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AMERICAN CINEMEDITOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE HONORARY PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY – AMERICAN CINEMA EDITORS, INC. SPRING 1989 VOL. 39 NO. 1

ARTICLES OF POST-PRODUCTION IMPORTANCE

Actress/Director PENNY MARSHALL A BIG Success In Post-Production

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39th Annual Eddie Awards

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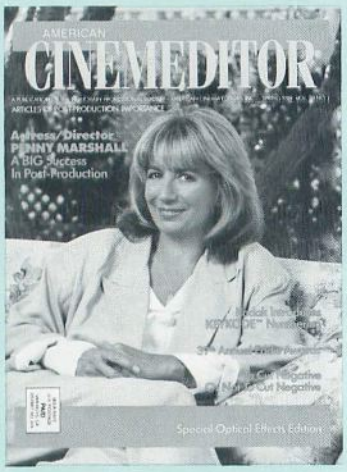
Spring 1989
Vol. 39, No. 1

AMERICAN CINEMEDITOR

A Publication of the Honorary Professional Society — American Cinema Editors, Inc.

FEATURES



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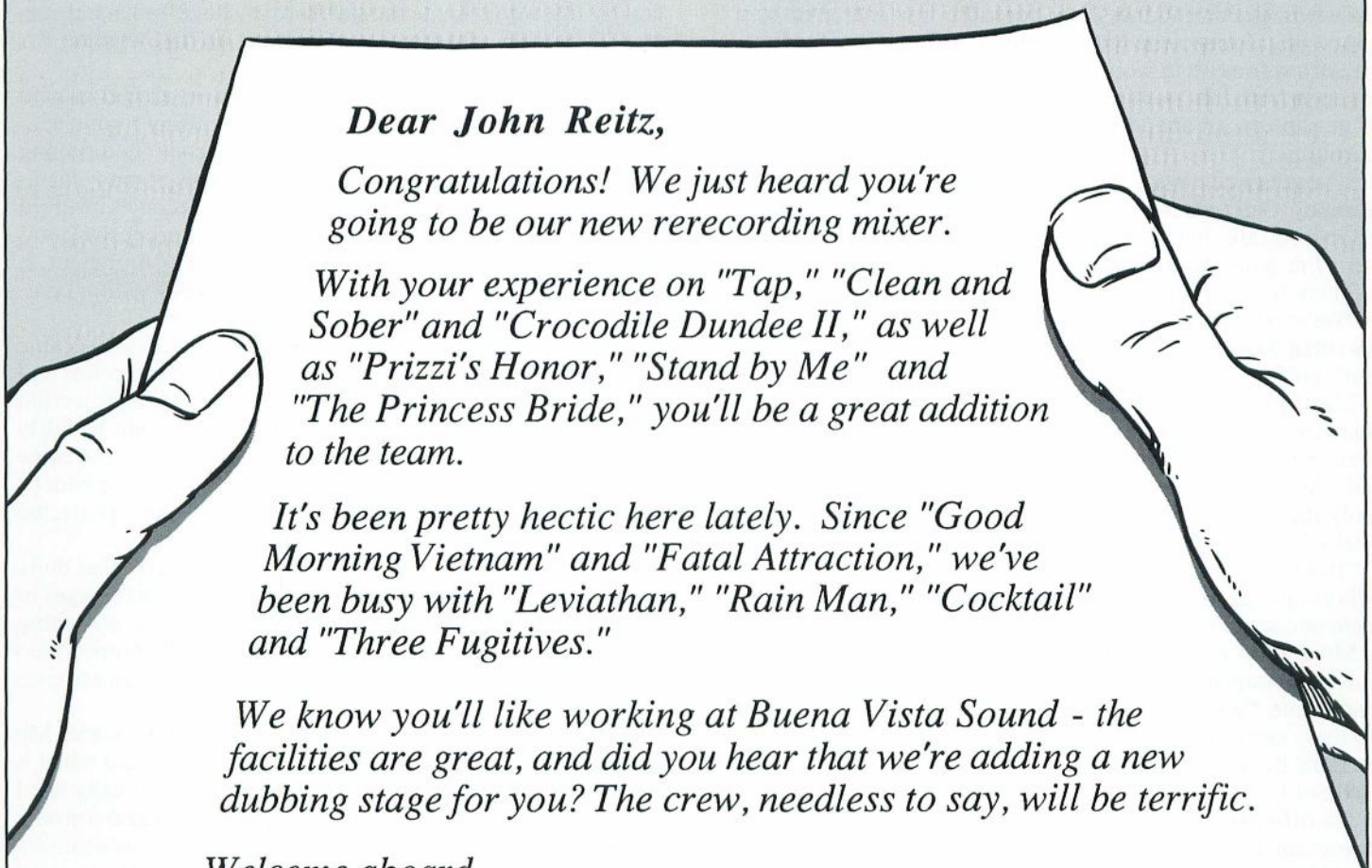
ACE CREDO

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.

