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AMERICAN

CINEMEDITOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE HONORARY PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY—AMERICAN CINEMA EDITORS, INC. WINTER 1988 VOL. 38 NO. 4

ARTICLES OF POST-PRODUCTION IMPORTANCE

WAR AND REMEMBRANCE

A View from the Bay

TELECINE COLORING and TINTING

The State of the Editor's Art

EQUIPPING TODAY'S AUDIO FACILITIES

THERE'S ART IN FOLEY

Peter Zinner & John Burnett

World War II will be longer in their cutting rooms than on the battlefield.

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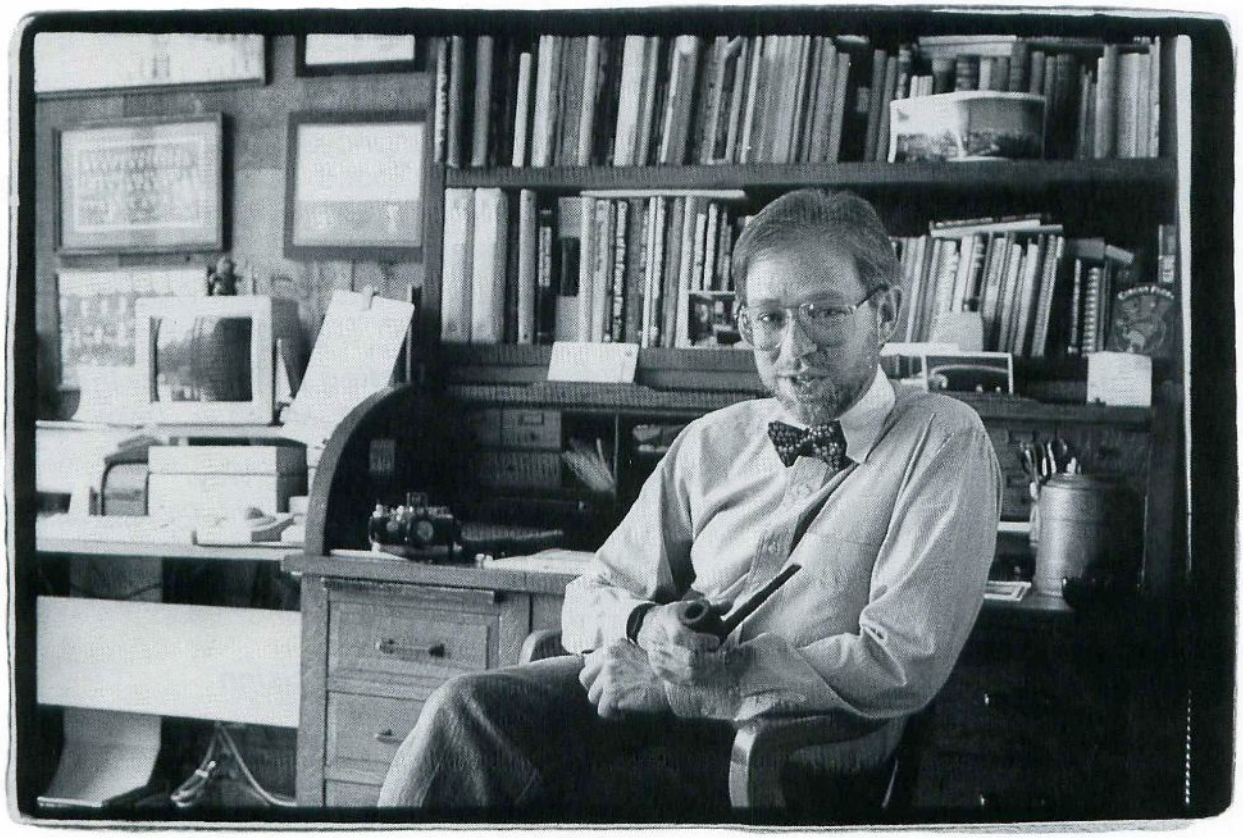
Steven Poster ASC



on film:

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Steven Poster's credits include "Someone to Watch Over Me," "Big Top Pee Wee" and "The Boy Who Could Fly." He's currently shooting "Next of Kin."

Eastman
Motion Picture Films

Kodak

Winter 1988
Vol. 38, No. 4

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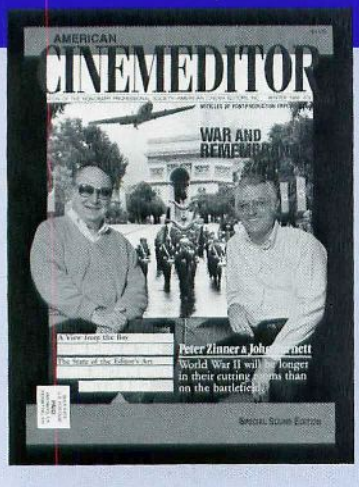

FEATURES

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ACE CREDO

The objectives and purposes of the American Cinema Editors are to advance the art and science of the editing profession; to increase the entertainment value of motion pictures by attaining artistic pre-eminence and scientific achievement in the creative art of editing; to bring into close alliance those editors who desire to advance the prestige and dignity of the editing profession.

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From The Editor.

About a hundred watched as the old vehicle slowly crept on its flattened wheels down the driveway, groaning under the weighty burden of a mountain, waterfall, and small tropical paradise. Unexpectedly, disaster struck as the float moved down into the dip at the curb. The tired rear springs could not support the mass of tonnage and allowed the tail pipes to grind themselves into the street cement. Our masterpiece of plaster, chicken wire, and greenery wouldn't move.

"We need more road clearance. Saw off the exhaust in the middle of the float!" commanded the undergraduate in charge. He gravely addressed Don, the apprehensive driver. "We'll push or tow you as much as possible with the motor off, but the float must pass the judges' stand under its own power. The driver's compartment will be full of carbon monoxide, so breathe as little as possible. **You** have the opportunity to win this for the fraternity!"

"For the fraternity!" acquiesced Don.

Such determination in quest of victory had been contagious for weeks among all of us. We seemed to have been driven by a compulsion not to be intimidated from the challenge of our neighbor and competitor at the corner. They were wealthier and larger in number than we were – spending bigger amounts and putting more members to work on their float was easy. They were using professional equipment and advisors, but we had to get our technical expertise from library books and mix plaster and paints in old wheelbarrows and spaghetti pots.

It was a bit scary eating food that came out of a kitchen in which cooking utensils were also being used to mix white plaster for mountain building. Everyone became afraid of the homemade white chocolate candy, and second helpings of the formerly popular New England white chowder didn't appeal to many. One day I was very suspicious of an unusually hard matzo ball in my soup – and that bouncing matzo ball was yellow!

The story of our determined effort gradually circulated throughout the campus, and as the day of reckoning drew closer, the number of onlookers got larger and larger. On the evening of the climactic parade, as our float motored past the grandstand and the bikinied girl volunteers waved from their paradise on wheels, the bleacher crowd rose and applauded the herculean accomplishment. The judges were impressed.

Afterward the float was towed back to the house, and Don, the tenacious driver, was laid on the couch beside me. As we waited for the arrival of an ambulance to take him to the hospital for observation, he looked up and feebly inquired, "Did we win?"

I was the one to break the news. "We won, Don. The Grand Sweepstakes trophy is ours!"

In biblical terms, David had slain Goliath.

It's been years since I have taken part in such rambunctious activities, but the lesson I learned has stayed with me forever. A small, determined group who has earned the respect of its community can succeed against a powerful foe.

Founded in 1950, the American Cinema Editors is not a large organization. Yet, it is well-known throughout the English-speaking world, and its symbolic acronym, A.C.E., is certainly the most recognizable set of professional letters in post-production. Since membership in A.C.E. is restricted only to editors of certain accomplishments, that symbol indicates a certain status in the editing profession. As a matter of fact, one of the most significant privileges of each active member is the right to acknowledge that A.C.E. honor after his/her name in screen credits.

The National Cable Television Association is the trade organization for the cable industry. In 1979, the fledgling group began to publicize itself via a set of awards it designated ACE (Award for Cable Excellence). We might ask some questions. Why did they pick our established name? Did they ever do any research on existing awards to discover similar, or identical, names? Was there some particular reason that they picked ACE?

The American Cinema Editors raised objections and secured assurances from the association that NCTA would always use ACE in print in conjunction with the NCTA logo, so as not to confuse all of us in the industry as to what is an ACE award.

Now the cable industry has grown spectacularly and is a rich, powerful segment of the entertainment industry. Some of its members are very respected members of the entertainment industry hierarchy. The association alone spends $7,500,000 annually (source: Encyclopedia of Associations, published by Gale Research, 1989).

Regretfully, in 1984 the National Cable Television Association decided it wanted the ACE designation with no restrictions; NCTA registered the trademark ACE in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for the purpose of presenting awards in the cable industry. It wants to use ACE without an accompanying NCTA logo and has obviously decided to completely disregard its previous pledge to the American Cinema Editors.

I have to believe that many NCTA members, once informed, would be ashamed of the questionable public relations tactics being practiced by the staff at the NCTA office. It's difficult to believe that a respected organization of entertainment leaders is trying to ignore, through an ensuing and potentially costly legal proceeding, any existence of the acronym ACE being used in the industry by the American Cinema Editors.

That registration can be contested for five years, so in 1989 NCTA could have ACE as an uncontestable trademark. But the U.S. Copyright office is anxious to do the right thing. That agency wants to know if granting this application would be improper. It wants to be notified by those in the industry who would be confused by two sets of awards in the entertainment industry with the letters ACE involved.

The American Cinema Editors feels strongly that the industry has been, or will be, perplexed by this situation, and we need to present our case.

If you are a studio chief, editor, sound technician or whoever...if you live in New York, Atlanta, Hollywood or wherever...if you work in television, documentaries, features or whatever...please call collect the special phone in our office, 213-387-7481, and let us hear your opinion. If you prefer, write to A.C.E., 2410 Beverly Blvd., Suite 1, Los Angeles, CA 90057. The views of your friends and associates are also welcome. All calls and letters will be tabulated and included in documents we are preparing for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

God willing, and with your help, perhaps David will successfully defend himself against Goliath one more time. □

Howard Kunin, A.C.E.

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The State of the

Disney Audio Facilities
Building From The Walls Out—And The Ground Up

What would you do if you could either rebuild your audio post-production facility from the walls out—or build one from the ground up?

That was the happy set of circumstances experienced recently by the Disney organization at its production facilities on both the West and East coasts. In Burbank, at the Buena Vista Studios, the antiquated audio facilities were replaced *in toto* by what is certainly the newest major audio post facilities in Hollywood. At the new Disney-MGM Studios in central Florida, the company built a highly flexible facility from scratch to service the three-stage film and video production complex.

While the circumstances behind each project were considerably different, both studios installed working environments that are highly flexible, able to expand, and capable of working in any configuration demanded by motion picture or television producers.

The more complex project was the renovation of the Buena Vista Studios, which for all intents and purposes had gone out of the post audio business. "It was dead," said Jacobus Rose, Director of Post-Production Services for Walt Disney Pictures and Television, who came to the studios in 1986 from Glen Glenn Sound.

