Chrysler Million Dollar Film Festival, which is produced by Hypnotic—a TV, film, and commercial production company—is a good example of a large company trying to connect with young, hard-to-find consumers. Other large com-

bility of the film. By using familiar brands or brands that have become cultural icons, the audience can have a shared experience and identify with the characters of the film.

Brand holders also derive many benefits from product placement. The company exposes their product and associates it with a certain lifestyle and positive image. As more households subscribe to TiVo and similar services, product placement is becoming even more important as a method of advertising. Placement of products in feature films is now becoming the most direct way for product makers to promote the product and the brand directly to an essentially captive audience.



If a scene with the product appears in the trailer—will that affect the price? If the product maker is providing cash up-front, what happens if, in the editing room, you decide to cut out the scenes with the product?

Die Another Day, seventy million dollars worth of product placement from twenty companies earned it the marketing industry nickname, *Buy Another Day*.

For independent filmmakers, the trick is to translate this benefit into product placement deals with the brand owners of the products. Of course, low-budget independent films rarely generate the audience numbers or celebrity opportunities that studio films do, but independent films have other attractive things to offer brand owners, even if the film doesn't turn out to be a big, fat *Blair Witch*. Independent films reach niche audiences that are often attractive to brand holders, even though these audiences are not usually attracted to studio films. This audience is often

panies such as Ford Motors, Coca-Cola, and BMW recently financed slates of short films produced by young filmmakers.

Filmmakers can benefit from product placement in different ways. In some cases, there may be direct payments for featuring products. The contribution may also be in the form of donations or loans of the product—cars, computers, or designer clothing. Locations such as bars, restaurants, or stores might be provided free of charge. Food or beverages to feed the cast and crew may be part of a deal with companies that produce these products. Films may also receive free exposure through product tie-ins. And, besides financial benefits, real products used in the film strengthen the reality and credi-

Television programming does not offer the same opportunities for product placement that films do, because while programs can be sponsored, there are strict laws regulating the relationship between brand owners and television producers. In the 1940s and early 1950s, product appearance on television was so scandalous, including under-the-table payments in exchange for on-air displays, that in the late 1950s, the Federal Communications Commission enacted the "payola laws." Today, payment for product placement on television is not permitted unless the featured brand is disclosed as a sponsor. Most television contracts expressly require producers and crew to verify that they have not accepted anything of value in

exchange for a promise to place certain products in the program. Brands may appear, however, if they are donated or if they are used for realistic effect.

The strictest rules concerning product placement apply to public television production. PBS specifically instructs producers to "scrupulously avoid product placement arrangements, i.e. deliberate or gratuitous appearance in the program of an underwriter's product or service in a way that draws attention to or features that product or service in any way whatsoever." In determining whether a certain underwriter is acceptable, PBS uses a set of rules and regulations, most notably the Editorial Control Test, the Perception Test, and the Commercialism Test. These tests help determine if the public will perceive that the underwriter has exercised editorial control; and if the placement of products suggests that the program is on public television principally because it promotes the underwriter's products, services, or other business interests. These rules are intended to protect and preserve the journalistic integrity of public television, and reinforce the accurate public perception that PBS is a free, non-commercial, and independent institution.

But theatrical releases of all sizes, even if they are later shown on TV (except PBS) are permitted to make deals for product placement. And it is not only brands with major name recognition that find product placement attractive. Small or new companies may also be evaluating the potential for bringing out a new line of products, but may not yet be in a position to spend large amounts of money for advertising or the large-scale product placement deals often required for studio film. These companies may consider a smaller product placement deal right for an independent film, especially if it has the same target audience as the placed product.

There are many other reasons why a smaller deal may be attractive for a company. Companies may be looking to reposition themselves in the market or improve their image. Foreign companies may be trying to break into the U.S. market. Some may only be looking to sell their products in metropolitan centers where the film will be shown—New York, San Francisco, and LA. Some films, especially international co-productions, may be looking for a way to re-introduce brands (French wines, chocolate and perfumes) that have lost their U.S. market appeal.

Once you find a company interested in a product placement arrangement with your production, it is important to define, in writing, all the terms of such arrangement. Disclose all the relevant information about the script and every scene in which the product will appear. Be specific about your obligations in relation to profiling the product, and what the brand will provide in return. If a scene with the product appears in the trailer—will that affect the price? If the product maker is providing cash up-front, what happens if, in the editing room, you decide to cut out the scenes with the product? If free products are being provided, who delivers them? Do they have to be returned? How many will be available? Can company representatives be present during the shoot? Can they watch the rough-cut of the film, or dailies of the scenes, or use other methods of verification of product exposure? All provisions regarding credits, logo, company name, size and placement should be covered in the agreement. It's also important to address which party is responsible for insuring the products. If you do not negotiate these issues before the shoot, it may be too late afterwards. ■

Innes Smolansky is an entertainment attorney specializing in representing independent filmmakers, writers, and performers. She can be reached at innes@filmlegal.com.

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Who Owns Culture?

MEDIA'S ROLE IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

By Ernesto S. Martinez

As culture becomes more of a commodity, certain questions about who owns culture have increased. With these questions come laws and lawsuits, and legislative wrangling has generated an increased public awareness. Two recent high profile events, the Supreme Court's upholding of the copyright term extension pass by Congress, and the

changes and the expansion of unregulated electronic media), implies that the liberal marketplace is best suited for producing a public sphere underwritten by stable and efficient commercial markets. In this scenario, the marketplace of goods conditions the marketplace of ideas. Likewise, legislative moves to support copyright term extensions suggest that public domain is

tion. An example of this model is when a family pays monthly cable rates in order to watch cable television. How does this differ from an independent media artist producing a collaborative work, where the subjects of the work participate in the production, and the finished work is shown in a public space in order to initiate conversation among community members about their community? What type of ownership is defined when a media artist "borrows" images from popular culture to make a critical film or video about his/her cultural history?

Cultural ownership implies a relationship between producers, con-

In rising opposition to these trends is a diverse group made up of independent media activists and organizations, universities and legal scholars, public advocacy organizations, elected officials, and an increasing number of the public, who are experiencing copyright law on a personal level for the first time.

FCC's ruling to raise the media ownership cap, have also increased discussion about public domain, intellectual property and the role these play in our society.

Questions of cultural ownership also lead to questions about access to production and consumption of culture. And by their very nature, these discussions are also about cultural citizenship and the public sphere. What role does or should media play in producing and supporting a democratic public sphere? Are broadcast media and the ancillary cable environment fulfilling their public interest obligations?

The FCC deregulation trend over the last forty years, and the trend towards copyright term extension over the same period, address these very questions in complex ways. The move to deregulate broadcast television (in light of technological

less important than broad legal fences that protect the intellectual property of license-holders of creative works. In other words, protection of the free speech rights of rights-holders trumps the protection of a different type of free speech, one that is inherent in the idea of a public domain. Together these two significant trends suggest the legal and legislative course currently set in the area of cultural ownership. At the same time, the appearance of a particular type of software architecture, such as peer-to-peer, that aids in connecting individuals via computers, has raised some poignant questions about the status of copyright and the kind of public sphere created by the deregulated media space.

So who owns culture? The marketplace defines cultural ownership through a simple economic transac-

sumers, and the creation of a public sphere. Over the past few years, the emergence of the new digital space, and the maturity of the information economy, have made this question salient on a very broad level. A great example of this conflict was the 1999 rise of Napster, its subsequent demise in 2002, and the continued emergence of other peer-to-peer (p2p) software programs, such as Kazaa, Morpheus, and Limewire.

The chief opponents of p2p, as well as the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), claim the issue is about respecting the law and participating as a good citizen or consumer. Interestingly, the issue is framed in terms of piracy and property theft, when the question, brought on by actual or potential rampant copyright infringement, is a larger one regarding

the social contract that constitutes copyright law between rights-holders and the public. But there is more to the arrival of broad scale interaction through p2p networks. The activity of p2p participants is not solely the downloading of copyrighted music files, but also the ability to upload files and disseminate them to other computers. This activity is upstream and downstream, whereas mass media is strictly a downstream phenomenon.

As the p2p question continues fomenting, the two above-mentioned trends signal a U.S. cultural policy that cultivates an already privatized media culture. The outcome of this policy could diminish the public sphere by creating less diversity in the media landscape, and by freezing the public domain.

However, in rising opposition to these trends is a diverse group made up of independent media activists and organizations, universities and legal scholars, public advocacy organizations, elected officials and an increasing number of the public, who are experiencing copyright law on a personal level for the first time. Their goal is to challenge these policies that are perceived as inimical to consumer's rights, noncommercial independent media spaces, and the health of a democratic public sphere.

The public domain is where all works rest after their limited terms of protection have expired. Here, they are available for all commercial and noncommercial uses. The main arguments of the opponents to the copyright extension were that extending ownership term limits results in a fallow public domain. A well-cultivated public domain allows for a greater number and diversity of actors to participate in cultural production and consumption by engaging with public domain works.

House Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) has introduced a bill entitled Public Domain Enhancement Act (PDEA) that aims to expand copyright fair

use exception. The PDEA calls for copyrighted works to fall into the public domain after fifty years if they are not registered yearly for the fee of \$1. Lofgren's proposal calls for a national registry of copyrighted works that would aid libraries, researchers, publishers, and creative workers in determining whether particular works are protected.

Congress has also stepped in to block the FCC's ruling to relax the media ownership rules. In July 2003, the House of Representatives voted 400-21 to block the FCC ruling to relax broadcast ownership of television stations. Similarly, Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.) invoked the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to completely overturn the Federal Communications Commission's ruling, which passed the Senate in September. The FCC rules are currently blocked by a stay issued by the US Court of Appeals pending litigation.

At the same time the FCC acknowledged the fiasco that radio consolidation has wrought in the wake of the 1996 deregulation of radio, and has since tightened radio ownership rules.

Large as these challenges to the FCC may be, it is important to put these legislative rebukes in perspective. Media concentration is already a done deal. There is a qualified irony here because even while media concentration has increased, there has been an expansion of the (unregulated) cable industry that has led to a greater need for programming content. As a result, there are a few venues for independent media at the national level. The Sundance Channel and the Independent Film Channel lead the way in their emphasis on independent media. HBO and Showtime have also reached out by programming film shorts. Although there are channels for the national distribution of independent voices on cable and PBS, the promise heralded by the arrival of cable in the late 1970s has been largely unfulfilled.

Perhaps to focus solely on a nation-

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al, centralized, downstream media structure is to entirely miss the point of independent ingenuity. Craig Baldwin, a media artist who works with media appropriation, montage techniques, and culture jamming, expresses this very point. For Baldwin, to focus on corporate media is to legitimize its claim that it is the center of culture. Baldwin's aesthetic and political tactics are to respond to his mediated cultural experiences in all their diversity. Indeed, Baldwin's work in media, and his organization of a microcinema space in San Francisco, is emblematic of the issues being discussed here. Another media artist, Alex Rivera, based in New York, emphasizes a need for broad fair use exceptions in order for emerging media artists with few resources to be able to comment on a media culture that dominates and shapes perceptions.

Independent media has always demanded access, localism, and a diversity of voices. (See Deirdre Boyle's *Subject to Change*, Dee Dee Halleck's *Handheld Visions*, Chon Noriega's *Shot in America*, and Renee Tajima's *The Anthology of Asian Pacific American Film and Video*.)

The two regulatory events that are furthering the enclosure of corporate media culture are part of the larger trend toward limiting access to the consumption of culture. For independent media artists, access to media culture as a basic resource is a necessity. Given that media culture is a dominant part of one's experience, many media artists consider the mediated culture to be raw source material from which to draw. "If we want to do media, we have to have access to tools, history, our past . . . you're not given access to your own culture," emphasizes media artist (and AIVF board member) Liz Canner who, with John Ewing, produced *Symphony of a City*. Canner wants her media practice to integrate communities and facilitate public dialogue about individual concerns.

Rivera agrees, but he emphasizes a



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.

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The oldest and largest national moving-image media organization, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides support for individuals and advocacy for the media arts field. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, AIVF offers a broad slate of education, information, and resource programs for members and non-members alike.

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different dimension of this necessity—the need for representation for people of color and others who have few resources. These groups too, says Rivera, need to have access to their mediated experiences as part of their responses to their social envi-

public. The activities taking place within the p2p networks highlight this extreme imbalance, which is also reflected in corporate media perceptions of p2p networks as threats to their control over the production of media culture.

The question that is gaining some currency is whether copyright law in its present form is fair, just, and equitable given the level of private media concentration, new technologies, and the need for a democratic public sphere.

ronment and history. Rivera states that the prevalence of copyright law is in the front of media-makers' minds, which could limit their expressions. While showing his work at a university, the first questions that Rivera was asked were about licensing rights for the images depicted in his work.

Independent media artists acknowledge that creative works need to have some sort of copyright protection so that individuals can make a living as artists. The extended term limits and the narrowing fair use exceptions are still up for debate. Copyright law provides the legal fences around intellectual property, and thus balances the interests of individual artists against the general public. The value inherent in this balance is the relationship between individual benefit and public good. The question that is gaining some currency is whether copyright law, in its present form, is equitable, given the level of private media concentration, the emergence of new technologies, and the need for a democratic public sphere. FCC deregulation enhances the copyright regime, and vice versa, because of the extreme lack of balance between copyright-holders, independent media, and the general

P2p file sharing dynamics provide an image of a potentially decentralized, democratic, independent infrastructure where the divide between producers and consumers is crossed. Imagine p2p networking among independent media organizations nationwide, or perhaps beyond national borders. The way that the p2p question in the mainstream media excludes discussions of alternatives to commercial media indicates how dominant the corporate media infrastructure of cultural production and consumption is, and how it affects perceptions of alternative models. The medium is the message.

Media activists have long understood this, but the new visibility of p2p architecture, and the individual experiences of millions of individuals, may provide a larger public understanding of the issues surrounding independent media. ■

For more info on these issues, see:
www.eff.org
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Ernesto S. Martinez is a Ph.D. candidate at UCLA. His work focuses on questions of independent media and race.

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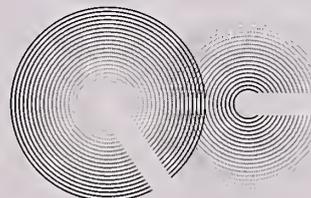
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Festivals

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 (e.g., Jan. 1st for March issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 16-21, MI. Deadline: Oct. 1, Nov. 15, Dec. 10 (final). Fest welcomes all cats & genres of independent filmmaking. Founded: 1963. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Awards: \$18,000 in cash prizes awarded. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, DVD, Beta SP. Preview on VHS, DVD or 16mm. Entry Fee: \$30 (early); \$35; \$40 (final). Contact: Festival, 203 E. Ann St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 995-5356; fax: 995-5396; aafilmfest@aol.com; www.aafilmfest.org.

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: Ryan Van Bidder, 110 East Hallam, Suite 102, Aspen, CO 81611; (970) 925-6882; fax: (970) 925-1967; shorts fest@aspenfilm.org; www.aspenfilm.org.

BIG SKY DOC FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 20-25, MT. Deadline: Dec. 3. Held at the restored Roxy Theater in downtown Missoula, Montana. The competitive event is open to non-fiction films & videos of all styles, genres, & lengths. Official selections w/ production dates prior to January 1 of previous yr. are eligible for entry but will screen out of com-

petition. Cats: doc. Awards: Best doc feature, short & Montana doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DVD, S-VHS, Beta SP, Mini-DV, DVCPPro, DVCam. preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: \$20 (shorts); \$30 (features). Contact: Festival, 801 Sherwood St. Ste. B, Missoula, MT 59802; bigsky@highplains.org; www.highplainsfilms.org/festival/index.htm.

BLACK MARIA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, January-June, NJ. Deadline: November 20. 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." 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: 200-3490; blackmariafest@aol.com; www.blackmariafilmfestival.com.

BROOKLYN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, June 4-13, NY. Deadline: Nov. 15; March 15 (Final). Annual fest (formerly The Williamsburg

Entry Fee: \$30; \$50 (final). 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.

CELLULOID BAINBRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. (date TBA), WA. Deadline: Dec. 1. Fest accepts films and videos about Bainbridge Island, or featuring a Bainbridge Islander in the cast or crew for a free screening at the historic Lynwood Theater. Cats: any style or genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, DVD, 1/2", CD-ROM, Hi8. Preview on VHS, CD or DVD. Entry Fee: \$15. Contact: Festival, 221 Winslow Way W., Ste. 201, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110; (206) 842-0985; dthorne@ix.netcom.com; www.artshum.org

CUCALORUS FILM FESTIVAL, MARCH 17-21, NC. Deadline: Dec. 10 (early); Jan 10 (final). Cucalorus is a non-competitive showcase of independent features, shorts & documentaries from around the world. The fest is held in historic downtown Wilmington, NC, one of the leading film production cities in the US. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, any style or genre. Awards: Non-competitive. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$20(early); \$30 (final). Contact: Dan Brawley,



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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: \$50,000 in services & cash. 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 (non-returnable).

420 Orange Street, Wilmington, NC 28401; (910) 343-5995; fax: (910) 343-5227; info@cucalorus.org; www.cucalorus.org.

DC INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL & MARKET, March 4-11, DC. Deadline: Nov. 15; Dec. 15 (final). Fest's mission is "to present a yearly event where industry professionals & the general public come to see the lat-

est, most exciting films from the United States & abroad." Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, animation, doc. Awards: \$50,000 in cash & prizes. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$10 shorts (up to 30 min.); \$20 features. Contact: c/o MediaFusion, 2950 Van Ness St. NW, Ste. 728, Washington, DC 20008; (202) 537-9493; fax: 686-7168; dcindiefilmfest@aol.com; www.dciiff.org

DURANGO FILM FESTIVAL, March 6-14, CO. Deadline: Oct. 1; Dec. 1 (final). Juried 9-day fest showcases the work of filmmakers that "embody the passion and distinctive voices that are found only in independent film." In addition, the fest will present educational salons, panel discussions, and hosts a variety of parties and receptions. Founded: 2001. Cats: feature, short, doc, student, animation, experimental, children, regional. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVCAM, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$40 (features); \$30 (shorts, under 50 min); \$20 (student). Final: \$45 (features); \$35 (shorts); \$25 (student). Contact: Sofia von Surksun, 656 Main Ave, Durango, CO, USA 81301; (970)259-2291; fax: (720) 528-8115; nfo@durangofilmfestival.com; www.durangofilmfestival.com.

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-14, FL. Deadline: Oct. 31; Dec. 5 (final). 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, HD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (short); \$35 (features); \$15 late fees. Contact: Matthew Curtis, Program Dir., 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32751; (407) 629-8587; fax: 629-6870; filmfest@enzian.org; www.floridafilmfestival.com.

FULL FRAME DOC FILM FESTIVAL, April 1-4, NC. Deadline: Oct. 1, Nov. 1, Dec. 1 (final). 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 between Jan. of previous yr. & Dec. of current year. Films cannot be longer than 180 min.. Cats:

doc. Formats: 35mm. preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35; \$50 (late). Contact: Connie Di Cicco, 212 West Main St.; Ste. 104, Durham, NC 27701; (678) 309-3483; connie@fullframefest.org; www.fullframefest.org.

GEN ART FILM FESTIVAL, April 14-20, NY. Deadline: Dec. 12 (early); Jan. 26 (final). Fest is curated, non-competitive 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. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 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.

HI/LO FILM FESTIVAL, April, CA. Deadline: November 1 (early); December 1 (late). Non-competitive fest "celebrates films w/ high concepts & low budgets for the adventurous & disenchanting." Festival seeks films that cannot be found at the multiplex: films that are more smart than slick, that privilege ideas over commerce; that prove great filmmaking has more to do w/ brains than wallets. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: super 8, 35mm, 16mm, digital, Hi8, 3/4", VHS, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (early); \$20 (late). Contact: Festival, Box 170309, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 558-7721; info@hilofilmfestival.com; www.hilofilmfestival.com.

KEY WEST INDIE FEST, April 1-4, FL. Deadline: Dec. 31. 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 1000 (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 \$10.00. Contact: Micheal Carr, 415 Mountain Village Blvd. #1031, Telluride, CO 81435; 970/ 728-3747; festival@keywestindiefest.com; www.keywestindiefest.com.

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LA CINEMA FE - LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK, March 1-8, NY. Deadline: Dec. 31. Fest's mission is to promote a wider & deeper understanding of the roots, life & diverse cultures of the Spanish & Portuguese speaking communities in Latin America, the United States, Spain & Portugal. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, 90 Convent Ave., Ste. 42, New York, New York 10027; (212) 281-5786; lacinemafe@yahoo.com; www.lacinemafe.org.

MIAMI GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, April 25-May 4, 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. 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; festivalinfo@the-beach.net; www.miamigaylesbianfilm.com.

NASHVILLE INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 26-May 2, TN. Deadline: Oct. 31; Nov. 26; Dec. 15. 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. Founded: 1969. Cats: incl. short narrative, animation, doc, feature, student, experimental, young filmmakers, TV (episodic and 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: \$35/\$40/\$45 (under 60 min.); \$50/\$55/\$60 (over 60 min.). Contact: Festival, Box 24330, Nashville, TN 37202; (615) 742-2500; fax: 742-1004; info@nashvillefilmfestival.org; www.nashvillefilmfestival.org

NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 3-13, NY. Deadline: Dec. 19 (early); Feb. 16 (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, . 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, 139 Fulton St. Ste PH-3, New York, NY 10038; (212) 571-2170; fax: 571-2179; info@newfestival.org; www.newfestival.org.

NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, March 10-16, NY. Deadline: Nov. 15; Dec. 1 (final). NYC's premiere showcase for films that go beyond mainstream expectations and commercial concerns. VARIETY calls the fest "the outer fringes of independent cinema." Fest seeks "innovation, experimentation, documentation, animation, revelation and reverberation" and "movies that go beyond all expectations, including ours". Founded: 1994. Cats: narrative feature, narrative short, doc, experimental, animation, , short, feature. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", super 8, Beta, mini-DV. Preview on VHS/DVD. Entry Fee: \$30; \$35. Contact: Kendra Gaeta, 195 Chrystie Street #503 , New York, NY 10002; (212) 614-2775; fax: 614-2776; info@nyuff.com; www.nyuff.com

NO DANCE FILM & MULTIMEDIA FESTIVAL, Jan. 17-23, UT. Deadline: Dec. 12. 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, short, animation, music video. Formats: DVD. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$35. Contact: James Boyd, festival director, 1023 N. Orange Dr, Hollywood, CA 90038; (310) 512-7988; boyd@nodance.com; www.nodance.com.

PALM SPRINGS INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 8-19, 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. Approximately 200 films from 60+ countries. 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. Founded: 1990. Cats: feature, doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$50. Contact: Rhea Lewis-Woodson, 1700 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite #3, Palm Springs, CA 92262; (760) 322-2930; fax: 322-4087; info@psfilmfest.org; www.psfilmfest.org.

ROCHESTER INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, May 1-3, NY. Deadline: Nov. 29, 2002 (early); Feb. 14 (final). Annual fest is the longest-running film event dedicated to the art of short film & video. Each fest incl. 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. 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 ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL, March 3-7, TX. Deadline: Dec. 1. The country's longest running int'l Chicano/Latino film & video fest will feature four days of film screenings, workshops & panels at the historic Guadalupe Theater & in venues San Antonio. Fest will incl. premieres, workshops, panels & special screenings of videos produced by well-established & emerging filmmakers. Founded: 1978. Cats: short, feature, doc, animation, experimental, youth media. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$25; \$15 (students: high school, college & community youth training programs). Contact: Catherine Herra, Dir. of Media Arts, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, 1300 Guadalupe St, San Antonio, TX, USA 78207; (210) 271-3151 x32; fax: 271-3480; cinefestival@guadalupeculturalarts.org; www.guadalupe.culturalarts.org/media.html.

SAN DIEGO LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, March 11-21, CA. Deadline: Nov. 30. The longest running annual Latino/Chicano film & video fest in S. CA. Award-winning films/videos from throughout the US, Mexico, Latin America have been screened. As in previous years, fest will incl. screenings throughout San Diego & Tijuana

community, discussions w/ filmmakers & catalog of all work screened. Looking for works by Latinos &/or about the Latino experience. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (shorts); \$25 (Features). Contact: Ethan van Thillo, c/o Media Arts Center San Diego, 921 25th St, San Diego, CA 92102; (619) 230-1938; fax: 230-1937; sdfff@sdlatinofilm.com; www.sdlatinofilm.com.

SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 6-14, CA. Deadline: Nov. 17; Dec 15 (final). Fest seeks short films in any genre and completed in any year. Innovative and non-traditional work is encouraged. Max. running time is 30 minutes. Cats: short. Awards: Cash juried awards. Formats: Super 8, 8mm, 1/2", 16mm, DV, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30; \$40 (final). Contact: Festival, 800 Chestnut St, San Francisco, CA 94133; (415) 771-7020; fax: 749-4590; filmfestival@sfaia.edu

SANTA BARBARA INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 30-Feb. 8, CA. Deadline: Nov. 27. Fest is "dedicated to enriching local culture & raising consciousness of film as an art form". It presents American Independent, Spanish & Latin American, European, World & Doc cinema. Founded: 1986. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DigiBeta, Beta SP, DVD, HD. Preview on VHS (NTSC & PAL). Entry Fee: \$35/\$40 (shorts under 30 min.); \$40/\$45 (features). Contact: Candace Schermerhorn, 2064 Alameda Padre Serra, Suite 120, Santa Barbara, CA 93103; (805) 963-0023; fax: 962-2524; info@sbfilmfestival.org; www.sbfilmfestival.org.

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST FILM FESTIVAL, March 12-20, TX. Deadline: Nov. 3 (early); Dec. 1 (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 last 2 years & must not have previously screened in Austin, TX to be eligible for consideration. 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: Matt Dentler, Sr. Programmer, P.O. Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 467-7979; fax: 467-0754; film@sxsw.com; www.sxsw.com/film.

SPINDLETOP/LAMAR UNIVERSITY FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 31-Feb. 2, TX. Deadline: Dec. 17. Annual fest is dedicated to bringing to light

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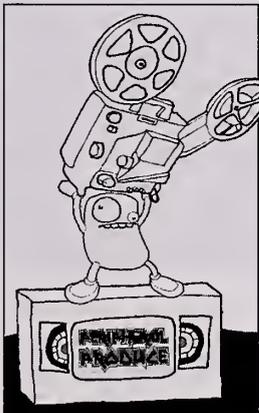
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the work of new & emerging filmmakers. Cats: experimental, feature, narrative, "1st time/novice" filmmaker, music video, animation, "old timers". Formats: 16mm, super 8, DigiBeta, Beta SP, 1/2", S-VHS, DV. Entry Fee: \$20; \$15 (student). Contact: O'Brien Stanley, Dept. of Communication/Lamar University, P.O. Box 10550, Beaumont, TX 77710; (409) 880-7222; stanleyoo@hal.lamar.edu; www.spinifest.org.

TAMBAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 23-25, FL. Deadline: Dec. 20. Festival strives to present work to the public, potential distributor & other filmmakers, as well as creating a film forum for Florida filmmaking. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35 (35mm); \$30 (video formats); \$25 (student). Contact: TFFV, 16002 Saddle Creek Dr., Ste. A, Tampa, FL 33618; (813) 964-9781; Tambayfilm@yahoo.com; www.tambayfilmfest.com.

TIBURON INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, March 12-18, CA. Deadline: Dec. 1. Located just north of San Francisco, Fest is a showcase for "int'l film art & contemporary trends." Founded: 2001. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Best of prize in all cats plus audience award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 544, Tiburon, CA 94920; (415) 381-4123; fax: 388-4123; info@tiburonfilmfestival.com; www.tiburonfilmfestival.com.

U.S. COMEDY ARTS FESTIVAL, March 3-7, CO. Deadline: Dec. 5. 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: None. Contact: Attn: Film Program, 2049 Century Park East, Ste. 4200, L.A., CA 90067; (310) 201-9595; fax: 201-9445; kevin.haasarud@hbo.com; www.hbocomedyfestival.com.

WISCONSIN FILM FESTIVAL, April 1-4, WI. Deadline: Dec 5; Dec 19 (final); Student: Jan 23. Presented by the University of Wisconsin - Madison Arts Institute. The fest features talks, panels, filmmaker discussions and showcases the work of Wisconsin filmmakers. Cats: feature, doc, short, student. Awards: Jury prizes in each category (Student/Wisconsin's Own). 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

WOMEN OF COLOR FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Deadline: Nov. 3; Dec. 1(final). Fest aims to provide a progressive showcase of films created by an underrepresented sector of the film industry. Films may be of any length, genre & format, & must be less than 3 years old. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, c/o Pacific Film Archives, 2625 Durant Ave, Berkeley, CA 94720; (510)642-1412; wocfilmproject@uclink.berkeley.edu; www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/pfa_programs/women_of_color.

INTERNATIONAL

BANGKOK INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 22-Feb. 2, Thailand. Deadline: Nov. 15, Dec. 1. Premiere discovery film fest of Asia accepts int'l shorts, features and docs. Fest will host opening and closing galas, panel discussions & underground film program. Cats: feature, short, doc. Awards: competition for Best Feature, Doc & Audience Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video. Preview on VHS (NTSC / PAL). Entry Fee: \$40; \$65 (final). Contact: Jennifer Stark, 9107 Wilshire Blvd., Mezzanine Level, Los Angeles, CA, Thailand 90210; 011 66 2 259 3112; fax: 66 2 259 2987; info@bangkokfilm.org; www.bangkokfilm.org.

BRANDON FILM FESTIVAL: 30 BELOW, March 15, Canada. Deadline: Dec. 31. For a film or video to be eligible for the 2000 30 Below competition, either of the producer or the director of the film/video must be a Canadian Citizen and have been born after Jan. 1 1974. Previously released productions are eligible if the director or producer currently meets the age requirement. The fest invites entries of both feature-length productions (31 min. & up) and shorts (under 30 min.). Formats: Beta, 16mm, 35mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30 (Cdn). Contact: Festival, Box 21084, West End P.O. Brandon, MB, Canada R7B 3W8; (204) 729-9977; info@filmfest.mb.ca; www.filmfest.mb.ca.

CRETEIL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, March 12-21, France. Deadline: Nov. 10. Films must be directed or co-directed by women; completed since March 1 of

previous year; not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV or shown at other French fests. Student productions will NOT be considered. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Fest pays for filmmakers accommodation (3 days) & round-trip shipping for films selected. Founded: 1977. Cats: doc, animation, experimental, feature. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC only). Entry Fee: None. 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; films femmes @wanadoo.fr; www.filmsdefemmes.com.

FILM EXCHANGE - NSI'S CANADIAN FILM FESTIVAL, March 2-6, Canada. Deadline: Nov. 14. Formerly Local Heroes Canadian Film Festival has a new name-FilmExchange: NSI's Canadian Film Festival. It's Canada's largest film fest dedicated to Canadian films, & to bringing Canadian filmmakers & audiences together to exchange stories, ideas & experiences. Founded: 1986. Cats: Short, Feature. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20. Contact: Bill Evans, Festival Coordinator, Nat'l Screen Institute of Canada, 206-70 Arthur St., Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3B 1G7; (204) 956-7800; fax: (780) 425-8098; filmexchange@nsi-canada.ca; www.nsi-canada.ca.

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 incl. historical aspects. Founded: 1987. Cats: Any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Awards: non-competitive. Formats: All formats accepted, 35mm, 16mm, S-VHS, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta, U-matic. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. 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.

ONE WORLD INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL, April 15-22, Czech Republic. Deadline: Nov. 15. Fests goal is "to present high quality doc films in cinemas, on the big screen & by doing so to promote doc filmmaking". Cats: doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video. Entry Fee: None. Contact: One World Festival/ People in Need Foundation, Sokolská 18, Praha 2, Czech Republic 120 00; 42 (0) 226 200439; tereza.porybna @oneworld.cz; www.oneworld.cz.

Films/Tapes Wanted

By Jessica McDowell

Noncommercial notices and screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Commercial notices are billed at classified rates. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Jan. 1 for March issue, as Jan/Feb is a double issue). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending.

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ARTHOUSE FILMS & DOCS WANTED for domestic & international distribution. For consideration, please send tape to: Passion River, GreeneStreet Film Center, 9 Desbrosses St, 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10013. 212-966-5877; www.PassionRiver.com.

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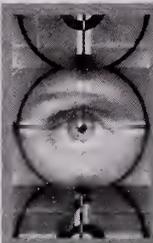
NEW DAY FILMS seeks energetic independent film and videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatrical markets. If you want to maximize your profits while working within a remarkable community

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Submissions accepted on VHS NTSC 1/2" or on CD-R as a QuickTime movie. Send to AFPV, 222 Bundy Road, Ithaca, NY 14850. Send a self-addressed stamped postcard to confirm receipt of your video. Deadline is Nov. 1, 2003. \$5 entry fee per submission, 3 submissions per entrant. For entry forms and more info, go to www.AFPV.net. E-mail us, at justin@AFPV.net or call 718-388-3554.