A Dear John Letter From Buena Vista Sound



Dear John Reitz,

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It's been pretty hectic here lately. Since "Good Morning Vietnam" and "Fatal Attraction," we've been busy with "Leviathan," "Rain Man," "Cocktail" and "Three Fugitives."

We know you'll like working at Buena Vista Sound - the facilities are great, and did you hear that we're adding a new dubbing stage for you? The crew, needless to say, will be terrific.

Welcome aboard,

Nick Alphin	*Jim Cook*	*Bob Harman*
Tim Hoggatt	*Dave Hudson*	*Doc Kane*
Mel Metcalfe	*Mickey Mouse*	*Terry Porter*

P.S. Hope you're well rested - Heidi Arnold is already starting to book your time.

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From The Editor.

Enduring the hospital traction treatment for yet another day, I was passing time by carefully contemplating the line of sight from my elevated big toe to the ceiling molding when, thank goodness, my boredom was shattered by a phone ring. I was excited to hear the friendly voice of a director with whom I had worked previously and who wanted me to repeat with him on his next project, an oft-delayed feature to be shot on an abandoned Civil War plantation in North Carolina.

"I've got good news... we finally got the green light to shoot Monday. Call Gretchen and make your travel arrangements. I'd love to talk, but they're doing the final decorating of the barn I'm going to burn down. See you next week."

There was only one possible reply. "I can't go."

"We've planned this for three months! The opening was even rewritten based on your suggestions! What do you mean you can't go?"

The explanation was almost as painful to my career as the traction was to my lower back. "It's a long story, but I bent over to pick up a pencil the wrong way and threw my back out. I'll leave the hospital next week, but I'm going to have daily therapy. My doctor won't let me work for two to four weeks."

"But I need you on location. Look, we're budgeted for two editors anyway, so someone else will start the picture. The moment you can walk onto the plane fly down here immediately!"

My doctor wasn't too thrilled at the idea of locationing, but his therapist gave me a crash course on what to do. He warned me, "Whatever happens, while you're working you must do these exercises every hour on a couch. If you don't, you'll be right back with us!"

When I landed at the small airport, a driver took me right to the office of the production manager. Just like in a police melodrama, he read me my rights. "You'll be in room 314 at the Hilton on the river. You'll have a car and reasonable per diem. You and your assistant will have a huge trailer, big enough for ten people—no one can believe the deal I made. You'll be making weekly changes for the executive producer, who has been travelling between Rome and New York and Moscow and Hollywood on his executive jet. He usually lands on Friday, screens your work on Saturday, and you get Sunday as your day off. Any questions?"

I tried to be blasé as I made my simple request. "A couch has to be put in the trailer for my back exercises," I said.

"A couch? A couch for an editor?? Our star is paid $1 million for the picture; he gets two couches. The producer and director each get a couch, but I've never given an editor anything more than a chair for his Kem and a stool for his Moviola!!!!!!"

Our conversation continued at the door, as I called for the driver to return me to the airport. The production manager finally softened. "Okay, okay. I'll radio the executive jet and see if I can get approval. Do you know what time it is over Moscow right now?"

The request was granted in a strange manner. My assistant was given $100, a truck, and a driver to select a used couch from the Salvation Army Thrift Store. Unbelievably, she found a wonderful couch, with graceful lines, beautiful fabric, and sturdy cushions for my back exercises. Everyone at the location loved my couch. Even the executive producer, on his weekend fly-ins, would invite the staff into my huge trailer and conduct his cutting conferences while sitting on my Salvation Army couch!

It has never been difficult to find production executives who are less than generous in furnishing film cutting rooms with items of comfort. I can even remember when air conditioning was a frivolous cutting room luxury in the eyes of many facility managers. However, as more of editorial becomes involved with video, as more of editorial works with expensive computer equipment that demands a clean, cool environment, it seems that more managers are willing to make the editor comfortable as long as it's good for the equipment.