"The facilities were antiquated and practically dysfunctional. The main theater was built like a tunnel, the scoring stage was half-built, the dialogue recording stages had been used for blood bank drives, aerobics workout rooms, and meeting halls. There were Foley props but no Foley pits. The transfer room was in five different locations.

"Overall, I'd say the studio was in a cocoon, a ripple in time up to the point of management changeover."

With the new management's approval, Rose set up the following priorities:

- To expand the dubbing capabilities to two stages, and eventually to a third and fourth facility.
- To have ADR/Foley stages that were equipped and flexible enough to perform either function.
- To consolidate the transfer department and rebuild the engineering lab.
- To build an entire facility to accommodate film or tape.

> ***"...recording stages had been used for blood bank drives, aerobics workout rooms, and meeting halls."***

"Since we were building the facility from scratch," Rose noted, "we wanted it completely versatile for either film or video."

The new audio team had another priority: to convince non-Disney producers to use the studio's services.

"I was able to structure a number of outside deals where producers could have a priority with Disney, providing new facilities were built. Our management looked at the package as a viable long-term deal based on financial analysis using these people's guarantees as a guarantee of revenue. Once the guarantee was in hand, it looked like a viable enterprise."

Rose also noted that the facility renovation was at first based strictly on outside projects, not Disney studio productions.

The initial project was to renovate the old dubbing stage, Stage A, which was built within the walls of an old scoring stage, and add 130 seats, a producers' office, kitchen, a THX-licensed monitor system with EV monitors, a Harrison PP-1 three-mixer console, "and all the bells and whistle-processing gear you could want," Rose added.

The new room is fully conversant in either film or video, with a film-style orientation throughout. "We've designed it so anyone used to film could operate in a tape mode with none of the normal restrictions presented by tape rerecording," Rose said. "We've kept all video functions away from the film console and offer experienced film mixers and smart recordists to insure the best possible audio quality."

Sonically, Stage A was already one of the best scoring stages in the industry. During the renovation, existing customers, including Stephen J. Cannell Productions, used the studio's main theater for its dubbing stage.

Its construction is all wood, including its floor and sides, and it features a 35-foot-high ceiling. Through its acoustics, designed by Charles Salter & Associates and acoustician David Schwind, the stage maintains the live feel without any extraneous reflections through a combination of hard and soft surfaces and diffusion panels. Acoustic surfaces were covered by an acoustically transparent, aesthetically pleasing stretch cloth with the speakers soffitted, then covered again with the acoustic cloth.

"Once we did a final room check," Rose said, "we found it had the most flat and even response in Hollywood."

The machine room features a multitude of synchronizers that allow the stage to operate in film, but Rose is wary about

continued on page 24

Editor's Art

Listening For Sound That's Five Years Away

by James A. Corbett
President, Mix Magic
Hollywood, California

I find it fascinating to predict the near future of our post-production sound industry; for those of us who operate and equip facilities it is also an essential part of our business planning. Recently I have come to the following conclusions:

Magnetic film, single stripe and full coat, for sound preparation and mixing, is still alive and well in the motion picture industry. Stock is very inexpensive; editing equipment is very accessible and very inexpensive. Recorder and player cost is relatively low, and quality is very good. You can move tracks very easily. The units and the masters are very transportable, and you can easily play it anywhere in the world.

Noise reduction for recording of features and television on 35mm full coat is now taken for granted. Now that Dolby has come out with their new SR version, it is the new standard for noise reduction. When used for transfers, predubs and final mixes, it can significantly reduce noise and retain the original sound. All this is accomplished at a very low dollar cost.

Sound editorial for television has rapidly moved to preparation on 2" 24 track tape. Editors have moved very fast to accept this medium and are now using it for low-budget features as well. The sound quality is excellent, sound can be prepared very fast, and just about every studio can interlock up to three 24 tracks for the final mix. The sound is easily transportable, and 2" 24 track analogue is a standard with which most studios can relate. Using noise reduction for prelaying is a good idea; using Dolby SR would help a great deal, but SR is not available at all studios.

Digital sound preparation, as well as digital sound mixing, is already here. Digital sound preparation spans from the use of MIDI triggered samplers to full blown multi-channel digital work stations. Each takes a sound (or sounds) and allows that sound to be edited, manipulated, reversed, superimposed, sped up, slowed down or modified. All are various processing paths that take the sound from one medium to another, such as 1/4" dailies that are digitally assembled and then transferred to 35 mag, or sound effects on CD's or DAT to 24 track.

I believe that pre-mixing and final mixing to digital multi-track is a very viable way of going. Digital is very clean, the machines are very fast, it does not add any noise or distortion, punch-ins are perfect, and there is no cross-talk. However, there are three flaws:

- Digital machines are very expensive.
- When the picture has been changed, the pre-dubs and the mix must also be changed. This requires the use of two digital machines and an editor.
- There are two digital formats that are not interchangeable. A Sony does not play on a Mitsubishi and vice versa.

Re-recordable, removable hard disc storage will be the wave of the future. We will be able to use and reuse the recordable hard discs the same way we do magnetic stripe and full coat mag. We will be able to edit sound, change sync, and transport the edited sounds to another location for the final mix. The mix will be recorded to separate hard discs. Shuttle speed, whether fast forward or reverse, will be almost instant. When the mix is finished, the digital information will be transferred to a multi-track digital recorder for storage purposes. The hard discs will then be "cleaned" and reused on the next project.

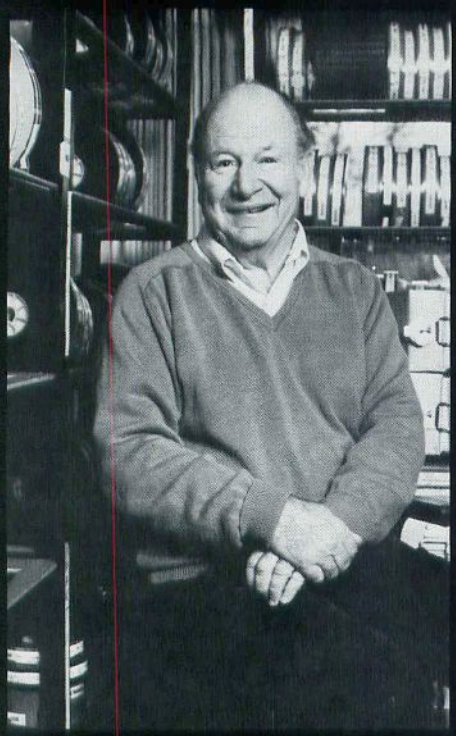
Our consoles will all be automated, digital based, virtual (programmable) consoles. We will easily be able to change the configuration of the mixing parameters. The consoles will have digital equalization, digital routing, etc. There will be a digital work station on board so that sound can be called up from a shared sound library and edited during the mix. The visual will be a high definition laser disc video projection system. Its rewind will be almost instant. We will do final playbacks with the 35mm work print on a projector to check sync.

A Sony (digital format track) does not play on a Mitsubishi and vice versa.

Various types of recorded sounds from various mediums are being used on the dubbing stages at the same time. With the use of modern synchronizers, the mixers are able to use various combinations of sound sources.

Looking into the future to the year 2000, 35mm film will still be a viable visual medium. There will be HDTV mini theatres. 70mm with six-track digital sound will be the premier motion picture experience. Home television will also be HDTV with four channels of digital sound including a surround channel.

The sounds I hear five years away are good for our audiences and our industry. I'm proud of my family's present and future involvement; my wife, Ruth, has helped me build and consistently enlarge our successful enterprise along with our son Robert, who works as the effects mixer in Studio C. □



Peter Zinner

War and Remembrance

World War II Will Be In The Cutting Room Longer

Measuring 31 hours, Herman Wouk's *War and Remembrance* is the longest project ever committed to film. Just ask Peter Zinner and John Burnett. For the past 3½ years, they've been editing the megaseries about WWII—that's longer than the duration of the war itself in Europe. The arithmetic, alone, is mind-boggling: 310 days of shooting in 11 different countries resulted in 800 daily rolls.

Zinner and Burnett, eventually pared down one-and-a-half million feet of film to 160 cut reels (compared to 10 reels on a normal feature).

"It did seem overwhelming," admits Vienna-born Zinner, still hard at work editing the second half of *War and Remembrance*, which airs in May. "I'd kill myself if I came to work and someone suddenly handed me 800 daily rolls. But if you get three to five rolls a day, it's almost like a normal schedule, except that it never ends. There's no time between rough and final cut, final cut and scoring, or between the first and second half. No respite whatsoever."

War and Remembrance tells of the lonely submarine patrols, the monumental sea battles that turned the tide, the secret development of the atomic bomb, and the horrors of the Holocaust. Intertwined with these are the personal stories, depictions of life at the home front, and a view of what was happening in Hitler's headquarters. It's the best kind of material for a miniseries: riveting storytelling combined with big production values.

Much of the program's power stems from its chilling realism. Enormous lengths were taken to present scenes and situations as authentically as possible. For the first time ever, filming was permitted inside Auschwitz. The sets of the crematoriums and concentration camp buildings were built according to Nazi blueprints. Zinner credits the "look" of the piece to art director Guy Comtois and assistant director/associate producer Branko Lustig, who happens to be a survivor of Auschwitz.

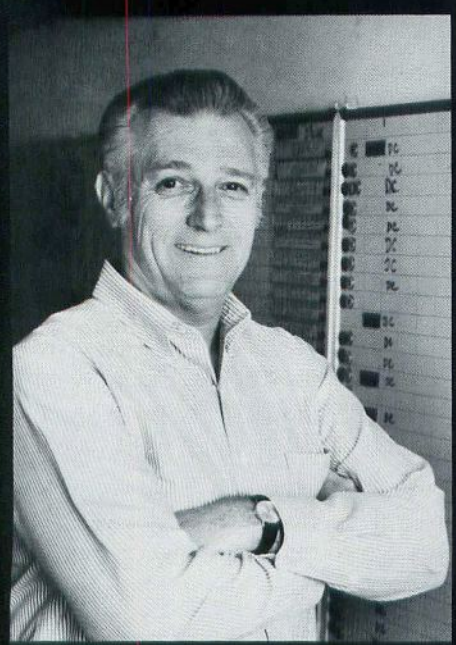
Attempts were also made to present Nazi brutality as realistically as possible. The mass shooting at Babi Yar, as well as the disposal of the bodies after they were gassed, was staged exactly as it happened. Occasionally, the censors deemed the brutality too extreme for TV audiences and insisted it be toned down. "Whenever the Germans entered a room where there were prisoners, they automatically started beatings," explains Zinner, "but it's too much after a while. Viewers can't take it."

The censors also balked at the off-color dialogue—whether it was spoken in English or German. However, the censors surprised everyone with their leniency regarding frontal nudity. "The sequence in which the naked prisoners are herded into the gas chambers was done really well, I think," says Zinner. "It was cut in such a way that it wasn't offensive."

Zinner and Burnett both worked with *War and Remembrance* Director/Producer/Co-writer Dan Curtis six years ago on Wouk's scene-setting novel about WWII, *The Winds Of War*. They joined the *War and Remembrance* team several months prior to the first day of shooting in September 1985. Except for a single two-week vacation last summer, Zinner's worked steadily on the project ever since. John Burnett left the project before the initial airing in November 1988.