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, The Alternative Screen: A Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS viewing tape, press kit (any written background materials), cover letter



Ocularis

Ocularis began in 1996 as a rooftop screening series for film and video makers working in largely underrepresented genres, such as documentary, experimental, and video art. Since then it has moved to its permanent home in Brooklyn's Galapagos Arts Space, where screenings are held weekly, often incorporating live events, music, and new media into the programming. This month, check out "War Games: Digital Gaming and The U.S. Military"—a multimedia presentation on the historical relationships between the video game industry and the U.S. military, by *Village Voice* writer and New York Underground Film Festival director Ed Halter. Also this month, "Superocheros" presents four films that represent the richness and diversity of Super 8 filmmaking in Mexico. See listing for more information.

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO. Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands, plus royalties to sustain your program. 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.

MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING

AMERICA'S FUNNIEST POLITICAL VIDEOS (AFPV) is screening humorous political videos in early 2004 in NY and San Fran. Seeking videos of funny protests, pre-produced videos on political topics, cartoons, funny & political music videos, subversive/political comedy routines, etc. Videos must be in English, or subtitled, under 10 min.

w/ contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, L.A., CA 90028. Tel.: (323) 466-3456 x115; fax: 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

BASEMENT FILMS of Albuquerque, NM, is a mobile, volunteer-run venue for experimental, underground & other under-represented forms of small-gauge (8mm, 16mm) film & video making. To screen your film work with us, send a VHS preview tape & any written mat. about it and yourself to BASEMENT FILMS, P.O. Box 7669, ALBQ, NM 87194. We pride ourselves in screening work in unique locations, so if you have a suggestion for your work in this regard, make a suggestion. Contact: (505) 842-9977; www.basementfilms.org.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. For more info call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

DAHLIA'S FLIX & MIX, a weekly showcase of new film & music held on Tuesdays at NY's Sugar, is seeking submissions. Showcases fresh and previously undistributed film & video work, as well as DJs spinning great music. No guest list, cover charge, or submission fee. For more info, contact dsmith@independentfilm.com or stop by Sugar any Tuesday evening (doors open 7pm, screenings begin 8pm). To submit your film, please send a VHS or DVD copy and a brief synopsis to: Dahlia Smith, c/o SUGAR, 311 Church St., New York, NY 10013.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned feature films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience (dialogue must be subtitled). Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

DIGITAL CAFE SERIES seeks videos (shorts & features) ranging from social-issue docs to experimental video for our ongoing biweekly screenings. Youth-produced videos (20 min. or fewer) may also be entered into the Young Videomakers Program at the Hamptons Int'l Film Festival. VHS only. Send S.A.S.E. if you'd like your video returned. For more info, contact Emily or Maggie at (845) 485-4480; emily@childrensmediaproject.org; www.childrensmediaproject.org.

ECHO PARK FILM CENTER microcinema seeking submissions to screen for weekly Thursday evening cinema. Non-Hollywood documentary, animation & experimental films & videos. We do not screen feature length narratives. Filmmakers receive an honorarium. Contact: Echo Park Film Center, 1200 N. Alvarado St., LA, CA, 90026; (213)484-8846; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.echoparkfilmcenter.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, any genre, to be screened at our 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

Flicker encompasses a Super 8 & 16mm showcase held in Ashville, Athens, Chapel Hill, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Richmond & Bordeaux, France. Film grants of \$100 to filmmakers are also offered through some groups. Send a short proposal to the Flicker nearest you. See the website for a list of local Flickers: www.flickeraustin.com.

THE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER'S SHOWCASE is a monthly film series dedicated to supporting the independent voice in video & film production. Open to independent video & filmmakers of any genre. Call for entries for the 2003-2004 film series will continue through the duration of the season. Also seeking quality films to showcase at www.FilmSeven.com. For more information contact filmseven@aol.com; Tel: (866) 266-8435.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in Urban Mediamakers magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE, a monthly microcinema screening program of int'l short films, videos & digital works, seeking short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly screening pro-

gram. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact: Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St., San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS LOS ANGELES seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. Films can be any length/year of production. Films without distribution only. No entry fee. Keep press kit to a minimum: synopsis, director's bio, 1 production photo. Submissions preferred on DVD; VHS (NTSC) & Mini DV also accepted. Send submissions to New Filmmakers, P.O. Box 48469, Los Angeles, CA 90048. For more info, e-mail newfilmmakersla@yahoo.com; www.newfilmmakers.com/LA%20call_for_entries.htm.

OCULARIS provides a forum for film & video makers to exhibit their work at Brooklyn's Galapagos Art & Performance Space. All works are considered for programming in the weekly series, travelling programs & other special projects. Local film/video makers can submit works under 15 min. to Open Zone, a quarterly open screening. Nat'l/int'l works & medium length works (15-45 min.) will be considered for curated group shows. For submission guidelines & other info, visit www.ocularis.net; shortfilms@ocularis.net.

OTHER CINEMA, San Fran's 20-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal non-fiction, of any length, for its weekly screening series. Send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks shorts (under 45 min.) 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 & an application form visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-

min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473. For questions call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

SPARK VIDEO: BEACON seeking work for 2003-2004 programming year. Deadline: Ongoing, early entries given preference. All independent/non-commercial work under 15 min. accepted. Int'l submissions encouraged. Formats accepted: VHS(NTSC only) and MiniDV or DVCAM (NTSC or PAL). Include synopsis, bio, CV & contact information. SASE required for tape return. Send materials to: Joshua Katcher - Video Programmer, Spark Video: Beacon, Fusion Media, 282 Katonah Ave. #148, Katonah, NY 10536; scoot@tele-base.net.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypicture.club.org.

TRUE STORIES is a sneak preview for new documentaries that challenge traditional documentary form. It runs monthly, February-September, screenings held the 3rd Wed. of every month at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Any length accepted, VHS or DVD format. No deadline, tapes held on a rolling basis until entire series is programmed. A modest honorarium is paid and the maker should be in attendance. For more info contact Gail Silva, Film Arts Foundation, 145 9th St. Ste. 101, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760 x315; www.filmarts.org/exhibition/truestories.html.

VIEWNAPPY'S HOMEMADE MUSIC VIDEO FESTIVAL: Monthly screening parties, & finalists will be entered in quarterly video slams. Music based submissions, 15 min. or under. No deadline. Acceptable formats: VHS/DVD (preferred), Beta SP/digi, MiniDV, Hi-8; email formats: Quicktime, Mpeg, Flash, SWA. Include a short artist bio & label tapes with your name, title, and contact info. Send to: Viewnappy, c/o Final Cut, 118 W. 22nd St. 7th floor, New York, NY 10011. For more info, visit www.viewnappy.com.

TOURING PROGRAMS

RUNNING FREE, a touring collaborative video installation presented by Montreal's View 72, seeks shorts (5 min. or fewer) of a

single person running continuously. Format must be mini-DV, but send VHS for preview. Immaculate_conception@view72.com; www.view72.com.

THE HIP HOP FILM FEST TOUR is an ongoing event hitting major cities & cultural centers on a global level. Organizers are indie filmmakers looking to share their visual documents of the vibrant Hip-Hop culture and connect with other mediamakers. Deadline: Ongoing. For more information visit www.hiphopfilmfest.com, email Info@HipHopFilmFest.com; or call (866) 206-9071 x9211.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY HISTORIC SITE in PA seeks artists for 2004 season exhibition at the site. Some funding avail. for media arts. Deadline: Nov. 6. To request an application, or schedule an orientation tour, contact Brett Bertolino at (215) 236-5111 ex. 12, or at bb@EasternState.org, or www.easternstate.org.

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

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 2003/2004 season. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact UICA Race St. Gallery, 41 Sheldon Blvd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; (616) 454-7000; fax 459-9395; www.uica.org.

SHOWCASES

DOCUCLUB is seeking submissions for its In-the-Works program, a monthly documentary rough-cut screening series in New York City. If you urgently need constructive feedback and want a chance to network with your peers, visit www.docuclub.org for details, or contact Liz Ogilvie: (212) 874-1878.

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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; or email www.finishingpictures.com.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

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.

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast. 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.

FASTSHOOTERS is accepting short feature films, animations and videos to assemble in a TV-broadcast-length collection for pitch to networks. All mediums and genres. For more information www.fastshooters.com.

FILMFINDS, KSC-TV's new showcase of independent films, now seeks work for broadcast in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Only feature-length narrative films considered. Work must have played in at least 2 juried film fests & cannot have had a wide release or previously been broadcast on network TV. For more info & a downloadable appl. visit www.mnfilm.org; filmfinds@mnfilm.org.

INDIE FILM SHOWCASE, the award-winning Twin Cities cable showcase, accepts ongoing submissions. Programs run 7-8 p.m. every Saturday & Sunday for a month. No fees. Send your work in any format (Beta, 3/4, Mini, DVCPRO, the 8's, 1/2") & a S.A.S.E. to: Indie Film Showcase, 2134 Roth Pl., White Bear Lake, MN 55110. For a release form & more info visit www.proletariatpictures.com.

THE SHORT LIST is an int'l showcase of short films that airs on PBS, Cox Cable & Movieola. Licenses all genres, 30 sec. to 25 mins. Produced in association with Eastman Kodak & Cox Channel 4. Awards 5 Kodak

product grants annually. Submit on VHS or DVD. Appl. form avail. on www.theshortlist.com or www.theshortlistv.com; fax (619) 462-8266; shortlist@mail.sdsu.edu.

SOUTHERN LENS: Broadcast on the first Thursday of each month, the series is one of SCETV's highest rated local programs. Seeking Southern indie filmmakers/films about the South for 2004 schedule. Deadline Dec. 1, 2003. Southern Lens is open to programs in any genre, including drama, documentary, docudrama, animation or innovative combinations. Contact Craig Ness at 803-737-3424; ness@scetv.org; or Amy Shumaker at 803-737-3433; shumaker@scetv.org for a submission form or with questions. Materials can be sent to: Craig Ness; Southern Lens; South Carolina ETV; 1101 George Rogers Blvd.; Columbia, SC 29201.

VIDEOHYPE TV is producing a cable public access 13-week show to highlight indie films in a video-bio format. Show up to 15 min of your work w/ your contact info. Show will be seen in Chicago IL, CA & NY. For submission application and more info, or send email to daproducer2003@yahoo.com.

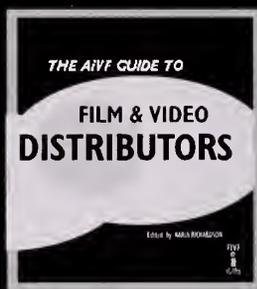
WEBCASTS

TURBULANCE is a project of New Radio and Performing Arts, Inc., a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that commissions net art works by emerging and established artists. Rolling deadline. Proposals can be in the form of text in the body of the email, or an attached RTF file. Email proposals to: newradio@si.rr.com. For more info, www.somewhere.org.

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine and showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the web. Seeks works created in Flash and Director as well as traditional animations & videos fewer than 10 min. in length to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

Members can visit
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Notices

By Jessica McDowell

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Jan. 1 for March issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

COMPETITIONS

SCRIPTAPALOOZA TV Television Writing Competition, is noted as "One of the Best" by Entertainment Weekly Magazine. We accept 1 hour spec scripts, 1/2 Hour spec scripts & original pilots. The winners in each category will be considered by Scriptapalooza's outstanding list of participants. Deadline for submission is Nov. 17, 2003. Winners will be announced Feb. 17, 2004. Visit www.scriptapaloozaTV.com for details or call (323) 654.5809.

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, you must have a film, 30 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St.) during operating hours, or get in touch w/ Jim at (212) 254-7107; jim@twoboots.com.

BACKSEAT FILM FESTIVAL is a rock-n-roll underground film festival that both tours nationally with the Vans Warped Tour and holds screening series in various cities and at quarterly major festivals. All categories, budgets, and skill levels are welcome. Rolling deadline. Entry fees: \$10 for short (0-29 min.); \$15 for featurette (30-59 min.); \$20 for feature (60+ min.) Prizes vary. Screening and preview either VHS or DVD. For more information contact Tivoni Devor, 1730 N. 5th St, Philadelphia, PA 19122; tivoni@backseatconceptions.com; (215) 235-5603.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

INTERNATIONAL FILM WORKSHOPS offers 150 summer workshops from Mar. to Oct in Oaxaca, Mexico; Seville, Spain & Rockport, ME. For more info, visit www.FilmWorkshops.com, or call for their catalog toll-free: (877) 577-7700; inter nationally (207) 236-8581.

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL FILM & PRODUCTION WORKSHOP begins its 27th year as 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

Program, available at: www.e-felix.org; Tel: (212) 206-7858.

GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FILMS SHOT IN NY STATE avail. for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numerous tax exemptions avail. in NY state for film, TV & commercial production. Put together by Empire State Development Corp. & NY State Dept. of Taxation & Finance, 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & TV Development, 633 3rd Ave., 33rd fl., New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

OTHERZINE, the e-zine of Craig Baldwin's Othercinema.com, seeks written works fewer than 1,000 words in length, including inter-



Take a Backseat

Only a year old, the travelling Backseat Film Festival is a raucous antidote to what the organizers call "safe" media outlets—and they are not afraid to go to extremes to bring this antidote to the public. In fact, the BFF takes an adventurous objection to the "commercialization of the term

"independent film." During the summer, the BFF tours with the Vans Warped Tour, screening films in their wackily decorated bus. They also sponsor independent mini-tours throughout the year, and host screenings in individual cities. Upcoming events will be held in Jacksonville, Philadelphia, Detroit, and New York. Finally, their bi-annual weekend festival showcases the best work from all the smaller screenings that they produce during the year. See listing for contact information and details.

not required. Application required & 2nd 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 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

FELIX: A JOURNAL OF MEDIA ARTS & COMMUNICATIONS announces RISK/RIESGO. This 1st bilingual issue of Felix is curated around the idea of the political, the transgressive, the risk of making works described by artists living in Mexico and the US. Edited by Kathy High, 568 pgs (Spanish/English), published by The Standby

views, filmographies, alternative histories of obscure or marginalized work, criticism & theory. Previously published work welcome, though work previously published on the internet is not eligible. Text formats: MS Word, ASCII text & HTML. Submit to: noellawrence@sprintmail.com; www.othercinema.com.

THE SQUEALER, a 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. Squealer Fall 2003 theme: propaganda. Subscriptions \$15/ year, or \$5 an issue. Visit www.squeaky.org.

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RESOURCES • FUNDS

2004 OAH ERIK BARNOUW AWARD is given annually in recognition of outstanding reporting/programming on network or cable TV, or in documentary film, concerned with American history, the study of American history, &/or the promotion of history. Winning film(s) or video program(s) will be screened and the award(s) will be presented at the 2004 annual meeting of the OAH in Boston, Massachusetts, 25-28 March. The producer(s) of the winning film(s) or video program(s) will receive a certificate and \$500. Films & video programs released Jan. 1, 2003 through Dec. 31, 2003 are eligible for entry. Entries must be submitted on 1/2 inch video cassette. One copy of each entry must be received by each committee member and the OAH by 1 December 2003. For more info www.oah.org/activities/awards/barnouw.

BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS, TELEVISION, AND NEW MEDIA COPRODUCTIONS provides in-kind investments & scholarships in return for equity investments (which vary according to the nature & scale of the project). Applicants must be mid-career or senior professionals w/ professional development needs. Deadlines: Feb. 28, June 30, Oct. 31. For more info, contact Sara Diamond, (403) 762-6696; fax: 762-6665; sara_diamond@banffcentre.ca; www.banffcentre.ca.

BLACK DOCUMENTARY COLLECTIVE (BDC) provides people of African descent working in the documentary film & video field with the opportunity to network professionally, promote each others' work, exchange ideas in order to generate productions & advocate on issues impacting black documentary makers. They hold works-in-progress screenings, project seminars, participate in the IFP Film Market & have special sessions with funders for independent producers. For more info email BlkDocCol@aol.com.

CABLE POSITIVE, the cable & telecommunications industry's national nonprofit AIDS action organization, provides funding for AIDS organizations & local cable systems to work together in joint community outreach efforts, or to produce & distribute new, locally-focused HIV/AIDS-related programs & PSA's through the Tony Cox Community Fund. Grants are available to \$5,000. Contact Jesse Giuliani, (212) 459-1547; jesse@cablepositive.org; www.cablepositive.org. Deadlines: March 14 & September 12.

CCH MEDIA PROGRAM PLANNING GRANTS: Outright funds of up to \$20,000 for film and radio documentaries that explore CA-related topics and issues of contemporary relevance. Contact Sarah Ashcroft, Programs Manager, at (415) 391-1474 x314. Deadline Oct. 1. www.calhum.org.

DIY REVOLUTION is now accepting free listings/classifieds on an indy media network. DIYR is a resource aimed to unite independent filmmakers, artists, activists, musicians, media groups & writers working for a more just, authentic & progressive world working outside of a corporate paradigm. Visit us at www.diyrevolution.com or www.diy.com for your free membership.

EXPERIMENTAL TV CENTER offers grants & presentation funds to electronic media/film artists & organizations. Program provides partial assistance; maximum amount varies. Presentations must be open to public; limited-enrollment workshops & publicly supported educational institutions ineligible. Appl. reviewed monthly; Deadline: ongoing. Contact Program Dir., ETVC, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd, Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341; www.experimentalstvcenter.org.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP FOR FILMMAKERS: Film Forum, a nonprofit cinema, efficiently administers filmmaker grants, retaining 5% of all monies from foundations, corporations, individuals (but not government sources). Budget must be a minimum of \$100,000 & filmmaker must have a track record. Send brief project description to: Film Forum Fiscal Sponsorships, 209 W. Houston St, New York, NY 10014. No calls, faxes, e-mails.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS fund independent film, video, radio & digital media that meets the foundation's goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty & injustice, promote int'l cooperation & advance human achievement. www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs & virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd; (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

PANAVISION'S NEW FILMMAKER PROGRAM donates 16mm camera packages to film projects, incl. graduate student thesis films, of any genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send S.A.S.E. to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

Classifieds

Deadline: First of each month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., Jan. 1st for March issue). **Contact:** (212) 807-1400, x221; fax: (212) 463-8519; classifieds@aivf.org.

PER ISSUE COST: 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, x241.

FREQUENCY DISCOUNT: \$5 off per issue for ads running 5+ times.

Ads exceeding the specified length will be edited. Place ad via www.aivf.org/independent/classifieds or type copy and mail with the check or money order to: FIVE, 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 include card #, name on card and expiration date.

**INTERACTIVE
CLASSIFIEDS ARE AVAILABLE
AT WWW.AIVF.ORG**

BUY • RENT • SELL

AATON XTR 16/SUP16 CAMERA PACKAGE for rent. Canon zooms, Zeiss primes & full support. Abel Maintained. Great rates. (718) 398-6688 or email: jrysius@aol.com.

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE AT LOW PRICES, NO RESTRICTIONS: Offering a High Quality, Extensive Library of Public Domain Footage spanning the 20th Century at prices independent producers can afford. Footage Farm (888) 270-1414; www.footagefarm.com.

AVID 1000 AND AVID MC OFFLINE FOR RENT. 7/24 building, 7/24 tech support. Midtown Manhattan. Great rooms, great views. Diva Edit at (212) 947-8433.

EQUIPMENT RENTALS: Production Junction... one good person, lots of great stuff, best prices. Cameras, decks, lights, mics, etc. Convenient downtown location. 24/7 access

Chris@ProductionJunction.com, cell: (917) 288-9000 or (212) 420-6696. www.ProductionJunction.com. Credit Cds accepted.

KEEP IT DIGITAL! Digibeta deck for rent (Sony A-500) \$400/day, \$1200/week. Also dubs to/from Digibeta to Beta-SP, VHS, DVCam, mini-DV, etc. Uncompressed Avid suite, too. Production Central (212) 631-0435.

LETS MAKE YOUR MOVIE. We have a 24' grip truck and a 14' truck with lighting, electrical etc. Also have a 60kw generator mounted on a separate truck, a tulip type crane and elmack dolly and car trailer. Also have a ARRI 16mm camera and DAT sound system. I am a very experienced actor looking for the right role and deal, in which case I would be willing to offer all of the above on a deferment basis. Contact Danny at (770) 540-6729.

SONY 300 DSR DV (broadcast) camera package inc. tripod, sennheiser audio, lights, monitor, more. Start \$350/day. Operator/asst. also available. Steve @ (212) 785-5517.

WELL-MAINTAINED, AFFORDABLE SCREENING ROOM on LA's west side. Perfect for rough cuts, tests screenings, film-outs and dailies. Film & videoproduction starting at \$55/hr. New Deal Studios screening room (310) 578-9929. www.newdealstudios.com.

FREELANCE

35MM & 16MM PROD. PKG. w/ DP. Complete package w/ DP's own Arri 35BL, 16SR, HMIs, lighting, dolly, Tulip crane, camjib, 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 XTR prod S16, Sony DVCAM. Experience in features, docs, TV & industrials. Credits: Dog Run, Strays, Working Space/Working Light. (212) 477-0172; AndrewD158@aol.com.

ARE YOU STUCK? Fernanda Rossi, script & documentary doctor, specializes in narrative structure in all stages of the filmmaking process, including story development, fundraising trailers and post-production. She has doctored over 30 films and is the author of "Trailer Mechanics." For

private consultations and workshops visit www.documentarydoctor.com or write to info@documentarydoctor.com.

BRENDAN C. FLYNT: Director of Photography for feature films and shorts. Owns 35mm Arri BL 3, Super 16, 24p, complete lighting pkg. and a Tulip Crane. Best Cinematography Award for "Final Round" and other film Awards at Sundance, Berlin, and Raindance. Call for more info at: (212) 208-0968 or www.dpFlynt.com email: bcflynt@yahoo.com.

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: Illuminate Music - Moving Music for Moving Images. Composer/producer George Whitty's credits incl. 2 Grammys, themes & score for CBS, ABC, NBC, Natl. Geographic, Lifetime. Full Prod. Studio in NYC area. www.illuminatemusic.com.

COMPOSER JOEL DIAMOND: NYC Studio. Credits include "The Believer" Sundance Winner, A&E, ESPN. (917) 215-3112; www.joeldiamondmusic.com.

COMPOSER KEVIN KELLER specializes in finely crafted music for documentary and feature films. Innovative, collaborative, passionate. Download free demo at www.kevinkeller.com or call (917) 520-8115 in New York; kkproductions@earthlink.net.

COMPOSER MIRIAM CUTLER loves to collaborate - docs, features. 2002 Berlin "Lost In La Mancha", Sundance/POV "Scout's Honor" & "Licensed To Kill," Peabody "The Castro," "Pandemic: Facing AIDS" & more. (310) 398-5985; 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.

COMPOSER: Perfect music for your project. Orchestral to techno—you name it! Credits incl. NFL, PBS, Travel Channel, Sundance, Hamptons and many others. Bach. of Music, Eastman School. Ouentin Chiappetta (718) 782-4535; medianoise@excite.com.

COMPOSER SARAH PLANT: Original+ licensed music. Arr, flutes: Ang Lee Oscar-nom. Eat Drink Man Woman. Scores: PBS, Bravo, Canal+, Nat. Hist. Museum. Classical, contemp, int'l. Acoustic+digital studio. www.sarahplantmusic.com. (845) 657-8454.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri SR Super 16/16mm & 35BL-2 camera pkgs. Expert Lighting & Camerawork for independent films. Create that "big film" look on a low budget. Great prices, willing to travel. Matthew (617) 244-6730; (845) 439-5459.

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 jyrisius@aol.com.

EDITOR with wide range of skills & experience: let's talk about your project. Private Beta SP & DV editing suite; East Village location. Reel available. For more information call (917) 523-6260 or go to www.HighNoonProd.com.

GRANTWRITING/FUNDRAISING: Research, writing & strategy (for production, distribution, exhibition & educational media projects). Successful proposals to NYSCA, NEA, NEH, ITVS, Soros, Rockefeller, Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation. Fast writers, reasonable rates. Wanda Bershen, (212) 598-0224; www.reddia.per.com.

IS YOUR GRANT PROPOSAL COMPELLING? Seasoned grant writer and proposal editor for all film and video projects. Hourly, daily or flat rate. Fast and professional. Contact Carol Stanger, (212) 369-0851; irving100@earthlink.net.

LOCATION SOUND: Over 25 yrs sound exp. w/ timecode Nagra & DAT, quality mics & mixers. Reduced rates for low-budget projects. Harvey & Fred Edwards, (518) 677-5720; (819) 459-2680; edfilms@worldnet.att.net; www.edwardsfilms.com.

NEED PRODUCER BUT THINK YOU CANT AFFORD ONE? Experienced professional Line Producer for Budget (detailed/top-sheet), Script Breakdown, Schedule, Day-out-of-Days. Specialty low budget but high quality AnnettaLM@aol.com for rates/references.

STORYBOARD ARTIST: With independent film experience. Loves boarding action sequences and complicated shots. Save money by having shots worked out before

cameras roll. Call Kathryn Roake. (718) 788-2755.

WEB DESIGNER WITH GOOD STREAMING MEDIA BACKGROUND to design site for your film, video or production company. Affordable prices. Call or e-mail SethThompson: (330) 375-0927; Website: <http://www.wigged.net>, seththompson@wigged.net.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

50 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR VIDEO BUSINESS. FREE REPORT. Grow a successful video business in Legal, Wedding, Corporate, TV and more. <http://videouniversity.com/50web.htm>

FELLOWSHIPS & TEACHING AVAILABLE: The MFA program in Film/Video/Digital Production at the University of Iowa in the Department of Cinema & Comparative Literature offers full fellowships and teaching support to qualified applicants to its 3-year MFA program. For more information on how to apply, visit: www.uiowa.edu/~ccl or call (319) 335-0330.

WE NEED YOUR FILM. Our membership network is anxious to watch and review your selected feature or short film, any genre. Reviews compiled and posted online. Always accepted, no entry deadline. Sign up & register films at www.viewashow.com.

PREPRODUCTION

BUDGETS/INVESTOR PACKAGE: Exp. 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.

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 incl: Miramax, Warner Bros, Fine Line. Rewrites available. (212) 219-9224; www.su-citypictures.com.

POSTPRODUCTION

AUDIO POST PRODUCTION: Full service audio post-production services for the independent filmmaker. Mix-to-pic, ADR, voice-over, sound design and editing. Pro Tools 5.1 environment. Contact Andrew, All Ears Inc: (718) 789-9211; allearsinc@yahoo.com.

AVID EDITOR: Over 25 feature films. Also

Trailers, Docs, TV, Reels. Fully equipped Tribeca AVID suite, FCP, DVD. Pro-tools editing & mixing. Very fast & easy to get along with. Credit cards accepted. Drina (212) 561-0829. DrinaL@aol.com.

BRODSKY & TREADWAY: film-to-tape transfers, wet-gate, scene-by-scene, reversal film only. Camera original Regular 8mm, Super 8, and 16mm. For appointment call (978) 948-7985.

CERTIFIED FINAL CUT PRO INSTRUCTOR, offering small workshops and private tutorials. For more information: call (917) 523-6260; e-mail Hinoonprod@aol.com or log on to www.HighNoonProd.com.

eMediaLoft.org FINAL CUT PRO G-4 digital video with editor \$65/hr; Discounts; Production; S/8 & R/8 film transfers; VHS, Hi-8, CD-Rom, DVD, mini-DV, DV-Cam; Photos, Graphics, Labels. West Village. Bill Creston (212) 924-4893 eMediaLoft@lycos.com.

FINISH! YOUR VIDEO/FILM PROJECT! Save money and learn for yourself with semi-assisted guidance. Expert explainer will clarify all remaining steps, teach you how to do it yourself, or provide assistance. Resolve strategies, mixing plans, sync issues, etc. DV and 16mm editing, transfer, and sound mixing too. Initial consultation includes clear summary report outlining detailed "next steps," proper sequence, and why. Low intro rate. (212) 777-1180; info@editlab.com.

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.

SOUND EDIT/DESIGN/MIX: Protools HD, 5.1, M&E AVID &FCP equipped. 10 Years Experience. Dozens of Features and Shorts, TV, Docs, Trailers, Spots. Flat Rate Packages available. Credit Cards. Frank, Mark (212) 340-4770. SoundDesignMix@aol.com.

AIVF MEMBERS CAN SEARCH BENEFITS, CLASSIFIEDS, AND NOTICE LISTINGS AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

November

INTRODUCING AIVF'S NEW TECHNOLOGY MINI-SERIES . . .

AIVF'S DIRECTOR'S TOOLKIT

when: Wednesdays, November 5, 12, 19, 6:30- 8:30 p.m.

where: Tribeca Film Center Screening

Room, 375 Greenwich St., NYC

cost: \$50/\$30 AIVF members and partnering organizations. BUY A SERIES PASS! \$100/\$60 AIVF members and partnering organizations.

Register online at www.aivf.org/store or call 212/807-1400 ext. 301.

Today, independents are challenged with navigating through the myriad of shooting mediums including film, digital video, and HD. And regardless of the medium, most films destined for theatrical release will be posted on a digital platform and sent to a transfer house for transfer to film.

AIVF's Director's Toolkit will provide filmmakers with the tools and strategies to make informed production decisions, which will ensure a smooth and cost effective post process that fulfills the director's aesthetic goals. Don't miss your opportunity to learn from seasoned professionals about the strengths and weaknesses of different formats and post production technologies. Learn how to get it right in production to save money in post-production.

NOV. 5: ORIGINATING ON DIGITAL VIDEO Tom Edmon of Heavy Light Digital

NOV. 12: ORIGINATING ON FILM: Steve Garfinkel of Kodak Film, and a panel of independent cinematographers (TBA)

NOV. 19: POST PRODUCTION AND FINISHING ON HD Edgeworx

Please visit www.aivf.org for complete workshop descriptions and details.



IN BRIEF: WRITER AND DEVELOPMENT DEALS

when: Thursday, Nov. 13, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$40/\$25 AIVF

members. Series Fees: 5 sessions pass \$100 for AIVF members;\$160 general public; advanced purchase is highly recommended. Register on-line at www.aivf.org/store or call 212/807-1400x301.

The AIVF Producers' Legal Series helps answer legal and business questions about structuring and negotiating deals in film and television. It also introduces independents to future legal and business resources.

This session presents an overview of copyright law as well as right of publicity, privacy, defamation, and trademark. The goal is to give filmmakers the legal background and tools to better protect themselves and their work and to avoid infringement of third party's rights. Panelists TBA.

DOCUMENTARY DIALOGUES: MARKETING: GETTING THE WORD OUT

when: Tuesday, November 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Wine reception until 9:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$20 general/\$5 AIVF members

You are finished with your film and

you feel like screaming it to the world. Instead you are having anxiety dreams about empty screening rooms and film festivals turned into ghost towns. Publicity and marketing of your film might not feel like filmmaking but it can be nevertheless creative and fun. Above all it's an imperative step in this competitive market. Join us to learn from your peers how to let everybody know your film is born.

Host Fernanda Rossi is a filmmaker and script/documentary doctor. She

reach AIVF...

Filmmakers' Resource Library

hours: Wed. 11-6.

or by apt. to AIVF members

Tue., Thur., Fri. 11-6.

****Please note that the library will not be having late hours in November****

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

writes *the Independent's* monthly column Ask the Doc Doctor.

For more information visit www.documentarydoctor.com.

AIVF PRESENTS . . .

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! DOCTORING YOUR DOC & TRAILER MECHANICS

Led by Script & Documentary Doctor
Fernanda Rossi

DOCTORING YOUR DOC: HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR DOCUMENTARY

when: Saturday, November 8, 10 am-5:30 pm

where: Goldcrest Post, 799
Washington St.,

Directions: A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, and 9 to
14th St. For a map visit

www.goldcrestpost.com/directions.

cost: \$115/ \$90 AIVF members ; \$110
workshops pass with Trailer Mechanics

To RSVP and for more info:
www.documentarydoctor.com/workshops.html
Register by Nov. 7. Limited seats.

A full day experiential hands-on workshop for producers, directors, writers, editors and composers. Stuck in the cutting room? Or maybe with lots of ideas and even footage but no clue where to get started? A solid structure is as necessary to your documentary as a strong script is to a narrative film. With hands-on exercises and analysis of films, this workshop can give you the guidelines you need to find solutions that are true to your documentary's style. Bring your work-in-progress (not required to attend).

TRAILER MECHANICS: HOW TO MAKE YOUR FUNDRAISING TRAILER

when: November 15; Two sections:

10 am-1 pm or 2-5 pm

where: AIVF

cost: \$55/\$45 AIVF members;;
\$110 workshops pass with Doctoring
your Doc.

To RSVP and more info: www.documentarydoctor.com/workshops.html Register by Nov. 13. Limited seats.

"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. (Not required to attend)

AIVF CO-SPONSORS: HIP-HOP ODYSSEY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



when: Saturday,
November 11-16
where: Bronx Mus.
of the Arts , Aaron
Davis Hall at City
College.

Anyone with a true love of Hip-Hop should mark their calendar for the Second Annual H2O Film Festival. H2O will be hitting New York hard with a selection of Hip-Hop films by underground and mainstream filmmakers. Be prepared for a variety of subject matters and interpretations of Hip-Hop, one of today's most influential cultural forms.

Admission to the launch party and film festival is free. For more info, visit www.h2oiff.org/

AIVF PRESENTS: DIGITAL REVOLUTION PANEL

when: Friday, November 14, 6-8 p.m.

where: City College Campus, Convent
Ave bet.133rd & 135th Streets, NYC.