But now I see another need arising. Before video became so important in post-production, the producer, director, and editor used to run daily film rushes on a screen in a projection room where the quality of picture and sound could be fairly accurately discussed and appraised by everyone in the same room at the same time. The entire group shared the benefit of seeing and hearing and judging the daily images projected on respectable professional equipment.

Today, it appears that it is rarer and rarer to have that daily running with everyone assembled together viewing images in a professional atmosphere; all too often everyone is running his or her own tape on a non-professional 1/2" home video tape recorder at some different time—and quite often not even on a daily basis.

Recently I did a show containing a dark garage scene. My playback equipment was not very sophisticated, and when it ran dailies on the dark scene, the system automatically tried to correct the black backgrounds by adding light and converting the black to milky gray backgrounds. Seeing those milky images, I feared that we were faced with under-exposed negatives.

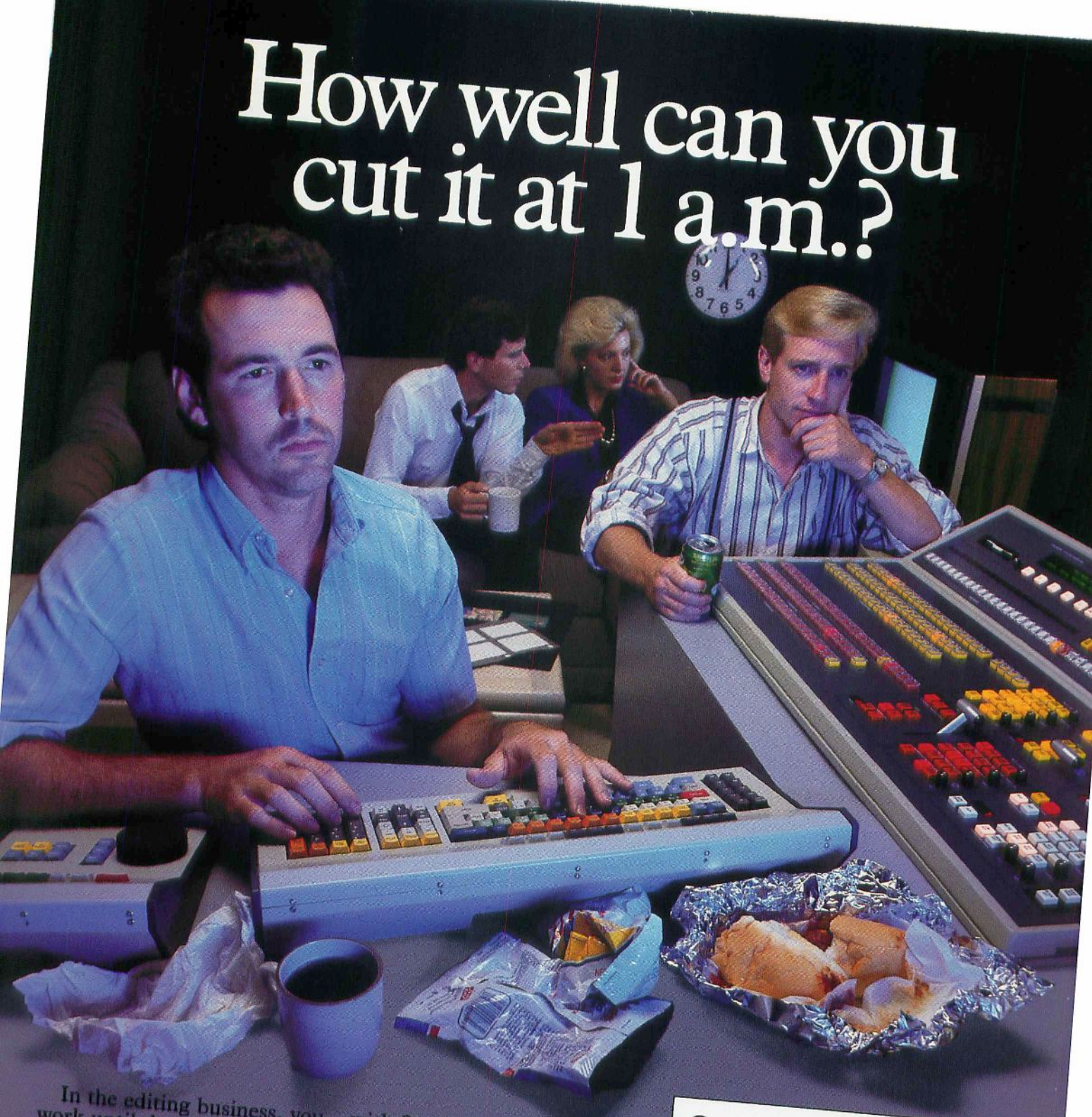
In addition, I was sometimes asked about the need to redo noisy dialogue tracks. But how could I, or any editor, effectively judge sound track quality on equipment not much more elaborate than a home stereo system?