Their first task was to storyboard the Battle of Midway based on stock footage and miniature sequences. Stock material flowed in from all directions—Japan, UCLA, US Navy, and various news services—but not everything was applicable. "It was tough to find just the right shot, not to mention footage that hadn't been seen before," explains Zinner, who worked closely with editor Gary Smith on the documentary material. The chosen footage was eventually colorized by American Film Technologies and combined with submarine miniatures that were built in the San Fernando Valley but shot in England.

Because of extremely tight scheduling,



photos by Gregory Schwartz

John Burnett

Than On The Battlefield

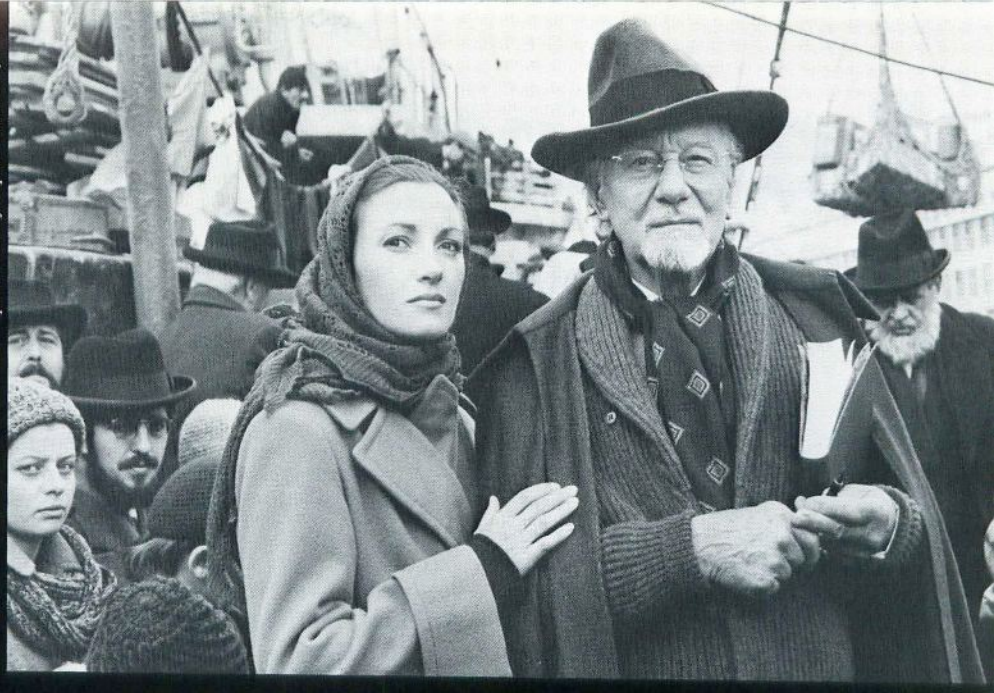


photo courtesy Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.

Jane Seymour and Sir John Gielgud in scene from WAR and REMEMBRANCE

Zinner and Burnett did not go on location with the production. Separated from Curtis by 10,000 miles, they enjoyed tremendous autonomy in cutting the film. Dan Curtis spoke briefly by phone no more than once or twice a week, and he rarely asked to see cut sequences. "Dan was so absorbed in shooting he didn't want to be bothered with editing unless there was a particular section he needed," says Zinner.

As dailies came in, they were recorded on VHS tape and logged. "It was easier than pulling out trims when Dan wanted to review his coverage," says Burnett. Per Curtis' instructions, Zinner and Burnett alternated editing complete sequences as shot. "Dan wanted us to split everything 50/50 because some of the subject matter was so difficult," Burnett adds. Later, each was responsible for entire episodes that were intercut with sequences the other had edited. Working from duplicate scripts and notes, they operated as a synchronized unit.

According to Zinner, Curtis rarely shot more than one or two takes of the same set-up simply because with a daily average of 22 set-ups there wasn't time. "If he fell behind on one location, all the others could have been ruined," he says.

Though Zinner and Burnett usually work strictly on features, they agree that Curtis is one TV director who can be counted on to shoot feature caliber film. Says Burnett, "He doesn't just shoot a master and a few close shots—he covers well."

Assisted by Kathy Virkler, Katina Hittelman (Zinner's daughter), and Emily Wallen Kutak, the editors were able to stay up to camera, although their schedule was about a week behind Curtis', since dailies were in transit for days. By the time the editors finished a sequence, a week had often passed and Curtis was in another country. Approximately every 3 months, Curtis returned to Los Angeles to address production matters such as casting. At those times, he'd run the sequences they had cut while he was away.

Upon finishing principal photography, Curtis returned to Los Angeles and began running each episode from the top in a projection room. Later, he'd sit with Zinner and Burnett at the Kem and make changes. Though it was pre-set what material would be included in each episode, Curtis made significant adjustments. The length of each episode was also determined at this time.

"The stories are parallel so the material lends itself to switching sequences," Zinner suggests. "But Dan was prepared to such a degree that the flexibility was almost minimal."

The nine scripts, each three hours in length, were divided into 13 episodes of varying length. "We did a lot of switching around because certain endings didn't work," remarked Zinner.

Last summer, Curtis returned to England to shoot submarine tank miniatures and back projection aerial footage. Because time was precious, Curtis asked Zinner to come to Pinewood Studios, outside London, to intercut the miniatures as they were being shot and work on the rest of the show. "Dan would be filming inside a tank and come check on me in between takes," recalls Zinner. It was during Zinner's time in England that ABC announced its decision to move up the air date of *War and Remembrance* from February '89 to November '88. Editors Peter Boita and Bill Blunden were then hired to assist with the accelerated schedule.

The project has been draining—professionally and emotionally. For Zinner in particular, the epic touches dangerously close to home. In August of 1938, Zinner left Vienna at age 17. He vividly recalls watching Hitler drive into the city after the union of Austria and Germany earlier that year. "In our film, a scene between Rommel and Hitler was photographed at the exact site where I stood the day Hitler drove in," he recalls. Shortly after Zinner's exodus, Crystal Night marked the official beginning of Hitler's rein of terror. Zinner, who comes from a Jewish background, escaped just in time.

This realization has made the work—particularly cutting the Holocaust stock footage—all the more difficult for him. "It could have been me or my family except for the grace of God," he explains. "At times when I have to see gruesome footage hour after hour, day after day... to have to decide which shot is better...it's a tough order. Usually, I forget my work when I go home but, in this case, it's impossible."

Sometimes, it seemed as if he'd never be free of the material. Last minute sound problems made it necessary for Zinner, along with post-production coordinator Kathy Virkler, to watch each episode prior to November's airing—sometimes as many as three times a day. "At least five shows required changes in the sense of balance on the day of airing," he explains. "My feeling was, 'Please, let me never see this again.' Then I'd walk through my front door and, of course, my wife would make me forget."

All in all, Zinner is extremely pleased with the results. He feels *War and Remembrance* is already on its way to becoming a classic and should be a required study in schools. "There will never be anything like this," he says. "The Nazis didn't want any witnesses. They were clever...but not clever enough, thank God." □

by Denise Abbott

Letters
to the editor

Dear Howard,

I wish to report that Warren Low is now at the Motion Picture Country House (Edit note: *A Letter To The Editor* in Spring '88 appealed for reader support to gain Warren admittance into the Home).

Stanley Frazen and I visited Warren several weeks ago. As we sat in his private room he related a film editor's story that is worth repeating. At Warner Brothers in the 30's and 40's Jack Warner assigned all the editors to pictures, or at least OK'd their assignments. The late George Amy had been assigned to edit *The Letter*.

Director William Wyler was printing multiple takes on all master shots. Amy had to continually sit with Wyler as he ran and reran half a dozen takes before choosing one. Early on in the shooting Amy decided to have some fun. He made several prints of the same take, eliminating the take number. Wyler ran and reran them, finally telling Amy to use the second one. Amy burst out laughing and told Wyler what he had done. Wyler was irritated and went to Warner, demanding that Amy be taken off the picture. Warner called Warren Low in and told him that he was to replace Amy. Warren said he didn't think it was fair to Amy and refused. Warner said, "Do it or you're fired!"

So Warren Low became the editor on *The Letter*, but Amy had the last laugh. Amy next went onto *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (for Warner), and the following year did *Air Force*, for which George Amy won the Academy Award.

All of you who know Warren Low should go out to the Motion Picture Home for a visit. Warren will love it and so will you.

Dann Cahn
Los Angeles

Dear Sir:

In your article *Cutting Three Perf In England* (Summer '88), Adrian Bate gives the impression that either Acmade or Steenbeck converted the Moviolas used on "A Piece Of Cake."

Roger Wilson, the supervising editor, approached several companies, including the Moviola agents, to convert his Moviola, to no avail. He finally turned to us, Roger Cherrill Ltd., a large post-production house in London, owned and run by film editors who understand that to cut a drama series perfectly without a Moviola would be difficult, to say the least. We set about the task of converting two standard machines to accept 3

perf. At the time of writing we still possess the only 3 perf Moviolas in England.

We would welcome any challenge to help the creation of a better post-production world.

Brian Hicklin

London

Dear Howard,

Recently I was trying to locate a specialised sound FX library suitable for use in a cartoon series, and thanks to your article in Fall '88, *I Need A Sound Effect, Where Do I Get It?*, I was able to contact Hanna-Barbara in LA, who supplied me with what I wanted.

Ray Daley

South Melbourne, Australia

Dear Mr. Kunin:

Mr. See (Technical Specialist, Sony Corporation of America) is correct in saying (*Letters To The Editor* Summer '88) that the resolution of a film or television system cannot be specified just by the number of scanning lines. In my view, the point of the article being discussed, *Shoot on Film, Finish on Tape* (Spring, '88) was not to compare the resolution of film and television, but to assess the value of making a "high definition" master for future program distribution in 1125/60 or 1250/50 television systems.

A 35mm camera negative film is capable of resolving over 2000 TV lines per picture height. But the resolution of a film or TV system depends on all elements in the imaging chain, not just the camera film or HDTV camera tube. For example, both theatrical projectors and HDTV picture monitors have MTF (modulation transfer function) characteristics that limit the system resolution.

Image quality depends on far more than just static resolution; however, 35mm motion picture film has many advantages over HDTV cameras for program production. These include sensitivity, dynamic range, dynamic resolution, and freedom from lag artifacts. Film cameras are more portable and require far less power.

Film is and will remain a very sensible choice for television production. Film is a flexible medium that can be scanned and converted to any TV format. Film produced today can be syndicated in tomorrow's HDTV formats, whether these new formats be 1125, 1250, or 1050 line systems. And best of all, film production requires no new capital investment!

Richard Schafer

Manager, Motion Picture Products

Eastman Kodak Company

Rochester, New York

Dear Howard,

Just a hasty note to tell you that I've just finished the Fall '88 issue of the ***American Cinemeditor***.

It is without a doubt one of the most erudite, scholarly, issues of this magazine since it was founded.

Congratulations!!!

Frederick Y. Smith

Los Angeles

Oops!

Our apologies to Michael Stevenson, A.C.E., for inadvertently failing to credit him as the editor of *Three Men And A Baby* in the Fall '88 cover story featuring Leonard Nimoy.