With introduction of prosumer HiDef cameras and the accessibility of creating low-cost DVD's, technological innovation continues to equal greater independence for the emerging urban filmmaker. Come learn about the latest in digital technology and underground distribution trends.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS: MARGARET MEAD FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

when: November 6 - 9, 15-16

where: American Museum of
Natural History, NYC

This international documentary film festival serves up world cinema from the ethnographic to the experimental and everything in between. The program includes discussions and roundtables with filmmakers, producers and special guests.

Topics include a celebration of the life of actor, writer and director Joe Chaikin, the debate around clitoridectomy, issues of surveillance in the United States and Poland, and an intimate glimpse into Dutch international peacekeeping forces in today's Afghanistan.

For more info, visit www.amnh.org/mead after October 20; for a festival catalogue, please call 212-769-5200 after October 24.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS: AFRICAN DIASPORA FILM FESTIVAL

when: November 28-December 14

where: Schomburg Center, Columbia
University, and Anthology Film Archives

The ADFFF showcases and celebrates the films of the African Diaspora community. The festival mission is to present these films to diverse audiences, redesign the Black cinema experience and strengthen the role of African descent directors in contemporary world cinema. In response to this mission, ADFFF features the work of emerging and established filmmakers of color. Most important, ADFFF distinguishes itself through its presentation of outstanding works that shine a different or comprehensive light on African Diaspora life and culture --no matter what the filmmaker's race or nationality.

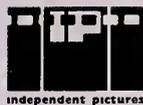
For more information, visit www.nyadff.org.

AIVF CO-SPONSORS:

**OHIO
INDEPENDENT
FILM FESTIVAL**

when: November 1-9, 2003

where: Cleveland, Ohio



Independent Pictures presents its 10th Anniversary Ohio Independent Film Festival. The 2003 Ohio Independent Film Festival hosts extraordinary films you wouldn't ordinarily see plus back-by-popular-demand workshops at the festival's Independent Film School.

Visit www.ohiofilms.com or call (216) 651-7315, email OhioIndieFilmFest@juno.com

AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT:

**FILMS AT THE
LINCOLN
CENTER**



where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC; [www. filmlinc.com](http://www.filmlinc.com)

AIVF members may attend select series (listed below) at a discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office!

November 1—**Golden Silents** presents "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (1920, silent)

November 7 to December 4—**Retrospective of films from Lenfilm Studios**

November 13—**Independents Night** presents "You Think You Really Know Me: The Gary Wilson Story" (Michael Wolk, documentary, 2003)

Looking for past issues of
**THE
INDEPENDENT?**
WE'VE GOT THEM

NOVEMBER 2002

The Great Money Hunt

- ✦ A fundraising primer
- ✦ Inroads to international investment
- ✦ Stories (and ideas) from the financing trail
- ✦ Legal issues with finishing funds
- ✦ Budgeting software for the filmmaker



DECEMBER 2002

The Write Stuff

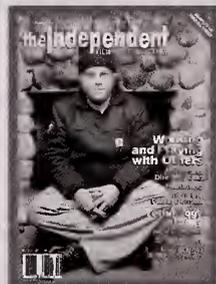
- ✦ Stories from screenwriters-turned-directors
- ✦ Screenwriting competition: perks and pitfalls
- ✦ A look into the screenwriter's toolkit
- ✦ Doc Doctor: scripting a doc
- ✦ Protecting copyrights



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2003

Working & Playing With Others

- ✦ Special technology section
- ✦ Media mentors as youth guides
- ✦ Collaborations in film and sound; and sound recording basics
- ✦ Opinion: the right to public domain art



MARCH 2003

The Women Behind the Camera

- ✦ Women Make Movies turns thirty
- ✦ Women cinematographers
- ✦ Feminist film and the ivory tower
- ✦ Work of Flash artist Marina Zurkow
- ✦ Sundance sleepers



To order back issues, contact info@aivf.org, or send \$5/issue (plus \$2 s&h each) to:

The Independent—Back Issues Orders
304 Hudson St. (6th fl.)
New York, NY 10013

AIVF THANKS

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides a variety of programs and services for independent moving image makers and the media community, including *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, information services, and arts and media policy advocacy.

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



The Academy Foundation
The Caliban Foundation
City of New York Dept. of Cultural Affairs
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
Home Box Office
The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation
The Jewish Communal Fund

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
The New York Community Trust
New York Foundation for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Panasonic USA
Sony Electronics Corporation

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

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Visit www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon programs.

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

**Albany/Troy, NY:
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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

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX:

Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
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**Boston, MA: Center for
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boston@aivf.org

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Charleston, SC:

When: Last Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Charleston County Library
68 Calhoun Street
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Peter Wentworth, charleston@aivf.org

**Cleveland, OH:
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Contact: Annetta Marion or Bernadette
Gillota, (216) 651-7315; cleveland@aivf.org
www.ohiofilms.com

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
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**Dallas, TX:
Video Association of Dallas**

When: Bi-Monthly
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700
dallas@aivf.org

Edison, NJ:

Where: Passion River Productions,
190 Lincoln Hwy.
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edison@aivf.org; www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:

Contact: Erik Mollberg
(260) 691-3258; fortwayne@aivf.org

Houston, TX: SWAMP

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Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, (256) 895-0423
huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
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**Lincoln, NE: Nebraska
Independent Film Project**

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
(402) 467-1077, www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Where: Hollywood Theatre
Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
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Where: Visual Studies Workshop
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San Diego, CA:

When: Monthly
Where: Media Arts Center, 921 25th
Street
Contact: Ethan van Thillo
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San Francisco, CA:

Contact: Tami Saunders
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tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:

Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline,
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Rochester's "LoFilm East"

After he returned from L.A., Rochester native Dave Danesh introduced the "LoFilm" concept to the Rochester Salon. "We brainstorm an idea for a short film and shoot completely impromptu. We then digitize the footage, edit collectively, write music, and produce the finished product by the end of the weekend." The salon loved the idea of a process which demands quick, creative thinking, and decided to launch their own version: "LoFilm East." So far, they have produced three films including the ten-minute *Sex and Conspiracy at the Midnight Cafe*, in which, because they only had one camera, they used a black stocking on the video lens to get, "a film look. The single remote mike was hung inside the lamp shade and a few lights turned on."

—Sean Donnelly

Stating the Budget

By Melinda Rice

State based production incentives are usually created to lure Hollywood films out of town, but smaller budget films can save a few dollars by applying for these local perks. Below are a few of the tax (and other) incentives offered by individual states.

California

(www.film.ca.gov, www.filmcafirst.com)

Through the State Theatrical Arts Resources (STAR) program, state-owned property is available to film productions at low (or no) cost. Reimbursement for labor and location fees for public property, as well as for local law enforcement, is possible. There is no sales or use tax levied on production and post-production services for qualifying films.

Florida

(www.filminflorida.com)

Tax incentives are specifically job-oriented in Florida: tax refunds correspond to the number of new jobs created by a production company. Bonuses are given to companies paying 150-200 percent of the average annual wage, as well as to companies creating jobs in designated counties.

Hawaii

(www.hawaiiifilmoffice.com)

A generous 100 percent return on cash investments is available for qualified productions. Tax credit can be assigned to individuals or corporations, against their Hawaii income tax, over a five-year period. At least seventy five percent of the budget must be spent in Hawaii.

Louisiana

(www.lafilm.org)

Tax credits are available in various guises for investors in films shot in Louisiana. The requirements differ for each tax credit, but incentives include sales and use tax exclusion, labor tax credit, and investor tax credit. These are good for ten years—if they cannot be used entirely in the year they are earned.

Minnesota

(www.mnfilm.org)

Film productions can make use of free scouting, free permits, and a ten percent rebate on purchases made in Minnesota. In addition, there is no lodging tax on hotel

stays that last thirty or more days, no sales tax on commercials, and some production office space is free.

New Mexico

(www.edd.state.nm.us/FILM)

Film companies can qualify for a fifteen percent film production tax credit, and a gross receipts tax deduction program—that makes it possible to receive the tax deduction at the point of sale for some production expenditures. New Mexico charges no location fee for shoots in state-owned buildings.

North Carolina

(www.ncfilm.com)

State property can be used without a fee, and there is a one percent cap on sales and use tax. North Carolina's Film Development Account also offers grants to filmmakers with expenditures of at least \$1 million who are shooting in-state.

Washington

(www.filmwashington.com)

The state with no state income tax also offers a tax exemption for the purchase of production services and rentals. Refunds are available for taxes on rental vehicles used in production.

Wyoming

(www.wyomingfilm.org)

Through the programs of the Wyoming Film Office and the Casper Area Film Commission, some Wyoming businesses offer a ten percent discount of services related to production. Companies must obtain a Wyoming Production Incentive Program card from the film office to be eligible for these discounts. □

For more information on state based production incentives, see www.marklitwak.com, the website of Mark Litwak, an entertainment attorney and author.

Melinda Rice is a former intern at The Independent.



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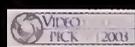
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How directors use improvisation to craft a story. [by Jason Guerrasio]

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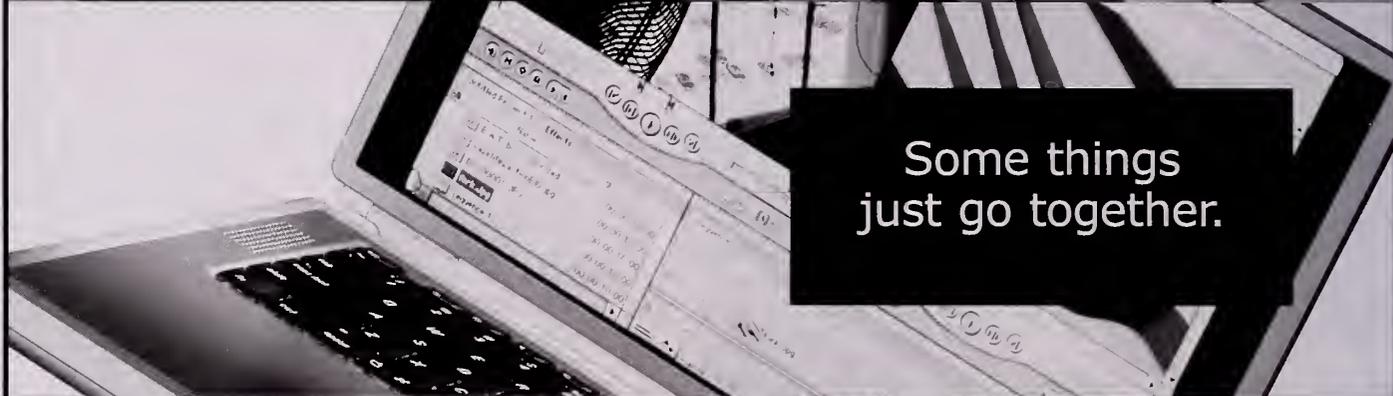
One award-winning filmmaker explains how to "discover" an original story—an excerpt from her book, *Documentary Storytelling for Film and Videomakers*. [by Sheila Curran Bernard]



Photos: Ellen Barkin and Tom Waits in Jim Jarmusch's *Down By Law*, edited by Melody London (Black Snake, Inc.). First-time actor Alex Frost in Gus Van Sant's *Elephant* (Scott Green/HBO Films/Fine Line Features). Heidi Bub with her Vietnamese family in *Daughter from Danang* (Heidi Bub/ITVS).

Page 5 photos: Peter Dinklage (right), Michelle Williams (left) in Tom McCarthy's *The Station Agent* (Miramax Films). Canadian director Peter Raymont making *The World Stopped Watching*, produced by The Sundance Institute Documentary Fund (Bill Gentile). Pedro Carvajal's *POPaganda: The Art & Subversion of Ron English* screened at the IFP Market 2003 (Pedro Carvajal). Nancy du Plessis is the producer/director of *Get The Fire!* (Irmgard Schmid/ITVS).

On the Cover: Filmmaker Sam Pollard in his New York office (Michael Galinsky).



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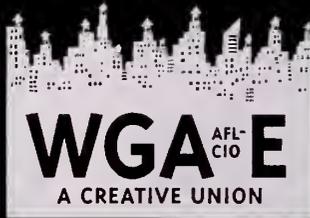
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Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,
Let me tell you why I'm thrilled to be the new Editor-in-Chief of *The Independent Film & Video Monthly*. A while

ago I read an interview with Lisa Bonet, who I believe now goes by the name Lilikoi. She is an actress I admired and aspired to emulate as a young girl and to whom I have been told, on strange and awkward occasions, I bear something of a resemblance. The interviewer asked Bonet what she felt was the toughest thing about the Hollywood life, and the first sentence of her response nearly made me weep with a feeling of kinship: "For me, I'm scruffier."

Lisa meant, of course, and I realize I'm stating the obvious here, that everything about Hollywood is so super shiny, well kempt, glossy, and all those other slippery words that she was not and could never be, because, and one might go ahead and draw this conclusion based on the fact that she renamed herself Lilikoi, she is an individual who places a high premium on personal style and nuance. She doesn't compromise (or tries not to—I think we're all still on the fence about her performance in *High Fidelity*), and is for the most part, committed to staying that way. I hold the *The Independent* in the same regard—that's right, the same regard in which I hold Lisa Bonet. And, having grown up with artist parents in a small rural New England town, no black people for miles, doing theater and going to movies when I should have been playing field hockey, the same regard I feel I've earned for myself.

And, so, I am tremendously grateful to the very capable and smart Maud Kersnowski, who passed the baton with grace and balance, and from whom I learned a freakish amount during the two weeks of our overlap.

This issue focuses on storytelling—the craft, the meter, the medium, and

the ways in which a story is first found, or even deemed a story for that matter, before it can be told and given a place in the world. Frequent contributor Charles Sweitzer talks to a small but diverse selection of film editors for his article "The Nuances of Film Editing," which takes a closer look at the often underrated task of film editing, a unique skill wildly crucial to the process of shaping both narrative and nonfiction stories. It is heartening to bear witness to the unyielding passion of indomitable, veteran film editor Sam Pollard; to learn from *Down by Law* editor Melody London how to make a writer/director understand that the editor is working *with* them, not against them; and to be encouraged to mind our "foresooth" quotient by Londoner Kate Evans.

In "Waxing Improvisational," staff writer Jason Guerrasio looks at the odd, innovative, and daring approach of combining the art of improvisation with novice actors in three remarkable independent films out this year. "From Idea to Story" is an adapted article from Emmy and Peabody Award-winning filmmaker Sheila Bernard's recent book, *Documentary Storytelling for Film and Videomakers*, published in October by Focal Press.

Also in this issue, Melinda Rice profiles Thomas McCarthy, the first-time writer/director behind this fall's sleeper hit *The Station Agent*. LA-based writer Paul Tullis weighs in on choosing the right medium for your story, while Documentary Doctor, Fernanda Rossi, answers questions on scene flow and finding drama where you might least expect it. *The Independent's* technology expert Greg Gilpatrick reviews the new Adobe After Effects 6.0, and *Miami New Times* writer Juan Rodriguez welcomes us to Miami.

Thanks for reading *The Independent*,
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Shooting People

A NEW FILM NETWORKING RESOURCE
TAKES AIM AT NEW YORK

By Alyssa Worsham

Shooting People, an online resource for independent filmmakers first founded in the UK, where it has experienced overwhelming success, launched its New York site this September. With over 28,000 members in England, Shooting People New York promises to be an essential link to the filmmaking community. The site hosts a listserv—a collaborative

effort from its membership that provides a daily email bulletin with news and job postings. On the UK site, members can tailor their bulletin around their interests by choosing to receive the sections most relevant to them: filmmaking, casting, screenwriters, script pitch, animation, documentary, and music video. "It's a good way to keep your ear to the ground," says UK editor and New York director George Graham.

In addition to the daily newsletter, members can post their profiles in the

online directory (and next to their bulletin postings), which allows other members to determine who might be suitable for their projects. There is also a search feature so that members are able to scan the directory by name, email, location, or through more specific categories like "films they wish they had made," "films they cried watching," or "books they gave their friends." These resources are intended to help new filmmakers find work, or people to work on their films, but they are also designed for those who want to move laterally in their careers—like an editor working in advertising who might want to try his hand at narrative film. There are also separate sections and profile cards for actors, which can be cross-referenced through the online directory. The grassroots style of the organization is

Director Mike Figgis is a patron of Shooting People.

beneficial to those who might not be able or know how to network, and who will feel further bolstered by support from more established filmmakers. Shooting People already boasts Danny Boyle (*Trainspotting*), Mike Figgis (*Time Code*), Nick Park (*Wallace and Gromit*), and Iain Softley (*Backbeat*) as patrons.

Founded in 1998 by Cath Le Couteur and Jess Search, the fledgling organization began with sixty members and quickly spread throughout Britain. New York editor Chris Ciancimino, a native of England who is currently a third year graduate student at NYU Film School, hopes that the stateside site will evolve similarly but also in ways unique to the New York film community. "After three and a half weeks we already have 1,000 members," Ciancimino said in September, "and this is all through word of mouth; we haven't even begun campaigning."

Members on both sides of the Atlantic will have the ability to connect with each other, fostering an international connection previously unavailable to many filmmakers. Ciancimino also has plans for a resource list with release waivers, basic production schedule worksheets, checklists, and other forms that filmmakers might find useful. Although some editorial guidance is provided, the organization, its creators maintain, is as good as the film community that supports it, and that community is growing.

For more info visit www.shootingpeople.org.

Will the FCC Open the Airwaves?

On October 22, 2003, the first hearing of the Localism Task Force of the Federal Communications Commission was held in Charlotte, NC. The event was open to the public and designed to gather information from consumers, civic organizations, and industry members about broadcast

services to local communities before company licenses come up for renewal in December. The hearing began with conversation initiated by several panelists and guests, while the second half of the meeting was reserved for an "open microphone," during which anyone could register their opinion with the Task Force.

The Charlotte hearing is one of six scheduled around the country (the remaining five will be held in San

Antonio, Texas; Santa Cruz/Salinas, California; Rapid City, South Dakota; Portland, Maine; and Washington, DC), although consumers and other interested parties are also encouraged to submit comments and information via the FCC's Electronic Filing System (www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs). Unfortunately, a large percentage of the public is unaware of the Task Force and the importance of speaking out about the consolidation of private media ownership. Public interest groups like Free Press, Consumers Union, and AIVF are trying to rouse awareness of these debates and encourage public participation.

on whether communities are being served by their public broadcasters. We are trying to educate people about the importance of these hearings," says Vidya Krishnamurthy, legislative coordinator for Free Press. FCC Commissioner Michael Copps is also concerned by the efficacy of the Task Force; his fairly severe criticism indicates his belief that the Task Force is a poor attempt at appeasement for the recent FCC decision to weaken



media concentration protections. "You cannot use a blanket of study to quell the fire of public outrage about increasing control of the public's airwaves by fewer and fewer conglomerates. I don't believe this diversionary tactic will divert either the American people or their representatives in Congress," says Copps. The hearings are just part of the initiative that FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell established on August 20, 2003. Once the public has been heard, the Task Force will advise the FCC on

"The Task Force wants public input

FCC Commissioners (from left) Jonathan Adelstein, Michael Powell, Kevin Martin, and Michael Copps.

FCC Commissioners (from left) Jonathan Adelstein, Michael Powell, Kevin Martin, and Michael Copps.

their recommendations to Congress regarding the licensing of thousands of additional low power FM stations, and on ways in which the FCC can promote localism in both radio and television. "Broadcasters must serve the public interest, and the Commission has consistently interpreted this to require broadcast licensees to air programming that is responsive to the interests and needs of their communities," says Powell.

However, those interests, according to Cops, are still being compromised. "The ownership protections, as well as the other public interest protections that the Commission has dismantled over the past years, are all designed to promote localism, diversity, and competition. We should have heeded the calls from over two million Americans and so many members of Congress expressing concern about the impact of media concentration on localism and diversity *before* we rushed to a vote. We should have vetted these issues before we voted. Instead, we voted; now we are going to vet. This is a policy of 'ready, fire, aim!'"

For more info go to www.mediareform.org

NYU Educates Aspiring Archivists

NYU just became the second university in the country (after UCLA) to offer a graduate program in Moving Image and Archive Preservation (MIAP). The intensive two-year masters program, offered for the first time this fall, grew out of the Cinema Studies department at NYU and will prepare future professionals to manage archives of various media—film, video, new media, and other digital formats. Before these programs (the one at UCLA only began a year ago), film preservationists came from museum or fine arts programs, or from apprenticeships, and often had limited background knowledge of the technology required for archiving film and other media. "Traditionally, students in this

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field learned on the job," says program director Howard Besser, "so the skills were not very transferable if they moved to a different institution."

NYU's program is unique in that it is involved with over a dozen institutions in New York, as opposed to UCLA's program which is directly associated with the UCLA Film Archive. Besser, who helped to create both programs, says that while they contain many similarities, NYU's program will help prepare students "for real life situations in a variety of institutions, and to deal with all kinds of moving images." MIAP students are required to take the four core courses required by all Cinema Studies graduate degree candidates, but their remaining requirements are highly structured and specialized. During the first three semesters, students must enroll in three different internships for ten or more hours a week, for fifteen weeks. The internships are arranged for the students—who are allowed to list their top three choices. Currently, NYU offers internships at The Museum of TV and Radio, The Natural History Museum, MoMA, The Guggenheim, The Whitney, The American Museum of the Moving Image, and several film labs.

Also, during the summer, the aspiring preservationists must participate in a full-time internship usually outside of New York and preferably abroad—the program has connections with both Dutch and Danish film archives. Other courses include: Film History and Film Style; Conservation, Preservation, Storage, and Management; Legal Issues and Copyright; Laboratory Techniques; Moving Image Cataloguing; Curatorial Work and Museum Studies; Programming; New Media and other Digital Technologies; and Access to Archival Holdings.

There are currently seven students enrolled in the first year of NYU's MIAP program, but in the future Besser plans to have more. "The students this year all have backgrounds in film, but I think that in future years there will be more of a hodgepodge—people interested in video, digital media, or fine art." Still, this year's crop seems pretty diverse—one of the students worked in the videotape evidence collection of a police department, another volunteered at San Francisco Cinematheque. Whatever their backgrounds, these students will be among the first to graduate from NYU with a masters degree in the school's new professional field of Film Preservation.

Alyssa Worsham is an intern at The Independent and a masters student in NYU's Cultural Reporting and Criticism Program.

Cowboy Rides into the Sunset

By James Israel

Independent film distributor Cowboy Pictures (formerly Cowboy Booking International) has shut down for business. The company announced the closure of its downtown Manhattan offices in October after filing for bankruptcy and being forced to lay off all of its employees.

"We've had a great run and I'm extremely proud of the wonderful films we've brought to audiences across North America," said Cowboy Pictures president and co-founder John Vanco in a prepared statement.

Cowboy Pictures was founded in 1997 by Vanco, a former publicist for Miramax and New Yorker Films, and Cowan, who left Cowboy last year and later had a hand in the formation of Global Film Initiative, a nonprofit

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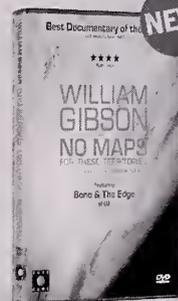
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CORRECTION

We regret the misspelling of filmmaker Madeleine Gavin's name in Maud Kersnowski's article *What I Want My Words to Do to You: Voices of Women in Maximum Security Prison*, which was published in our October issue.

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aimed at funding filmmakers in developing countries. Cowboy specialized in handling American independents, foreign-language films, revivals, and documentaries for US and Canadian distribution. In their six-year history

Cowboy's films received numerous awards and citations, including an Oscar nomination for Carlos Bolado, B.Z. Goldberg, and Justine Shapiro's documentary *Promises* (see page 26) which focuses on children growing up



they distributed over forty films theatrically, boasting an impressive selection of work, ranging from music documentaries such as D.A. Pennebaker's *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* to foreign film classics by Akira Kurosawa and Jean Cocteau.

While reintroducing classics to new audiences, Cowboy also never shied away from endorsing young filmmakers, distributing works such as David Gordon Green's poetic vision of the South with *George Washington*, and Alex and Andrew Smith's rumination on high school football, *Slaughterhouse Rules*. Other innovative and refreshing works released by Cowboy include *Benjamin Smoke*, Jem Cohen and Peter Sillen's documentary about a Southern drag queen musician, and Catherine Breillat's controversial tale of an overweight girl's sexual awakening, *Fat Girl*.

amid the Middle East conflict; and best documentary recognition from the National Board of Review and Chicago Film Critics was given to George Butler's *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition*.

As they close up shop, Vanco acknowledges that, "Cowboy could have never grown into a full-fledged company without the efforts of many talented people, and I wish to take this opportunity to salute my former partner, Noah Cowan, and the talented and passionate employees who worked with us, especially Julie Fontaine, Emily Gannett, and Sarah Finklea." ■

James Israel is a Brooklyn based filmmaker and staff member at AIVF.

Cowboy Picture founders John Vanco and Noah Cowan.



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"What I Want My Words to Do To You" offers an unprecedented look into the minds and hearts of the women inmates of New York's Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. The film goes inside a writing workshop led by playwright Eve Ensler, consisting of 15 women, most of whom were convicted of murder. Through a series of exercises and discussions, the women, including former Weather Underground Members Kathy Boudin and Judith Clark, delve into and expose their most terrifying realities, as they grapple with the nature of their crimes and their own culpability. The film culminates in an emotionally charged prison performance of the women's writing by acclaimed actresses Mary Alice, Glenn Close, Hazelle Goodman, Rosie Perez and Marisa Tomei.

What I Want My Words To Do To You

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Love & Diane
by Jennifer Dworkin
April 21, 2004 at 9 PM (check local listings)

"Love & Diane" is a frank and astonishingly intimate real-life drama of a mother and daughter desperate for love and forgiveness, but caught in a devastating cycle. During the 1980's, a crack cocaine epidemic ravaged and impoverished many inner city neighborhoods. As parents like Diane succumbed to addiction, a generation of children like Love entered the foster care system. Shot over ten years, the film centers on Love and Diane after the family is reunited and is struggling to reconnect. Now 18 and a mother herself, Love must reconcile her anger and confront the ways in which her mother's past mistakes haunt her life. Diane, in turn, makes new choices for herself, seeking to break the treadmill of addiction and poverty. Powerful and immediate, "Love & Diane" is an epic film that shatters stereotypes and offers hope amidst seemingly impossible odds. An Independent Television Service (ITVS) co-presentation. **itvs**

Love & Diane



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Story Is As Story Does

BUT HOW DO YOU REALLY KNOW?

By Paul Tullis

In 1997, I had a decent career as a freelance magazine writer when at the beach one day I told a friend, a production executive at a major studio, about a book I'd recently reviewed. She said she thought it would make an interesting movie. A year later, I moved to LA with the option to the book and forty-three pages of a screenplay.

The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers, based on a true story, features Edgar Allan Poe as its central character who tries to resurrect his career by solving the sudden disappearance case of the eponymous young woman, and then writing about it (which Poe did in real life with the fictionalized *The Mystery of Marie Roget*). The book I based my script on was a history of New York's first true-crime media sensation, and what struck me about it was that its themes, though occurring in the 1840s, neatly paralleled ones that I had believed unique to contemporary times: police malfeasance, press sensationalism, women in the workplace, and overt expressions of female sexuality as threatening and frightening to the dominant culture.

The story is set in New York during the city's first explosive population growth in the early nineteenth century, a rich backdrop previously underexplored by cinema at the time I was writing. Although I went through a spec rewrite for a production company that wanted to sex the story up with some action sequences and set pieces, my rewrite did not meet their expectations, and eventually their interest faded.

Unfortunately for my bank account, even though the notes I received on the piece were quite posi-

tive, it was clear that the script was entirely too dreary for commercial viability, even by the standards of independent film (because let's face it, independent producers are trying to make money, too). It's a depressing story—Poe spirals into insanity as his search for the victim turns into an

Horizontal corporate integration and so-called “fake indies” like Fox Searchlight and Paramount Classics have so fuzzed the lines between independents and studios anyway, who can keep track?

obsession. In addition, any period script is expensive to produce, and perceived by producers and executives as not appealing to the broad market. This particular story's ending, moreover, involved something rather controversial. Today, *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers* is pretty much dead in the water.

In the time since I moved to LA, I have been to a bunch of meetings with execs and producers who'd read the *Mary Rogers* script and found that, to the limited extent they wished to employ me, their interest was focused on strengths apparent in the screenplay: the mystery component and the setting. Not wanting to be pigeon-holed as a writer of mysteries/rewriter for setting details—around this time two friends of mine were becoming the sports-movie-rewrite-guy and the military-movie-rewrite-guy (not that they were complaining, nor should they have been)—I decided to make my next script a comedy. A friend and I con-

cocted the idea watching TV one night in his West Hollywood apartment: an actor on a network drama is written out of the show, then goes about killing everyone responsible. (OK, it's a black comedy.) Long story short, nothing happened with that script either.

I didn't throw away a perfectly good career and move to what I consider the armpit of North America (armpit-adjacent, at least) to wallow in obscurity, admired by an isolated clique of intellectuals unlikely to have their worldview altered by exposure to my

ideas, if only because they probably share my worldview. Of course, I'd be ecstatic to have my work produced at all, but the victim status in segments of the indie world, which seems to value its own irrelevance in the larger culture, has never appealed to me. Dickens wrote for mass-produced serials; Miles Davis worked for Sony. Horizontal corporate integration and so-called “fake indies” like Fox Searchlight and Paramount Classics have so fuzzed the lines between independents and studios anyway, who can keep track?

So, my most recent script, based again on a true story, is a fairly conventional investigative drama. This story has setting elements, primarily 1970s flashbacks, that would enrich the film's score and production design. I've managed to weave in some issues of sex, gender, race, and class that figure crucially in the plot, and to center the story on a moral dilemma that interests me. The story follows a familiar structural arc that is easily

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received by casual filmgoers, and by sneaking in some subversive elements, it becomes a more mainstream movie while still featuring themes and ideas that I think matter. My producer and I are now trying to get a star attached, and to work through her agents to "put it together," in the proper film industry parlance.

The main reason that I decided to try expressing myself through film as opposed to magazine articles is because movies are the way people receive stories these days. If you want to get through to a wide range of individuals over the long term, you don't write a novel (excellent print run: 20,000 copies) or an article (circulation of *The New Yorker*: 900,000). It's precisely the people who go to the multiplexes of America that need to be rattled out of the doldrums that enabled a lifelong, well-connected zero to be elected president, and who recently elected for state office a man most famous for portraying a movie cyborg.

I'm comfortable with trying to write in a more commercial way because I've seen firsthand that financial success opens the doors to creative freedom. I've also seen it go the other way, whereby critically-acclaimed independent film writers and directors get big budgets to work with, but they, too, are nevertheless forced to make artistic compromises.

In the meantime I've gone back to journalism. And if nothing happens with this most recent script, I'll stick with magazine writing until I come up with a new story to tell through film. Still, I maintain that more people would encounter my creative expression on a single wide-opening weekend than would read a lifetime of my magazine articles, and the opportunity to get my stories and ideas across to people is too important to pass up. □

Paul Tullis has written for many national magazines.

Hometown Hitter

THE STATION AGENT'S TOM MCCARTHY

By Melinda Rice

First-time screenwriter/director Tom McCarthy didn't stray too far from home when he decided to make his debut film *The Station Agent*. The film, set and shot about twenty-five minutes away from where McCarthy grew up in rural New Jersey, is a small-town story about an out-of-towner new to small-town life. Finbar McBride, played by veteran independent film actor Peter Dinklage, is the reclusive dwarf obsessed with trains at the center of McCarthy's stirring film about personal connections and disconnections.

Three years after McCarthy first dreamed up the story of *The Station Agent*, while he was still a fulltime actor, the film won the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival 2003, where it was picked up by Miramax, and in October, opened with a wide theatrical release to great acclaim. McCarthy, who continues to work as an actor, says he came to screenwriting and directing as someone accustomed to playing characters, memorizing lines, and being directed by someone else. For *The Station Agent*, he wanted to draw from his own experiences as an actor, particularly with regard to the actor's relationship to the director, while also staying true to his vision. "It's a tough conflict," McCarthy said. "Because you want to be a strong leader, and you also want to be collaborative." Not to mention get a film made on a twenty-day shoot schedule and a \$500,000 budget.

Peter Dinklage (front), Patricia Clarkson (center) and Bobby Cannavale in Tom McCarthy's *The Station Agent*.

There wasn't much time for improvisational work, but McCarthy believed in the strength of his writing and was happy to stick solidly to the script to make the film he had envisioned. Still, there was a lot to juggle. "I was learning 100 new things a day," McCarthy recalls. On the other side of the camera for the first time, he used humor and humility to balance his instinct for control with his desire to



let the actors develop on their own. "One of the last things you want to do is control the action. You want to encourage [the actors]. Without the actors, it doesn't work. You want to welcome their creativity, welcome what they do best—act."