The editor is often expected to be the first to find the possible defects in the picture and sound simply because he is usually the first to run the images in a studio environment. Unfortunately, he may be running on the studio lot, but his or her editing room is rarely provided with serious reproduction tools such as high-resolution monitors or professional audio equipment.

I suggest it's time for a round of improvements in the editing room. I suggest we all realize that more and more of the "first look" at potential daily problems is being done in the video editing environment—and many video editing rooms are not equipped to see with the best possible eyes, or listen with the best possible ears. I suggest the editor be made "comfortable" with better equipment to do the easiest, but often most crucial, function of his or her job ... just looking and listening to dailies. □

Howard Kunin, A.C.E.

How well can you cut it at 1 a.m.?



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Laser Edit In New York

Gary Matz, President of Spectra Image, Inc., and William H. Breshears, President of Laser Edit, Inc., jointly announced the opening of Laser Edit East, Inc. in New York. This new affiliate will utilize the Spectra System™ for both online and offline editing. Offline editing will feature the Emmy Award winning dual headed laser disc players.

Vincent Anelle, formerly with Synapse Communications, will be President of Laser Edit East, Inc. and Tom Guadarrama will be its Vice President of Engineering.

Laser Edit East, Inc. plans to install six Spectra Systems in its New York facility during May and offer the systems for use in client facilities soon thereafter.

A training program for editors is scheduled to begin the latter part of May. For more information regarding Laser Edit East and its services, write 304 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017 or call (212) 983-3255.

ShowBiz Expo Opens June 3rd

The sixth annual ShowBiz Expo will take place June 3-5, 1989, at the Los Angeles Convention Center. This year's edition is expected to draw in excess of 7,000 attendees.

Conferences and seminars will provide the following dynamic panel discussions: Directors Guild of America—career transitions; Writers Guild of America—writing for television; Studio Teachers Guild—what producers need to know about working with kids in production, and Women in Film—children's programming.

There will be other seminars and such additional activities as Insider Sessions and the Exploratorium—a "hands-on" lab with four areas of specialization: computer graphics, film/video production, video editing and digitial audio.

For the second year, The Screening Room offers a respite to tired feet while entertaining the mind with award-winning commercials, computer graphics, film trailers and video productions presented on video towers donated by the Sony Corporation.

FOCUS Award-Winning Films Shown

On April 3 and April 18, 1989, eleven Nissan FOCUS Award-winning short films were shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Nissan FOCUS (Films of College and University Students) is the largest national student filmmaking competition in the U.S.

Program I films were: *The Long Walk Home* by Beverlyn Fray of USC; Oscar-nominee *Portrait Of Imogen* by Meg Partridge of San Francisco State University; *Jazz In The Classroom* by Mitchell Braff of UC Santa Barbara; *Recurrents* by John Adamczyk and *Why* by Suzanne Dimant, both of California Institute of the Arts.

Program II films were: *Promised Land—A Musical* by Pat Verducci of UCLA; Oscar-nominee *Gang Cops* by Toby Fleming and Daniel Marks of USC; *Miles From The Border* by Ellen Frankenstein of USC; *Cat And Rat* by James Richardson of Columbia College, Chicago; *Artistic Vision* by Richard Quade of UCLA; and *Halcyon*, a FOCUS finalist, by Danny Goldberg of USC.

California Ends Post-Production Tax

Thanks to a massive post-production industry lobbying effort, the California Senate recently passed Bill #1405, which subsequently became law under section 6010.6 of the California Sales and Use Tax Law. This milestone achievement for the industry alleviates the unfair tax burden placed on California post-production houses and producers. The new law, passed in September, states that any fabrication labor (qualified production services) performed on film or tape in connection with a qualified motion picture is not subject to California sales tax.

No longer must parties contract directly with the producer to obtain an exemption from sales tax. The "special employee" concept that was previously the foundation for the tax exemption no longer applies. However, post-production facilities are still expected to provide verification of any claimed exemptions. So, if you own a post-production entity, be sure to retain receipts of sales you consider non-taxable. This development is a major coup for California post-production facilities because it makes them competitive (at last!) with facilities in other states.