Dolby SR Recording in the Film Industry

by Bill Mead, Director of Marketing, Dolby Laboratories San Francisco, California

Dolby Stereo Spectral Recording (SR) is the new professional recording process that has become the logical successor to Dolby A-type noise reduction. Like Dolby A-type, it provides complementary signal processing during record and playback, adapting continuously to the signal. The noise reduction is substantially greater than with A-type, making background noise inaudible.

But SR is not merely "supercharged" noise reduction: it allows much higher levels to be recorded at extreme low and high frequencies, giving a much cleaner signal at all frequencies than is possible without SR.

The resulting clarity and improved transient response of SR optical prints, with superb handling of high level sounds, compares favorably with 70mm magnetic sound tracks. While magnetic tracks potentially have a marginally wider frequency response, this is rarely achieved in practice because of variations in magnetic stock.

Dolby SR takes optical grain noise well below audibility; the anti-saturation circuitry enables very loud high-frequency sounds to be recorded without overload and dramatically reduces distortion introduced by the optical process. The SR print simply sounds cleaner and has more impact.

Making an SR print is relatively simple; SR replaces the A-type noise reduction in recording the magnetic printing master. To take full advantage of SR, however, it needs to be used throughout recording and mixing. All laboratory processing remains unchanged. However, the mixing engineer will probably wish to produce a slightly different mix for SR, to use the extra headroom and dynamic range.

Converting the studio from A-type to SR is easy. Dolby SR modules can be interchanged physically with A-type modules used in many Dolby noise reduction and cinema processing units.

The benefits of an SR print are obvious when the film is played in a theatre with good acoustics and sound system. But when played with SR decoding in a poor theatre, reproduction may be degraded to the point where the improvements are not apparent—the same is true of 70mm. The extended dynamic range may be lost; low-level atmospheres and effects may be masked by air conditioning, traffic rumble or sound from an adjacent auditorium.

However, SR prints are likely to become widespread in first-run theatres with good sound systems, where the potential of Dolby Stereo SR can be realized. In the US and Canada, approximately 180 screens are SR equipped; 24 films have been released in SR. *Scrooged, Mississippi Burning* and *U2: Rattle and Hum* are a few of the titles that were recently released in Dolby. □

There Must Be A Better Way

by Tom Kobayashi
Vice-President, Post-Production, Lucasfilm, San Rafael, California

Sound has always been a second class citizen as far as motion pictures are concerned. It is always the first to be cut as far as budget, time and creativity are concerned. Even though budgets for sound editing have risen the past few years, the mixing time to do complex stereo pictures has been reduced by half. This has taken place despite the fact that there are so many types of formats that are used for distribution purposes (i.e., Dolby stereo type A, Dolby SR, 70mm six track, TV dub, airline dub, mono dub and various foreign formats). There has also been an increase in the number of preview or temp mixes included during or prior to the final mix.

What this has created in post-production has been an assembly-line type of sound post-production, done in a pressurized time schedule, resulting in long hours and week-ends for both mixers and sound editors. This, I feel, will lead to burnout for many of the sound personnel—all the week-end and night work is creating havoc for any type of personal or family life.

This time pressure has also pushed post-production houses to gear up to overproduce sound tracks. ADR (looping) is done for marginal tracks because there isn't time to see whether or not those tracks can be corrected by the dubbing mixer with the various tools now available to him. Foley is done to cover all parts of the sound just in case footsteps or clothing rustle are needed in the scene. Many of these tracks are not even used in the final mix, since they are covered by sound effects or music. Often all Foley takes from a multi-track are transferred to magnetic film (string offs)—a procedure usually done to save time, but at an enormous cost to the budget.

Transfer costs are also increased by the time pressure. The sound effects editor transfers from the library not one effect (like a door slam), but a number of the same effects, so that the director will have a choice at the mix stage, just in case he didn't like the choice made by the editor.

All of these methods have increased the cost of sound editing, and with abbreviated worktime availability created by late turnovers and release date commitments of a feature release, stress has become standard operating procedure.

There must be a better way to combat this time pressure, waste, and eventual burnout of the popular and in-demand sound editor and mixer.

Lucasfilm has always maintained that sound is 50 percent of the picture and has advocated and practiced different methods of approaching the sound post-production process. Its ideas of planning post-production sound cannot be used for television, but for features it would provide better creativity, less pressure, lower cost and finally, a better product.

Our concept provides that the dialogue mixer, sound designer or sound editor and assistant, if needed, comes on board as soon as the picture starts its production shoot. Working with the film editor as the dailies come in, the mixer runs the dialogue through the mixing panel to see whether he can fix any bad dialogue. If not, he can have the actor loop it the next day as a wild line or have the sound editor prepare it for ADR prior to the actor leaving the production. Any sound design, library effects or live sound effect recording can be done on a daily or weekly basis. Any Foley that is needed can be done outside or on the Foley stage, as needed.

The music composer is brought on at any time during the period, so that all major scenes can be discussed with the director, film editor, sound designer/editor.

By the time the final cut is finished, the majority of the dialogue is complete, and if most of the ADR is done, it will already be pre-mixed. The sound effects will also be completed and pre-mixed, as well as most of the Foley tracks.

In this way, the post-production time can be spent tweaking the show, rather than using that time to engage in the mass-produced, time pressure sound process that is in vogue at the present time. This gives the creative people (sound editor, sound mixer, composer) greater flexibility, more pride and a less pressure sensitive environment. In addition, temp mixes will be better.

With the coming of electronic editing tools, for both film and sound, this new idea of staffing will make the task easier for the crew to do more and make sync changes almost on a random access basis.

Hopefully, more people will start practicing this method of creating the sound track for the complex sound feature in the near future, so that we can relieve some of the time pressures and long hours. It will also help reduce some of the waste and duplication that is presently practiced and keep the costs of future feature production from rising even further. □

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Enter your best work now. The entry you submit must have been produced on a non-commercial basis while you were enrolled in a U.S. college, university, art institute or film school.

NARRATIVE FILM

Finished 16mm film. $4,500 awarded in cash prizes. First-place winner receives a new Nissan Sentra. SPONSORED BY AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT. Board of Judges: Lewis Allen, Joe Dante, Nina Foch, Randa Haines, Randal Kleiser.

DOCUMENTARY FILM

Finished 16mm film. $4,500 awarded in cash prizes. First-place winner receives a new Nissan Sentra. SPONSORED BY EASTMAN-KODAK COMPANY. Board of Judges: Saul Bass, Lance Bird, Karen Goodman, Humberto Rivera, Ben Shedd.

ANIMATED/ EXPERIMENTAL FILM

Finished 16mm film. $4,500 awarded in cash prizes. First-place winner receives a new Nissan Sentra. SPONSORED BY UNIVERSAL PICTURES. Board of Judges: John Canemaker, Ed Hansen, Faith Hubley, Chuck Jones, Harry Love.

SCREENWRITING

Original feature-length screenplays. $4,500 awarded in cash prizes. First-place winner receives a new Nissan Sentra. SPONSORED BY JOHN BADHAM'S GREAT AMERICAN PICTURE SHOW. Board of Judges: Marisa Berke D'Vari, Tony Bill, Syd Field, Anne Kramer, Midge Sanford.

SOUND ACHIEVEMENT

Finished 16mm film. $2,000 cash prize. SPONSORED BY DOLBY LABORATORIES INC. Board of Judges: Gary Bourgeois, Charles L. Campbell, Donald O. Mitchell.

FILM EDITING

Finished 16mm film. $2,000 awarded in cash prizes. SPONSORED BY BENIHANA OF TOKYO, INC. Board of Judges: Lynzee Klingman, Carol Littleton, Tom Rolf.

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Finished 16mm film. $2,000 awarded in cash prizes. SPONSORED BY EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY. Board of Judges: John Bailey, Allen Daviau, Jim Glennon.

WOMEN IN FILM FOUNDATION AWARD

Finished 16mm film or feature-length screenplay. $1,000 cash prize. SPONSORED BY FOCUS. Board of Judges: Judy James, Ilene Kahn, Margot Winchester.

RENEE VALENTE PRODUCERS AWARD

In honor of Renee Valente, Honorary Chairperson of FOCUS and former president of the Producers Guild of America. Finished 16mm film. $1,000 cash prize. Board of Judges: Gale Anne Hurd, Alan Rafkin, Renee Valente.

INSTITUTIONAL AWARDS

The corresponding college or university of the first-place winners of the Narrative, Documentary and Animated/Experimental Categories of FOCUS will receive $1,000 in Eastman motion picture film and videotape from EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY for their film department's use.

FOCUS AWARD CEREMONY

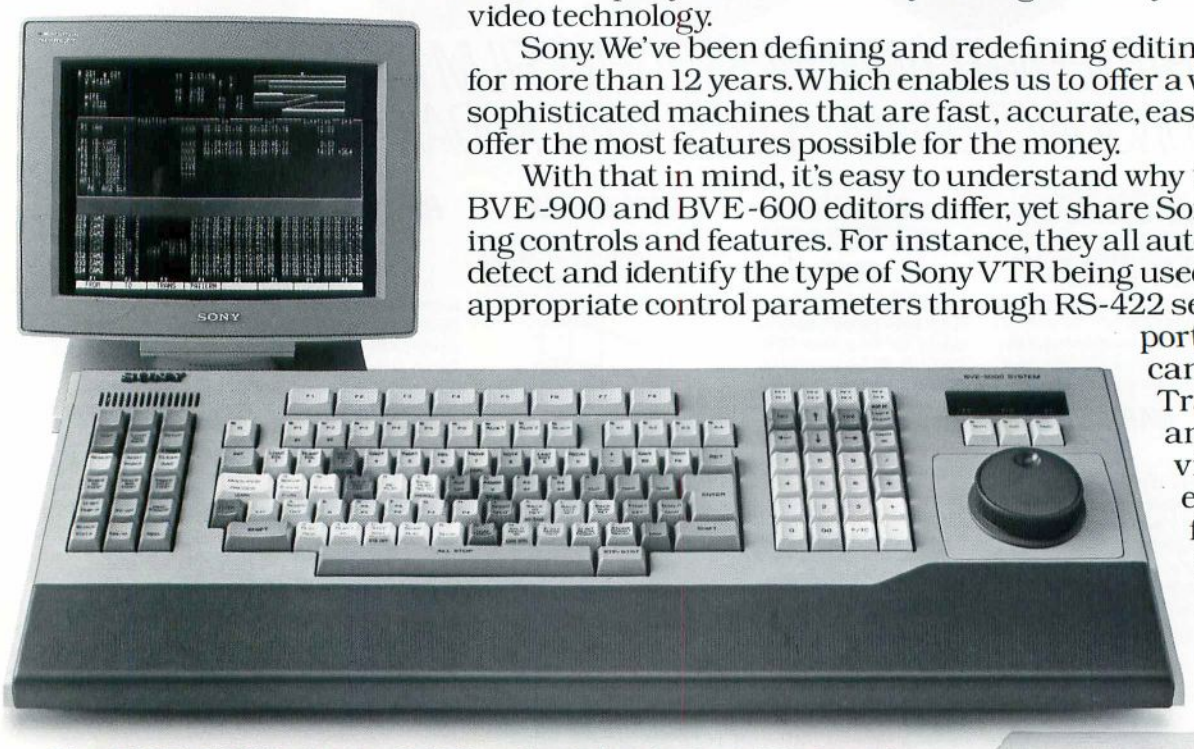
All winners will be flown, expenses paid, to Los Angeles for the FOCUS Award Ceremony, to be held August 29, 1989 at the Directors Guild Theater. Accommodations will be provided by The Westin Bonaventure Hotel.