The truth is that McCarthy had begun to anticipate the performances by his three lead actors since the script's inception. He recalls running into his friend Peter Dinklage when he was still trying to flesh out his main character, which at the time McCarthy had only imagined

as a recluse who would communicate the theme of disconnection. Over drinks, McCarthy and Dinklage, who stands 4' 5" because of a genetic mutation called achondroplasia that causes dwarfism, discussed the script and the ideas McCarthy wanted to convey through the main character. That's when McCarthy was first inspired by the creative possibilities of casting a dwarf as his main character.

The visual contrast of a dwarf with the people and objects in the world appealed to McCarthy, and he felt an audience would immediately understand that the character hated the attention he drew as a dwarf, and had retreated into himself as a result.

After meeting with Dinklage, McCarthy continued writing the script, knowing that he was writing the part of the main character, Finbar McBride, specifically for Dinklage. McCarthy also decided on actors for the two other main characters before finishing the script: the role of Olivia Harris, an artist who has lost her son, was written for Patricia Clarkson; and the role of Joe Oramas, a winsome street vendor with his café-in-a-truck parked on a deserted street, was for Bobby Cannavale.

McCarthy then crafted a story based

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on how he thought each of his characters would relate to one another if they met at a particular moment in time: Fin's only friend has just died; Joe's ailing father has just given him control of the family business; and Olivia is mourning the death of her son. Using circumstance as a vehicle, McCarthy tells the story of Fin's unlikely inheritance of an old train depot in Newfoundland, New Jersey, where he moves with the hope of avoiding contact with other people. However, Joe, whose mobile café operates just outside of Fin's new home, is anxious to befriend Fin, who ultimately gives in with a grudging tolerance. Meanwhile, the character of Olivia makes a kind of slapstick entrance with erratic driving that runs Fin off the road and into the woods.

McCarthy recalls that the characters often brought something new to the table that he did not anticipate, like in the scene where Emily (Michelle Williams), a young, attractive librarian, kisses Fin. "Michelle's character's kiss was a surprise. It was a response to desperate times, not about rationality. It was about responding emotionally." However, as McCarthy explains, this kiss, as well as Fin's earlier kiss with Olivia, falls in line with the theme of the movie. "Both kisses are about connection . . . [characters saying] I need connection, I need it desperately right now." And, because Fin, as McCarthy is quick to note, is a strong character, others seek him out even if he seems to be ignoring them.

With its paint peeling and its corners cluttered and dusty, the train depot itself serves as a character in the film, as well as an unexpected element of stability, both because it has weathered time and because it is

the initial draw for Fin's move to Newfoundland. The train depot, which McCarthy refers to as "the soul of the film," is based on a depot near his home when he was growing up, and McCarthy hoped that its inclusion in the film would evoke the same kind of emotional starkness that the wild west did in the John Ford classics like *The Searchers* and *Fort Apache*.

In the end, McCarthy claims that it was a trust in the original story and not the actual writing or directing of the film that demanded the biggest leap of faith. "It was like laying train



tracks as the train was coming." But there is a sense of calm in McCarthy's voice as he relays this analogy, as though he was never really worried that the tracks wouldn't be laid in time. McCarthy says that what he wanted was for the story to stay ahead of the audience. And, remarkably, in a movie where the intrusive neighbor is finally befriended, and the reclusive dwarf reaches out for relationships in the end, the story not only stays ahead, but also manages to be not at all obvious or formulaic. □

Melinda Rice is a former intern and contributing writer at The Independent.

Tom McCarthy on the set of *Station Agent*.

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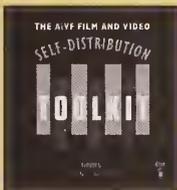
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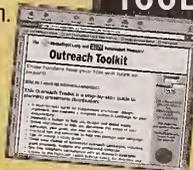
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Ask the Documentary Doctor

By Fernanda Rossi



Dear Doc Doctor:

I'm a journalist turned documentary filmmaker. How can I tell a story exactly as it happened and still make it entertaining as a documentary?

Cara Mertes, Executive Director of POV, put it very nicely during a panel discussion at this year's IFP Market in New York: "There are storytellers and there are journalists, both telling their truths in their own way." While it's tempting to solve all storytelling issues by asking who your audience is, the question I prefer to ask first is: Who are you? And subsequently, how is who you are helping or preventing you from moving forward with the story you have to tell?

Documentary filmmaking welcomes everybody regardless of professional background—from journalists to English majors, from photographers to political activists. Each one of them face different challenges when making their films. My work with numerous filmmakers led to the following conclusions that, even if generalizations, illustrate this point. Journalists develop their stories with great emphasis on documents and statistics, even though they may distrust a montage of images that appears too much of a capricious construction. Filmmakers with a background in writing might not be enamored by hard data, but may share a passion for the word, whether as narration or

interviews. When photographers become filmmakers, they can let the camera "contemplate" endlessly, and they feel more comfortable letting the images tell the story. They shy away from complicated long texts but alas, sometimes we need that. In short, their assets become their shortcomings.

Turning those shortcomings around is not too difficult if you are willing to do some soul searching. Accept that you will unfold merely a cross section of your story and not the whole of it (unless, of course, you plan to make a ten-part series). And even in

. . . I would suggest that you take off your journalist hat for a moment and look in the attic for other hats you have worn in the past.

that case, writing a book could be the better course to chart. Limiting the extent of what you are covering by prioritizing the information will make room for other storytelling devices.

Next, I would suggest that you take off your journalist hat for a moment and look in the attic for other hats you have worn in the past. News anchor of St. Louis KSDK-TV turned filmmaker Art Holliday and the making of his documentary *Before They Fall* is a good example. His film, which tells the tragic story of Matt McBride, a schizophrenic who ends up murdering his parents, was powerful but stalled in places. When we were watching the rough cut together, I caught a glimpse of one particularly striking black and white photograph of McBride that Art had used as b-roll. "Who took that picture?" I asked. "Me," he answered, quite modestly. "Well, from now on, be more of a photographer," I said.

As the session went on, Art seemed more and more comfortable moving scenes around. Back in Missouri, he added more of the photographs he had taken not only as b-roll, but as stand-alone scenes. He was still telling the truth of the McBride case, while allowing himself to compose a big moving photo; a documentary.

Dear Doc Doctor:

I have all my scenes cut but they don't flow, they don't even seem to belong to the same film. Is it because my documentary has no conflict?

There are several things to consider when the scenes of a film don't come together harmoniously. One reason could be that after spending so much time with each individual scene you are simply not used to seeing them in one consecutive cut. Or, you may have

developed each scene as a mini-documentary, each with its own beginning, middle, and end. That scene structure times twenty equals a heavy, repetitive first cut.

Picture a clothing line with a handkerchief, a beach towel, a pillow case, maybe a couple of sheets, all neatly arranged after having been dutifully wrung, flying in the wind. Now compare that to a line with ten soaking wet beach towels. The line will sag to the breaking point. When you start trimming your scenes and giving them uniqueness and character, the story will start to move naturally.

It's interesting you mention conflict as a possible reason for a lack of flow—when a film doesn't work, well-intended peers and even lay people automatically offer two pieces of advice: There is no conflict. Or, you should be in the film. But before documentaries became regular program-

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ming on primetime television, dramatic conflict and documentaries were hardly uttered in the same breath. I don't dare speculate on whether or not television encouraged documentary filmmakers to imitate the narrative structures of fiction films in order to better engage audiences, or whether documentaries were evolving in that direction naturally, thereby making them more attractive to network programmers. Either way, conflict-driven documentaries may be more popular now, but if they were being made before without conflict, they can certainly be made again.

If there is no dramatic conflict in your film, you are not allowed to make it up, right? You shouldn't be allowed to unless you don't mind being an unethical documentary filmmaker. I suggest you look closely at the smaller obstacles your characters may encounter at various points in the story. Obstacles tend to be considered production problems or mistakes to be hidden or discarded. On the contrary, making them into scenes will add contrast to the film and leave the audience wondering how your story will evolve.

The Academy Award nominated documentary *Winged Migrations* is an extreme example of a film that works well without a conflict or a voice over, or a lot of other things that we usually see in documentaries, namely people. There are a series of obstacles set before the tireless migrant birds featured in the film, and that made the audience gasp in anguish. (I was lucky to watch the film on a huge screen with a packed house.) Those obstacles offered contrast to the overwhelming beauty of the images while keeping us glued to the screen. □

Want to ask the Doc Doctor a question for a future issue of *The Independent*? Write to her at info@documentarydoctor.com

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

Welcome to Miami

HOT PINK MINIS MEET COOL DOCS AND INDIES

By Juan Carlos Rodriguez

The image of Miami as a bustling hub for the film industry is one that is somewhat sprinkled with a dose of movie-land fairy dust. Sure, there are enough big budget Hollywood productions and commercial television work to keep film professionals working, and audiences around the globe have seen the pastels of Miami's famed Art Deco buildings and the lush tropical foliage roll by in blockbuster films such as *Too Fast Too Furious* and *Bad Boys 1 & 2*, as well as on network television shows like *CSI Miami*.

But the city's photogenic and romantic qualities perfume its public image, just as NBC sitcoms and Woody Allen films inform the collective imagination, whether true or not, of life in Manhattan. One would think that with so much action and attention Miami would be thriving year round as a fertile network of film professionals, where a niche for independent film could easily be carved.

Well, that's not quite the story.

Here, young indie talents have to hustle and scrounge not only to get their projects off the ground, but to find experienced crew who are willing to work for proverbial peanuts (not to mention

The "M" program is an example of the Miami Beach Cinematheque Archive, the world's premiere collection of souvenir movie programs which tell the entire history of cinema.

traveling to New York for adequate post-production facilities). Those with the right connections usually shoot scenes in friends' apartments, and recruit trusted amigos as cast and crews. "The film community in Miami," says Grella Orihuela, partner of Tareco Productions who is finishing two unnamed feature projects, "is my black book."



Despite the fact that much of the paying production work in the city is farmed out to crew members from New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, the city remains vital to young upstart directors who quickly learn that in order to get their films made, they must be ver-

satile, quick witted, and ready to impress at a moment's notice.

The situation is made more dire by the public support for alternative cinema—which is as fleeting as an afternoon thunderstorm in August. That is to say, alternative film venues, historically, don't last long in this town known for booty, babes, and bacchanalian titillation. The latest victim, a promising upstart called the Mercury Theater, bit the dust after just a year, despite the fact that it had been located not a mile from Miami's Design District, a trendy gentrified arts area full of young, educated, and affluent professionals. As if to tell a cautionary tale of what can happen to cultural gems in Miami, what was once the Mercury Theater is now a designer fitness gym.

But all hope is not lost.

This year the Miami Beach Cinematheque, an alternative art house, opened in trendy South Beach. Located among a throng of nightclubs, cafes, and restaurants, the intimate gallery/film space with no more than fifty seats, presents regular independent film screenings produced by both local and international filmmakers.

To whet the local taste for small films, the Cinematheque presents a program called Independent Exposures, which screens independent shorts that have been collected and packaged by MicroCinema International, a San Francisco distributor of indie films from around the world. Cinematheque's is the only screen in Florida to feature MicroCinema programs, says its director and founder Dana Keith. "In fact, I've been asked to program a Miami version of MicroCinema shorts," Keith, a film historian and former art director, reports.

On Saturdays, the theater further delves into the local scene by featuring the work of resident filmmakers. The night is designed to garner

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support both from the public, and from within the industry, for local independent production. The screenings are similar to an ongoing film festival, where audiences can get an



up close and personal look at local film projects and the people who make them.

Aside from presenting independent films on a regular basis, Keith says the Cinematheque will also assist alternative film festivals by providing a place to curate entries or present film panels. This year they will be providing the IFP Miami a space for its monthly "Show Us Your Stuff" screenings of local works-in-progress. The venue will also assist the non-profit GenArts in choosing material for its upcoming event, "Shorts in the Park." Keith's venue will also house the three-day Documentary Film Festival presented in mid-November by the upstart film group, The Florida Room.

"All the different film organizations in Miami are all working independently," Keith says. "With the Cinematheque we hope to bring them together to utilize a space that acts as a common grounding point where film people can at least hang out and exchange ideas."

As with most happenings in Miami, there is a good dose of drama and controversy, be it in political battles,

immigration issues or cutting edge art. Film festivals in Miami are not devoid of the passionate philosophical exchanges or just plain organizational turmoil. The city's largest event, the Miami International Film Festival, has experienced a major ruckus since long-time director Nat Chediak resigned in 2001. Chediak's successor, David Poland, a film journalist, retired just weeks after directing only one season. Although Nicole Guillement has been named the new director, until recently the festival's future has been tenuous. Chief Sponsor Florida International

the Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, also went through a recent upheaval when its founder, Robert Rosenberg, was forced to retire as the director because of programming disagreements with the festival's board of trustees. Most locals roll their eyes. Despite the potential cultural losses, Miamians' reasoning goes something like this: In the tropics, things are bound to get heated.

But perhaps the most refreshing and provoking film event to come along is the tiny Documentary Film Festival produced by The Florida Room, a roving film organization



University pulled out in August and it was announced in October at a press conference that the festival will be taken over by Miami Dade College. MDC president Eduardo Padron says, "Our aim is to have the best film festival in the Western Hemisphere."

The city's other major movie fete,

established in 2002 by Miami filmmakers Rhonda Mitrani and Juan Carlos Zaldivar.

The pair set up three nights of outdoor screenings along Espanola Way, a pedestrian alley of funky shops, bistros, and an international youth hostel. The main presentations were feature length documentaries that addressed issues like environmental waste, disillusionment, and human rights, and were screened at the Cinematheque, less than a block from Tantra, where sexy hipsters cavort in skimpy

Opposite page: Miami-based filmmaker Juan Carlos Zaldivar co-founded The Florida Room. This page: Tiffany Shlain's *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness* premiered at the 2003 Florida Room Documentary Film Festival.

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designer clothes over \$200 bottles of vodka.

The event resulted in impassioned intelligent discussions (a rarity on the SoBe circuit), especially after the screening of *Promises*, Justine Shapiro, B.Z. Goldberg, and Carlos Bolado's harrowing and heartbreaking film that tells the conflict between Israeli Jews and Palestinians through the stories of children living on both sides.

Mitrani explains that bringing films with themes that are not usually

want to collaborate with bigger festivals," Mitrani says. "Last year we had hundreds of people who got involved and said 'wow.' We're really happy with keeping it small and growing at a great pace."

Miami filmmaker Robert Rosenberg recently shifted back to the business of making films after leaving his post last year as director of the Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. After growing the festival into a major event that drew thousands of participants, Rosenberg is now free to focus on his

says, even if your name is recognized, as his is from his prominent role with the MGLFF. "Organized financing is just not present in Miami," Rosenberg laments.

So, he shopped the market for a company that would likely back his first feature narrative project to the tune of one million dollars. The investment could make possible Rosenberg's dream of creating a series of Miami-based films that capitalize on the city's rich cultural mix, colorful history, and geographic setting. "There's a million stories to tell here," says Rosenberg, a native New Yorker who speaks fluent Spanish. "Miami is as unique a place as it gets in the United States."

Beyond creating his own projects, Rosenberg hopes, like many South Florida filmmakers, to further develop a rich creative exchange within a real, tangible, and healthy film community. □

Miami native Juan Carlos Rodriguez works as an editor and writer for the Miami New Times.



played in Miami was a risk, but it was a way to establish the festival as a unique event. "I think that part of our mission is to bring films and create panel discussions about issues that are not usually seen or discussed here," Mitrani explains. "We're also focused on growing the independent film community by bringing local filmmakers together, as well as various art organizations."

This November, The Florida Room will follow up on its success with the second Documentary Film Festival with a roster of three hard-hitting films that examine heroism in the face of racism, as well as a woman's right to choose abortion.

"We want to keep it small, but we

labor of love, his screenplay called *Biscayne Boulevard*, a historical murder mystery that examines Miami's gay underground circa 1950.

The Emmy-winning filmmaker was recently in New York City doing the schmooze with potential producers at the IFP Market. His was among fifty screenplays selected for the event, and was only one of two scripts to arrive from Florida. Obviously, a roomful of production companies who are looking for future projects is essential for any filmmaker. But for Rosenberg, networking jaunts to New York or Los Angeles are just a part of what it takes to make a film in Miami. Financing films with local connections can only go so far, he

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This page: *Promises*, an award-winning film about Israeli Jews and Palestinians, screened at Miami's tiny Documentary Film Festival. Facing page: *Mir in The Boy who Plays on the Buddhas of Bamiyan* was produced by The Sundance Institute Documentary Fund.

Sundance Institute Documentary Program

Jason Guerrasio interviews
program director Diane Weyermann

What is the Sundance Institute Documentary Fund?

It's a fund to support documentaries in the US and internationally that deal with contemporary human rights issues, social justice, civil liberties, and freedom of expression. It used to be the Soros Documentary Fund.

How long has the fund been with Sundance?

It's been here for two years.

How did Sundance take over the reigns?

I initiated the move to Sundance. It's OSI's (Open Society Institute) policy to spin off programs so that they eventually become self-sustainable in organizations and institutions that support that kind of work. When I moved to Sundance, the fund was spun off as a Sundance program and given a multi-year grant to continue the work here.

Have you changed the mission of the fund?

We've made a few changes. One of the things that we've done is increase the grant amount, which means that we're funding fewer projects. We prefer feature-length documentaries that have the potential to be broadcast [on television], and the potential for a theatrical release. We look for work that has a strong appeal to a large international community. In other words, we're not looking for films where the subject is on a local issue or a local appeal, but work that would be potentially screened around the world.

What types of projects do you seek?

The four main areas are human rights,

social justice, civil liberties, and freedom of expression. We only fund one-off, feature lengths.

Should filmmakers who don't have docs about the conflicts in the Middle East or human rights issues apply for the grant?

If it doesn't fit in [one of] those categories then people should not submit.

Explain the different grants?

We fund in two different stages. The first fund is the development and those grants are up to \$15,000. The second stage is the work-in-progress stage, and that requires a portion of a

thing—our grants are always part of a larger financing package that the filmmaker puts together. The other thing that we do is, if a film gets a development grant, the filmmaker is eligible to come back to us and ask for supplemental support once they have a work-in-progress. They must demonstrate that they have raised a portion of the outstanding budget and if so, they are eligible for up to \$60,000 in supplemental support.

Is the same amount given out each year?

It's about the same. It's a total of about one million dollars a year.

How many submissions do you receive annually?

We get about 800-900 projects a year.

How many projects do you accept?

The last two years we had two annual



rough cut that's about a half hour or more. That grant goes up to \$75,000. Not every project gets the maximum amount. We have a limited amount of money so we never fully produce any-

meetings a year and at each committee meeting we review about twenty-five projects. Of those, about twelve-fifteen are supported. They would vary year to year, but about thirty



projects a year might be supported. We also have started documentary labs, which is where we take projects that have already been identified through the fund and try to help them in the creative process. One that we started this August was a documentary composers lab. We invited three projects from the fund to participate in a lab that focused on music as an element of storytelling. We're going to start an editing storytelling lab next year. Those aren't going to be open to the general documentary filmmaking community, simply because we don't have that many slots.

Talk a little about the review process. When we receive projects they are initially reviewed by our staff—this is done to make sure that everything

Peter Raymont's *The World Stopped Watching*, produced by The Sundance Institute Documentary Fund.

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that we need is there, and to see if the project fits with our mandate. Then the projects come to me and I review everything again, and decide which of them go to committee review. The committee is a rotating group of experts in the field of human rights and film. All the tapes and written material are sent a month ahead of

the meeting so everybody has a chance to go through the project in detail. Then we come together to discuss each project and make the final grant decision.

How long does that take?

It varies from two to six months. It depends on when the projects come in.

Are there any restrictions in applying?

Films have to be at least an hour. We won't give a grant to a filmmaker who doesn't have creative control on their film. Can't be a historical doc, and we don't do biographies.

Is there a timeline within which the funds must be used?

No. In fact, some films that we have given grants to we know are going to take three, four, five years. For instance we've given a grant to a Danish filmmaker who's following the Milosovic trial (*Milosovic on Trial*). We know for a fact that that film is going to take years to be completed and that's fine. If anything we encourage work that really goes into the complexities of the subject matter and encourage projects that are really following something in depth, or following a character in depth, or following an issue.

What's the deadline to apply?

We have a rolling submission; people can submit at any time.

Can you give a few titles that were selected for the fund in the past?

Gail Dolgin & Vincente Franco's *Daughter From Danang*, Kate Davis's *Southern Comfort*, Edet Belzberg's *Children Underground*, and Deborah Hoffmann & Frances Reid's *Long Night's Journey Into Day*.

What's the most common mistake a filmmaker makes when they approach you?

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that don't fit in the guidelines. People should go to our website, which lists all the details about the fund, what our guidelines are, how to apply, what



we require as part of the application process. Another thing is sometimes filmmakers rush through a project that isn't really ready. The work-in-progress category is very competitive and you should submit something that's strong. We're looking for something that shows both how the filmmaker is approaching the documentary stylistically and development of the narrative art, so if you only have something that's bunched together and doesn't show the development of the story, it's probably not ready.

Are there any tips you can give filmmakers to make a project look more attractive?

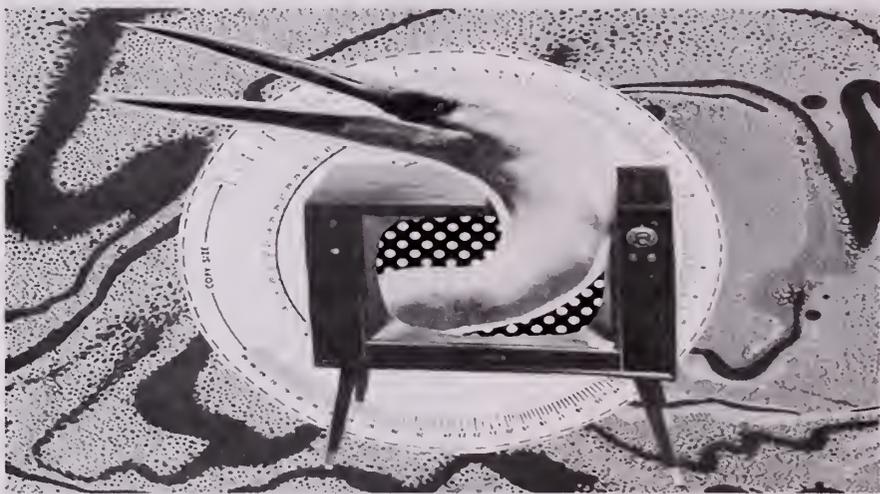
I think the key is not to quickly submit [your project]. We don't have deadlines, but if a filmmaker hears that we're having a committee meeting and the films that are in by next month will be discussed, people will rush to get something in. I generally counsel people against rushing. Unless there's a compelling reason to do that, it's best to take the natural time to get the project to the stage where it's going to be the strongest coming in here. Filmmakers can always submit something and say, "I'm not sure if this is strong enough at this point. Could you let us know?" And we're happy to do that. □

*Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for
The Independent.*

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The IFP Market's Silver Anniversary

By James Israel

A painter who hijacks billboards for subversive messages against corporate advertising; a man trying to convert his car to run on French fry oil; a boxing cutman who loses his touch; a homeless African American man struggling to find an apartment and reclaim his dignity; a dying Hollywood producer who bribes his son into filming his death; a woman uniting with her estranged family to reveal a tragic secret.

These stories and hundreds more were brought to the 25th annual IFP Market in New York this past September. A broad range of rough cuts, trailers, film shorts, excerpts, scripts, and pitches from both first-time filmmakers and Sundance winners were presented as part of the recently redefined market of less projects and, ideally, more opportunities. While market attendance was down this year—which was most notably marked by the reduced industry presence at the Angelika Film Center screenings—the market still created a flurry of activity. The most obvious benefit for attendees was the networking opportunities. The complimentary suds and socializing at the Puck Building each evening after the panels, and the festival-like late-night party circuit proved filmmakers were hot to share their wares and mingle with each other, or even the occasional actor.

Documentaries made a strong showing this year with several unique stories, including Pedro Carvajal's *POPaganda: The Art & Subversion of Ron*

Facing page: Phil Grabsky directed *The Boy who Plays on the Buddhas of Bamiyan*. This page: Rory O'Connor's *The Brokaw Hoax* screened at the IFP Market.

English, which is a hilarious, engaging piece about painter Ron English's very illegal mission to take over billboards by putting up his own typically anti-corporate messages. For example, labeling McDonalds golden arches with the words "Phat Food," or cover-

Two other strong docs at the market explore the injustice that can result in the enforcement of the country's drugs laws. Cassandra Herrman and Kelly Whalen's *Tulia, Texas* covers the controversy surrounding forty six residents (thirty nine of which were black) arrested in 1999 and sentenced on a false drug charge. Jed Riffe's *Waiting To Inhale: Doctors, Patients and the Law* follows a group of marijuana growers as they battle the DEA to legalize medical marijuana for sick patients.

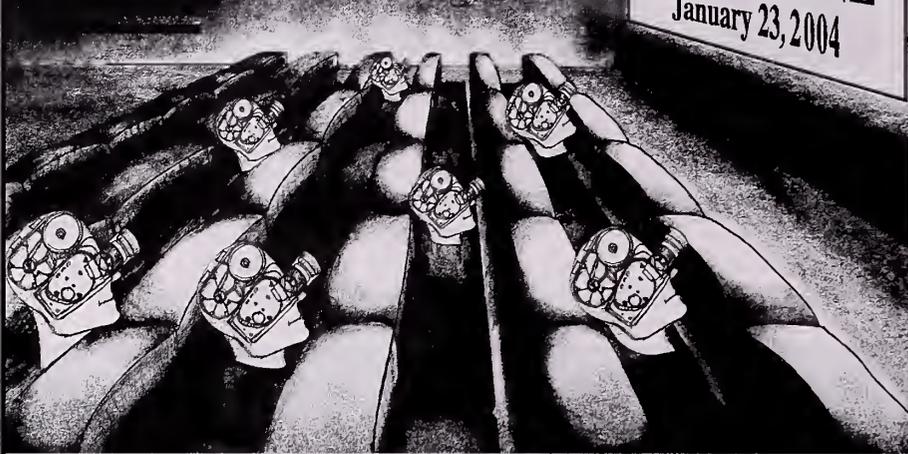
In these times of media conglomer-



ing a cigarette company's logo with the word "breathe." Carvajal also incorporated a performance into one of his more provocative, if less hilarious, takeovers. After replacing a billboard with an illustration of a giant coat hanger, a woman climbs up in front of the board, disrobes, takes out her own wire coat hanger, and graphically demonstrates in shock-value proportions what would happen if abortion became illegal, collapsing after splattering fake blood everywhere.

ation and manipulation, Rory O'Connor's *The Brokaw Hoax* investigates a very strange incident involving NBC's coverage of the Panama Invasion. After losing contact with its crew in Panama, NBC placed a call to a man in Indiana and told him to talk on the air with Tom Brokaw and pretend to be a businessman stuck in a Panama hotel. The documentary at first seems to be a hoax itself—it seems the story would have been covered before now. To that end, the filmmak-

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er, who was no doubt aware of how his claim would come across, had a voice analyst at the screening confirm the identity of NBC's fake witness.

Environmental concerns were on the minds of other doc makers. Roberta Grossman's *Turtle Wars* follows Native American activists trying to protect their land from oil drilling,



mining, and toxic waste dumping. Daniel Gold and Judith Helfand's latest doc, *Melting Planet*, examines the effects of global warming. With beautiful camerawork and quirky storytelling (much like their 2002 Sundance winner *Blue Vinyl*), Gold and Helfand present a smart and informed documentary that features both elements of humor and important environmental themes—desperate ski resort workers in Park City, Utah attempt to make snow during an April-like January winter; a man and his buddies trying to create bio-fuel out of French fry grease in their garage; and Alaskan villagers being forced to relocate their entire town as it literally drops into the ocean because of melting ice's erosive effects. The filmmakers were at the screenings and, conscious of the fact that their production was contributing to the ozone problem with all the flying and driving required to complete the film, handed out complimentary, energy efficient light bulbs.

In the narrative category, two projects dealing with issues of death and the family appeared promising. Garrett Bennett's *A Relative Thing* is about scattered siblings who return home to face the horror of cancer in the family; and Christopher Jaymes's *In Memory of My Father* focuses on a

dysfunctional Hollywood producer who pays his son to film his imminent death. As the family gathers to witness the event, it becomes clear that the father isn't the only socially inept one of the bunch. Both *A Relative Thing* and *In Memory of My Father* include solid, professional production and competent acting, but were somewhat of a challenge for the viewer. Their complex narratives and multiple characters made it difficult to grasp the nuances within the material.

Of the unfinished projects at the market, the ones that seemed to best represent what their finished result would look like were rough cuts or cohesive sections of film, as opposed to several disconnected scenes that required an introduction and explanation from the filmmaker to let the audience know what they were about to see. This, of course, brings up the



question of how useful it is to extend a public forum to films that are nowhere near completion. It is, perhaps, a bit unwise for filmmakers to show only bits and pieces of a film so far in advance of its finishing point. Obviously, there are projects that need to seek additional funding, but distributors and festivals attend the screenings as well, so these public screenings of partial projects could possibly do more harm than good. This year, there were several films at

Facing page: Daniel Gold and Judith Helfand's *Melting Planet*. This page: Yon Motskin's *The Cutman*.

IFP where it was strikingly evident that more work would benefit the project. And, as many distributors will tell you, you only get one shot to show them your film, so make it a good one.

While docs attracted most of the attention at this year's market, there were also some very polished, beautifully shot shorts, some of which had already been making the rounds on the festival circuit throughout the year. Yon Motskin's *The Cutman* is about an elderly man whose job it is to patch up boxers during fights. After a crucial error in the ring, he struggles to hold onto his job while trying to improve a failing relationship with his son. Kevin Shaw, who was a 2003 finalist for the Gordon Parks Emerging African American Filmmaker Award, mainlined his strong and well-acted short *Jeremiah Strong*, about a homeless man trying to put his life back together.

After a week of screenings, panels, and parties, market attendees gathered at a downtown nightclub to celebrate the winners. Rosie Perez hosted a very large, rowdy crowd, and awards of more than \$130,000 in cash and services were given to six filmmakers. In the Emerging Narrative Category, Benno Schoberth received \$85,000 in goods and services for his work in progress, *Shelter*. Tanya Steele received a \$10,000 cash award for her screenplay *The Parachute Factory*, while Annemarie Jacir was honored with a \$5,000 cash award for her short film *Like Twenty Impossibles*. Gretchen Berland and Mike Majoros received a \$10,000 cash award for their documentary, *Rolling*, and this year's Gordon Parks Awards went to Alison McDonald for her screenplay *Headshrinker*, and to Seith Mann for his short film *five deep breaths*. □

James Israel is a Brooklyn based filmmaker and staff member at AIVE. He recently completed a feature length screenplay, Five Boroughs, and a Super 8 short, Up & Down, starring musician Rebecca Moore.

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Work to Watch For

By Jason Guerrasio

Theatrical

Just An American Boy

Dir. Amos Poe

(Cowboy Pictures, November 26)

Filmmaker Amos Poe has always been a fan of singer/songwriter Steve Earle. After directing a few of his music

Bob Dylan. "I told them that I'd love to do a black and white movie."

Although Poe wasn't able to make a film in the gritty style of Pennebaker's black and white verité, he was able to create a portrait of the artist that shows Earle's dark past and his strug-



videos, Poe was asked by Earle's label producers at Artemis Records if he'd be interested in doing a documentary on Earle. "They asked if I wanted to do a *Don't Look Back*-kind of thing on Steve," Poe recalls, citing their reference to the classic DA Pennebaker documentary on

gle with drugs, as well as his rebirth as a musician, playwright, and short story writer. "When you've lost five to six years of your life to drugs," says Poe, "you make up for lost time, and I think that's what [Earle is] doing."

Initially, Poe wanted to show the

person Earle is when he's off stage, but during their four-month shoot, Earle's music began to insinuate itself in a way that turned the film more into the story about the person Earle is when he's *on* stage. "We were going to try to do it without much [of his] music, but it's kind of like doing something on Shakespeare without the words," Poe explains.

Earle's songs about the death penalty, politics, and most recently, the "American Taliban" John Walker Lindh, along with his blunt, unapologetic style of songwriting are what earn him his fanbase and make him, in Poe's opinion, "the quintessential American." "His belief in freedom of speech is to the point of loving people who have completely opposite points of view," Poe says. "It gets him off."

The Hebrew Hammer

Dir. Jonathan Kesselman

(Cowboy Pictures, December 19, special showing on Comedy Central December 8)

Just in time for the holiday season comes the first "Jewexploitation" film. Mordechai Jefferson Carver (Adam Goldberg), aka "The Hebrew Hammer," is known on the fierce, dirty streets of New York as the protector of the Jewish faith and all around ass-kicker of anti-Semites. After Santa Claus's evil son, Damian (Andy Dick), devises a plan to eliminate Hanukkah, the Jewish Justice League calls on the Hammer to foil the evil plans of Santa Claus junior. Poking fun at Jewish stereotypes and the Blaxploitation genre, the film offers a refreshing break from traditional holiday films.

Television

Get The Fire!