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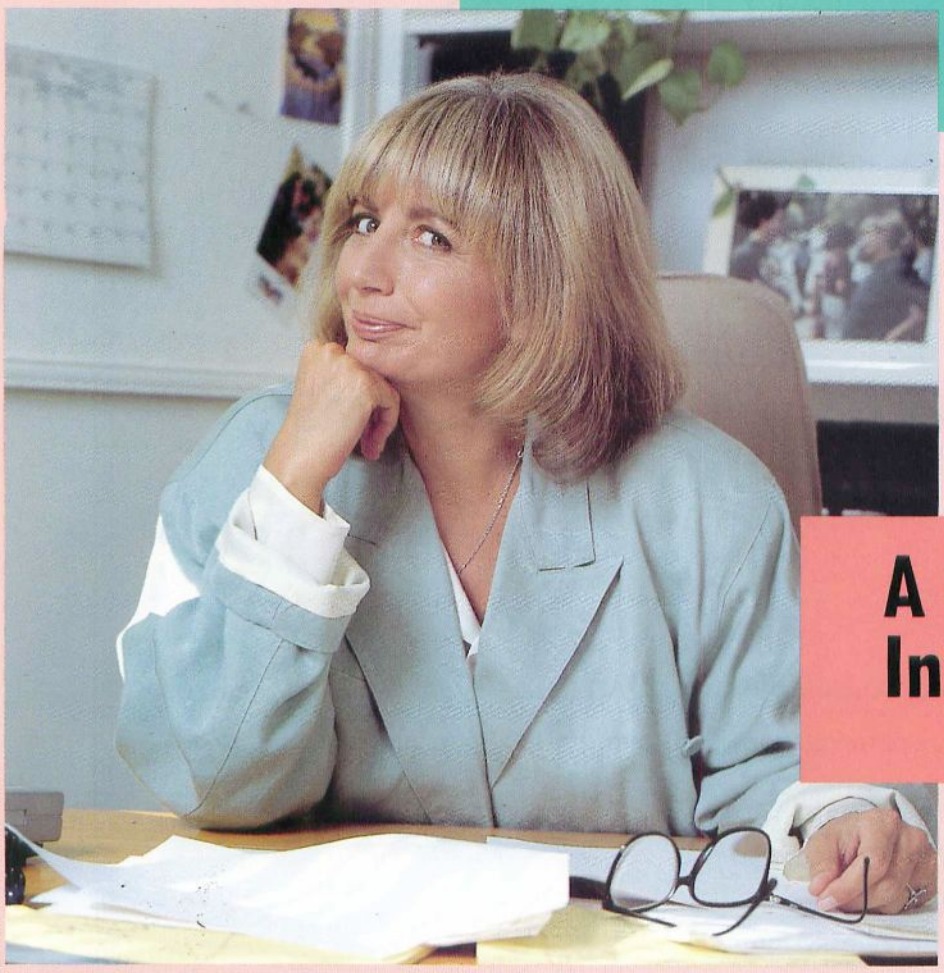
Actress/Director PENNY MARSHALL



photos by Gregory Schwartz

A BIG Success In Post-Production

The actress-turned-director, who scored *BIG* with a box office bonanza about a 12-year-old boy who suddenly finds himself inhabiting the body of a 35-year-old man, is sitting with feet propped up on her desk in her comfy office at Twentieth Century Fox. Within minutes, it's clear that her most recent success hasn't changed Penny Marshall one bit. No matter that *BIG* is a huge hit, pulling in $100 million at the box office so far. Or that it's the most successful feature (only her second) ever directed by a woman. Or that it's garnered Academy Award nominations for star Tom Hanks, writers Gary Ross and Anne Spielberg. How does Penny Marshall feel about it all? "Relief more than anything," she says in her Bronx twang. "It's like...Phew! I get away with that one."

If pressed, Marshall admits to "feeling good about" *BIG'S* success. "But I don't know if that'll mean I'll be overconfident on my next job," she adds hastily. "I'm not known for my confidence. I'm known for my whining and begging. Besides, so much of whether or not a project comes together is based on luck."

Indeed, luck has played a roll in Marshall's transition from co-star in TV's top-rated series *Laverne & Shirley* to hotshot film director. "I wasn't pursuing film directing; it came to me through odd channels," she says. "Jim Brooks walked into my office, put the *BIG* script on my desk, and said, 'This is your movie.'"