COMPETITION DEADLINE: APRIL 28, 1989

Get a complete set of rules from your English, Film or Communications Department. Or write to: FOCUS, 10 East 34th Street, New York, New York 10016. (212) 779-0404.

Why Sony
cutting edge

BVE-9000



One company has consistently managed to stay at the forefront of video technology.

Sony. We've been defining and redefining editing control units for more than 12 years. Which enables us to offer a wide range of sophisticated machines that are fast, accurate, easy-to-use and offer the most features possible for the money.

With that in mind, it's easy to understand why the BVE-9000, BVE-900 and BVE-600 editors differ, yet share Sony's key operating controls and features. For instance, they all automatically detect and identify the type of Sony VTR being used and set the appropriate control parameters through RS-422 serial control ports. Plus, they can read Control Track, Time Code and perform video/audio split edits. The list of features goes on and on, so by all means, read on.

The BVE-9000. State-Of-The-Art That's Top-Of-The-Line.

The Sony BVE-9000 is one of the most flexible and powerful editing systems in the world. It's designed to save the most precious commodity of all: time.

Among its significant innovations are multi-edit preview and full assembly look ahead. This allows you to preview an entire sequence of up to 999 events, before actually having to record a single edit. And then, with the flick of a few key strokes, you can automatically record the entire program.

Of course, there are many other incredible features that help you control your entire editing facility. For one thing, the BVE-9000 can work with 28 separate devices. It also has an optional color menu display that's user friendly and programmable for layout and color.

What's more, our Dynamic Motion Control Learn-With-Create and

BVE-900

y is on the of technology.

switcher Learn-With-Create features allow you to record a move without having to re-rehearse it. In addition, the temporary record assignment greatly speeds up multi-layering. And the most complete set of test diagnostics in the industry helps reduce system downtime. No wonder this top-of-the-line editing system can meet all your present and future needs.

The BVE-900. State-Of-The-Art Technology And State-Of-The-Art Economy.

The next best thing to editing on a BVE-9000 is editing on a BVE-900. It, too, is an easy-to-use system and economically offers technical advancements and expandability.

It controls up to four VTR's in any A/B roll edit. So you can perform sync roll and sync play. In addition, the BVE-900 gives you full control of video switchers and audio mixers, including fader selection and VCA control for split audio/video edits.

What's more, its easy-to-use menu driven display puts edit accessibility at your fingertips.

BVE-600

The BVE-600. State-Of-The-Art Technology Even More Economically.

The BVE-600 is our most economical unit. It allows you to control three VTRs (two players and one recorder). Which, depending on your needs, may be more than enough. You have the power to dissolve, wipe, or superimpose editing sequences, without the need for an external video switcher. Our optional built-in component/composite video switcher offers a selection of 10 wipe patterns. That, with our built-in MXP-29 Audio Mixer interface, make A/B roll editing a reality.

Of all the benefits of using Sony editing control units, perhaps the greatest is that they form an easy-to-use system. Which means you can connect them to Sony VTRs, switchers, audio mixers and video monitors. All of which are serviced by Sony.

For more information about Sony's entire line of editors, write to: Sony Information Center, P.O. Box 6185, Union, NJ 07083. Then you'll be able to see even better why Sony is on the cutting edge of technology.

SONY

Broadcast Products
Sony Communications Products Company

A View FROM THE BAY

Telecine Coloring and Timing

by J. T. Way

In the late 1970's, when United Kingdom-based Rank Cintel first introduced the flying-spot telecine to the U.S. marketplace, the domestic post-production industry was born. Prior to the introduction of the telecine, film was often transferred to video by simply aiming a video camera at a movie screen—a rudimentary procedure known as "film chain" transfer. Today, only ten years later, extremely sophisticated telecines offer subtle techniques for the precise manipulation of color, nuance and image.

Flying Spot vs CCD

Essentially, there are two types of telecines that address various transfer needs: flying spot and CCD. Flying spot telecines, made only by Rank Cintel, use a high intensity beam of light to scan the film, while the more common CCD variety employs solid state imagers similar to those used in satellites and home video equipment. Flying spot telecines are built for post-production applications, while CCD telecines are designed for broadcast and other users.

The Rank Cintel Enhanced MkIIIC Digiscan 4:2:2, or its earlier analog versions, is used on virtually all high budget jobs. This machine transfers film to first-generation digital video tape and allows operators to adjust any color, insert pan, scan and zoom effects that weren't incorporated in the original, and produce a high-quality picture with no "lag" or "burn."

CCD telecines are more suitable for broadcast applications. Using photosensitive silicon chips to scan the projected image, a high-end CCD telecine offers the advantages of unattended operation and automatic color correction. Furthermore, CCD telecines are typically priced lower than flying spot machines and offer considerably upgraded picture quality over conventional film-chain transfers.

Broadcasters are looking to these CCD devices not so much for the artistic abilities of a flying spot machine, but for the ease of use, image integrity, reliability and facilities a high-end solid state imaging device has to offer. Desirable features include manual scratch patching and simple tape-like fast forwarding or rewinding for clean, direct editing. A high-end machine also provides automatic scratch and dirt concealment.

The CCD telecine is designed to be turned on and run; it virtually operates itself. A flying spot telecine, on the other hand, requires the expertise of a professional colorist. It is the task of the flying spot colorist to act as the liaison uniting film and video, while retaining the same look and feel captured in the original work.

Light and Dark

The amount of modification done in the post-production stages is staggering—largely due to the difference in brightness ratios between film and tape. Film's brightness ratio is 250:1, meaning that the most luminous discernible object is 250 times brighter than the darkest. Videotape's ratio, on the other hand, is only 50:1. The large discrepancy results in film's vibrant mid-range colors and lifelike flesh tones turning out muddy and unnatural when transferred to videotape.

The colorist, therefore, is charged with an extremely difficult task: to translate the information from one "language" into another and bring the original feeling across the gap. For this reason, he or she often works side by side with the director or cinematographer to retain the original look and feel of the film, while compensating for these inherent color variations.

Timing & Feeling

Proportion and quality of light and dark is only one concern in the transfer suite. Color variations, known as "timing errors," are also everyday events in image transfers from film to magnetic tape. Colorists must go through the production, scene by scene, and make sure that all the colors remain consistent. Several use a Matchbox still store, which lets them call reference colors and test patterns in a split screen to ensure absolute accuracy.

The Matchbox digital still store also helps to determine if the shadows, midtones and highlights of a particular scene are mismatched and have to be readjusted. Even if they do match, the colorist may alter them to create a different feeling. Film to tape transfer is an essentially subjective process: a series of judgments that ultimately stem from personal taste. Some people may prefer rich images, while others respond to a brighter or ethereal effect. A "warmer" or "colder" effect may be called for, since the mood portrayed on a movie screen often gets lost in the translation to TV.

Aspect Ratio

Commercials and episodic television programs are generally shot and blocked with a square TV screen in mind, and directors are careful not to project the action too far from the center of the screen. Feature films, though, are always shot in wide screen ratios, such as 1:85, Panavision, or Cinemascope, and movie screens are wider from side to side than they are from top to bottom. Therefore, in transferring wide screen film to vid-

eo, a certain amount of picture information has to be sacrificed.

The sacrifice doesn't have to come from the film. It can come at the top and bottom edges of the TV screen, by blocking out two strips of active picture area with a "letterbox" technique to preserve the original aspect ratio.

Cleanup at the Telecine

Besides having to worry about aspect ratio, the colorist is often faced with the tricky task of cleaning up pre-existing gaffes in the original production. For instance, a cut between different camera angles changes the color consistency and is magnified by the time the film reaches the transfer room. Skin tones—particularly those of darker-skinned and black actors — often look wrong after the transfer. In this case, the telecine operator can correct the imbalance by illuminating lower-light areas of the frame to bring out more detail and alter the ambient lighting to accentuate a specific mood, but it certainly helps when the project is properly balanced from the start.

An advanced CCD telecine will accomplish many of these corrections by itself, and, if it is equipped with a color correction device, scenes can also be tailored by hand. Rank's ADS 2 CCD telecine also offers automatic dirt and scratch concealment—a feature not found on flying spot units. A dedicated CCD detects flecks and mars, which are then filled in with the surrounding color. For filling in film scratches on a flying spot telecine, a telecine ArtFile (a small, comprehensive graphics tablet) is used to color in missing information.

Of course, neither telecine can compensate for a poorly shot film. The quality of the finished videotape is dependent on how the original production was filmed. There is only so much the colorist can do to overcome inherent flaws.

Peripheral Equipment

A whole industry of peripheral equipment has grown around the telecine. This gear greatly expands the artistic capabilities of a fully equipped facility. Ultimatte, for example, compliments the flying spot by allowing artists to composite several layers of film over one another with no generation loss. Using a neutral "blue screen" background, the machine allows users to "key in" images from a variety of sources. For example, a desert scene could be keyed in over a blue screen, and then a squadron of jets could be keyed in over the desert.

Two companies—Steadifilm and Encore—have created special film gates for the Rank Cintel Enhanced MkIIIC and Enhanced MkIIIc Digiscan 4:2:2 telecines. The Steadifilm gate uses a technique known as pin registration to hold the film absolutely still for special effects work. Encore EPR (Electronic Pin Registration) accomplishes the same feat electronically. Rank Cintel itself makes a special gate for three-perforation film stock.

Another add-on, the floppy disc-based Amigo console from Rank Cintel, is a scene-by-scene programmer that provides absolute control over all telecine functions. Amigo's electronic "scratch pad" allows the user to program up to seven temporary buffers, showing experimentation with different colors, moods, or environments.

Basically, film to tape transfer is the right mix of superb technology coupled with skilled artistry and fastidious attention to detail that ultimately produces an outstanding videotape version of a film, episode, or commercial. It begins with the director's chair and ends with the living room easy chair, with lots of creative effort in between. □

continued from page 8

going into great detail. "It's a trade secret how we put it together. If we publicize the exact ingredients, it would be similar to Coca-Cola giving away its magical formula. They're not about to do it, and we're not either. Suffice it to say, however, that we can judge the customer satisfaction by the amount of repeat business we've gotten. We've become a leader in the filmed TV audio facility business."

As soon as Stage A was done, the customers were moved out of the main theater and demolition was begun on it. "We went all the way to the bare walls," Rose said. The screen was brought 50 feet forward, creating better stereo imaging, and the speakers were spread further apart.

To bring the theater's acoustics in line with Stage A, some modification was needed to soften its hard stucco surfaces. At the same time, the theater was an architectural gem, designed by S. Charles Lee, the foremost theater designer in the 1940's.