Dir. Nancy du Plessis

(ITVS, December 23)

It happens to everyone at least once in his or her lifetime. There's a knock on the door and when you open it, a well-dressed boy or girl wants to talk about

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Filmmaker Nancy du Plessis has had the experience numerous times, and found herself intrigued enough after finding out that 60,000 young people every year go on two-year missions to learn the ways of the Mormon Church that she decided to direct a documentary film on the subject.

du Plessis approached the Church's public relations department, which granted her permission to follow three boys assigned to complete their missions in Munich, Germany, provided she follow one ground rule that du Plessis didn't feel entirely sure she could stand by. "They wanted a success story," explains du Plessis. "I had to agree that if my subject gave up and went home early, I would throw away all the material [I filmed] and never say anything about it." Fortunately, that didn't happen and du Plessis was able to effectively capture the boys' unique pilgrimage in this unique documentary account.

Get the Fire! tracks the boys as they adapt to a new culture in Germany, and the strict rules issued by the Mormon Church, including no phone calls home (except on Christmas and Mother's Day), no newspapers, movies, or television, and only church-authorized music. du Plessis documents their daily routines as they go door-to-door each day to speak about Mormon beliefs, as they relax and sing songs at their temporary homes, and as they meet with fellow missionaries. "I spent a lot of time watching, listening, and running after them. They always walked very fast," du Plessis recalls.

While the film is about young Mormons, du Plessis maintains that she didn't make the film to focus expressly on their beliefs but more on the experience of being on a mission. "I didn't make a movie about the

Mormon church," she says. "I made a film about young people who went through this experience."

Loaded Gun: Life, and Death, and Dickinson

Dir. Jim Wolpaw
(ITVS, December 16)

In this light-hearted documentary about Emily Dickinson, director Jim



Wolpaw tries to bring about a new understanding of "the belle of Amherst." Beginning with the traditional approach of interviewing historians and English professors, Wolpaw then ventures into less conventional methods by interviewing actors auditioning for a fictitious Emily Dickinson Hollywood film, and later employing a rock band to create songs based on Dickinson's poems. As the film goes on, we soon realize Wolpaw's intention is to demonstrate that the fun in reading Dickinson's work is its enduring difficulty to categorize.

What I Want My Words to Do to You

Dir. Judith Katz
(POV, December 16)

Since 1998, playwright Eve Ensler has volunteered her time to help women at the Bedford Hills Correctional

Facility in upstate New York by leading a writing group for the inmates. *What I Want My Words to Do to You* documents the women who participate in this group, most of whom are serving sentences for murder, as they face their crimes and punishment through discussion and writing exercises. The film ends with actors Mary Alice, Glenn Close, Hazelle Goodman, Rosie

Perez, and Marisa Tomei performing the group's written work.

To Live Is Better Than To Die

Dir. Weijun Chen
(Cinemax, December 1)

Ten years ago the Chinese government asked rural areas of the country to give blood for cash. Since then, the AIDS epidemic has infected a large percentage of the population in those areas. This documentary shows the bleak, day-to-day existence of one family coping with the disease that infected all of them, except the oldest daughter—who was born before the parents gave blood. Although the future is grim, the father's pride keeps the family in good spirits as they cherish each other's company for as long as they have left. □

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.

Opposite page: Steve Earle from *Just an American Boy*. Young Mormon missionaries "tracting" in suburban Germany in *Get the Fire!*



The Nuances of Film Editing

SHAPING A STORY AFTER THE WRAP

By Charles Sweitzer

The word “edit” has a bad reputation. To lay folk, the word brings to mind overindulgence, censorship, and the property neighbored by “File” and “View.” But people in film know better. Walter Murch, the editing savant behind *Apocalypse Now* and *The English Patient*, once compared film editing to translation in that the challenge is not so much to find ways to cut things out, but rather to leave things in—to find ways in which ideas and emotions make sense in one context (the printed page) and still resonate in a completely different one (reels of celluloid). In cinema, the editor is just as much of a storyteller as the screenwriter; it’s not uncommon, after all, for editors on documentaries to take codirecting credits.

For this article, I spoke to three established film editors about the challenge of artistic transubstantiation.

Melody London

Anyone who loses sleep over jittery music videos and CNN promos is likely to take comfort in the work of film editor Melody London. At first, it might seem odd to even refer to her minimalist style as “editing”—London-edited films like Jim Jarmusch’s *Down By Law* and *Stranger Than Paradise* have fewer cuts per hour than most car commercials.

“I think it’s often the case that less is more,” says London, who is currently editing Charles Randolph-Wright’s *On the One*. “I mean, it’s a visual medium. Unless you’re doing *My Dinner with Andre*, where the dialogue *is* the story, I find that often we lose a lot of the expository scenes and go for the essence, the throughlines of the expository scenes.”

To be fair, not all of the films London edits rely on long takes or a minimalist style: In *Joe the King* and *Novocaine*, the

editing may have more of a “traditional” feel, but London’s still applying a carefully measured sense of storytelling. “I think of the film as the final rewrite of the script,” London says, explaining her approach to collaborating with directors, or writer/directors—negotiating the latter, London says, can require a special kind of diplomatic skill. “I’ve worked with a lot of writer/directors,” she explains, “and often there tends to be a kind of attachment to the script, more so than, for example, the person I’m working with now [Randolph-Wright, who did not write the script.]” (The *On the One* screenplay was written by Kevin Heffernan and Peter E. Lengyel of the Broken Lizard comedy troupe, from a story by Monica Lengyel Karson.)

When dealing with a director like Randolph-Wright, London says, “there’s a greater freedom, actually, with the material, because [the director] has also worked with the script in a detached way. It’s not as personal to them—it doesn’t reflect some kind of personal experience, or autobiographical kind of sentiment. . . . I think they’re more objective, which an editor needs to be, so there’s almost an equality in that sense.”

Still, London has come up with an assortment of strategies she deploys when dealing with writer/directors. “You have to make a writer/director understand that you’re working *with* them, so I wouldn’t suggest making any real ‘interpretations’ on the material. Even if you have a strong opinion about something not working, I would include it in the

Top: John Lurie, Tom Waits and Roberto Benigni in Jim Jarmusch’s *Down By Law*, edited by Melody London. Facing page: Robert Benigni and Nicoletta Braschi share a tender moment in *Down By Law*; with Tom Waits and John Lurie in the background.

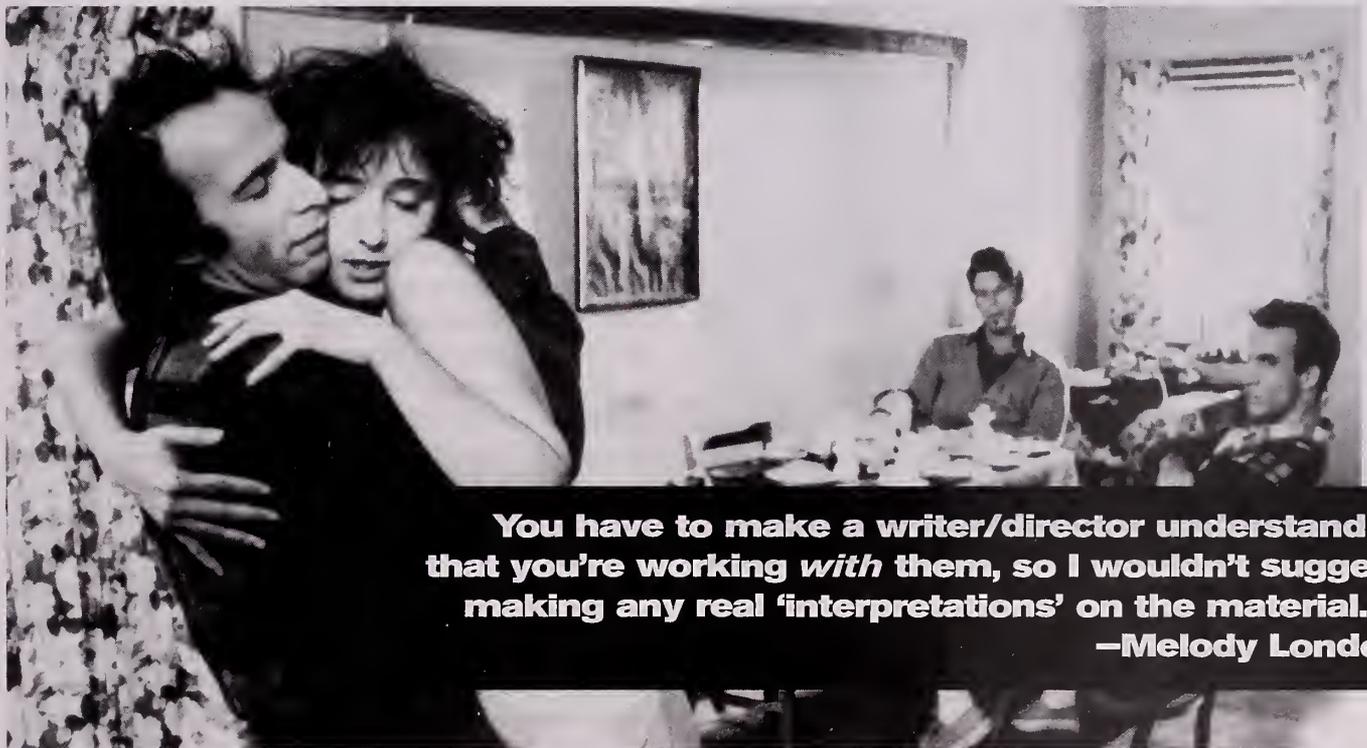


first cut and make sure [the director] had viewed everything. Usually, it's much clearer and simpler to *show* people how something may not be working, rather than interpret it."

London also credits the advent of nonlinear editing systems (like Avid and Final Cut Pro) to improving negotiations between directors and editors. "Because now one is generally working with Avid, there is much more freedom to try things and experiment, and if they don't like it, it can always be put back in a flash. [Before nonlinear editing], I think it was a question of trying to encourage the director to try things, and see how they work."

then looking at it again, before you reject that new form (or shape) that it might be taking."

Surprisingly, one of the most famous scenes in a London-edited film—in fact, probably one of the most famous scenes in any American independent film—was almost left behind in a fit of reevaluation. "In *Down By Law*, we had a situation where we had many scenes that were taking place in prison with the three characters: Roberto Benigni, John Lurie, and Tom Waits," London recalls. "And that section of the film was just running too long. There wasn't a problem with the performances, or the scene play-



**You have to make a writer/director understand that you're working *with* them, so I wouldn't suggest making any real 'interpretations' on the material.
—Melody London**

Often, all it takes to instigate change—for better or for worse—is a shift in perspective. "I think there's also a danger in getting used to the flow of material in a certain form," London says. "You get used to the scenes playing in a certain rhythm with all the dialogue, and then when you see parts excised, it's kind of a shock. The questioning leads to more looking at it, and then looking at it again, and

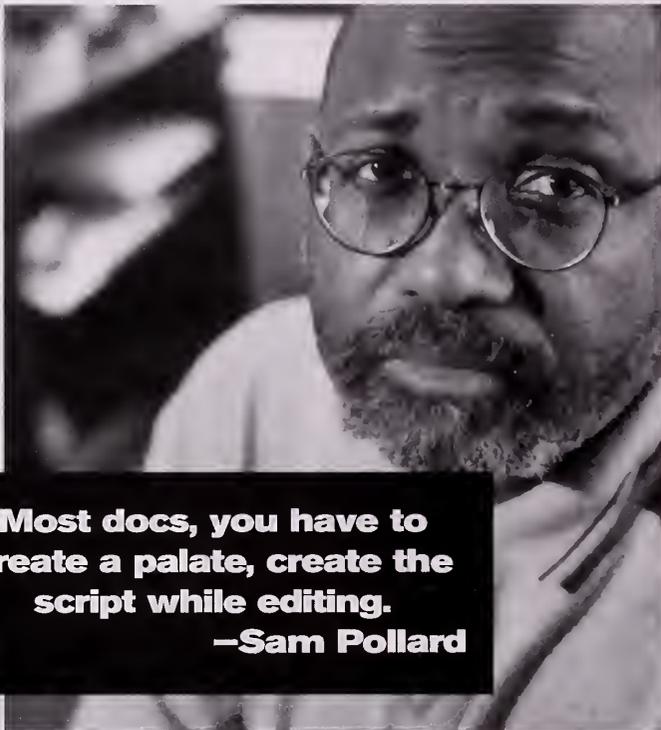
ing well, or anything having to do with the writing—it was just a question of that portion of the film running too long. So we tried viewing the film with certain portions of that taken out. And we'd look at it again and again, and see what was being sacrificed, and often we'd try to change the order of those scenes and put them back, and let the film run longer. And curiously, one of the parts we tried taking

out became one of the most quoted scenes in the film: the 'I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream!' scene."

London ultimately cautions against trying to apply generalities, and encourages a sort of receptiveness to others and, ultimately, one's self. "Each story is unique to each given project," she says. "It has to do with the style of the film and what the director is trying to achieve. Each director has a unique approach to their material, and you have to understand what their process is, as well as [your] own."

Sam Pollard

It would be tough to find an editor as fearless as Sam Pollard. "There's no material that frightens me!" he says, laughing. Pollard is the rare film editor who is equally at home with narrative features as he is with documentaries. In the realm of feature films, Pollard is perhaps best known for having edited Spike Lee's *Mo' Better Blues*, *Jungle Fever*,



Most docs, you have to create a palate, create the script while editing.
—Sam Pollard

and *Clockers*, among other features in Lee's repertoire. But he's also an omnipresent figure in the world of documentary editing. Pollard's credits here include Lee's *4 Little Girls* and *Jim Brown: All American*, as well as numerous nonfiction projects for PBS. (Most recently, he produced an installment of *The Blues* miniseries, and directed, wrote, and produced public television's *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* miniseries.)

"Working in documentary has given me a tremendous sense of confidence," he says. "Most docs, you have to create a palate, create the script while editing."

On features, Pollard has a set way of working. "Usually, I

read the script first, and see how I respond to the characters and the situation and the storyline. I usually don't read the script again, unless it's a very complicated scene, with a lot of [additional] improvised dialogue." Pollard says he's worked this way pretty consistently since 1981. "For the first couple features I did, I kept the script in front of me at all times," he says. "The one film that changed from script to screen that I worked on in the feature category is a little-known horror film—the first feature that I ever edited—called *Gamma 693*," a film, according to the Internet Movie Database, also known as *Battalion of the Living Dead*, *The Chilling*, and/or *Night of the Wehrmacht Zombies*. "It did not turn out to be very good, even with all the changes—but I tried."

Pollard stresses the importance of an editor understanding the shape of cinematic storytelling. "I usually start a project when they start shooting," he says. The process, he says, breaks down into these elements: "There are three levels of storytelling. Level one, the director has an idea, and prepares a script with that idea. Level two, they find a location, a cast, and get a crew in place. That changes the script; it changes the energy and level again, because someone's reading your words, and blocking it, and shooting it.

"And then the third level of storytelling is in the editing room. When you look at the credits to a John Sayles movie, you'll see it says, 'Written, directed, and edited by John Sayles.' Why did he take all three jobs? Because he knows that *that's* the evolution of the storytelling process."

Ultimately, though, this evolutionary process can't be rushed, and Pollard, like London, opts for a thorough approach. A difficult set of dailies should be approached, Pollard says, by "editing sequences first."

"That approach usually gives the editor the opportunity to get comfortable with the material," he says. "I will usually sit down with pen and paper and write down all the sequences, and then start to develop a structure. I always suggest patience when approaching this task, because most times, this structuring process goes through many permutations before figuring out the arc of the film."

Kate Evans

If Walter Murch is right, and editing a feature from a screenplay is like translating words from one language to another, editing a feature from a screenplay based on a novel must be like some cruel game of telephone. Kate Evans, editor on the film adaptation of Tracy Chevalier's best-selling novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, directed by Peter Webber, found that some major changes had to be made in the editing room to match the structure of Chevalier's work of speculative historical fiction about a Johannes Vermeer painting.

"When we finished shooting, we had a rough cut of about three hours and thirty minutes," Evans says, "and that was fairly faithful to the book!" Evans went on to compare the editing process to working on a documentary: "Almost every

sequence was moved around.” Evans is especially proud of one particular sequence midway through the film in which we see, in steady succession, Vermeer’s maid Grete learning Vermeer’s wife is pregnant; Grete seeing Vermeer and his wife flirting; and Grete flirting with her boyfriend. “None of those sequences in the original film followed each other,” says Evans. “Those three scenes work brilliantly together, though they came from completely different places. We didn’t have a grand design of what the structure was going to be.”

Evans says that she was ultimately glad that they had as much footage to draw from as they did. “I think Peter knew quite a lot of the time when he was shooting that some things weren’t going to work, but sometimes you need to shoot things, because the actors have read the script and expect them to be shot—essentially, for political reasons.” Much of the material that ended up being cut was dialogue. The film version of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* incorporates many near-wordless sequences like the aforementioned flirting montage. Grete’s artistic talent is established in a silent kitchen sequence, and many of the scenes that establish her relationship with Vermeer are similarly still.

“I think one of the things about period movies that can be especially difficult is the dialogue,” says Evans. “Even if it’s absolutely correct for the time, it can take you out of the movie. We wanted to avoid any line that jarred.” She laughs. “You have to listen very closely to the dialogue, so you don’t get any *forsooth!* kind of lines.”

Another obstacle Evans faced in editing *Girl* was when—or even if—to incorporate footage of the actual Vermeer painting the story centers around. “We felt we had to include it, but both Peter and I felt very strongly that when you really look at the painting, she doesn’t look very much like [lead actress Scarlett Johansson],” says Evans, who resolved to work around this by not showing the painting until right before the credits roll. “Because you haven’t seen the painting, you feel she looks exactly like it. But if you actually put the painting next door, you would feel the differences.”

For the final product, Evans’s own gauge of what to keep in and leave out amounted to a not-so-complex formula of common sense. “I mean, really, we used the best bits. That’s what it comes down to. You can’t be too reverent to the original text, because people want a film that works within its own terms. Even Tracy Chevalier is pleased with our film, because it works. And that’s what people want—they don’t want to see something ‘faithful,’ if in fact they’re asleep before the end.”

After talking with this diverse trio of editors, I thought that in the end, perhaps one of the greatest apocryphal bits of film editing advice is the pointer that Stanley Kubrick allegedly gave Jerry Lewis. The two were said to have crossed paths sometime circa 1968, when they were working in adjacent

editing rooms. (Kubrick would have been editing *2001*; Lewis, *The Big Mouth*). In despair over a difficult sequence, Lewis lamented, “You can’t polish a turd,” to which Kubrick reportedly responded, “You can if you freeze it.”

Again and again, the advice proffered by the editors I spoke with broke the art of editing down into two sim-



I mean, really, we used the best bits. That’s what it comes down to.
—Kate Evans

ple necessities: time and space. Pollard is a strong advocate of the latter. “I believe that to get the best creatively out of people, you need to give them room to create,” he says. Evans, too, confirms the importance of creative freedom. Though she had worked with director Peter Webber on several prior projects, she was nonetheless grateful for the space she was given. “We look at the film together, and then we decide what needs to be done,” she explains. “And then I do it, without Peter there, and then he’ll come back and look at it again.” Evans says she found that this method was ultimately beneficial for the director, too. “Peter found that he wanted to keep his distance from the actual physical cutting so that he could try and have some freshness and objectivity when he saw the film again. If he was there when I was literally making the cuts, he found he became too involved in the actual cutting.” She chuckles. “We work *very* well together.” □

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Waxing Improvisational

WHY DIRECTORS WORK WITHOUT SCRIPTS

By Jason Guerrasio

Everyone can act. Everyone can improvise. 'Talent' or 'lack of talent' have very little to do with it.
—Viola Spolin, creator of the Second City Company, excerpted from *Improvisation for the Theater*.

The art of improvisation has long been a vital tool in the actor's repertoire. Along with the sense of reality to a character, improvisation also brings spontaneity to a film set, where actors may often find themselves waiting for hours before shooting their next scene. "Because of all the mechanics involved in film—camera set up, lighting, etc—to keep it alive and immediate you have to shake things up, and improv is a great way to do it," says Kevin Scott, who teaches basic and advanced improvisation for film at the Second City training center in New York City. An offshoot of the Chicago-based Second City Company, the center is known for fostering some of the best improvisational actors of our time, among them John Belushi, Bill Murray, and Eugene Levy. Scott adds that the tradition of Second City, founded by Viola Spolin, started with the notion that improvisation is something both actors and non-actors can experience on an almost primal level. "The idea is that it's a very childlike instinct," he explains. "It's like playing make believe."

But it's not just actors who employ the art of improv, directors such as John Cassavetes, Mike Leigh, and Christopher Guest have also used improvisation in their work. While each of them utilized the art with a different cinematic end result, they have similarly chosen to combine the art with professional actors. Three standout independent films this year feature unscripted performances from a cast of young aspiring actors or kids with no past acting experience whatsoever. Whether it's discovering the opposite sex, going through a mundane day at school that ends horrifically wrong, or getting caught up in a violent culture that surrounds them, the storylines of these three films prompted their directors to incorporate improvisation, with the hope of affecting an authentic element that would not have otherwise come about through the use of professional actors.

Invite Discovery

Peter Sollett knew he wanted his NYU thesis to be reminiscent of his own childhood growing up in Brooklyn, New York, but he and his producing partner, Eva Vives, were experiencing difficulty finding actors through conventional casting methods. The team decided to post flyers around the lower east side of New York City, where Sollett moved to as an adult and now lives, advertising an open casting call. "We didn't really think about the ethnic breakdown of the neighborhood," says Sollett, referring to the mostly Latino population of the lower east side. "[But] they were great and had a lot to offer, so we did the film with them."

The casting call solicited actors that while talented, Sollett felt were more interesting when they weren't reading lines, but rather speaking from their hearts. "I wanted the foundation of their characters to be formed based on their own impulses," he says. And with that in mind, he resolved that his cast would not follow a written script. During the shoot, Sollett realized that letting his cast create the movement, speech, and attitude of their characters was a technique that worked, and his thirty-minute thesis, *Five Feet High and Rising*, went on to win the short film prize at Sundance and Cannes in 2000. Bolstered by the feedback and success of his short, Sollett began writing *Raising Victor Vargas*, an expanded feature-length version of *Five Feet* that he hoped would build on the talents of his novice cast.

Judy Marte and Victor Rasuck were both attending performing arts schools when one of the flyers Sollett and Vives had posted was first brought to their attention. "My teacher got the flyer and picked the top five kids from the class to go audition," says Marte, who was one of the select five. Rasuck found the flyer while involved with another NYU graduate film project. "I was walking down the hallway at NYU," he recalls, "and I saw flyers for Pete's short

and I auditioned for it." Fifteen-year-old Marte got the part of "Juicy" Judy, the object of Victor Vargas's affection in both *Five Feet High* and *Raising Victor Vargas*, and fourteen-year-old Rasuck was cast in the lead role of Vargas, who thinks he's the neighborhood playboy until he meets his match in Judy, the first girl to teach him what real love is.

To prepare for the feature, Sollett rented an apartment for rehearsals before shooting started. For a month the actors ran through scenarios that Sollett hoped could be used in the film. "The bulk of what we were doing was exploring the scenes to different levels of preparedness," says Sollett. For one scene, where Victor and Judy are on the rooftop and Victor invites her over for dinner with his family, the two young actors rehearsed only to a point where they knew what to do. "Once we hit all the points Peter wanted we just stopped, we didn't want it to get stale," says Marte. But in a scene where a series of improvisations were needed to make it work correctly, Sollett ran through it numerous times with the actors until he felt it was perfect.

For another scene, where Victor goes to seek out Judy's brother, Carlos (Wilfree Vasquez) in order to get an introduction to Judy, Sollett explains that it was important to break the scene into sections so the actors understood their objectives. "Victor started with his objective—go find Judy's brother and make Carlos introduce him to his big sister. [But] Carlos' [main] objective doesn't appear until half way through. First it's to get back to his basketball game. That's fine, you do that improvisation, but then you need to give a piece of information to turn the scene and initiate a new beat, which is Carlos realizing that he has an opportunity to ask for an introduction to Victor's sister." Sollett went on to explain that part of the process includes watching what the actors are doing in order to see how their actions relate to the story. "You have to see what the actor is offering," he says. "Then you need to identify the gaps and [fix it] with what the narrative needs."

Sollett found that it was critical to give his actors the freedom they needed to delve into their characters as much

and as deeply as they could. "Putting the characters into the hands of the actors only results in the growth of the characters themselves," he says. "Judy can do a better job owning the Judy character than I could, because she only has Judy and I have ten characters to manage. If I'm reciting every line they go through, I might as well just draw the characters and make a cartoon. I want to be surprised, and I want the process to invite discovery."

Unfortunately, that kind of creative abandon is not indulged on every film, and the experience of it can spoil an actor. Marte, now twenty, says she loved the autonomy

of creating a character for *Victor Vargas*, but that as a result she has since felt more restricted when auditioning from a script. "Actors feel secure having lines because it's a base they can stand on and not sink," she says. "They focus so much on the lines and depend on them so much [their] emotions aren't one hundred percent." Marte maintains that raw

acting produces raw emotions, which is what draws an audience in. Rasuck, nineteen, says he has also felt the confines of sticking strictly to a script. In one film, after his experience on *Victor Vargas*, his part was cut after he gave his input on the character's development. "You take a big risk by making it your own," says Rasuck. "A lot of directors don't want that—they want what's on the script and then I'm not right for the role."

We from the Movies

Adapting a book for the screen that serves as a mix between *Lord of the Flies* and *Goodfellas* forced Brazilian director Fernando Meirelles to put himself and his young cast into life-threatening situations in order to capture the authentic experience of living in a dangerous Brazilian ghetto. Before filming *City of God* (*Cidade de Deus*), which is based on a housing project of the same name, as well as a same-titled novel by Paulo Lin, Meirelles shot a short film as a final test for his inexperienced cast, which, up until that point, had never acted before. "I did the short as a rehearsal because I wasn't sure that I could make a picture with the boys," says Meirelles.

To ensure that his cast and crew would be safe in the housing project, Meirelles tried to make sure the police did not



Victor Rasuck as Victor Vargas and Judy Marte as Judy Ramirez in *Raising Victor Vargas*.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS AND FIREWORKS PICTURES

come around while they were shooting. “[In Brazil] to be protected you have to make sure [the police] don’t show up,” he explains. However, two undercover cops did slip in under the radar and arrested two drug dealers who were watching the film shoot. “After that, the other drug dealers came to us and told us we had to do something about their friends or we couldn’t leave.” Meirelles and his crew negotiated with the police until 4:00 in the morning, when a deal was finally struck and the drug dealers were released, as were Meirelles and his crew. “We were supposed to shoot the feature at [City of God], but we decided to find another location,” says Meirelles. All was not lost though because Meirelles was happy with the performances from his actors. “I realized the boys could really do the feature.”



Since the 1960s, drugs and crime have plagued City of God to the point that today the area, widely considered by neighboring residents as unsalvageable, has been cut off from the rest of Brazil. In the film, we see the history of the locale: first infiltrated by petty thieves in the 1960s, overrun by violence and drugs in the 1970s, and then invaded by drug lords and their turf wars in the 1980s. What’s most remarkable about the film, though, is that many of the performances are by relatively untrained actors who had never expressed an interest in the craft before they came on board for the film.

During pre-production, Meirelles knew that trained actors would not be able to furnish the realness and grit that the film needed. The Brazil native decided that he would have to find his talent in another way. “Brazil is like two different countries,” he explains. “There’s the official country where I live, middle class people, and then there is this different side of Brazil,” Meirelles continues. “They speak in a different way, they have a different way of moving. It’s like another culture, and I thought nobody from the middle class would be able to play one of those characters.”

To find his actors he went to the slums of Brazil, and, like Sollet and Vives, Meirelles posted flyers inviting anyone interested to join his actor’s workshop. “We would come back to do interviews and there would be 200-300 kids waiting,” the filmmaker says. In total, Meirelles did 2000 interviews with boys ranging from their early teens to their early twenties, and out of those interviews, he selected 200 boys. Those boys were then introduced to the art of improvisation by the acting coach Guti Fraga, known for his theater group “We from the Hills”—“hills” signifying the slums.

Fraga played a significant role in developing the kids improv talents. The young acting group was dubbed “We from the Movies,” as a tribute to Fraga’s company.

From the start, Meirelles knew that the biggest obstacle the actors would face was being comfortable in front of the camera. So the classes, which ran up to three days a week for two hours each, were always videotaped. “After three months, they didn’t really care [about the camera],” says Meirelles. “They could be shouting or acting or creating something with the camera one foot from their faces and they wouldn’t care because they were so used to it.”

After the six months of initial training, the most talented of the boys were considered for major roles. Up to this point, however, no one had told the boys that their training had been for acting in a film. “They never knew we were going to do a feature,” says Meirelles. “They thought they were going to do some classes and get a certificate, and maybe the possibility of doing a movie.” As Meirelles began to cast the film, the mystery was revealed to the boys, and it was time to develop the story. While Meirelles followed the true events from Lin’s novel, adapted as a guide for the film’s narrative by Braulio Mantovani, the boys created all of the dialogue. Many of the scenes depicted in the film were created during the workshop period when, explains Meirelles, “instead of giving them a script, we’d explain the sequence [of a scene] and they would put something together in a few minutes.”

Meirelles looked for talent in the boys, but he also tried to discover qualities they might share with the film’s characters. Goose (Renato de Souza), the brother of the narrator, Rocket (Alexandre Rodrigues), is a young hoodlum in *City of God*, entertaining himself by robbing people and selling drugs. After Goose’s father finds out about his son’s illegal activities, he beats him and forces Goose to sell fish with Rocket. This part of the film comes directly from de Souza’s own experience as a drug dealer turned fish-seller. Conversely, Rocket goes through most of the film determined to lose his virginity, something that Rodrigues simultaneously had on his mind during most of the shoot. “This was a big problem for him,” says Meirelles about Rodrigues. “In

This page: Alexandre Rodrigues in Fernando Meirelles’s *City of God*. Facing page: Alicia Miles and John Robinson in Gus Van Sant’s *Elephant*.

the third week of shooting he finally lost his virginity, so we had it put in the film. There were a lot of little stories that the boys had and we incorporated them. The boys know this reality [of living in the slums]. When I was working with the idea [of making the film] I tried to learn about drug dealing, but they are living in it. It's incomparable."

Since the film, "We From the Movies" has evolved from an actor's workshop to a production company. With headquarters in Rio de Janeiro, the group has produced documentaries, short films, and numerous television specials. Meirelles explains that "the global success of *City of God* has catapulted some of the actors into stars. A couple are in soap operas, and one has done a few more features. They'll be on the street and have to give autographs." Not bad for a couple hundred kids from the slums.

Casting To Essence

After an intimate cast and crew experience while filming his last film *Gerry*, which was entirely non-scripted and improvised, director Gus Van Sant decided he wanted to recreate a similar atmosphere for his next film. That film, *Elephant*, follows a group of teenage students through a normal day of high school until things turn terribly wrong when two students appear with rifles and start shooting everyone in sight. Van Sant cast high school students with no acting experience to capture the reality of the event, which is highly evocative of the Columbine High School shooting of April 1999.

Dany Wolf, a producer on *Elephant* and longtime collaborator with Van Sant, says that while *Gerry* was freeing for the director, *Elephant* was reality looking him in the face. "*Gerry* was a very liberating creative experience for Gus, which motivated him to make *Elephant* in the same style," Wolf explains. "Making *Elephant* without a traditional screenplay and with real high school students enabled Gus to bring us even closer to reality."

The opportunity to be involved with a film like *Elephant*, says the film's casting director Mali Finn, was among "the most exciting projects you could work on." Particularly because the option to cast the latest crop of young actors in Los Angeles was immediately eliminated. "Young people who have been in the business for a while are all revved up in the industry," Finn explains. "It forces them into an image before they've really defined their image, and we're

looking for people who are still in the process of finding out who they are."

The casting calls were conducted in Portland, Oregon, where Van Sant lives and which also serves as the film's setting. Sixteen hundred teenagers flocked to the audition, a number ultimately winnowed down to fifty. From there, Van Sant began shaping his film by observing the kids and listening to the stories they told. "It was kind of overwhelming because we heard so many stories and they opened up almost immediately," says Finn. "Those stories were the basis for the film." Unlike *Victor Vargas* and *City of God*, where the rehearsals, even though unscripted, were essential to the filmed improvisations, Van Sant did very little rehearsing at all. He used the audition process as the place where actors were made aware of what they would be doing on film—being high school kids.

Throughout the casting process, Van Sant and Finn never kept it from the kids that they would be improvising their parts. "When you're casting non-actors, you're casting to essence," says Finn. "When they're willing to reveal themselves, you look for that essence, you look for someone whose not self-consciousness in front of the camera, who will share themselves emotionally."

By observing the kids off set, Van Sant found individual character talents and traits that lent important elements to the film. For instance, one day in between shooting, Van Sant discovered Alex Frost, who played one of the shooters (Alex) in the film, playing piano during his free time and immediately found a place in the film for his talent. In the scene leading up to the climactic shooting, Alex plays

Ludwig van Beethoven's "Für Elise" in his bedroom, which delivers an unsettling and portentous tone for the film's dark finale.