Though she had directed several episodes of *Laverne and Shirley,* her three-camera experience gave her no hint of the relentless planning and tedium involved in film directing. "Just to have to film these lines over and over...I thought I'd die. It was so boring. And the monotony of dubbing, mixing, looping. Half the time I didn't understand what they meant by tweaking, etc. I kept saying, 'I didn't take that course. Please explain.'"

Halfway into pre-production, the company shut down for three months in order to re-cast and wait for actor Tom Hanks. The long delay gave an anxious

continued on page 14

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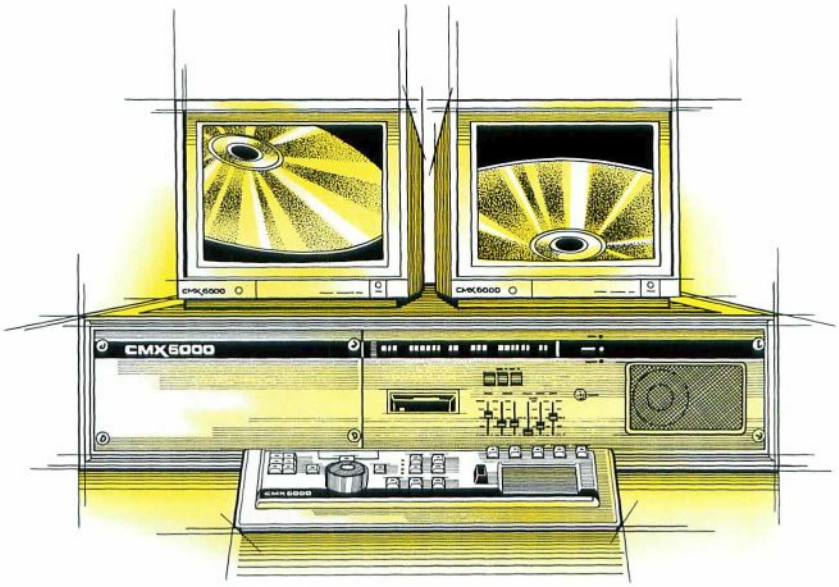

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Marshall plenty of time to think about all that could go wrong. "I went over the film so much that, by the time I actually got around to filming *BIG*, I'd already shot it several times in my head. Keeping the material fresh was a constant struggle. We'd shoot a scene and I'd think: haven't we already done this?"

Throughout production, Marshall sought the advise of seasoned confidants such as brother Gary Marshall ("He sat through the film without music—that's above and beyond the call of duty"), Jim Brooks ("He's like a brother"), and old pal Steven Spielberg, originally slated to direct *BIG* himself ("He gave me his notes and told me what he thought the film needed"). She also welcomed input from her post-production crew and frequently invited them to screen *BIG* with editor Barry Malkin and her. "I'd stagger it, always bringing in new people to hear what they thought."

Marshall developed a great camaraderie with the post-production crew, particularly with Malkin. Not only did he do an amazing cutting job, she says, but he shares her culinary tastes as well. "Editing is largely about: Whaddya want tuh eat?" she says earnestly. "When you're fused together in a dark room for months on end it's important that you like the same foods. That's why I pick editors from the Bronx—we share similar sensibilities."

"In comedy the difference between funny and not funny is often a matter of two frames or the way the sound comes in."

Unlike many directors, Marshall has no qualms about taking "an axe to the footage." She and Malkin sat together at the KEM and honed the assemblage from 228 minutes to 214, and then to 208. "We got stuck at around 159 for the longest time," she recalls. Each cut was cassetted so that "when Jim Brooks asked if we'd tried it a certain way we could show him that we had."

According to Marshall, the movie's handball scene—three- and-a-half hours of three-camera shooting—was difficult to edit since actor John Hurt didn't play handball and could never hit the ball twice. Looping, however, was unquestionably the toughest part of *BIG*'s post. "In comedy, the difference between funny and not-funny is often a matter of two

frames or the way the sound comes in," explains Marshall. "Things have to be just right in order to elicit a laugh response. On the jokes, I'd have 15 choices that I'd play for the mixers. I'd take votes on which was best, and we'd narrow it down. Poor Beth Bergeron (ADR editor) was going nuts."

As a performer, herself, Marshall instinctively acts out each character's role. "If I can play it, then I know it's playable." Her propensity for line readings received mixed reviews though. "Some mind; others don't. Some just say, 'Give me the damn line reading and stop trying to describe it.'" Depending upon the actors, Marshall sometimes finds it necessary to shoot as many as 20 takes or more. For instance, "Tom's first and second takes are his best, and then he's dead for the next nine," she explains. "I might as well not even have film in the camera. Then he comes back up again."