Disney-MGM Florida Facility

By way of compromise, most of the chamber's outstanding visual characteristics were left intact, such as inset lighting and rounded ceiling "steps." The acoustics were improved by the creation of five-foot-deep acoustic chambers in the walls and ceiling, which broadened and gave depth to the hall.

The rear wall was curved and extended to avoid secondary reflections back to the mixers. The lobby was restructured, a production office was created, as was a small kitchen. The machine room and the projection room were also renovated (including the addition of 70mm and video projection capabilities). The machine room was rewired for five 32-track digital audio recorders, along with three six-track magnetic film recorders.

A full complement of tie lines (video, audio and control), running between the ADR/Foley room and the dubbing theater to the facility's main machine room, allows the dubbing theater to use either audio or video recording units in the Foley room.

In the next phase of development, which Rose anticipates would begin this year (1989), the studio will build a third dubbing stage, a brand new, from-the-ground-up ADR/Foley stage, and add a central lounge between these two rooms. Eventually, a fourth dubbing stage and a second ADR/Foley stage will be added.

The Florida Connection

The situation at the Disney-MGM Studios was significantly different than the Buena Vista project. The post-production facility at the Florida complex had been designed by the Disney organization, but an outside company, The Post Group, a renowned Hollywood (California) post-production facility, was brought in to operate it for Disney.

According to Phil Mendelsohn, Post Group director of technical operations, "We took those concepts and applied our own principles; i.e., we took an audio dubbing/Foley facility for film and made it wholly flexible to handle whatever comes along. At this point in time, the studio's business is doing more TV-oriented work, but when a film comes along which requires full audio, we'll be able to accommodate it quickly."

The original plans called for a dubbing theater, an ADR/Foley room, and an adjacent control room. To accommodate TV-style prelay, the room was redesigned to be a multi-purpose room with an emphasis on Foley, and, to a lesser extent, prelay.

The room has a medium-size Foley stage with Foley pits as well as a Sony MXP-3000 32-in mixing console, audio cart machines, a CD player and 24-track Sony PCM-3324 digital recorders.

The dubbing theater is a mid-size room, currently set up to handle film-style mixing on TV shows. It features Solid State Logic's new SSL 5000 series 80-channel console, which can be expanded to 96 channels. While it is a three-operator console, a single mixer can handle smaller projects. The theater also has its own machine room, including a one-inch VTR and can accommodate five 24-track audio recorders.

The facility will be fully operational by the end of January.

Whether the situation is primarily for television and some film, or primarily for film and some TV, any facility that wants to survive must design for maximum flexibility. The two Disney facilities have taken this approach and anticipate a future where video and film continue to cross over. □

Editing—A Career Decision

by James Roberts
Payneham, Australia

It was still university days, and we were going to revolutionize the world of film making, if not the world. We shot Tri-X on hand-wound Bolexes and looked angry. This was hard work for people who slept 'till 11 o'clock every morning and were getting free tertiary education.

Our assignment was Relationships. The next day I was gazing through a grainy viewfinder at 2-square-inch portions of my wife's anatomy. I was convinced my film would break new ground in artistic eroticism and lead to a reduction in single parent families.

When we got the work print back I screened it onto our fridge at home on an old Bell and Howell. The long, lovely pans! The gentle tilts! The teasing focus! It was too much!!

I trembled with anticipation as I laced the film through the Steenbeck. This was the easy part, editing. I chopped the print up and hung the shots on the purple trim bin with bright yellow paisley. Moribund film conventions didn't concern me—this film would be Art. In a matter of minutes I had a complete assembly.

The result was Arty. Still, it seemed long. I felt the best thing to do was increase the pace. I cut each and every shot in half. The film now had Pace. Still, it lacked real innovation in Structure. I decided to intercut flash frames of a profile shot with an extreme close-up pan along a leg. I cut the shot into 173 2-frame sections and inserted them at random into the cutting copy.

We spent a lot of time at university praising silent films, mainly because no one knew how to use the Nagra. Still, I felt my film cried out for a sympathetic sound track. Knowing nothing about composing was no problem. I quickly dashed off a score for a violin solo, which a crazed music student recorded for me under the impression that it was an early Mozart concerto written backwards.

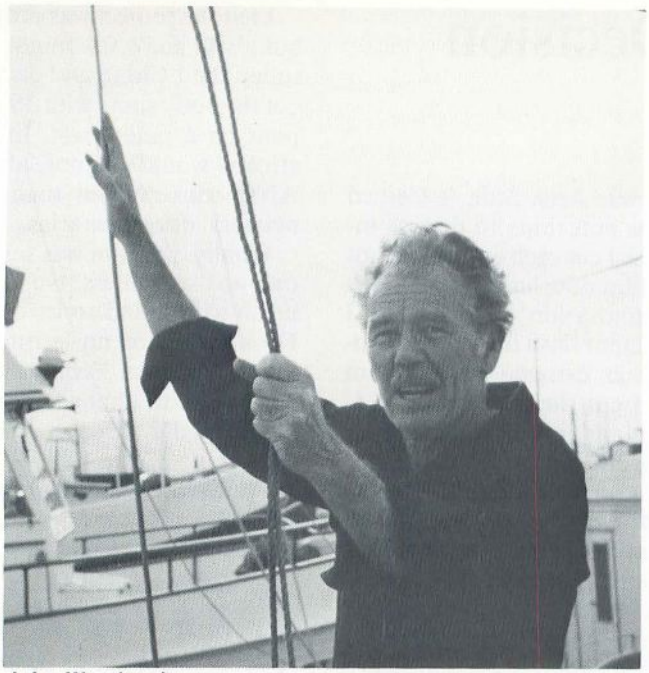
When I played the music with the cut, the university janitor ran into the editing room to see if someone had sliced his finger off on a splicing block. Although he didn't know it at the time, that man was the first person to really respond emotionally to my film.

I felt the project was progressing well, but it still had a few minor flaws. I consulted the I Ching and decided to intercut the body shots with 360 degree swish pans on a pine forest. In one brilliant stroke I would say more about eroticism **AND** conservatism than hundreds of network documentaries.

Finally, the film was screened. Everyone was speechless. No one could even begin to respond to its complex issues. For some reason my lecturer started talking to me about Economics, asking if I would like to change courses. Not me, not after I'd discovered the power of editing.

I knew then and there what I wanted to be...an Editor. □

Seminar



John Woodcock

"It makes me proud to know I've made this many friends," remarked John Woodcock, obviously moved as he looked out at the large turnout in his honor at the A.C.E. screening seminar on November 29 at 20th Century Fox. Woodcock answered questions about his editing of the featured film of the evening *El Dorado*, and reminisced about his notable 54-year career in film and television. The audience delighted in Woodcock's anecdotes about working alongside legends Howard Hawks and John Wayne on the '67 western. The two industry giants playfully nicknamed Woodcock "the skinny Hemmingway" after he grew a beard.

According to Woodcock, Hawks was an imposing fellow who, at 6'5", stood taller than John Wayne. "Hawks was a fine gentleman with a good sense of humor. We got along, but he wasn't a person you could buddy up to – always quiet and distant.

"One day, he asked me how I would stage the gunfight scene at the bell tower," Woodcock continued. "I suggested having the actors shoot right and left; that way I couldn't make a mistake. Shortly after, associate producer Paul Helmick came in and said, 'Boy, are you in with Hawks.'

"How do you know?" I asked.

"He knows your name," Paul replied. Later, Paul told Woodcock that if Hawks didn't know your name after about a month, it usually meant you were through.

Woodcock laughed as he recalled a particularly memorable encounter with John Wayne. Wayne had come into the editing room to view some film he had to match in a reshoot, and proceeded to spit tobacco into Woodcock's loaded trim bin. When Woodcock protested the probable print damage, Wayne remained unimpressed. "Who cares?" he shrugged.

"I was so nervous being in the presence of the imposing John Wayne that I kept ripping the film as I put it into the Moviola," recalled Woodcock. "Finally, he turned to me and said, 'Hey, kid, when does the regular operator get here?'"

How Woodcock landed the El Dorado assignment is a story in itself. Woodcock and his wife Barbara had navigated a yacht to Hawaii on the Trans-Pacific yacht race in 1965. Once there, he agreed to do some assisting work for his good friend, Stu Gilmore, on the feature *Hawaii*. Later, when scheduling problems prohibited Gilmore from editing *El Dorado* as was planned, Gilmore recommended Woodcock for the job. "Through Gilmore's intervention, I came back to Hollywood and did the picture," says Woodcock.

Woodcock got his start in Paramount's film receiving department in 1934. He worked as a film porter for $18 a week. Despite a meager salary, he managed to make ends meet. "When Barbara and I got married, I was making $24 a week. We bought a house in the Valley for $4,500 – two bedrooms and a bath."

After the service, Woodcock made the transition from sound to film editing. He rejoined Paramount where he took a pay cut from $131 a week as a sound editor

Scene from *El Dorado*

photo courtesy Paramount Pictures

Honors John Woodcock Career

to $101 as a picture assistant. It paid off in the long run! He first assisted Artie Schmidt, Sr. on Billy Wilder's *The Big Carnival*. He followed that with Frank Capra's *Here Comes the Groom*, assisting Ellsworth Hogland. He worked as a fill-in assistant on George Stevens' *Shane* and *A Place In the Sun*, and helped George Tomasini on two Alfred Hitchcock classics, *Rear Window* and *To Catch a Thief*.

Woodcock received his first editing assignment on Hal Wallis' documentary of the Korean War, *Cease Fire*. He then joined the TV world at Desilu Productions on *Our Miss Brooks*. Woodcock's many feature credits include four Jerry Lewis films, Sydney Pollack's *Scalphunters*, Howard Hawk's *Rio Bravo*, and *24 Hours of LeMans* starring Steve McQueen. Other TV credits include *When Hell Was In Session*, a movie of the week for which he received an Emmy and Eddie Award nomination, and the mini-series *Ike, the War Years*, which won him the Eddie plus a second Emmy nomination. He enjoyed a long association with Aaron Spelling—editing such pilots as *Starsky & Hutch, Charlie's Angels, Fantasy Island*, and *Dynasty*—before eventually being named Supervising Editor for Spelling Productions.

"That's the trouble with getting old as an editor. The film prints get old right along with you."

As the evening drew to a close, Woodcock acknowledged his wife, Barbara, for putting up with him all these years. "Anyone who can stand me for 50 years deserves an Academy Award," quipped the man who's served as A.C.E. secretary for two terms. He also thanked 20th Century Fox's Senior Vice President of Post Production, Gary Gerlich, and his administrative assistant, Robyn Gerlich, for the use of the Zanuck Theatre, and Paramount for the print of *El Dorado*.

"We tried to get other prints of my shows," he said in his final remarks, "but they've discolored and don't make for a good screening. That's the trouble with getting old as an editor," he sighed in bemusement. "The film prints get old right along with you." □

by Denise Abbott

There's Art In Foley

by Laura Cohen

"When I first started Foley, you did nothing but footsteps," states Joe Sikorski, retired sound editor from Universal Studios, who once walked Foley side by side with the immortal Jack Foley. Sikorski leaps from his couch and, on the soft rug of his Northridge home, demonstrates the correct way to do footsteps.