Elephant went on to win the Palme d'Or and Best Director prize at this year's Cannes Film Festival, but that's now part of the past for Van Sant and Wolf, who are already in pre-production on their next project which, like the previous two, will be acted completely through improvisation. "Making experimental, improvisational film is creatively fulfilling for Gus, myself, and everyone involved," says Wolf. "Everyday is a challenge with creative opportunities, which makes it just plain fun to go to work." ■

Jason Guerrasio is a staff writer for The Independent.





From Idea to Story

DISCOVERING A DOCUMENTARY NARRATIVE

By Sheila Curran Bernard

Suppose that you're thinking of doing a documentary film about Elvis Presley, or a diner in your home town, or images of Islam in American popular culture. Something about the topic has caught your interest, and you think you want to take it to the next level.

First, ask yourself what it is about the idea that grabs you. As the initial audience for your film, your gut reaction to the subject is important. Chances are it wasn't a sweeping notion of Elvis Presley that caught your attention, but an account, perhaps, of his time in the military. It's not the fact that there's a diner in your home town, but that rising taxes and a dwindling customer base have left the owners open to offers from developers looking to build a mall despite local opposition. You hadn't thought much about images of Islam in America until you watched a couple of newly-arrived students from Iraq and the Sudan trying to make their way through a pep rally at your son's school, and you found yourself seeing American culture—high school culture—through their eyes. By narrowing the focus, you're on the road to finding the story within a subject.

A story is the narrative, or telling, of an event or series of events, crafted in a way to interest the audience. At its most basic, a story has a beginning, middle, and end. It has compelling characters, rising tension, and conflict that reaches

some sort of resolution. It engages the audience on an emotional and intellectual level, motivating viewers to want to know what happens next. Most successful documentaries, whether essays (*Bowling for Columbine*), mysteries (*The Thin Blue Line*), family dramas (*Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern*), or histories (*New York: A Documentary Film*) follow a compelling narrative throughline that serves as a framework for factual, and often complex, material.

The exact story you'll tell on screen, or how you'll tell it, might take months or even years to determine. But by evaluating a potential subject with storytelling in mind, you begin the creative process of turning an idea into a film early on, ensuring that you start out with at least a baseline framework for a film that will work.

"Finding" the Story During Production

With experienced filmmakers, this tends to mean not that a filmmaker has simply shot material without any story in mind, but that he or she alters the story's focus or, more likely, its structure, during production and postproduction. Even verité projects, which are significantly crafted in the editing

This page: Heidi Bub and her mother, Mai Thi Kim, from *Daughter from Danang*. Facing page: family photograph of filmmaker Jeanne Jordan (left) and family, from *Troublesome Creek*.

room, are generally begun with a sense of the story and its potential development. You can't know where real life will take you, but you can certainly anticipate a range of outcomes and determine whether or not the story's narrative holds sufficient promise.

Sometimes an opportunity comes along that precludes extensive planning. Filmmakers Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco had just days to decide whether or not to travel to Vietnam after they learned about an upcoming reunion between Heidi Bub and the birthmother who'd given her up during "Operation Babylift" in 1975.

At minimum, Dolgin and Franco had a basic, straightforward narrative of an adoptee returning to her homeland, although whether or not that could be turned into a documentary remained to be seen. In Vietnam, the filmmakers found themselves immersed in the complex story that would become their documentary *Daughter from Danang*.

It's also not unusual for filmmakers to begin one project, only to be drawn by the characters and situations they encounter that are both different and stronger than they anticipated. In publicity material for the film *Sound and Fury*, director Josh Aronson says that he initially intended to film five deaf individuals whose experiences covered a range of viewpoints on deafness. But in his research, he discovered the Artinians, a family in which two brothers—one hearing, one not—each had a deaf child. This created an opportunity to explore conflict within an extended family over how to raise deaf children. In another example, filmmaker Andrew Jarecki was making a film about birthday party clowns when he discovered, through one of his characters, the story that he eventually told in his documentary *Capturing the Friedmans* of a family caught up in a devastating child abuse case.

Knowing that this may happen, or is even *likely* to happen, doesn't mean that you shouldn't approach a general idea by looking first for the best story you can given the subject as you then understand it. Each approximation of your story has value, and each helps to ensure that you're working efficiently and effectively toward production.

Evaluating the Story

Beyond the conviction that a subject you're developing has an underlying narrative that will work well on film, there are some practical considerations that may be helpful to consider in deciding on a film subject or determining your approach to it. An initial topic may seem beyond the scope of your schedule and budget, for example, but there may be a smaller component within that topic that would allow you to explore many of the elements that first captured your interest.

1. Access and Feasibility

Does your film provide entree into new or interesting worlds, and can you obtain access to those worlds? Aside from exclusive or extraordinary access, any film, even one shot in your grandmother's kitchen, depends on some kind of access being granted, whether it be personal (your grandmother), location (permission to bring your equipment into her home), or archival (access to her photo album or those poems she's been writing all these years). In some cases, *lack* of access may become part of the story, as with Michael Moore's pursuit of General Motors chairman Roger Smith, in *Roger & Me*. In others, extraordinary access leads to unique films, as evidenced by news producer Alexandra Pelosi's proximity to George W. Bush as he campaigned for the presidency in *Journeys with George*, or director James Cameron's filmed journeys deep into the wrecks of the Bismarck and Titanic.

As you develop your idea, you need to determine if what you need for production is really possible. Can you get inside a cyclotron to film? Will you be allowed to follow a third-grade student during that spelling bee? Gaining access usually means establishing a relationship and building trust with the people who can grant it. It's important to respect that trust, so be truthful about yourself and your project from the start. You can generally get people to talk to you even if they know that you don't agree with their position, as long as you make it very clear that they will be given a fair hearing and that you value their point of view. (Again, there are exceptions: filmmakers such as Nick Broomfield (*Kurt & Courtney*) and Michael Moore may push the boundaries of access as a matter of style; they may show up with the cameras rolling to deliberately put their subjects on edge.)

2. Affordability

In terms of budget and schedule, is it realistic to think that you can afford to tell the story you want to tell, in the way you want to tell it? Even if digital technology can put a relatively inexpensive camera in your hands, getting your film shot, edited, and technically ready for broadcast or theatrical release will still be expensive. Don't think small, just realistically. Know that some types of documentaries are costlier to produce, and that "extras," such as the rights to use a clip of archival film or a piece of music from your favorite album, could set you back thousands of dollars.

3. Passion and Curiosity

Passion is going to be your best weapon against discouragement, boredom, frustration, and confusion. Passion is not the unwavering conviction that you are right and the whole



world must be made to agree with you. Instead, it is the commitment to the notion that this idea is exciting, relevant, and meaningful, and perhaps more importantly, that it's something you can look forward to exploring in the months or even years to come.

4. Audience

Many documentaries, whether produced independently or in-house, are created with an audience in mind. It's always possible that the film you thought would only reach your immediate geographic region will be a break-out hit, but in general, you should have some idea who you *want* it to reach: age, geographic area, educational level, etc. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't try to also reach a wider audience, but that you're likely to approach MTV's audience differently, for example, than Lifetime's or PBS's. Is your film not intended for broadcast, but for use by community or educational groups? Do you want to try to release your film theatrically, does it have the potential to be the next *Roger & Me*? These questions are worth thinking about early on.

5. Relevance

This can be a tough one. You may be passionate about fourteenth century Chinese art or the use of mushrooms in gourmet cuisine, but can you really find a compelling story that will be worth others not only funding but also watching it? It's possible to make people care about all sorts of things, but it usually takes the right approach—and a solid story.

By rising beyond its specifics, a story often gains greater relevance for a wider audience. *Daughter from Danang* has layers of story that each add relevance: the reunion of an adopted daughter and her birth mother; the cultural dissonance felt by an American woman returning to the Vietnamese homeland she barely remembers; the change that has occurred in both countries in the years since 1975; and questions about expectation and need, both emotional and material, that are made all the more difficult by barriers of language and culture.

6. Timeliness

One aspect of relevance, though not always the most important one, is timeliness. Television executives may plan documentary programming to coincide with major events, anniversaries, or even high-profile motion picture releases—anything to capitalize on public and press interest. The fact that a subject is topical, however, is not by itself a reason to pursue it, because by the time you finish it, interest in that issue may have passed.

In fact, the quality of being “evergreen,” meaning the film will have a shelf life of many years as opposed to many months, can be a positive selling point. A film on whale behavior or the American electoral process in general may be evergreen, whereas a film that specifically explores a particu-

lar environmental campaign or issues in the presidential campaign of 2004 probably will not be.

7. Visualization

Is the story visual, and if not, can you make it visual? This is an important question whether you're telling a modern-day story that involves a lot of technology or bureaucracy, or you're drawn to a historical story that predates the invention of still or motion picture photography. A film subject that doesn't have obvious visuals requires additional foresight on the part of the filmmaker; you'll need to anticipate exactly *how* you plan to tell the story on film. The opposite may also be true: a subject can be inherently visual—it takes place in a spectacular location or involves state-of-the-art microscopic photography, for example—without containing within it an obvious narrative thread.

8. Hook

In its simplest form, the hook is what got you interested in the subject in the first place. It's that bit of information that reveals the essence of the story and its characters, encapsulating the drama that's about to unfold. *Sound and Fury*, for example, is the story of the little girl who wants a Cochlear implant. The hook is not that she wants this operation, nor that the implant is a major feat of medical technology. The hook is that the little girl's parents, contrary to what many in the audience might expect, don't want her to have the operation. It's the part of the story that makes people curious; they want to know more.

9. Existing Projects

It's useful, before you get too far, to explore what other films have been made on a subject and when. In part, this may simply inform your own storytelling: What worked or didn't work about what a previous filmmaker did? How will your project be different and/or add to the subject? It's not that you can't tackle a subject that's been covered. But knowing as much as you can about your subject also means knowing how else it's been treated on film.

Every new film project is a leap of faith: you begin with the germ of an idea that seems exciting and interesting, learn as much as you can about the subject, and work to find the story within it that you want to tell. Asking practical questions when evaluating an idea is a means of refining your storytelling even further, not by limiting you but by challenging you to find creative ways to use the resources you have to effectively tell your story on screen. ■

Sheila Curran Bernard is an Emmy and Peabody Award-winning filmmaker whose credits include the PBS series Eyes on the Prize and I'll Make Me a World. This article is adapted from her book, Documentary Storytelling for Film and Videomakers, published in October 2003 by Focal Press. For more information, see www.focalpress.com.

The Writer-Director Dilemma

By Robert L. Seigel

The independent film and video community has proven fertile ground for the creative hyphenate “writer-director.” Sometimes a writer-director is someone who uses his or her own script as the vehicle to attract producers and funding. On other occasions, a writer-director may want to create the opportunity to direct as a means of protecting the script.

I have had the unique opportunity of representing both producers who have entered into deals with writer-directors, as well as writer-directors who are entering into deals with producers and funders. There are certain general guidelines to which writer-directors should adhere when determining what is possible, and what is pragmatic, given the variables and circumstances involved.

For the purposes of this article, let's assume that the writer-director is not a member of the Directors Guild of America (DGA). Writer-directors (and directors in general) and producers should recognize that there are “low budget” agreements for productions specific to the DGA. These agreements provide producers with some degree of flexibility when he or she hires not only the director, but also personnel such as production managers and first assistant directors who are also DGA members. However, this discussion is beyond the scope of this article and interested parties should contact their local DGA office (www.dga.org).

If a writer-director is self-financing a project or is using funds from friends and family, then the writer-director generally can contractually retain creative control of his or her “cut” until third party distributors, sales agents,

and licensees enter the picture. If said parties want the right to edit, modify, or otherwise alter a completed project, the writer-director and producer have to decide whether what a distributor, sales agent, or licensees is offering is justifiable from both a creative and a business perspective. If a distributor, sales agent, or licensee is not offering any significant advance to a mediator, which might be used to repay

... “marketable” names may be reluctant to work with a first, or even second-time, director.

funding sources, outstanding loans, or deferred compensation to cast and crew, the parties may agree that there would be no editing, modifications, or other alterations to the project without the mediator's prior written consent.

This does not include edits or other changes for foreign governmental censorship or television “broadcast and standards” purposes. Mediamakers generally agree on these—if their projects contain profanity or some degree of violence, nudity or sexuality, so that a distributor, sales agent, or licensee can enter into licenses with television services that are not solely subscription-based and which may have to accommodate commercial breaks. Many distributors may insist that a project have a Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) rating no more restrictive than an “R” or “PG-13,” to increase the accessibility and the size of a project's potential audience. Outside the United States, certain countries have policies similar to the MPAA ratings. While some countries have little concern toward nudity or sexuality, other nations have

issues with undue violence. Even without the pressure of third party funders or producers, which are accountable to industry funding sources (e.g. studios), the mediator must decide whether or not he or she can work within these given parameters.

A writer-director will then generally enter into an agreement directly with a studio, network, or television service, or with a producer or a production company—which then enters into an agreement with industry funding and distribution sources such as studios, large independent distributors, “end users” (e.g., networks and television services, or home video/DVD distributors), and foreign sales agents or

territorial buyers (e.g., foreign licensees such as foreign distributors or foreign television services such as the BBC or Canal Plus).

As the process continues, a funder or a producer may decide he or she wants to pay less money to the writer-director for his or her script and/or his or her directing services in exchange for the writer-director's opportunity to direct—often for the first time. While the writer-director may argue that he or she is providing the producer or the funder with an opportunity to produce the writer-director's script, the producer or the funder would maintain that in affording the writer-director the opportunity to direct his or her own script, the producer or the funder forfeits the option of hiring a director with more experience and clout who might make the project easier to finance.

In addition to producers and funding sources, certain actors and actresses with so-called “marketable” names may be reluctant to work with a first, or even second-time, director. Writer-directors can argue that more and more actors have become comfortable

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working with less experienced directors because the project offers a stronger script or the opportunity to perform in a role "against type." Other actors may grow to become comfortable with a writer-director based on a sample of his or her work.

Writer-directors have to decide their priorities. If the key issues are money and establishing credibility within the industry, then a writer-director may choose to negotiate a higher purchase price for a script and forego directing until (hopefully) the next project, since he or she has a produced script credit. This scenario is especially true when a studio is interested in a script and the project's budget is in the tens of millions or even more. Otherwise, the writer-director can decide that the issue of directing is a "deal-breaker," in which case the producer and/or the funder may agree that the writer will direct the project. To facilitate the writer-director's foray into larger-budgeted projects, a studio producer and/or the funder will secure a "name" cast and engage the services of experienced key personnel. On the other hand, a producer and/or a funder may decide that the prospects of securing sufficient funding and a certain level of talent with the writer-director attached is remote and may not be worth the effort of starting the process of raising funds and approaching potential actors to cast. Even on non-studio projects, writer-directors and producers can negotiate whether a writer-director gets sole or shared approval, or at least meaningful consultation rights concerning certain key personnel and casting.

It is for the best that both the writer-director and the producer and/or the funder state their respective intentions upfront so that the parties share the same understanding and they do not engage in unfruitful and unrealistic attempts to fund and produce a project at a given budget level.

I once represented a writer-director who had entered into an agreement to

direct a studio film based on a script that he co-wrote. The studio soon informed him that a veteran director had read the writer-director's script and wanted to direct the project. Flattered and shocked, the writer-director had to decide whether to comply with the initial studio agreement or step aside as director. Ultimately, the writer-director made the pragmatic move of stepping aside, as the veteran director could only add appeal to the project, and the studio paid a "kill fee" (i.e., a type of "pay or play" compensation) to the writer-director for waiving his right to direct the project. The project was eventually produced, commercially released, and became one of the director's less notable efforts in his career on both a financial and critical basis.

Besides the compensation issue, one of the most significant issues is a project's so-called "final cut." The writer-director will insist initially that he or she should have final creative input, especially if the project is produced and financed without the use of industry resources, while producers and funders will maintain that the project must survive in an ever-crowded marketplace, causing a distributor to insist there should be changes made to increase the project's accessibility to a paying audience. There are a few measures by which a writer-director and a producer and/or a funder can address this issue. The parties can agree that the director will work with the project's editor to create a "Director's Cut," which is actually a right for DGA members. After the parties have screened and discussed the "Director's Cut," an agreement between the parties may state that any decision regarding the "cut" must be approved by the director and the producer, thereby permitting each party to veto any decision concerning the "cut." If the parties cannot reach a consensus, which creates a stalemate, then the parties may choose to invite third party input by way of feedback

from a respected industry opinion, or a test or preview audience.

A preview audience has its own strengths and drawbacks. Certain directors and producers may not be comfortable placing the fate of a project in the hands of a preview audience that has literally come in off the street. However, preview audiences can provide a certain degree of insight on how the public might respond to the project once it is in the marketplace. A writer-director usually has the opportunity to negotiate anywhere from one to three preview screenings, and to re-edit accordingly, based on a producer's patience and, more importantly, what monies are remaining in the post-production budget.

The writer-director and the producer and/or the funder may agree that the final "Director's Cut" is the version submitted to distributors, sales agents, and licensees, often with the understanding that the project's distributor may request changes in the project. And given the fact that the distributor might potentially be investing millions of dollars in marketing funds and prints, that request is generally granted. However, to decrease the chances of this happening, a writer-director and a producer should be prepared to shoot alternative scenes or "coverage" during principal photography, especially when the project airs on television.

A writer-director and a producer and/or funder must always take into account the other party's creative and business expectations while deciding what is the best course of action for them and a given project, especially when such critical elements as budget, cast, funding, and production values are at play. □

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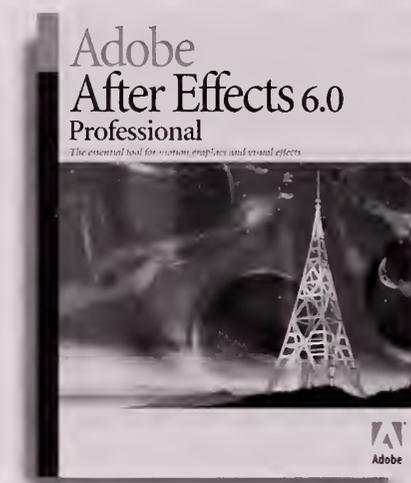
By Greg Gilpatrick

Bill Gates may not agree, but competition is a good thing for the software industry. Case in point: the new desktop video effects application Adobe After Effects 6.0 (AE) has improved considerably in response to stiff competition in the field, bringing it back to its former glory of a few years back when it was at the top of the affordable video effects software game. That early success, though, went to Adobe's head, and the company became slightly complacent about adding new features to AE in the time since. Recently, however, with close contenders in Discreet's Combustion and Apple's Shake, Adobe realized it was time to put some significant work into a new version of After Effects, which has resulted in a release that shores up the software's weaknesses and adds compelling new features that previously were found only in competing programs.

AE is a tool primarily used for combining different image elements like photos and video, a fundamental visual effects process known as "compositing." Wherever a computer generated image is combined with live action, or titles and/or animation appear over an image, or when an actor shot up against a blue-screen is married with a background image—the process of compositing is in use. After Effects represents the relative low-end of the compositing software field where turnkey systems can cost upward of \$100,000. It also offers an accessible tool for filmmakers, with features that challenge the high-end systems.

After Effects now includes a number of new features intended to make life easier for both motion graphics designers and visual effects artists.

AE's new paint and text tools make it easier to create attractive text and animated graphics without having to go to an outside program like Photoshop, Illustrator, or Commotion. In both areas, AE had been contending with rivalry from Combustion and Commotion, and it has faced the challenge well. AE's new text system uses a text palette very similar to the one in Photoshop, so it will instantly feel comfortable to people



familiar with Photoshop. AE adds much more than a simple text palette though. An innovative new technique allows for easy text animation.

Creating complex animations where separate words and letters move independent of each other has traditionally been a time-consuming task. Now, instead of animating each letter or word separately, AE 6's new "Text Animation Groups" and "Animation Selectors" allow you to create one animation control that can then effect individual letters at different times. So, when you want the letters of a

word to fly in one at a time from off screen, you no longer have to animate each letter separately. Instead, you can now set—or "keyframe"—the animation just one time and apply that to each subsequent letter. If you discover that the timing needs to be changed, you only have to change the parameter once.

A completely new feature, the paint tools add a new dimension to the usefulness and practicality of After Effects, which had previously included a Vector Paint plug-in (which is still included for backwards compatibility)—an element widely agreed upon as awkward and unintuitive. Like the text tools, the new paint tools take a page from the Photoshop book and use the familiar interface from that program. Anyone who has used the paint brush feature in Photoshop 7 will feel right at home with the paint tool in AE 6. There are, however, differences between AE and Photoshop's paint tools that make it more useful for video work.

One such difference is the ability to create a "write-on" effect with your paint strokes. A write-on effect is where a paint stroke appears to be drawn on the image over time—like a signature being written across a TV screen. After Effects isn't the first program to add a write-on effect to its paint system, but it is among the first to have done it in a significantly innovative way. Instead of simply dividing the recorded paint stroke by the number of frames and revealing the logical part of the stroke at each frame, AE 6 allows you to define by percentage how much is written at any point. So, you could specify a slow beginning with the speed of the stroke increasing toward the end in order to make it look more natural. Even more interesting is that AE 6 includes a parameter for the beginning of the stroke, so that the brushstroke can be made to disappear after it's been drawn, or even before the stroke has ended, giving the illusion of disappearing ink.

Another new feature of AE 6 is a set of rotoscoping tools. Rotoscoping is the process of masking out a person or object from a scene for the purpose of combining it with another image. It is a time-consuming method that requires a great deal of attention to detail. Previously, After Effects was weak in the rotoscoping area, but its new Rotobezier system places it at the head of the pack for its mix of professional features and intuitiveness. Most professional rotoscope artists swear by systems that use a powerful yet confusing drawing method called B-Splines. AE 6 takes what's good about B-Splines and removes the confusing element.

After Effects is split into two separate products. There's the standard After Effects 6.0 that includes the tools for importing images and compositing them, along with a set of filters and tools—including the text and paint tools detailed above. Then, there's After Effects 6.0 Professional (formerly known as the Production Bundle), which includes tools for advanced visual effects, keying, tracking, and other powerful features. The higher-end version of AE used to cost a thousand dollars more than the standard version. Now, AE 6 Professional is only four hundred dollars more than the standard version. Along with the price drop, the Professional version includes some notable new tools, such as a high-quality keying plug-in, as well as faster, more accurate image-tracking and stabilizing, making the professional version a much more compelling product for independent producers who want to get the most out of their equipment.

Chroma Keying involves selecting certain colors in a shot and then removing every instance of that color, or range of colors. When an actor is photographed in front of a blue or green screen, it is usually so that the background can be removed with a keying application and later composited over a new background. After

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Effects' older keying tools (which are still available for legacy purposes) left much to be desired, in that they were difficult to control and often delivered unimpressive results. Keylight, the keying plug-in included in AE 6, was originally designed as a tool for creating high-end visual effects for Hollywood movies at The Computer Film Company (CFC). When CFC realized what a great keying system they had, they began to license it as a plug-in for high-end compositing systems. Now, AE 6 Professional includes the plug-in for free. Keylight is a great keying tool that puts AE on par with the similarly proficient keying tools in Commotion Pro and Combustion. Though I would never say that pulling a good key is easy, Keylight makes it much easier to key material by allowing you to select color points and set a few versatile adjustments. Keylight also includes settings for minimizing color spill, when the color of the background screen reflects onto the foreground subject.

Another feature included with the Pro version of AE 6 is the Motion Tracker. A motion-tracking tool is used to chart the movement of people or objects in video clips. Tracking has many uses, such as applying effects to a moving object or stabilizing a shaky shot. AE Pro had earlier included a motion tracker, but it was slow and fairly inefficient. The new tracker in AE 6 Pro is as fast and accurate as those featured in Commotion and Combustion. The only drawback to AE 6's tracker is that it is difficult to apply tracker data to paint strokes or effects, requiring the use of AE's scripting system.

The Professional version of the program includes a number of other features that some users might welcome, such as filters for adding effects to images rendered from 3D animation programs; warping and morphing effects that can be used to distort images; and support for high quality 16-bit images.

In terms of the features it offers, the new release of After Effects, especially the Pro version, is a great package. It is, though, as with most things, not without its flaws. The biggest problem with After Effects comes from a fundamental issue that grows out of its history and design. AE's interface is a labyrinth of palettes, controls, windows, views, and a large timeline window that dominates screen real estate. All but the smallest of tasks will litter your workspace with a myriad of different windows. There's virtually no way to work in After Effects while keeping an orderly and logical workspace, especially if you need multiple views of your composite from the top, right, camera, etc. This might well be something that users could become accustomed to. Nonetheless, it is a frustrating drawback, especially when using anything but the largest of monitors.

One last disappointment is the quality of the documentation included with the software. Adobe's manuals include only the basic description of what each complicated tool does. If you are new to After Effects, be prepared to buy some supplementary training materials. Creating Motion Graphics with After Effects (Vol. 1 & 2) by Trish and Chris Meyer (CMP Books, 2003) is a good series of books for learning After Effects.

Disappointments aside, After Effects 6.0 is a competitive and compelling application for creating animation, title design, and visual effects. The new and improved features and tools offer the potential for creating impressive work with a relatively inexpensive application. Although AE's age shows in its complex interface, it has easily adapted to the current state of desktop visual effects and motion graphics applications by reinventing itself with faster and better tools. □

Greg Gilpatrick is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and consultant. To contact him, write to greg@randomroom.com.



THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

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Festivals

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 (e.g., Jan 1st for March issue). Include festival dates, categories, prizes, entry fees, deadlines, formats & contact info. Send to: festivals@aivf.org.**

INTERACTIVE FESTIVAL LISTINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.AIVF.ORG

DOMESTIC

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN CINEMA FILM FESTIVAL, March 5-6, NY. Deadline: Jan. 8. Fest seeks Films & Scripts by women who are of the African, Latino or Asian Diaspora. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, animation. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (films/scripts). Contact: Terra Renee, 545 8th Ave, Ste. 401, New York, NY 10018; (212) 769-7949; fax: 871-2074; info@aawic.org; www.aawic.org.

ASPEN SHORTSFEST, March 31-April 4, CO. Deadline: Nov. 7, Dec. 19 (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, Beta SP, 70mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35, \$45 (final). Contact: Ryan Van Bidder, 110 East Hallam, Suite 102, Aspen, CO 81611; (970) 925-6882; fax: 925-1967; shortsfest@aspenfilm.org; www.aspenfilm.org.

BIG MUDDY FILM FESTIVAL, February 20-29, IL. Deadline: Jan. 23. 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, ani-

ation, 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 environmental issues. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", DVD, Mini-DV, DVCAM. Preview formats same as screening formats. Entry Fee: \$35 (under 20 min.); \$40 (20-50 min.); \$45 (over 50 min.). Contact: Evan Smith, Dept. of Cinema & Photography, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-6610; (618) 453-1482; fax: 453-2264; bigmuddy@siu.edu; www.bigmuddyfilm.com

BIG SKY DOC FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 20-25, MT. Deadline: Dec. 1, Dec. 15 (final). Held at the restored Roxy Theater in downtown Missoula, Montana. The competitive event is open to non-fiction films & videos of all styles, genres, & lengths. Official selections w/ production dates prior to January 1 of previous yr. are eligible for entry but will screen out of competition. Cats: doc. Awards: Best doc feature, short & Montana doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DVD, Beta SP, Mini-DV, DVCam. Preview on VHS, DVD. Entry Fee: \$20 (shorts); \$30 (features). Contact: Festival, 801 Sherwood St. Ste. B, Missoula,

53115; (262) 740-BPFF; richardparo@yahoo.com; www.blackpointfilmfestival.com.

CUCALORUS FILM FESTIVAL, March 17-21, NC. Deadline: Dec. 10 (early); Jan 10 (final). Cucalorus is a non-competitive showcase of independent features, shorts & documentaries from around the world. The fest is held in historic downtown Wilmington, NC, one of the leading film production cities in the US. Founded: 1994. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, any style or genre. Awards: Non-competitive. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Video. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$20(early); \$30 (final). Contact: Dan Brawley, 420 Orange Street, Wilmington, NC 28401; (910) 343-5995; fax: (910) 343-5227; info@cucalorus.org; www.cucalorus.org.

DC INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL & MARKET, March 4-11, DC. Deadline: Nov. 15; Dec. 15 (final). Fest's mission is "to present a yearly event where industry professionals & the general public see the latest, most exciting films from the U.S. & abroad." Fest also incl. seminars, a film market, a trade show which offers an opportunity for pro-



Bay Watch

The San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival is the world's oldest and largest celebration of queer cinema. This year's festival, June 17-27, 2004, which is presented by Frameline, will mark the festival's twenty-eighth anniversary. Based at San Francisco's historic Castro Theatre, last year's festival screened seventy-seven feature films (including *Party Monster*) and 194 short films from thirty-two countries, making the fest a focal point for other festival programmers and acquisition executives. Plus, not to be outdone in the awards department, last year's festival gave away \$20,000 in cash awards. See listing.

MT 59802; bigsky@highplains.org; www.highplainsfilms.org/festival/index.htm.

BLACK POINT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 21-25, WI. Deadline: Dec. 31; Jan. 31 (final). Founded: 2002. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: 4 shorts awards, 6 feature awards incl. audience & doc. Formats: 35mm, 1/2", DVD, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 (Short); \$30 (Feature); \$25 (late-Short); \$40 (late-Feature). Contact: Richard Paro, 3235 Chicago Club Drive, Delavan, WI

duction companies to showcase their services & latest technological advances plus network in the country's third most important production community. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, short, animation, doc. Awards: \$50,000 in cash & prizes. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$10 shorts (up to 30 min.); \$20 features. Contact: c/o MediaFusion, 2950 Van Ness St. NW, Ste. 728, Washington, DC 20008; (202) 537-9493; fax: 686-7168; dcindiefilmfest@aol.com; www.dciff.org.



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FILM FLEADH: THE IRISH FILM FESTIVAL, March 13-21, NY. Deadline: Dec. 1. An annual fest open to films made in Ireland, or by an Irish filmmaker, or by a filmmaker of Irish descent living outside Ireland, or w/ an Irish actor in the lead. A 6 week music series & 1 day concert will be held in NYC in March before the fest. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, script, any style or genre. Awards: Cash awards (Kodak) to best feature & short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, Beta, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25. Contact: Terence Mulligan, Fest Dir., 104 W. 14th St, New York, NY 10011; (212) 414-2688; fax: 675-5822; Filmfleadh@aol.com; www.FilmFleadh.com.

FIRSTGLANCE: PHILADELPHIA INDEP. FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, PA. Deadline: Jan. 15, Feb. 1 (final). Fest encourages student & professional film & videomakers at all levels for underground alternative event whose mission is to exhibit all genres of work, from mainstream to controversial, in a competitive, casual atmosphere. Festival's mission is to bring together film- & videomakers from around the world, to promote & exhibit Philly talent, & to expose Philadelphia to film- & videomaking from around the corner & around the world. Winners will also screen in LA. Founded: 1996. Cats: feature (over 60 min.), narrative (under 60 min.), doc (under 60 min.), animation, experimental, student, feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, Beta, DV, 35mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-VHS, Beta SP, super 8, Hi8, U-matic, 8mm, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC) & DVD. Entry Fee: \$25-\$40. Contact: Firstglance Films, Box 571105, Tarzana, CA 91356; (818) 464-3544; (215) 552-8566; wropro1@email.msn.com; www.firstglancefilms.com.

GEN ART FILM FESTIVAL, April 14-20, NY. Deadline: Dec. 12 (early); Jan. 26 (final). Fest is curated, non-competitive 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 previous year. NYC theatrical premiere required. No works in progress will be shown. Founded: 1996. Cats: animation, feature, experimental, short,

doc. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, 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.

HI/LO FILM FESTIVAL, April, CA. Deadline: December 15; Jan. 15 (final). Non-competitive fest "celebrates films w/ high concepts & low budgets for the adventurous & disenfranchised" Festival seeks films that cannot be found at the multiplex: films that are more smart than slick; that privilege ideas over commerce; that prove great filmmaking has more to do w/ brains than wallets. Any genre, any subject, any length—bring it on! Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: super 8, 35mm, 16mm, digital, Hi8, 3/4", VHS, DV. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15; \$20 (late). Contact: Festival, Box 170309, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 558-7721; info@hilofilmfestival.com; www.hilofilmfestival.com.

HUMBOLDT INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, April 3-10, CA. Deadline: Jan. 30. 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 mediums, the Festival invites you to submit your 16mm film or digital video. Films must be under 45 min. in length & completed in the last three years. Selected entries must be avail. for projection in film print format or on DVD, if DV. Cats: narrative, experimental, animation, doc, & the "you call it" category, short, any style or genre. Formats: 16mm, Digital Video. Preview on VHS/DVD. Entry Fee: \$10 (under 9 min.); \$20 (10-29 min.); \$30 (30-60 min); \$10 additional for Int'l entries Contact: Pablo Koontz, Dept. of Theater, Film, & Dance, Humboldt State Univ., Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-4113; fax: (707) 826-4112; filmfest@humboldt.edu; www.humboldt.edu/~filmfest.

INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL OF BOSTON, April 29-May 2, MA. Deadline: Oct. 31, Jan. 31, March 1. Fest was created to discover unknown filmmakers, incl. students, first-timers, & int'l directors. Festival specializes in films still seeking distribution. Cats: any style or genre, feature, doc, short, animation, experimental. Formats: 35mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$10-\$45. Contact: Festival, 44 School Street, PMB

385, Boston, MA 02108; (857)891-8693; info@iffboston.org; www.iffboston.org.

INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL (LOS ANGELES), April 14-18, CA. Deadline: Jan. 5. Fest showcases films from & about India by Indian & int'l filmmakers. Cats: feature, doc, short, any style or genre. Awards: Audience Award in all cats. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: \$30 (up to 60 min.); \$40 (Over 60 min.). Contact: Christina Marouda, 311 N. Robertson Blvd. Ste. 382, Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310)278-8270; fax: 278-3499; info@indianfilmfestival.org; www.indianfilmfestival.org.

IOWA CITY INT'L DOC FESTIVAL, April 15-18, IA. Deadline: Jan. 15; Jan. 31 (late). A competitive fest showcasing short documentaries. Length of entries is limited to 30 min.. Festival seeks short documentaries of 30 min or less. The definition of a "doc" is open to wide interpretation. Founded: 2002. Cats: doc, short. Awards: Cash prizes. Formats: 1/2", 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25; \$30 (late). Contact: T. Seeberger, P.O. Box 10008, Iowa City, IA 52240; (319) 335-3258; info@ICDocs.org; www.icdocs.org.

KANSAS CITY FILMMAKERS JUBILEE, April 16-22, MO. Deadline: Nov. 1; Dec. 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. Awards: Fest awarded over \$100,000 in cash & prizes in the last seven years. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$25; \$30 (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 1-4, FL. Deadline: Dec. 31. 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, CO 81435; (970) 728-3747; festival@keywestindiefest.com; www.keywestindiefest.com.

LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK, March 1-8, NY. Deadline: Dec. 31. Fest's mission is to promote

a wider & deeper understanding of the roots, life & diverse cultures of the Spanish & Portuguese speaking communities in Latin America, the United States, Spain & Portugal. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, 90 Convent Ave., Ste. 42, New York, New York 10027; (212) 281-5786; lacinemafe@yahoo.com; www.lacinemafe.org.

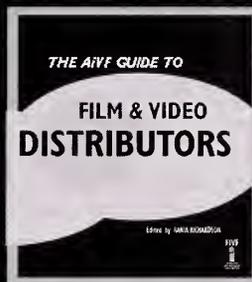
MAGNOLIA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 5-7, MS. Deadline: Jan. 15. Fest keeps the independent spirit of cinema alive & well & moving forward in Mississippi. The first film fest in the state, the fest goes out of its way to present the best of independent films of all lengths & genres, also to treat 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. Formats: 35mm, video, Beta, 1/2", DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$20 features; \$15 shorts; \$10 student. Contact: Ron Tibbett, Fest Dir., 2269 Waverly Dr., West Point, MS 39773; (662) 494-5836; fax: 494-9900; ron@magfilmfest.com; www.magfilmfest.com.

METHOD FEST INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 2-9, CA. Deadline: Nov. 23; Jan. 25 (final). 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, \$40 (final); Features: \$40, \$50 (final). 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

NASHVILLE INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, April 26-May 2, TN. Deadline: Oct. 31; Nov. 26; Dec. 15. 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.

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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: \$35/\$40/\$45 (under 60 min.); \$50/\$55/\$60 (over 60 min.). Contact: Festival, Box 24330, Nashville, TN 37202; (615) 742-2500; fax: 742-1004; info@nashvillefilmfestival.org; www.nashvillefilmfestival.org.

NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 3-13, NY. Deadline: Dec. 19 (early); Feb. 16 (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, 139 Fulton St. Ste PH-3, New York, NY 10038; (212) 571-2170; fax: 571-2179; info@newfestival.org; www.newfestival.org

PALM BEACH INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 15-22, FL. Deadline: Dec. 30, Jan. 30 (final). Festival showcases over 80 American & Int'l independent features, shorts & documentaries. Set in Florida's tropical playground, fest gatherings range from stimulating seminars to casual beach parties & a black tie affair hosting some of top names in the film industry. Founded: 1996. Cats: Open to any genre, incl. doc, animation, experimental, drama & comedy, etc., any style or genre, feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, Beta, Beta SP, DigiBeta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30-\$70. Contact: Festival, 289 Via Naranjas, Royal Palm Plaza, Ste. 48, Boca Raton, FL 33432; (561) 362-0003; fax: 362-0035; info@pbfilmfest.org; www.pbfilmfest.org.

PORTLAND DOC & EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL (PDX), April 15-18, OR. Deadline: Dec. 15, Jan. 2 (final). Fest is a four-day expo of non-conventional cinema. PDX seeks work that is "artistic, underground, quirky & challenging work that reflects contemporary culture, documents historic oddities, & is otherwise generally unclassifiable." Cats: doc, short, experimental, underground. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry Fee: \$15. Contact: Peripheral Produce/PDX Film Fest, PO Box 40835, Portland, OR 40835; pdxff@peripheralproduce.com; www.peripheralproduce.com.

ROSEBUD FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 27-28, DC. Deadline: Jan. 25. Founded in 1990 to promote independent film & video communities of DC, Maryland & Virginia. The goal of the fest is to recognize & honor the innovative, experimental, unusual & deeply personal in creative film & video making. Eligible entrants are producers or directors who are current residents of DC, MD or VA (exceptions are made for students temporarily living out of the area or those away on work assignment). Works accepted in all styles & genres. Independent panel of judges select 20 nominees from which 5 winners, incl. Best of Show. Founded: 1990. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Awards incl. trophy, cash, film & video products & multiple area theatrical & television screenings. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25 (Entry fee incl. a one-yr. membership to Arlington Community Television, the sponsoring organization). Contact: Jackie Steven, Festival Director, 2701-C Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201; (703) 524-2388; fax: (703) 908-9239; jax@arlingtonmedia.org; www.rosebudact.org.

SAN ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL, March 3-7, TX. Deadline: Jan. 25. The country's longest running int'l Chicano/Latino/Indigenous film & video fest will feature four days of film screenings, workshops & panels at the historic Guadalupe Theater & in venues San Antonio. Fest will incl. premieres, practical & production workshops, panels & special screenings of videos produced by well-established & emerging filmmakers. Founded: 1978. Cats: short, feature, doc, animation, experimental, youth media. Awards: Prizes in all cats, plus First Work Award & Jury Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: \$25; \$15 (students: high school, college & community youth training programs). Contact: Catherine Herrera, Festival Director, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, 1300

Guadalupe St., San Antonio, TX, USA 78207; (210) 271-3151 x32; fax: 271-3480; cinefestival@guadalupeculturalarts.org; www.guadalupeculturalarts.org/media.html.

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 17-27, CA. Deadline: Jan. 5, Feb. 2 (final). Fest, one of the oldest & most respected, 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". Fest produced by Frameline, nonprofit arts organization dedicated to gay & lesbian media arts. Founded: 1976. Cats: any style or genre. Awards: Frameline Award, Audience Award, 1st Feature Award (\$10,000), Excellent Doc Award (\$10,000); Formats: 35mm, 1/2", Beta, 16mm, BETA cam SP-NTSC only. VHS-NTSC/PAL. Entry Fee: \$15-25. Contact: Program Coordinator, 146 9th St., Ste. 300, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 703-8650; fax: (415) 861-1404; info@frameline.org; www.frameline.org.

SET IN PHILADELPHIA SCREENWRITING COMPETITION, April 8-21, PA. Deadline: Dec. 1. The competition is open to all screenwriters who submit an original feature length screenplay set primarily in the Greater Philadelphia Metropolitan Area. All genres will be accepted. Scripts will be judged on their overall quality, & the extent to which they tell a genuine "Philadelphia story." Cats: script. Awards: \$10,000 cash prize, Notes from High Profile Judges. Parisi Winner: \$1,000 cash prize. Entry Fee: None. Contact: c/o the Greater Philadelphia Film Office, 100 S. Broad Street, Suite 600, Philadelphia, PA 19110; SIP@film.org; www.film.org/film makers/sip.php.

SPINDLETOP/LAMAR UNIVERSITY FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 31-Feb. 2, TX. Deadline: Dec. 17. Annual fest 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. Cats: experimental, feature, narrative, "1st time/novice" filmmaker, music video, animation, "old timers". Formats: 16mm, super 8, DigiBeta, Beta SP, 1/2", S-VHS, DV. Entry Fee: \$20; \$15 (student). Contact: O'Brien Stanley, Dept. of Communication/Lamar University, P.O. Box 10550, Beaumont, TX 77710; (409) 880-7222; stanleyoo@hal.lamar.edu; www.spinfest.org.

SYRACUSE INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 29-May 2, NY. Deadline: Nov. 15; Dec. 1; Dec. 15 (final). Fest is organized & run by artists for artists. Fest promises that "a professional pre-screening committee will screen every minute of every entry." All entry fees will be returned for works accepted into the fest. Founded: 2003. Cats: feature, short, doc, animation, experimental, youth media. Awards: Eight \$1,000 prize winners. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: Nov. 1: shorts (under 30 min.) \$30; shorts (under 60 min.) \$35; features \$45. Dec 1: \$35;\$40;\$55. Dec. 15: \$55; \$60; \$85. Contact: Christine Fawcett, 108 W. Jefferson St., Syracuse, NY 13202; (315) 443-2247; fax: (315) 443-5376; cfawcett@syr.edu; www.syracusefilmmandvideo.com.

TAMBAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 23-25, FL. Deadline: Dec. 20. Festival strives to present work to the public, potential distributor & other filmmakers, as well as creating a film forum for Florida filmmaking. Founded: 1999. Cats: feature, doc, short. Awards: Cash & non-cash prizes in Best New Director, Reel Humanitarian Award, Best of Show & Jury Award cats. Formats: 35mm, Beta SP, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$35 (35mm); \$30 (video formats); \$25 (student). Contact: TFFV, 16002 Saddle Creek Dr., Ste. A, Tampa, FL 33618; (813) 964-9781; Tambayfilm@yahoo.com; www.tambayfilmfest.com.

TAOS TALKING PICTURE FESTIVAL, April 15-18, NM. Deadline: Jan. 16. 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. 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. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$25-\$50 (no fee for int'l entries). Contact: Kelly Clement, Dir. of Programming, 1337 Gusdorf Rd. Ste. B, Taos, NM 87571; (505) 751-0637; fax: (505) 751-7385; ttpix@ttpix.org; www.ttpix.org.

TIBURON INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, March 12-18, CA. Deadline: Dec. 1. Located just north of San Francisco, Fest is a showcase for "int'l film art & contemporary trends." Founded:

2001. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, student. Awards: Best of prize in all cats plus audience award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV. Preview on VHS (NTSC). Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, P.O. Box 544, Tiburon, CA 94920; (415) 381-4123; fax: 388-4123; info@tiburonfilmfestival.com; www.tiburonfilmfestival.com.

UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM & DIGITAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, February 20-22, NJ. Deadline: Jan. 23. 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: \$4,000 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). Contact: Albert Nigrin, Rutgers Film Co-op/New Jersey Media Arts Center, 72 Lipman Dr., 018 Loree Bldg-Douglass Campus, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (732) 932-8482; fax: 932-1935; njmac@aol.com; www.njfilmfest.com.

WASHINGTON DC INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 21-May 2, DC. Deadline: Jan. 16. Annual fest that brings "best in new world cinema" to nation's capital. Known as Filmfest DC, it presents over 70 feature premieres, restored classics & special events. All are DC premieres. Fest attempts to represent the broad geographical diversity of world cinema, the newest films of emerging countries & the latest work from newly recognized young directors. Cats: feature, doc, animation, children, short. Awards: Fest is noncompetitive except for an Audience Award given to the most popular film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$15 (under 30 min.), \$25 (30 min. & up). Contact: Tony Gittens, Fest Dir., Box 21396, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 724-5613; fax: 724-6578; filmfestdc@filmfestdc.org; www.filmfestdc.org.

WOMEN OF COLOR FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Deadline: Nov. 3; Dec. 1 (final). Fest aims to provide a progressive showcase of films created by an underrepresented sector of the film industry. Films may be of any length, genre & format, & must be less than 3 years old. Cats: feature, doc, short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Preview on VHS.

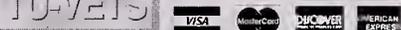
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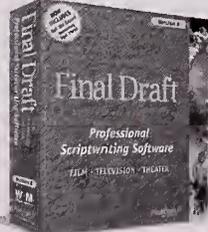
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Entry Fee: None. Contact: Festival, c/o Pacific Film Archives, 2625 Durant Ave, Berkeley, CA 94720; (510) 642-1412; wocfilmproject@uclink.berkeley.edu; www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/pfa_programs/women_of_color/.

WORLDFEST HOUSTON INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 16-25, 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, documentaries, 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. Awards: Student Awards Program. Scripts & screenplays also have competition. 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

BRANDON FILM FESTIVAL: 30 BELOW, March 15, Canada. Deadline: Dec. 31. For a film or video to be eligible for the 2004 "30 Below" competition, either of the producer or the director of the film/video must be a Canadian Citizen & have been born after Jan. 1, 1974. Previously released productions are eligible if the director or producer currently meets the age requirement. The fest invites entries of both feature-length productions (31 min. & up) & shorts (under 30 min.). Formats: Beta, 16mm, 35mm, DVD. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: \$30 (Cdn). Contact: Festival, Box 21084, West End P.O., Brandon, MB, Canada R7B 3W8; (204) 729-9977; info@filmfest.mb.ca; www.filmfest.mb.ca

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April 8-23, China. Deadline: Dec. 10; Jan. 10. HKIFF regularly includes a selection of International, Asian, and Hong Kong Cinema Retrospectives among 200 films and videos screened at various venues. The fest has been recognized as a valuable showcase for Asian works that allows the

West to discover the riches of Chinese cinema. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Entry Fee: \$20-\$50. Contact: Film Programmes Office, 22nd Floor, 181 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong, China; 011 852 2970 3300; fax: 2970 3011; hkiff@hkadc.org.hk; www.hkiff.org.hk.

HOT DOCS CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, April 23-May 2, Ontario. Deadline: Dec. 15. Competitive fest which celebrates Canadian and international doc filmmaking, encourages an appreciation and awareness of the doc genre. Over 80 docs are screened in four programs including Canadian Spectrum, International 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: (416) 203-0446; info@hotdocs.ca; www.hotdocs.ca.

INSIDE OUT: TORONTO LESBIAN AND GAY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 20-30, 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 and 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. Cats: feature, doc, short, animation, experimental, music video, student, youth media, family, children, TV. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Kathleen Mullen, 401 Richmond St. West, Ste. 219, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 3A8; (416) 977-6847; fax: 977-8025; inside@insideout.on.ca; www.insideout.on.ca

INT'L TEEN MOVIE FESTIVAL, April 16-23, Canada. Deadline: Jan. 15. Sponsored by Levi's, this fest presents media (film, video, scripts, websites, music videos, comic books & more) by teens 19 & under. Note: Top 5 films' worldwide distribution rights are owned by TITMF for 5 years. Income generated goes back into the Festival. Cats: feature, doc, short, script, music video, youth media, commercial, movie poster, comic book. Awards: Prizes range from \$5000 cash to an internship at Warner Brothers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP, 1/2". Preview on

VHS (NTSC or PAL). Entry Fee: \$14-\$32. Contact: Festival, Hiltz Squared Media Group, Inc., 2100 Bloor Street West, Ste 6118, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6S 5A5; (905) 881-3892; hiltz@hiltz2.com; www.hiltz2.com.

OBERHAUSEN INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, April 29-May 4, 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 are viewed by an independent selection committee appointed by the fest & will be in the market catalogue unless stated otherwise. Approx. 70 titles will be selected by the Int'l Competition & 40 in the Children & Youth 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 32,500 EURO (approx. \$30,000). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta SP/PAL, Super 8, DV, S-VHS. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Melanie Piguel, Coordinator, Grillostr. 34, Oberhausen, Germany 46045; 011 49 208 825 2652; fax: 49 208 825 5413; info@kurzfilmtage.de; www.kurzfilmtage.de.

SINGAPORE INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, April 15-May 1, Singapore. Deadline: Jan. 15. 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, 1/2", Beta SP. Preview on VHS. Entry Fee: None. Contact: Philip Cheah, Festival Director, 45A Keong Saik Rd., Singapore, Singapore 089149; 011 65 738 7567; fax: 011 65 738 7578; filmfest@pacific.net.sg; www.filmfest.org.sg.

Members can visit
www.aivf.org/listings

Films/Tapes Wanted

By Jessica McDowell

Noncommercial notices and screening opportunities are listed free of charge as space permits. Commercial notices are billed at classified rates. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Jan. 1st for March issue). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending.

DISTRIBUTORS

AQUARIUS HEALTH CARE VIDEOS, the leader of documentary films that focus on powerful life challenging situations is seeking additional programs to add to our award winning collection. Our strong, targeted marketing program will help increase awareness for you. We look forward to previewing your film. Please send your film to Aquarius Health Care Videos, 266 Main St, Suite 33B, Medfield, Ma 02052, (888) 440-2963, leslie@aquariusproductions.com, www.aquariusproductions.com.

ARTHOUSE FILMS & DOCS WANTED for domestic & international distribution. For consideration, please send tape to: Passion River, GreeneStreet Film Center, 9 Desbrosses St, 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10013. 212-966-5877, www.PassionRiver.com.

EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS VIDEOS on guidance issues such as violence, drug prevention, mentoring, children's health & parenting for exclusive distribution. Our marketing gives unequalled results! Call Sally Germain at The Bureau for At-Risk Youth: (800) 99-YOUTH x. 210.

INDIE-UNDERGROUND SEEKS OFFBEAT, EDGY FEATURES AND DOC FEATURES for foreign/domestic distribution. Gross % on Internet sales. Established track record, fast response. Visit www.IndieUnderground.com Submissions page, send us your show.

NEW DAY FILMS seeks energetic independent film and videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatrical markets. If you want to maxi-

mize your profits while working within a remarkable community of committed activist filmmakers, then New Day is the perfect home for your film. New Day is committed to promoting diversity within our membership and within the media we represent. Explore our films at www.newday.com, then contact Heidi Emberling at (650) 347-5123.

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

YOUTH-PRODUCED VIDEO. Guaranteed exposure to tens of thousands, plus royalties to sustain your program. Only Noodle-Head Network distributes videos made with kids. Educational videos in all

underground & other under-represented forms of small-gauge (8mm, 16mm) film & video making. To screen your film work with us, send a VHS preview tape & any written mat. about it and yourself to Basement Films, P.O. Box 7669, Albuquerque, NM 87194. We pride ourselves in screening work in unique locations, so if you have a suggestion for your work in this regard, make a suggestion. Contact: (505) 842-9977; www.basementfilms.org.

CAPE COD FILM SOCIETY SCREENING SERIES of Brewster, MA, seeks experimental, documentary & fiction films & videos. Films can be any length, genre or style, but should fit into one of these 7 categories: war, women filmmakers, race & identity, religion, Cape Cod, masculinity or grief. Please send work on VHS, DVD, or mini-DV w/ filmmaker bio & suggested category. Also indicate your availability to appear with your work for Q&A.



Freight Night

At the weekly Monday Night Shorts Series, hosts Erni Vales, Victoria Clark, and Michael Ginsberg introduce a new set of eclectic shorts at 7:30pm and again at 10pm. Past screenings have ranged from documentaries to animation to experimental shorts, including Erika Yeomans' *The Forger*,

Gregory Hutton's *The Black Road*, and La Monte Edwards' *Anguish*. The event takes place at Manhattan's Freight Restaurant where independent and local filmmakers can dine on chicken empanadas and industrial strength wings, and drink half price cocktails, while they check out new films. Not only is this a prime mingling opportunity, but the events also give filmmakers the opportunity to gauge audience reactions to their films in a relaxed and encouraging environment. See listing.

subjects. Check out our distributor FAQ at www.aivf.org/independent and get your students' voices heard. (800) 639-5680.

MICROCINEMAS • SCREENING

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE accepts entries for its ongoing program, The Alternative Screen: A Forum for Independent Film Exhibition & Beyond. Looking primarily for feature films w/o wide distribution, but also will consider shorts, animation, new media, etc. for other programs & showcases. Send 1/2" VHS, press kit (any written background materials), cover letter w/ contact info & S.A.S.E. to: Margot Gerber, The Alternative Screen, 1800 N. Highland, Ste. 717, LA, CA 90028. Tel: (323) 466-3456 x115; fax: 461-9737; www.americancinematheque.com.

BASEMENT FILMS of Albuquerque, NM, is a mobile, volunteer-run venue for experimental,

Send to: Rebecca M. Alvin, Belly Girl Films, Inc., PO Box 1727, Brewster, MA 02631-7727; bellygirl@earthlink.net.

CELLULOID SOCIAL CLUB is a monthly screening series in Vancouver featuring the best in independent provocative short & feature films & videos followed by fun & frolic. Hosted by Ken Hegan at the ANZA Club, #3 West 8th Ave, Vancouver, BC. No minors. Prizes galore. Call (604) 730-8090; info@alterentertainment.com; www.CelluloidSocialClub.com.

CINEMARENO is a nonprofit film society featuring monthly screenings showcasing independent films & videos. Focusing on new, undistributed works. Formats: 16mm, Beta-SP, Mini-DV. Preview on VHS or DVD. Entry fee: \$20; fee waived for AIVF members. Entry form & instructions at www.cinemareno.org. Contact: Cinemareno, PO Box 5372, Reno, NV 89513; cinemareno@excite.com.

CLUB DIY is a new monthly screening series in Hollywood, CA, showcasing the best work from the DIY Film Festival at the Derby nightclub. Each screening will also feature discussion panels and cocktail party. For more info, call (323) 665-8080; DIYConvention@aol.com; www.DIYReporter.com.

DAHLIA'S FLIX & MIX, a weekly showcase of undistributed film & video work, as well as DJs spinning great music. No guest list, cover charge, or submission fee. For more info, contact dsmith@independentfilm.com or stop by Sugar any Tuesday evening (doors open 7pm, screenings begin 8pm). To submit your film, please send a VHS or DVD copy and a brief synopsis to: Dahlia Smith, c/o SUGAR, 311 Church St, New York, NY 10013.

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING FILM PROGRAM, hosted by Film Society of Lincoln Center, seeks original films or videos, from 1-20 min., to include w/ monthly screenings of open-captioned featured films at Walter Reade Theater. Films w/ artistic involvement from deaf artists preferred, but not required. Seeking original work that can be understood by deaf audience (dialogue must be subtitled). Send 1/2" video copy (nonreturnable) to: The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Film Program, 165 W. 65th St, 4th fl, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5638; sbensman@filmlinc.com.

ECHO PARK FILM CENTER microcinema seeking submissions to screen for weekly Thursday evening cinema. Non-Hollywood documentary, animation & experimental films & videos. We do not screen feature length narratives. Filmmakers receive an honorarium. Echo Park Film Center, 1200 N. Alvarado St, LA, CA, 90026; (213) 484-8846; polyesterprince@hotmail.com; www.echoparkfilmcenter.org.

ELECTRIC EYE CINEMA of Madison, WI, is a monthly venue for independent documentary video features. All net profits from screenings redistributed back to participating filmmakers. Looking for 30 to 90 min. works that are creative, witty, or politically conscious. Also looking for shorts 10 min. or fewer, any genre, to be screened at our 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; www.prolefeedstudios.com.

EMERGING FILMMAKERS series at the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY, seeks work from New York State amateur filmmakers of all ages. Deadline: ongoing. Send VHS screener & cover letter to Karen vanMeenen, programmer, Emerging Filmmakers Series, Little Theatre, 240 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; ren@eznet.net.

GIRLS ON FILM is a quarterly screening series in San Fran that seeks short narrative, doc & experimental works of 30 min. or fewer by women of color. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, VHS, or Beta; preview on VHS (NTSC) or DVD. No entry fee. Send preview (with name, title, length, phone & e-mail) to: Jennifer Jajeh, Girls On Film, 1566 Grove Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include SASE if you'd like your work returned. For more info, girlsonfilmseries@hotmail.com; www.watasite.org.

INDIE CINEMA NIGHT, presented by the Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Association, Inc., seeks short & feature-length narrative, documentary & child-aimed works of all genres for a monthly screening series. Preview on VHS, Beta SP, or DVD. Reviews of selected works will appear in Urban Mediamakers magazine; audience evaluations solicited after every screening. No entry fee. (404) 287-7758; aumai@urbanmediamakers.com; www.urbanmediamakers.com.

MICROCINEMA'S INDEPENDENT EXPOSURE, a monthly microcinema screening program of int'l short films, videos & digital works, seeking short video, film & digital media submissions of 15 min. or fewer on an ongoing basis for the monthly screening program. Artists qualify for a nonexclusive distribution deal, incl. additional license fees for int'l offline & online sales. Looking for short narrative, alternative, humorous, dramatic, erotic, animation, etc. Submit VHS or S-VHS (NTSC preferred) labeled w/ name, title, length, phone # & any support materials, incl. photos. Submissions will not be returned. Contact Joel S. Banchar, Microcinema International, 531 Utah St, San Francisco, CA 94110; info@microcinema.com; www.microcinema.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS at New York's Anthology Film Archives seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. No entry fee or form. Send a VHS copy of your film or video w/ a brief synopsis to David Maquiling, New Filmmakers, Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10009. For more info, visit www.newfilmmakers.com.

NEW FILMMAKERS LOS ANGELES seeks submissions for its weekly screening series. Films can be any length/year of production. Films without distribution only. No entry fee. Keep press kit to a minimum: synopsis, director's bio, 1 production photo. Submissions preferred on DVD; VHS (NTSC) & Mini DV also accepted. Send submissions to New Filmmakers, P.O. Box 48469, Los Angeles, CA 90048. Contact newfilmmakersla@yahoo.com; www.newfilmmakers.com/LA

OCULARIS provides a forum for film & video makers to exhibit their work at Brooklyn's Galapagos Art & Performance Space. All works are consid-

ered for programming in the weekly series, traveling programs & other special projects. Local film/video makers can submit works under 15 min. to Open Zone, a quarterly open screening. Nat'l/int'l works & medium length works (15-45 min.) will be considered for curated group shows. For submission guidelines & other info, visit www.ocularis.net; shortfilms@ocularis.net

OTHER CINEMA, San Fran's 20-year-old microcinema, accepts submissions of experimental film & video, as well as personal nonfiction, of any length, for its weekly screening series. Send a VHS tape (nonreturnable) to: Other Cinema, 992 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110; www.othercinema.com.

POTHOLE PICTURES, a revitalized 450-seat movie house in Shelburne Falls, MA, seeks 35mm films for "Meet the Director" series, which features a discussion & reception following film's screening. Any length/genre. Connection to New England, whether through subject matter, filming locations, or hometown of filmmakers, helpful but not necessary. Send VHS preview tape to Fred DeVecca, Pothole Pictures, Box 368, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; frogprod@javanet.com.

SHORT FILM GROUP seeks shorts (under 45 min.) 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 & an application form, visit www.shortfilmgroup.org.

SHORT FILM SLAM, New York'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, you must have a film, 30 min. or fewer, in a 35mm, 16mm, BetaSP, VHS, or DVD format. To submit your film, stop by the Pioneer Theater (155 E. 3rd St. during operating hours, or get in touch w/ Jim at (212) 254-7107; jim@twoboots.com.

SHOW & TELL is a monthly film, video & music event. Highlighting everything from film, video, music & poetry, this event provides a venue to show the works and talents in a nonconventional location. Seeking 15- to 20-min. film/videos. Show & Tell, c/o Black Robb, 535 Havemeyer Ave #12H, New York, NY 10473. For questions call (718) 409-1691; blackrobb@netzero.net.

SPARK VIDEO: BEACON Seeking work for 2003-2004 programming year. Deadline: Ongoing, early entries given preference. All independent/non-commercial work under 15 min.

accepted. Int'l submissions encouraged. Formats accepted: VHS(NTSC only) and MiniDV or DVCAM (NTSC or PAL). Include synopsis, Bio, CV & contact information. SASE required for tape return. Send materials to: Joshua Katcher - Video Programmer, Spark Video: Beacon, Fusion Media, 282 Katonah Ave. #148, Katonah, NY 10536; scoot@tele-base.net

TIMEBASE, a new moving image series in Kansas City, seeks innovative short films, videos, installations & web-based projects. No entry fee. Rolling deadline. Send VHS, DVD, or CD-Rom: Timebase, 5100 Rockhill Rd Haag 202, KC MO 64110. Tel: (816)235-1708; www.time-base.org.

TINY PICTURE CLUB seeks Super 8 films for quarterly, theme-based programs. Films will screen on Super 8 & be accompanied by live music. Tiny Picture Club is especially interested in work from the Portland area. Send VHS tape to: Tiny Picture Club, 6202 SE 17th Ave., PTX, OR 97202; www.tinypictureclub.org.

TRUE STORIES is a monthly sneak preview for new documentaries. Any length accepted, VHS or DVD format. No deadline, tapes held on a rolling basis until entire series is programmed. For more info contact Sean Frechette, Film Arts Foundation, 145 9th St. Ste. 101, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760 x324; www.filmarts.org/exhibition/truestories.html.

VIDEOTHEATRE, New York's never-ending video festival, seeks original videos. All kinds. No deadlines. No late fees. Year-round submission. Weekly programming in a 99-seat, AC theater located in downtown Manhattan's theater row. VideoTheatreNYC@aol.com; www.videotheatrenyc.com.

VIEWNAPPY'S HOMEMADE MUSIC VIDEO FESTIVAL: Monthly screening parties, & finalists will be entered in quarterly video slams. Music based submissions, 15 min. or under. No deadline. Acceptable formats: VHS/DVD (preferred), Beta sp/digi, MiniDV, Hi-8; email formats: Quicktime, Mpeg, Flash, SWA. Include a short artist bio & label tapes with your name, title, and contact info. Send to: Viewnappy, c/o Final Cut, 118 W. 22nd St. 7th floor, New York, NY 10011. For more info, visit www.viewnappy.com.

GALLERIES • EXHIBITIONS

ART IN GENERAL encourages general submissions for exhibition & residency. Works can encompass all media, including site-specific installation, single channel video, audio projects & window installations. Video work must be on VHS (NTSC). Send

Statement of Ownership: Management and Circulation (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: The Independent Film & Video Monthly. 2. Publication number: 011-708. 3. Filing date: 09-30-2003. 4. Issue frequency: Monthly (except combined issues January/February and July/August). 5. Number of issues published annually: 10. 6. Annual subscription price: \$55/individual; \$35/student; 100/nonprofit & school; \$150/business & industry. 7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. Contact person: Shana Liebman, telephone: (212) 807-1400 x229. 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, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. Editor: Rebecca Carroll, AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. Managing Editor: Shana Liebman, AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. 10. Owner: The Association of Independent Video and Film (AIVF), 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013-1015. (AIVF is a nonprofit organization.) 11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None. 12. Tax status: The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this 501(c)(3) organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes has not changed during the preceding 12 months. 13. Publication title: The Independent Film & Video Monthly. 14. Issue date for circulation data below: Sept. 2003. 15. Extent and nature of circulation: a. Total No. Copies (net press run): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 11,739; actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 11,012. 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: 4,897; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 4,960; (2) Paid in-county subscriptions stated on Form 3541: N/A; (3) Sales through dealers, carriers, street vendors, counter sales & other non-USPS paid distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 3,597; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 4,202. (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: 7,612; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 9,162. d. Free distribution by mail: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 200; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 232. e. Free distribution outside the mail (carriers or other means): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,625; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1,250. f. Total free distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,725; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1,482. g. Total distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 9,337; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 10,644. h. Copies not distributed: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 676; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 368. i. Total (sum of 15 g, h(1) and h(2)): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 10,112; no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 11,012. j. Percent paid and/or requested circulation: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 81.52%; actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 86.07%. 16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: Publication required. Will be published in the December 2003 issue of this publication. 17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. (Signed) Shana Liebman, Managing Editor, 21st October, 2003.

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application (available at www.ArtnGeneral.org) along with S.A.S.E. & materials to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY at Central Michigan University reviews proposals year-round. All media considered, incl. 2-D, 3-D, performance, video & computer art. Artists interested in exhibition at the University Art Gallery should send 20 slides, video or disc, resume, artist statement & S.A.S.E. to: Central Michigan University Art Gallery, Art Dept. Wightman 132, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

SHOWCASES

DOCUCLUB is seeking submissions for its In-the-Works program, a monthly documentary rough-cut screening series in New York City. If you urgently need constructive feedback and want a chance to network with your peers, visit www.docuclub.org for details, or contact Liz Ogilvie: (212) 874-1878.

THE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER'S SHOWCASE is a monthly film series dedicated to supporting the independent voice in video & film production. Open to independent video & filmmakers of any genre. Call for entries for the 2003-2004 film series will continue through the duration of the season. Also seeking quality films to showcase at www.FilmSeven.com. For more information, contact filmseven@aol.com; Tel: (866) 266-8435.

FINISHING PICTURES accepts 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.