Another difficulty arose when Marshall discovered that the voices of the adolescent actors had lowered during the time in-between filming and post-production. "We couldn't tweak the voices because they were in totally different registers. So the actors had to speak in falsetto, which made looping very tedious." Marshall hired a music editor to put in a temp orchestral score. "That's where the money went," she says with a grin.

No one's more surprised at *BIG's* success than Marshall, herself, who plummeted into a deep depression after seeing the long first assemblage. "I thought my career was finished. I left the country...I went to Russia. That's one way to stay depressed," she says with a laugh, "go straight to Moscow."

It wasn't until she began screening *BIG* for small audiences that she realized the film worked. When it came time to show it to the studio, Marshall sensed that "five businessmen watching *BIG* alone in a screening room at 7:30 a.m. wasn't going to work." So she asked Fox executives to break with tradition and screen the movie with an audience. Needless to say, they loved it. But even Barry Diller's proclamation that *BIG* "epitomizes everything a movie should be" elicited a low-key response from Marshall. "Does this mean I don't have to reshoot?" she asked.

Today, she's doing all she can to improve her skills as a director. This explains her segue from hit movie to TV commercials. "When a film's as big a hit as *BIG,* how do I go back and learn all I missed along the way? There's no school for me. Commercials are the best place to try different techniques and meet people." Last summer, she directed a Christmas commercial for Disney video and Coke Classic. Just recently, she directed 26 celebrities in a Revlon commercial to benefit AIDS. Happily, the task of condensing 68,000-feet of film into two snappy 30-second spots belongs to someone else.

"Talk about tedium and spending money," she observes. "In commercials, everything's done at least 14 times. I may have overshot for Revlon but at least there's no post-production." She's also open to the possibility of doing another comedy series. "TV's fun. You never get bored because it's a new situation every week...and the hours are much more humane. I detest getting up early. Directing a film, I'm constantly questioning why I'm putting myself through it."

Meanwhile, Marshall's a hot, bankable commodity with a development deal at Fox and a deluge of script offers. "I got burnt out trying to read them all," she sighs, "but I've got to find what I like, and no one can do that for me." She's now interested in a "heavy drama" set in a hospital. Colleagues question why on earth she'd want to make a movie that's so...well, depressing. "Hey," she tells them, "I was depressed shooting *BIG* in a toy store, so what the hell difference does it make?" □

by Denise Abbott

Kodak Improves Key Numbering

Kodak's new development in edge numbering, called the KEYKODE™ system, was first announced at the fall SMPTE Conference in New York on October 16th, 1988.

"Eventually, all of our motion picture negatives will have this feature making, in effect, smart films," said Gary Borton, manager, strategic business and product planning for Kodak's Motion Picture and Audiovisual Division. "They will provide important information for negative cutters and for machine readers during postproduction."

KEYKODE numbers will be available on a limited basis mid-1989. The first film to incorporate this labor-saving feature will be Eastman EXR color negative film 5296. KEYKODE numbers will be used on other Eastman negatives and intermediate products later in the year.

The new system consists of 10 very legible digits printed every 12 inches (64 perforation intervals). These human-readable key numbers are augmented with a machine-readable bar code. The latter consists of an encoded version of the key numbers along with information identifying the film and manufacturer. The KEYKODE number also provides information which verifies that the machine has read the data correctly.

The new edge numbering system provides editors with some significant advantages:

1) The current edge numbering system consists of a combination of nine numbers and characters. The new edge number with ten numbers significantly reduces the possibility of key numbers being duplicated on different rolls.
2) Previous edge numbers were repeated every 64 perforations, once per foot in 35mm film. Short scenes with less than a foot of film could end up with no key number. The new system solves the problem by adding an indicator midway between each one-foot edge number. It consists of the last four digits of the key number and a "+32" notation to indicate the half-foot offset. The more frequent spacing ensures that even very short scenes will contain a key number.
3) The machine-readable KEYKODE number is more convenient for editing video tape transferred from film.
4) A short hyphen appears on the edge of the film at 4-perforation intervals. This helps the editor to find frame lines on workprints more efficiently, particularly in low-light scenes where one dark frame may blend into another.
5) The name of the manufacturer and film type are clearly identified in a location on the edge of the film where it does not interfere with time-code recorded in-camera.