Performing a little two-step, Sikorski explains, "You can't walk in place because that sounds like stomping. You have to take the weight off your feet."

Actually, when Foley was young at Universal, there wasn't much need to stomp. You had plenty of room to just lope across Stage Ten, the heels of your cowboy boots clicking across a stretch of gravel five feet wide and nine feet long, as you matched the footsteps of famous Universal cowpoke, Audie Murphy. "You didn't have Foley stages in the Fifties," Sikorski states. "Stage Ten was ordinarily the scoring stage. Moreover, you didn't have built-in 'surfaces' the way they do today." A square of pavement here—a square of sand here—a square of Astroturf for the grass. Sikorski laughs. "When we needed a grass surface, we just had the laborers cart in eucalyptus leaves from the back lot." When a dirt surface was needed, in came the carts of medium density "Number Three" gravel.

"They'd dump it right on the concrete floor, a foot deep." Then, the Foley artist would create a walk along its length, matching Murphy's steps, a boom microphone following with him.

At Disney, meanwhile, now-retired artist Jimmy Macdonald was doing the footsteps for *Darby O'Gill* without even climbing out of his chair. He'd sit and dance with his feet, on the stage, and he wouldn't even have a picture to watch! Just scoring sheets and headphones feeding him a click track.

What about horses? At Universal, horses weren't Foleyed but edited in from the library. At Disney, the horses WERE Foleyed, with a little help from two halves of a coconut shell. Macdonald still has them. He opens his briefcase, pulls them out and engages in a little demonstration atop a drumhead, reciting aloud "left, right, right, left." He says: "I've heard the fellows do left, right, left, right, but that's wrong. That's not a horse. That's how a rabbit moves."

Forty-Five Pairs Of Shoes

Nowadays, footsteps are just one part of Foley art. "A minor part," says Jerry Trent of Compact Video. Yet footsteps are what initially brought Trent, previously a dancer, into the profession. Trent got his start doing dance Foley for musi-

cals like the T.V. show, "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."

And John Roesch, co-owner of the TAJ Soundworks (a post-sound house specializing in Foley), when asked what his favorite prop is, doesn't say "a wet chamois" (Trent's favorite), but replies simply "my shoes." Roesch has forty-five pairs in a size nine-and-a-half, which Roesch calls "the Universal Foley standard." Well over half his shoes are leather shoes. "The bottom line is I have to do what's in sync," says Roesch, "but if you do a shot from the waist up, all I have to go on is the shoulders and what

authority, another might sound tappy and gay, another one might sound just perfect for a hooker."

Why Is It Called Foley?

"Jack Foley was a character," says Joe Sikorski. "An Irishman. He wasn't an editor. He was a producer at one time. He was a director at one time. Foley wasn't named after him; it just came about. We called it Foley at Universal because Jack was doing the Foley. It was just a short way to say it. Like we say 'Let's make a Xerox' when we want to use a copy machine."

"I've heard the fellows do left, right, left, right, but that's wrong. That's not a horse. That's how a rabbit moves."

is this person's character?" Defining character through footsteps is important to Roesch, and that's why he uses all those shoes. "One pair might have a certain squeak, another has a certain low-end sound which gives a feeling of

How did the term Foley come to be accepted throughout the film industry? After MCA bought Universal in 1955, ninety editors from Revue (the TV arm of MCA) moved in, and the original nine editors at Universal taught them how to "make Foley." Next season, they got laid off and spread all over town and, according to Sikorski, "It's like dropping a stone into the water. The ripples go out, and everyone's talking about 'making Foley.' So the name came into wide usage throughout Hollywood. Now they say 'make Foley' in England and France. But I don't think Jack or his relatives ever knew about this."

Unique Sounds Are Still The Goal

The late Jack Foley would be amazed to learn that his name has become such a household word and equally amazed to see what the craft bearing his name has become. "Car crashes aren't even a gray area of Foley anymore," says Roesch. "They're standard." Roesch, at TAJ, has created a rainstorm in *The River*, a torture machine in *The Princess Bride* and many a car crash and barroom brawl. On his resume Trent has a twelve-car pile-up, a freight elevator and all the effects for the infamous feature *The Fly*. Jimmy Macdonald wouldn't bat an eye at Roesch's rainstorm, having done similar effects for Disney's films with his renowned Surf Machine, which is filled with dried Mexican peas and bears on its circumference thousands of finishing

continued on page 32

continued from page 31

nails. "We didn't use real rain and surf because how can you control them?" asks Macdonald, who cranked his machine to create the sound of waves breaking on the shore in *Robinson Crusoe*. Roesch agrees with Macdonald. "Foley," Roesch says, "is custom sound effects."

Sikorski feels that Foley today is overdone and insists "You can get body-falls out of the library. Doing all those falls and crashes on the stage is dangerous."

Why Has Foley Become So Elaborate?

The answer, not surprisingly, lies in the changing financial climate of Hollywood. In days of yore, schedules were lengthier, so there was more time during production to take care with the production tracks. And Los Angeles was not always home to the busiest airport in the universe, as it seems to be now. Particularly in major feature films, it's not uncommon to replace one-hundred-percent of the production track with fresh sound today. This mammoth task must be accomplished in a short period of time, since post-production schedules—like production schedules—have been shortened. Sound editors work frantically trying to smooth the dialogue tracks, and more and more sound effects work must necessarily be done on the Foley stage.

"We're being asked to do a lot more in the same amount of time," remarks Roesch.

A Thousand Blinking Buttons

Faced with the dilemma of more to do and less time to do it in, Foley artists wonder how their craft will evolve in days to come. Roesch feels the future lies in the new digital technology. "Right now, it can't do footsteps as well as Foley but at some point, it will. It won't be a piano keyboard. It'll be some kind of touchpad, maybe." Indeed, Roesch has

put his money where his mouth is. A digital system called the Synclavier is owned by TAJ.

Trent doesn't care for keyboard sound effects machines. "They don't allow you to scuff and shuffle. They don't give the footsteps any character. It sounds like a loop."

Sikorski is favorably disposed towards the keyboard systems. "I heard a score not too long ago on one of those things, and I could swear it was a full-fledged orchestra. If it can make musical instruments sound like musical instruments, I would think it could come up with footsteps."

Naturally, the new technology appeals to inventor Jimmy Macdonald. He's talking to me about it as he packs away all his little gizmos and gadgets in his worn briefcase. The coconut shells. Surgical tubing and a wooden spool (used to create the sound of a bumblebee). Balloons (blow them up and put a bee-bee inside and you've got the wobbly wheel of Herbie, the Volkswagen). He's chatting about a recent visit to Walt Disney Imagineering (where the sound effects are created for Disney's theme parks). "There must be a thousand blinking buttons over there," he smiles. Macdonald affirms: "You wouldn't believe what they can do to create a thunderstorm." □

On The Fourth Beep....

by Barbara Harris
The Looping Group

When Sydney Pollack asked me to supply actors for the *Out Of Africa* looping sessions, I knew this wasn't a simple request for some background "walla." For *Out Of Africa*, a group of actors were needed from three specific African tribes (Kukuyu, Somali, and Masai) who could speak the native languages with dramatic truth on the fourth beep!

It was a tall order but one that I knew could be filled. It took a little time, but I assembled a group of native Africans—some were actors, others were not. For those who were new to looping, I conducted four training sessions so that the uninitiated could experience the process before the first session. It was a challenge. It was fun. And all of us are very proud of the final results.

Whether it's authentic Tibetans for Eddie Murphy's *The Golden Child*, bringing life to the newsroom in James L. Brooks' *Broadcast News*, or mastering the Vulcan language for the *Star Trek* films and television series, today's "loopers" must be acting professionals possessing a curious blend of creativity, craft, discipline, intelligence and spontaneity. These actors can breathe new life into a scene, augment and redefine a character; or create anew.

In the "old days" of ADR (Automated Dialogue Replacement), a producer might ask a few secretaries and mail room fellows to supply some "party walla." It didn't matter what they said, as long as there was a constant buzz to fill the track. Today's films are sophisticated. So are their sound systems and the audiences that enjoy them. A simple party "walla" may no longer be so simple. It's now Quadraphonic with multiple tracks mixed to create a special sound. To accomplish this, the actors must perform many takes consistently and yet keep each take spontaneous and energetic. *Cocktail* was such a film. Some actors in The Looping Group remember well the patient building of multiple tracks while singing "The hippie hippie shake." Simple party walla? Not on your life.

There are two aspects to a looping group. First, there's the point person, the one who represents the ensemble of actors in the group. This person will choose the right voices for your ADR needs, prepare them for any special aspect of the film, such as subject matter, location, accents, and lead the acting ensemble in the looping sessions, all the while keeping the editor free of organizational demands. That leader must imbue you with confidence and trust and prove to you that their artistic judgement is on the right track. If research is involved, you must be certain that he/she can produce the right kind of people with the right kind of information.

And then, of course, the second aspect is the actors themselves. I have seen many truly talented actors falter on the fourth beep. Likewise, many experienced voiceover artists of commercials and animation fail to convey the naturalistic reality for ADR. Their voices may be ***too*** special, ***too*** noticeable. The looping artist must be able to convey interesting reality with only the voice! I have been at sessions where an actor delivered dialogue which appeared absolutely perfect as I watched the actor, and yet, the lines screeched out as untruthful when played back. What made the dialogue appear so apropos to me as a live audience—the tilt of a head, a smile, a look in the eyes—had disappeared on the naked audio track, leaving only the actor's voice to convey the reality.

What makes a good looping artist? The ability to remain dramatically truthful while counting footage; the capacity to be inventive and improvisational while also mindful not to distract from the main scene; the intelligence to know what to say, and more importantly, what ***not*** to say. It's a little like rubbing your stomach and patting your head. It takes concentration, talent and ***experience***. Over the nine years The Looping Group has been doing films and television this core group of actors have worked together hundreds of times. It is truly an ensemble, with each actor aware of the others—their strengths, their weaknesses.

Like any expert craft, you may not notice what a looping group is contributing, but you'll certainly notice when it isn't there. It is not uncommon to get a frantic call from a producer or director

bemoaning a ruined session because of inexperienced actors. "They didn't know what they were doing...it's so frustrating...she just had to sync up **one line** and it took an hour!"

Many producers have learned that there isn't much of a saving hiring novices if they can't deliver the goods. Our group has done thousands of jobs and faced many interesting challenges. We love our work. And ultimately, that's what it comes down to. Craft and talent aside, it's the caring that brings that special dose of magic to the ADR process. □

Holiday Party Enjoyed By All

by John Martinelli

Candlelight, beautiful decorations, delicious hors d'oeuvres and perfect Southern California weather made ACE's annual Holiday Party an especially enjoyable affair.

Priscilla Nedd and Mark Melnick were welcomed as new active members. The American Cinema Editors were happy to add Hal Harrison of Viacom and Jack Teahan of Eastman Kodak to the roster of affiliate members. New life members are Eve Newman, George Nicholson, and Arthur Schneider.

The gathering was held in the lovely garden of the Court Theatre in Hollywood. This charming setting was built in the 1920's as an actor's rehearsal hall and has served as the site for many of Hollywood's most glamorous intimate parties. The festive mood was made even more enjoyable by the piano stylings of Josh Harris. Many a hectic schedule was forgotten as members took time to catch up with old friends and make some new ones as the happy mood lasted well into the evening.