FREIGHT FILM SALON seeks submissions for its Monday Night Shorts showcase series. Work can be any genre, 20 min. or fewer; must be on VHS or DVD. Will screen on 6' screen, 2 plasma screens & 4 monitors. FreightFilmSalon@yahoo.com for additional info, or visit www.FreightNYC.com.

TOURING PROGRAMS

THE HIP HOP FILM FEST TOUR is an ongoing event hitting major cities & cultural centers on a global level. Organizers are indie filmmakers looking to share their visual documents of the vibrant Hip-Hop culture and connect with other mediamakers. Deadline: ongoing. Visit

www.hiphopfilmfest.com for more information, email Info@HipHopFilmFest.com, or call (866) 206-9071 x9211.

BROADCASTS • CABLECASTS

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 p.m. Submissions should be 25 min. or fewer, VHS, 3/4", or DV. Send copies to Bijou Matinee, Box 649, New York, NY 10159; (212) 505-3649; www.BijouMatinee.com.

BROOKDALE TELEVISION is a progressive educational access channel in Monmouth County, NJ reaching over 79,000 households at the Jersey Shore. All lengths & genres considered. Nonexclusive rights release upon acceptance, no payment but promotional & contact info will be provided on air and through our office. VHS for preview, Beta SP, MiniDV, SVHS and DVD accepted. Contact Roger Conant; BTV Brookdale Community College, 765 Newman Springs Road, Atec Rm.112, Lincroft NJ, 07738; (732) 224-2467; rconant@brookdalecc.edu.

DUTV is a progressive, nonprofit access channel in Philadelphia that seeks works by indie producers. All genres & lengths considered. Will return tapes. Beta SP, DV, S-VHS & DVD accepted for possible cablecast 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.

FILMFINDS, KSC-TV's new showcase of independent films, now seeks work for broadcast in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Only feature-length narrative films considered. Work must have played in at least 2 juried film fests & cannot have had a wide release or previously been broadcast on network TV. For more info & an appl., visit www.mnfilm.org; filmfinds@mnfilm.org.

INDIE FILM SHOWCASE, the award-winning Twin Cities cable showcase, accepts ongoing submissions. Programs run 7-8 p.m. every Saturday & Sunday for a month. No fees. Send your work in any format (Beta, 3/4, Mini, DVCPRO,

the 8's, 1/2") & a S.A.S.E. to: Indie Film Showcase, 2134 Roth Pl., White Bear Lake, MN 55110. For a release form & more info, visit www.proletariatpictures.com.

MIND IGNITE seeks short films for Australian anthology TV show. Work must be 28 min. or fewer, any genre. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, DV, mini-DV, SP, Super 8 or 8mm. Along with film, the filmmaker must also submit a press kit, clearance for all music & sound, artistic release & signed nonexclusive licensing agreement, which can be found on www.mindignite.com. For more info visit site, or call Anne Maryfield, +618 9324 4455.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE accepts proposals for programs & completed programs by independent producers aimed at public television audiences. Consult PBS web page for content priorities & 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.

THE SHORT LIST, The long-running, Emmy Award-winning showcase for international short film on public and cable TV licenses outstanding films from 30 sec. to 20 mins. in all genres. For more info and an application form, visit www.theshortlist.cc.

WEBCASTS

BROWNFISH.COM accepting submissions of films 10 min. & under for exhibition on the web. Brownfish.com accepts submissions on Mini DV (recommended), VHS tape, .avi file & QuickTime .mov file. Submission form and more info. can be found at www.Brownfish.com.

TRIGGERSTREET.COM hosts AN online short film festival. To submit visit www.triggerstreet.com. Upload your film before Mar. 24 to be considered for a competition & one of three awards.

TURBULANCE is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) org. that commissions net art works by emerging and established artists. Rolling deadline. Proposals can be in the form of text in the body of the email, or attached RTF file. Email proposals to: newradio@si.r.com; www.somewhere.org.

WIGGED.NET is a digital magazine that is a showcase, distributor & promotion center for media artists via the web. Seeks works created in Flash and Director and traditional animations & videos fewer than 10 min. in length to be streamed over the internet. For details, visit the "submit media" page at www.wigged.net. Deadline: ongoing.

Classifieds

Deadline: First of each month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., January 1st for March issue). **Contact:** (212) 807-1400, x221; fax: (212) 463-8519; classifieds@aivf.org.

PER ISSUE COST: 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, x241.

FREQUENCY DISCOUNT: \$5 off per issue for ads running 5+ times.

Ads exceeding the specified length will be edited. Place ad via www.aivf.org/independent/classifieds or type copy and mail with the check or money order to: AIVF, 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 include card #, name on card and expiration date.

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EQUIPMENT RENTALS FOR LOW BUDGETS: ProductionJunction has cameras, lights, audio gear, VTRs and more for day or weekly rental. ProductionJunction.com or (917) 288-9000.

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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.

ARE YOU STUCK? FERNANDA ROSSI, SCRIPT & DOCUMENTARY DOCTOR, specializes in narrative structure in all stages of the filmmaking process, including story development, fundraising trailers and post-production. She has doctored over 30 films and is the author of "Trailer Mechanics." For private consultations and workshops visit www.documentarydoctor.com or write to info@documentarydoctor.com.

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COMPOSER: ILLUMINATE MUSIC - Moving Music for Moving Images. Composer/producer George Whitty's credits incl. 2 Grammys, themes & score for CBS, ABC, NBC, Natl. Geographic, Lifetime. Full Prod. Studio in NYC area. www.illuminatemusic.com.

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als should be received by January 16th, 2004. Send applications to: Katie Arfanakis, Manager of Faculty Services, College of Communication, Boston University, 640 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. Boston University is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

INDEPENDENT FILM AND DESIGN company is looking for a uniquely talented production associate to be involved with image research and lighting on an upcoming film on the: Future of the City. For more insight call Chris at: (610) 346-9164.

LECTURER III- FILM AND 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, video, television and digital media production beginning September 1, 2004. 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. Given the Program's continuing commitment to integrated production and studies courses team taught with studies faculty, candidates should be willing to participate in interdisciplinary curriculum development. Curricular 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 January 16, 2004, and continue until the position is filled. The University of Michigan is a non-discriminatory/affirmative action employer.

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videography/cinematography. Qualifications include MFA or PhD in field and significant professional experience. Candidates without an MFA or PhD but with exceptional professional accomplishments may be considered for an artist-in-residence renewal term appointment. Application review will begin on 15 December 2003 and will continue until filled. Submit in hard copy a cover letter, statement of teaching philosophy, detailed curriculum vitae, and names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of five professional references. Submit to Michael Frierson, Chair, Search Committee, BCN, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, NC, 27402-6170. Tel: (336) 334-3768. E-mail: frierson@uncg.edu. EEO/AA. For more details see www.uncg/bcn/search.html.

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PREPRODUCTION

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eMediaLoft.org FINAL CUT PRO G-4 digital video with editor \$65/hr; Discounts; Production; S/8 & R/8 film transfers; VHS, Hi-8, CD-Rom, DVD, mini-DV, DV-Cam; Photos, Graphics, Labels. West Village. Bill Creston; (212) 924-4893; eMediaLoft@lycos.com.

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RESOURCE DIRECTORY
AT WWW.AIVF.ORG**

**TO PURCHASE AN AD
CONTACT
CLASSIFIEDS@AIVF.ORG**

Notices

By Jessica McDowell

Noncommercial notices are listed free of charge as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length and makes no guarantees about duration of listing. Limit submissions to 60 words and indicate how long your information will be current. Listings must be submitted to notices@aivf.org by the first of the month two months prior to cover date (e.g., Jan. 1 for March issue). Remember to give us complete contact info (name, address, and phone number). Listings do not constitute an endorsement by *The Independent* or AIVF. We try to be as current and accurate as possible, but nevertheless: double-check details before sending anyone anything.

CONFERENCES • WORKSHOPS

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Manhattan's public access TV center, now offers ongoing free public monthly seminars on film & TV production. Each month's workshop is held at MNN's studios at 537 W, 59th St. and features a different speaker, screening and focus; past speakers have included Sharon Greytak, Joel Katz and Sam Pollard. (212) 757-2670 x 308; www.mnn.org.

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL FILM & PRODUCTION WORKSHOP begins its 27th year as 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. Application required & 2nd 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 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

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AM. FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To send work, contact Roselly Torres, LAVA, 124 Washington PL, NY, NY 10014; 212.463.0108; imre@igc.org.

FELIX: A JOURNAL OF MEDIA ARTS & COMMUNICATIONS announces RISK/ RIESGO. This 1st bilingual issue of Felix is curated around the idea of the political, the transgressive, the risk of making works described by artists livign in Mexico and the US. Edited by Kathy High, 568 pgs (Spanish/English), published by The Standby Program, available at: www.e-felix.org; (212) 206-7858.

GUIDE TO TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FILMS SHOT IN NY STATE available for producers who want clear instructions on how to claim numer-

ous tax exemptions available in NY state for film, TV and commercial production. Put together by Empire State Dept. of Taxation and Finance. 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture and TV Development, 633 3rd. Ave., 33rd Fl. New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: (212) 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

AGAPE FOUNDATIONS DAVID R. STERN MEMORIAL FUND offers loans to film projects committed to nonviolent social change. \$3,000 will be loaned for up to three months to filmmakers who promote the use of nonviolence in their work. Applications are due by the last business day of each month. (415) 701-8707; agapefri@sirius.com.

ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATION provides completion funding for educational series assured of airing nat'lly on PBS. Children's series are of particular interest. Consideration will also be given to innovative uses of public TV, including computer online efforts, to enhance



Experimental Television

The Experimental Television Center has provided support for media artists on multiple levels since its inception in 1971, and it has remained dedicated to its independent roots through the development of new outlets for film and electronic works created by independent artists and organizations. The ETC's programs include a residency that offers artists access to equipment in a retreat-like workshop environment, sponsorship for artists' projects, and a grants program that offers finishing funds, presentation funds, and technical assistance. In 1994, the ETC also began working on its Video History Project, an "ongoing research initiative concerning the early historical development of video art and community television." See listing.

ous tax exemptions available in NY state for film, TV and commercial production. Put together by Empire State Dept. of Taxation and Finance. 51-pg. reference guide can be obtained from NY State Governor's Office or Tax Office. Contact: Pat Swinney Kaufman, NY State Governor's Office for Motion Picture and TV Development, 633 3rd. Ave., 33rd Fl. New York, NY 10017-6706; (212) 803-2330; fax: (212) 803-2339; nyfilm@empire.state.ny.us; www.nylovesfilm.com.

OTHERZINE, the e-zine of Craig Baldwin's othercinema.com, seeks written works fewer than 1,000 words, including interviews, filmographies, alternative histories, criticism & theory. Previously

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 32202-49221; arthurvining@bell.south.net; www.jvm.com/davis.

ASTRAEA provides grants of up to \$10,000 to film & video projects that reflect depth, complexity & diversity of the lesbian community. Special attention to projects geared towards diverse audiences. Nonprofit fiscal sponsorship req'd. Our U.S. Grants Fund utilizes a community-based activist

grantmaking panel to review proposals and to make funding decisions. Deadline: Dec. Contact: Astraea, 116 E. 16th St, 7th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 529-8021, fax: 982-3321.

BLACK DOCUMENTARY COLLECTIVE (BDC)

provides people of African descent working in the documentary film and video field with the opportunity to network professionally, promote each others' work, exchange ideas in order to generate productions and advocate on issues impacting black documentary makers. They hold works-in-progress screenings, project seminars, participate in the IFP Film Market and have special sessions with funders for independent producers. For more info, email BlkDocCol@aol.com.

CINEMAX REEL LIFE & HBO AMERICA UNDERCOVER

offer completion and production funds, respectively, 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.

CREATIVE CAPITAL

a New York City-based nonprofit organization that supports artists who pursue innovation in form and/or content in the performing and visual arts, film and video, and emerging fields, is accepting applications for its 2004-05 grant round. Grants will be awarded to individual artists in the fields of Visual Arts and Film/Video; Performing Arts and Emerging Fields will be eligible to submit Inquiry Forms in 2005. Applications will be available on the website February 16, 2004; the postmark deadline for completed forms is March 15, 2004. Visit www.creative-capital.org for more information, or email at info@creative-capital.org.

DIY REVOLUTION

is now accepting free listing/classifieds on an indie media network. DIYR is a resource aimed to unite independent filmmakers, artists, activists, musicians, media groups and writers working for a more just, authentic and progressive world working outside of a corporate paradigm. Visit www.diyrevolution.com or www.diyrr.com.

EMEDIALOFT.ORG CREATIVE PROJECTS GRANT

provides ongoing fee support for 8 artists a year w/ creative/fictional narrative projects who will work 50 hours to produce/postproduce digital video w/ an editor/videographer. Documentaries, political and promotional tapes are not covered by this grant, but low rates and discounts for all work are available. Send 200-250 word project description, resume and S.A.S.E. to Bill Creston and Barbara Rosenthal, eMediaLoft, 55 Bethune St. #A-628, NY, NY 10014-2035.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER PRESENTATION FUNDS

award up to \$1,000 each year to nonprofit media arts organizations in New York State. Funds must go to fees to artists for in-person presentations of film, electronic media, sonic art, and art using new technologies and the internet. Electronic music & work that's primarily commercial, instructional, educational, or promotional not considered. For more info, call program director Sherry Miller Hocking, (607) 687-4341; etc@experimentaltvcenter.org; www.experimentaltvcenter.org.

MEDIA ARTS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUND

is designed to help non-profit media arts programs in New York State stabilize, strengthen or restructure their media arts organizational capacity, services & activities. The Fund will provide up to \$2000 per project to organizations which receive support from NYSCA's Electronic Media and Film Program. Applications are accepted quarterly, with a postmark deadline of Jan. 1, Apr. 1, July 1 & Oct. 1. For more information, visit www.experimentaltvcenter.org or contact (607) 687-4341.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP FOR FILMMAKERS:

Film Forum, a nonprofit cinema, efficiently administers filmmaker grants, retaining 5% of all monies from foundations, corporations, individuals (but not government sources). Budget must be a minimum of \$100,000 & filmmaker must have a track record. Send brief project description to: Film Forum Fiscal Sponsorships, 209 W. Houston St, New York, NY 10014. No calls, faxes, e-mails.

FLICKER FILM GRANT

Flicker is a bimonthly short film festival held in six 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 Donacaster Drive, Austin, TX 78745, or see www.flickeraustin.com.

FORD FOUNDATION MEDIA, ARTS AND CULTURE GRANTS

fund independent film, video, radio and digital media that meets the foundation's goals to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation and advance human achievement. For more info, visit www.fordfound.org/about/guide line.cfm; office-secretary@fordfound.org.

HAMBURG FOUNDATION

seeks letters of inquiry for possible future funding for controversial, risky, or innovative projects that use communication systems (radio, computer, television, theater, documentary film, books) to educate and inform about serious issues. Preference given to new works. Contact Ernie Harburg; (212) 343-9453; ernie@harburgfoundation.org.

GLOBAL CENTER, a nonprofit, IRS-certified 501(c)(3) educational foundation, seeks filmmakers seeking fiscal sponsors. For more info, call (212) 246-0202, or e-mail roc@globalvision.org; www.globalvision.org.

HUMANITIES WASHINGTON

supports public programs that have as their primary purpose the presentation of insights gained from the humanities. Humanities Washington offers three types of grants. Quick Grants are available year-round to small or rural organizations for program planning or implementation. Visit nych@humanities.org.

JEROME FOUNDATION'S MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM

offers production grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to emerging NYC artists w/ works budgeted up to \$200,000. Narratives, docs, new media & experimental works, as well as radio, interactive formats, online programs and virtual reality experiments considered. The foundation does not support education, exhibition, broadcast, or distribution. Contact program officer Robert Byrd. Tel: (651) 224-9431 (or toll-free in NY or MN only, (800) 995-3766); fax: 224-3439; www.jeromefdn.org.

JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

provides partial support to selected doc series and films intended for national or international broadcast and focusing on an issue in one of the foundation's two major programs (human and community development; global security and sustainability). Send prelim. 2-3 page letter. Contact: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 140 S. Dearborn St. Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 726-8000; 4answers@macfdn.org; www.macfdn.org.

KOED-TV IN SAN FRANCISCO

provides in-kind postproduction assistance to a number of independent projects each year. Subject must be compelling and of interest to KOED's viewers, or attract new audiences. Material must pass technical evaluation for broadcast quality. Producer must supply rough cut for review. KOED also takes on a number of co-productions each year. For more info, call (415) 553-2269.

NATHAN CUMMINGS FOUNDATION

is 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 information, visit www.ncf.org.

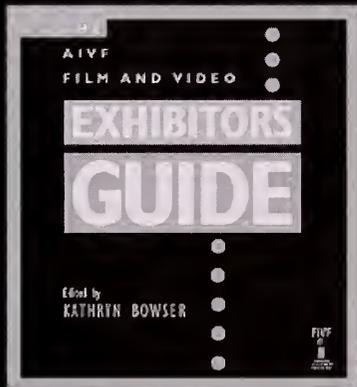
Need an audience?

Here is a tool to help:

The AIVF Film and Video EXHIBITORS GUIDE

edited by Kathryn Bowser,
updated by Rania Richardson

New Edition Just Released!



\$35 / \$25 AIVF members

The newly updated guide hosts a bounty of current, comprehensive, easy-to-use information.

New content includes:

300-plus updated listings, with . . .

- technical facilities that include digital formats
- helpful tips for submitting work to venues
- details on various exhibitor's programming focus

. . . plus additional screening venues from theatrical to microcinema.

The Exhibitors Guide is the most comprehensive resource for getting your work into public spaces. It has current information on over 1,000 exhibition venues in the US, from coffeehouses to corporate multiplexes. Venue profiles, technical specifications, and contact information provide a leg up towards the daunting task of bringing your work to the public.

Order online at

www.aivf.org or call

(212) 807-1400 x303.



NEW DAY FILMS, a premier distribution cooperative for social issue media, is seeking energetic independent film and videomakers with social issue docs for distribution to non-theatrical markets. Now accepting applications for new membership. Contact: on the east coast: (617) 338-4969. West and midwest: (415) 383-8999; www.newday.com.

OPEN CALL FOR PRODUCTION/ OPEN DOOR COMPLETION FUNDS are available from National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for applicants with public TV projects in production and post-production phases. Awards average from \$20,000 to \$50,000 per project. OPEN CALL takes approximately 3-6 months. For OPEN DOOR a full-length rough cut must be submitted. Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Contact: NAARA Media Fund, 145 Ninth St, Suite 350, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814 x 122; fax: (415) 863-7428; mediafund@naatanet.org; www.naatanet.org.

OPPENHEIMER CAMERA provides new filmmakers w/ access to a fully accessorized Arri 16SR camera package, w/ instruction and technical support. Students, media arts center members & unaffiliated independents are encouraged to apply. No commercial projects, music videos, features & PSA's. No appl. deadline, but allow 2 wks min. for processing. Tel: (206) 467-8666; fax: (212) 467-9165; filmgrant@oppenheimercamera.com; www.oppenheimercamera.com.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATION (PIC) COMPLETION FUNDS are provided for the final preparations of broadcast masters of Pacific Island-themed programs intended for national public television. Categories: doc, performance, children's and cultural affairs programming. PIC is particularly interested in projects that examine Pacific Islander issues. Rough cut must be submitted w/ app; fee: \$25. Deadline: ongoing. Contact: Annie Moriyasu, Media Fund, PIC, 1221 Kapiolani Blvd, Ste. 6A-4, Honolulu, HI 96814; (808) 591-0059; amoriyasu@piccom.org; www.piccom.org.

PANAVISION'S NEW FIIMMAKER PROGRAM donates 16mm camera packages to film projects, including graduate student thesis films, of any genre. Highly competitive. Submit proposals 5 to 6 months before you intend to shoot. Filmmakers must secure equipment & liability insurance. Send SASE to: New Filmmaker Program, Panavision, 6219 DeSoto Ave, Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2602.

PLAYBOY FOUNDATION MEDIA GRANTS seek social change doc. & video projects. Grants from \$1,000 to \$5,000 are limited to projects in post-production. For info visit www.playboyenterprises.com.

SUNDANCE DOCUMENTARY FUND, formerly the Soros Documentary Fund, supports int'l doc films & videos on current & significant issues in human rights, freedom of expression, social justice & civil liberties. Development funds for research & preproduction awarded up to \$15,000; works-in-progress funds for production or postproduction up to \$50,000 (average award is \$25,000). Email sdf@sundance.org or visit www.sundance.org.

THE ASIAN CULTURAL COUNCIL has provided, over the past 40 years, grant assistance to more than 3,700 Asians & Americans in the arts. For information on fellowships, visit www.asianculturalcouncil.org.

THE PUFFIN FOUNDATION supports the creation and presentation of new artistic works to the public. In particular, the Foundation intends to foster & encourage younger artists & those whose projects find funding difficult because of the projects' genre &/or social philosophy. Awards are \$1000-\$2500 to projects incl. short films & videos. Grant proposals for 2004 are accepted from Oct. 1-Dec. 31, 2003. For more info. visit www.puffinfoundation.org.

U.S.—MEXICO FUND FOR CULTURE grants economic support to projects of excellence that reflect the artistic & cultural diversity of Mexico and the United States, & that enrich cultural exchange & promote lasting ties among artists, scholars, independent groups & cultural institutions in both countries. Application should incl. a plan for evaluating & documenting the process, results & impact of the project. Special attention will be given to projects that propose innovative ways to understand and conceptualize art in any of the artistic disciplines. Deadline: Dec. 12, 2003. Visit <http://www.fidemexusa.org.mx>.

WALLACE ALEXANDER GERBODE FOUNDATION supports programs and projects offering potential for significant impact w/ a primary focus on the SF Bay area and Hawaii. Categories of interest include: arts & culture, environment, pollution, reproductive rights & citizen participation/community building. Projects must havenonprofit status/ fiscal sponsorship. Send letter of inquiry to: Thomas C. Layton, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, 470 Columbus Ave. #209, San Francisco, CA 94133-3930; (415) 391-0911.

December

IN BRIEF: FILM FINANCING: RAISING MONEY FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION

when: Thursday, December 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

where: AIVF

cost: \$40/\$25 AIVF members

Series Fees: 5 sessions pass \$100 for AIVF members; \$160 general public.

Advanced purchase is highly recommended. Register at www.aivf.org/store or call 212/807-1400x301.



The AIVF Producers' Legal Series answers legal and business questions about structuring and negotiating deals in film and television. It also introduces independents to future legal and business resources.

This seminar will discuss negotiating contracts with and for public television including agreements for production, coproduction and acquisition. Issues include copyright, distribution rights, income and profit shares, clearances, and union agreements. We will also address traditional and non-traditional financing sources for PBS projects.

AIVF ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

when: Monday, December 8, 8-10 p.m.

where: 304 Hudson Street, 6th Floor (Between Spring and Vandam), NYC; Please RSVP!



It's that time again for AIVF's Annual Holiday Party! Come by to eat, drink and be merry with acquaintances old and new at our celebrated Holiday Party!

AIVF CO-SPONSORS: INDEPENDENT FILM & THE MAC

when: Wednesday, December 10, 7-10 p.m.

where: William Patterson University, 1600 Valley Rd., Wayne, NJ 07470

cost: Free. To register, 732-321-071 or info@Passionriver.com.

The New Jersey Final Cut Pro Users Group and the NJ AIVF Salon present a special evening of technology and discussion on the latest trends in the independent film scene. See the latest Apple technology including Final Cut Pro 4, DVD Studio Pro 2, and the new Powermac G5.

In addition to Apple Pro training, participate in a roundtable discussion on film distribution, and enjoy screenings of local, short, independent films.

For more information, visit www.passionriver.com/njsalon

AIVF CO-SPONSORS: NATIVE AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL

when: December 4-7

where: Various locations, New York, NY

The 12th Native American Film and Video Festival celebrates the many remarkable recent accomplishments in the field of Native media, presenting 85 new productions from Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Arctic Russia, and the continental United States and Hawaii. Organized by the Film and Video Center of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (FVC).

For more information, visit www.nativenetworks.si.edu/nafvf.htm

AIVF MEMBER DISCOUNT: FILMS AT THE LINCOLN CENTER

where: Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W 65th St., NYC
www.filmlinc.com



AIVF members may attend select series (see below) at a discounted rate—just \$5 per ticket. Bring your membership card to the box office!

Through December 4:
Another Russia: A Tribute to Lenfilm Studios

December 5-24:
Spanish Cinema Now!

reach AIVF...

Filmmakers' Resource Library

hours: Wednesday 11-9 or by appt. to AIVF members
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11-6.

Please note that the office will be closed December 22 to January 2.

The AIVF office is located at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring & Vandam) 6th fl., in New York City.

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
Tuesday-Friday 2-5 p.m. EST

By internet:
www.aivf.org; info@aivf.org

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 www.aivf.org/regional for an overview of the broad variety of Regional Salon 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

Atlanta, GA: IMAGE

When: Second Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Where: Redlight Café
553 Amsterdam Ave.
Contact: Mark Smith, (404) 352-4225 x12
atlanta@aivf.org; www.imagefv.org

Austin, TX:

Contact: Jen White, (512) 917-3027
austin@aivf.org

Boston, MA: Center for Independent Documentary

Contact: Susan Walsh, (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: Michael Hill,
(303) 442-8445 x100; 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

Columbia, SC:

When: Second Sundays
Where: Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Contact: Wade Sellers, (803) 929-0066
columbia@aivf.org

Dallas, TX:

Video Association of Dallas

When: Bi-Monthly
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 428-8700
dallas@aivf.org

Edison, NJ:

Where: Passion River Productions,
190 Lincoln Hwy.
Contact: Allen Chou, (732) 321-0711
edison@aivf.org; www.passionriver.com

Fort Wayne, IN:

Contact: Erik Mollberg
(260) 691-3258; 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

Huntsville, AL:

Contact: Charles White, (256) 895-0423
huntsville@aivf.org

Jefferson County, AL:

Contact: Paul Godby, (205) 956-3522
jeffersoncounty@aivf.org

Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Independent Film Project

When: Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.
Where: Telepro, 1844 N Street
Contact: Jared Minary, lincoln@aivf.org,
(402) 467-1077, www.nifp.org

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; milwaukee@aivf.org
www.mifs.org/salon

Portland, OR:

Where: Hollywood Theatre
Contact: David Bryant, (503) 244-4225
portland@aivf.org

Rochester, NY:

Where: Visual Studies Workshop
Contact: Liz Lehmann
(585) 377-1109; rochester@aivf.org

San Diego, CA:

When: Monthly
Where: Media Arts Center, 921 25th
Street
Contact: Ethan van Thillo
(619) 230-1938; sandiego@aivf.org

San Francisco, CA:

Contact: Tami Saunders
(650) 271-0097; sanfrancisco@aivf.org

Seattle, WA: Seattle Indie Network

When: Bi-Monthly
Where: Wiggly World
and 911 Media Arts Center
Contact: Heather Ayres, (206) 200-0933;
Wes Kim, (206) 719-6261; seattle@aivf.org

Tucson, AZ:

Contact: Rachel Sharp, (520) 906-7295
tucson@aivf.org

Washington, DC:

Contact: Joe Torres, DC Salon hotline,
(202) 661-7145, washingtondc@aivf.org

HOUSTON'S MISSION

The Houston salon rose to the occasion of Media Advocacy Day by paying a visit to Congressman Gene Green (D-TX), as well as representatives for Senators Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-TX) and John Cornyn (R-TX). Before this visit, the group held a salon to sign a petition, which addressed issues including FCC deregulation of media ownership, increased funding for the NEA, PBS, and ITVS, and copyright law. The delegation was led by Mary Lampe, executive director of Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP), who reported that the mission was a success. "At least they know we're out there, and that people care about these issues," Lampe says. The meeting was also a learning experience for first-time advocates, and provided them with a chance to discover more about the political system and how they can get involved.

AIVF THANKS

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) provides a wide range of programs and services for independent moving image makers and the media community, including *The Independent* and a series of resource publications, seminars and workshops, information services, and arts and media policy advocacy.

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



The Academy Foundation
Adobe Systems, Inc.
The Caliban Foundation
City of New York Dept. of Cultural Affairs
Forest Creatures Entertainment, Inc.
Home Box Office
The Jewish Communal Fund

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
The New York Community Trust
New York Foundation for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Panasonic USA
Sony Electronics Corporation

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

Business/Industry Members: **AL:** Cypress Moon Productions; **AZ:** Duck Soup Productions; **CA:** Adobe Systems, Inc., Eastman Kodak Co.; Groovy Like a Movie; The Hollywood Reporter; SJPL Films, Ltd.; Ultimatum Entertainment; **CO:** Pay Reel; **DC:** 48 Hour Film Project; **FL:** E.M. Productions; **IL:** Kartemquin Films; Roxie Media Corp.; Urban Work Productions; Wonderdog Media, Inc.; **IN:** The Storyteller Workshop; **MA:** Escape TV; Glidecam Industries; **MD:** NewsGroup, Inc.; Waltery Insurance; **MI:** 10th Street Productions; Grace & Wild Studios, Inc.; Michael Kuentz Communications; **NH:** Kinetic Films; **NJ:** Alternative Media & Resources International; Panasonic USA; **NV:** Broadcast Productions; **NY:** All In One Productions; Analog Digital International, Inc.; Arc Pictures; Arts Engine, Inc.; Blueprint Films; C-Hundred Film Corporation; Cataland Films; Cypress Films; DNT 88 Productions; Docurama; Downtown Avid; Field Hand Productions, Inc.; Forest Creatures Entertainment; Fred Siegel CPA; Free Dream Films; Getcast.com; Greenwich Street Productions; HBO; IdDigEnt; Karin Bacon Events; Lighthouse Creative; Lightworks Producing Group; Mad Mad Judy; Metropolis Film Lab; Moxie Firecracker Films; Off Ramp Films, Inc.; Outside in July, Inc.; Persona Films, Inc.; Post Typhoon Sky, Inc.; Robin Frank Management; Roja Productions; Wildlight Productions; **PA:** Cubist Post & Effects; **RI:** The Revival House; **VA:** Dig Productions; Kessler Productions; **WI:** Image Pictures, LLC; Tweedee Productions

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A Holiday Wish List

By Jessica McDowell

'Tis the season to be jolly—and to wish for things you don't have. This month we asked a few mediamakers what their hearts most desire for Christmas 2003—whether political, philosophical, or purely material. The following list reveals what many independent filmmakers today share: a level of social engagement, passion, and yes, the ever-present need for more resources.

"We'd love to be hired by a big network to be 'embedded' during the impeachment of our current administration."

—Michael Galinski and Suki Hawley, filmmakers, *Horns and Halos*

"I guess all I want for Christmas are the two things I can never get enough of: inspiration and motivation."

—Mary Sampson, filmmaker, *Wave*

"If I could wave a magic wand and have my heart's desire it would be peace on earth, especially in the Middle East. For the Film-Makers' Cooperative, I wish two wonderful, working 16mm projectors, one ELMO and the other an EIKI."

—M.M. Serra, Exec. Director, Film-Makers' Cooperative

"1. An Apple G3 "Pismo" PowerBook: What the Technics SP-1200 is to turntables, this baby is to laptops—fast, a large 14" screen, and it doesn't overheat and burn your crotch when it's in your lap. 2. Motion Dive VJ software: An interface that is intuitive and nice to look at, this is the smoothest of all software video solutions. 3. Ms. Pinky turntable-based video system: With cute, pink, vinyl records that interface with your digital video clips, this 'inter-dimensional wrecked system' may just change the (VJ) world. 4. More A/V collaborators and people to battle. 5. More and better funding systems for the arts in the U.S."

—Art Jones, New York-based media mix-master

"For Christmas, I would like the airwaves returned to their status as public property as stated in the 1934 Communications Act that first created the FCC."

—Nina Rota, filmmaker, *Who Needs Hollywood, Terminator Seed*

"I must say, what troubles me the most from day to day is the knowledge that there are sadly misguided American soldiers in another sovereign nation, firing wildly at the natives (and getting fired on themselves) in an absolutely criminal and ultimately doomed campaign to violently force an entire population back under imperial control

... and oh yeah, for the enrichment of a very few hypocritical war-pigs. It is a knife in my heart that this goes on in my name. My Xmas gift request: pull it out."

—Craig Baldwin, filmmaker, *Specters of the Spectrum, Sonic Outlaws*

"My Christmas wish is for a 12-inch Apple Powerbook complete with over one gig of RAM, a Super Drive, full compliment software from Final Cut 4 to Pro-Tools 6, and a partridge in a pear tree."

—Bryant Falk, owner, Abacus Audio

"My top picks would be a DV-CAM camera and a large garden with plenty of room to plant a vegetable patch and rose bushes and a hammock."

—Jennifer Dworkin, filmmaker, *Love and Diane*

"Quickly, off the top off my head: a truly independent video store in every major city in America; a DVD player that makes it just as easy to fast-forward as VHS; a switch in priorities from hi-tech to hi-humankind; a new feature film from Jim Jarmusch; a revolving, non-profit film fund for independents which gives out \$100 million a year; a public television service with guts and vision."

—Milos Stehik, Exec. Director, Facets Multi-Media, Inc.

"I want snow."

—Bill Morrison, filmmaker, *Decasia*



Jessica McDowell is an intern at The Independent.



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