Index of Advertisers

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THE TRIM BIN

by Bob Bring, A.C.E.

Bob Bring

Heartbeat

Supervising Producers: Joe Viola, Allison Hock
Producers: Bill Schwartz, Fred Rappaport
Cast: Kate Mulgrew, Ben Masters, Laura Johnson
"Series returns for a second season for Aaron Spelling Prods. and ABC. Editing at Warner-Hollywood Studios."

John Burnett

Leviathon

Producers: Luigi and Aurelio De Laurentiis
Director: George Comatos
Cast: Peter Weller, Richard Crenna, Amanda Pays
"A science fiction adventure at the bottom of the sea. I am editing this MGM film for a spring release, with Roberto Silva."

Dann Cahn

Tarzan In Manhattan

Producers: Max and Micheline Keller
Director: Michael Shultz
"Tarzan updated to the present. The only survivor of a 1960's plane crash, a five-year-old boy, grows up with the apes. His favorite chimp is captured and taken to N.Y. for a scientific experiment. Tarzan comes to rescue him and meets Jane, a Manhattan cab driver. Got the picture? A MOW for CBS and American First Run."

George Grenville

Judgment

Producer: Oscar Costo
Director: William Sachs
Cast: Emelia Crow, Elliot Gould, and Karen Black
"Going into the final stretch; final cut, music, effects, and dubbing, at Warner-Hollywood Studios."

Marsh Hendry

Father Dowling

Cast: Tom Bosley
"For Viacom Productions at Universal Studios. Hal Harrison is post-production supervisor."

Miami Vice

Producer: Michael Mann
Cast: Don Johnson, Philip Michael Thomas
"I am associate producer/supervising editor for this Universal series."

Doug Ibold

B.L. Stryker

Producers: Tom Selleck, Charles Floyd Johnson, Rick Weaver, Alan Barnette, and Chris Abbot
Director: William Fraker
Cast: Burt Reynolds, Ossie Davis
"My co-editor is Steve Lovejoy. Shooting on location at Palm Beach, Florida, and editing at Universal Studios."

Harry Kaye

Paradise

Producers: David Jacobs, Jim Brown
Cast: Lee Horsley, Sigrid Thorton
"This western series, laid in 1890, has Lee Horsley playing a gunfighter, suddenly saddled with his dead sister's four children. For Lorimar and CBS, editing on the Ediflex."

Jerrold L. Ludwig

Original Sin

Executive Producer: Larry Thompson; Producer: Ian Sander
Director: Ron Satlof
Cast: Ann Jullian, Charleton Heston
"A two-hour MOW for New World Television. Editing on the Ediflex at Big Time Pictures."

John A. Martinelli

Columbo

Producers: Richard Alan Simmons, Stanley Kallis, Philip Saltzman, Peter Ware
Directors: Jim Frawley, Leo Penn
Cast: Peter Falk
"Editing on the Ediflex at Universal; I am also the associate producer."

In an effort to better acquaint our readers with current credits for the ACE members, Bob Bring asks them . . .

WHAT I[illegible] 'URRENTLY EDITING?

The follow[illegible] 'ere received by the deadline for th[illegible]

Mark Melnick

Troop Beverly .

Producers: Peter Ma[illegible] ott, Ava Ostern Fries
Director: Jeff Kanew
Cast: Shelley Long, Craig Betty Thomas
"Eight delightful 12-year-old 'wilderness girls' learn to survive in Beverly Hills. It's a spring release for Weintraub Entertainment."

Argyle Coe Nelson

Nightingales

Producer: Douglas Cramer
Cast: Suzanne Pleshette
"A series for Aaron Spelling and NBC about student nurses. I'm editing at Warner-Hollywood studios."

Robert Seppey

thirtysomething

Producers: Edward Zwick, Marshall Herskovitz
"For MGM/TV at CBS/MTM studios."

Herbert L. Strock

Snooze

Producer: Jonathon Liebert
Director: Jonathon Liebert
Cast: Daryl Guilbeau, Joan Carol Benson, Johana Watson, Jay Richardson
"A feature film about a young boy's sexual and psychological teenage fantasies. Editing at Herbert L. Strock Productions."

Larry Strong

Wiseguy

Executive Producers: Stephen J. Cannell, Les Sheldon
Supervising Producers: Jo Swerling Jr., David J. Burke, Stephen Kronish
Cast: Ken Wahl, Jonathon Banks, Jim Byrnes
"Ken Wahl plays an undercover agent who infiltrates the mobs. Editing in Hollywood at Stephen J. Cannell Productions."

Scene and Heard

The New Year is off to a bustling start for ACE members, while warm memories of holiday cheer still linger. For many, the holidays offered an opportunity to squeeze in some much needed rest & relaxation.

Vikki Wilson, A.C.E. affiliate and owner/president of Armistead Camera Rentals, enjoyed a ski vacation with her husband and four children in Alta, Utah. It was the first time on the slopes for the younger Wilsons—**Clint**, 8, and **Jamie**, 7,—but they quickly developed into snow bunnies after just a few lessons. "It's in their blood," says Vikki, adding that her family water skis on the Colorado River every summer.

Congratulations to **Fred** and **Marilyn Chulack**, who celebrated their second wedding anniversary with a trip to Kauai over the holidays. Spending the holidays in a tropical setting was a first for both and, according to Fred, "It was definitely different."

Affiliate member **Ron Koch** of Deluxe Laboratories and his wife, **Barbara**, flew to Palm Harbor, Florida for a memorable family reunion with 18 of their closest relatives. "People came in from all over the country," recounts Ron, whose parents reside in Sarasota, Florida. "Some I haven't seen in four or five years."

Art Seid may have retired a year ago, but he shows no signs of slowing down. "Use it or lose it," quips the electronic editing wizard who admittedly loves to party. He and his wife, **Ann**, spent New Year's Eve kicking up their heels to the Big Band sounds in Catalina's Avalon Ballroom. "We had such fun when we did it on Valentine's Day, that we decided to gather some friends and sail over again." One thing's for certain—no moss grows under the Seids' feet. Last summer, for instance, they leased their Malibu abode and took a trip to Scotland and Italy. Clearly, Art means it when he says, "Keeping busy is the key to a rewarding retirement."

Now that **Bruce Scott** has sold off portions of Scott Sound (leaving him to concentrate strictly on retail motion picture equipment sales), you'll find him spending more time on his favorite hobby—photographing historical architecture. Bruce regularly drives up Highway 99 to the San Joaquin Valley and Fresno area in search of decaying farms, abandoned cars, and fallen bridges. "Old structures have more to say than newer ones," he explains. "My goal is to compose a shot so it tells a story."

Former editor **Andy Maisner** recently sold his American Video Factory to MT Communications, which owns eight TV stations. "It's a great opportunity for me to do what I've always wanted—make movies," says Andy, who's eager to get back into the creative end of show business. "For years, I was totally consumed with the business aspects of running my company." Upon returning from a holiday ski trip in Utah, he begins producing his first feature—*Hollywood Flash Dance*. He'll edit too, using the Brainex System he co-created with John Peterson.

Newly retired A.C.E. life member, **Art Schneider**, has just moved to the Yosemite area. He authored a book on editing, due out in February 1989. And speaking of editors creating editing systems, Art has been active in the building of LINK, a new electronic editing system.

An old structure photographed by Bruce

There's exciting news from **Maury Winetrobe**, who belongs to a small syndicate that owns race horses. Two years ago, his stallion sired an offspring named *Itchy Feet*. Now, the filly has turned into something of a gem during her very first year at the track. She won four out of eight races in '88 and placed second in three. In addition to winning two stakes races, she was voted 1988's Two-Year-Old Filly of the Blue Ribbon Downs Meet in Oklahoma. The only drawback: *Itchy Feet* resides in Kentucky, so Maury never gets to see her race except on video tape.

On the homefront, **Michael** and **Sandy Stevenson's** purchase of a new house in West Hills last January turned into a nightmare. "We were totally unprepared for the mind-boggling, non-stop work that's required when you're dealing with a spanking new house," explains Michael. "Unfortunately, nothing is built as well as it should be. We've been up to our necks in dirt and we've had workmen and contractors traipsing through all year. We're still trying to get drapes on the windows. And now it looks as if landscaping of the front yard won't begin until February." Amidst all this upheaval, Michael was called to Mexico for four months to work on Disney's *Honey I Shrunk the Kid*, starring Rick Moranis. Happily, the worst is over. And the Stevensons are hoping for a long, hot summer so they can revel in the swimming pool, which was such a pain to install.

Don Zimmerman, too, has had his share of home construction blues. He and his wife, **Donna**, are remodeling the kitchen of their Bel-Air home. "Shutting down a kitchen when you've got five kids can be a little chaotic," he says, clearly understating the case. Even so, the Zimmermans somehow managed to host a traditional Thanksgiving feast for 25 people in their home. "Don't ask how we did it," he says. "I have an amazing Italian wife."

Photographed on New Year's Day, this float represented the city of Burbank. It was designed by Erik Andersen of Christy's Editorial Supply and appeared in color illustration form in the *Scene and Heard* section of the *American Cinemeditor* Summer '88 issue.

Thanksgiving was particularly meaningful for **Ben Weissman**. He shared the holiday with a Northridge family he became close to during the aftermath of Hurricane Gilbert in Cancun, Mexico, last September. Ben was two days into a scuba diving vacation when the horrific storm hit the island destroying everything in its path. "It was like living through the last days of Saigon," Ben recalls. "Club Med, where I was staying, was devastated. There was no electricity, water, plumbing, or phones for five days. I ran into another editor—**Peter White**—also caught in the hurricane." Ben's misadventures on Cancun haven't diminished his passion for scuba diving, however. He recently explored the waters off the Channel Islands. An equally avid snow skier, he hopes to squeeze in a trip to Aspen "if the television season permits."

Itchy Feet

Affiliate member **Charlie Goldstein** also hopes to hit the slopes this year—Mammoth, Tahoe, anywhere he can. "I'll wear the new ski boots I bought last year but never had time to use," he explains, adding: "I'd like to start spending a little more time on myself."

Other ACE members worked straight through the holidays. **David Bretherton** recently returned from five months in Canada with Universal's *Sea of Love*, starring **Al Pacino** and **Ellen Barkin**. The film's being edited in Canada and Los Angeles. **Dick Van Enger, Jr.** and **Fred Knudtson** keep churning out episodes of *Falcon Crest*, now in its eighth year. "After the writers' strike, I can hardly complain about having to work through the holidays," says Dick. "I've had a great run with the show, and it may even go one more year after this." **David Simmons** got so busy working on Tri-Star's *Blind Fury* (with location shooting in Reno, Squaw Valley, and Houston) that he was forced to cancel his Christmas vacation. "This business is feast or famine," he says with a sigh. "I've barely had any time to spend with my two-year old son, **Nicholas**. He's a delight." As for a New Year's resolution, David promises to think about quitting smoking. "How's that for hedging?" he quips. At least it's a step in the right direction.

Erik's Float

Wishing everyone success, health and happiness in '89. □

by Denise Abbott

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