KEYKODE numbers have many potential applications. For example, a telecine equipped to read KEYKODE numbers will be able to transfer key numbers and other data to video tape automatically. Currently, this is often a manual process subject to human error.

In addition, edited film workprints can be run through a KEYKODE number reader which automatically generates and prints a negative pull list. Again, this is currently a manual task subject to human error.

KEYKODE numbers can also be used to cue telecines and color analyzers automatically to factor in customized settings for different film types.

Kodak has asked the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers to study the possibility of using the new edgeprint format as a standard for film edge identification and messages. □

Kodak Values Your Opinion

The accompanying article entitled "Kodak Improves Key Numbering" explains KEYKODE™ numbers, a revolutionary film edge number system. The KEYKODE system is not yet in its final form, and Kodak is soliciting comment and suggestions from the readership of the ***American Cinemeditor.***

Already, optical houses have had considerable input into the KEYKODE innovation through the ***Cinemeditor.*** Kodak and this magazine would like to offer an opportunity for all branches of our post-production audience to express themselves.

The Eastman Kodak Company is listening. This is your opportunity to help refine what will undoubtedly become the world-wide trade standard for key numbers. Please convey your thoughts to:

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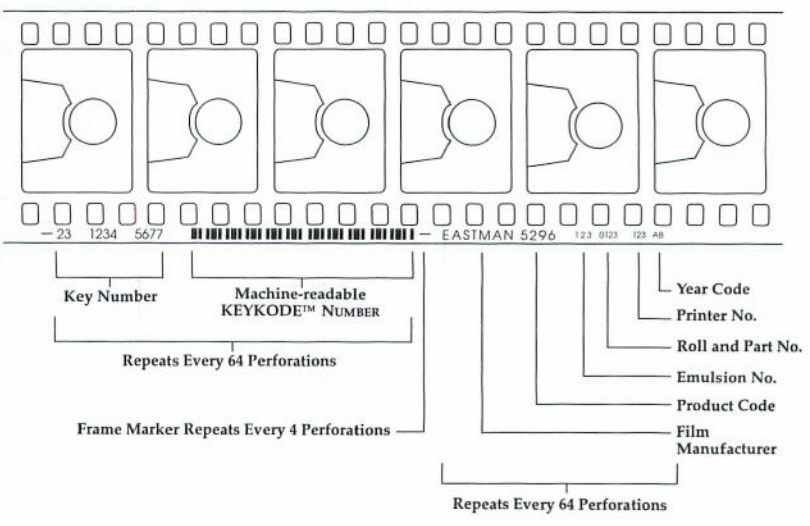
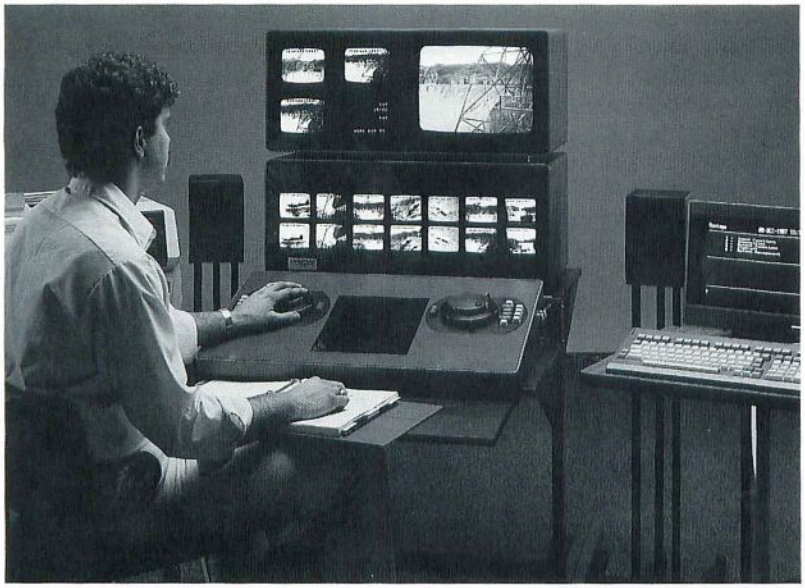
If you prefer, John Norris can be contacted at 1-716-724-3351.

Example of New Edgeprint Format for *EASTMAN* Color Negative Films





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- Most powerful, picture-oriented nonlinear system. Easily handles complex action shows. Montage combines the best attributes of film and video with the ease and flexibility of common PC word processors, so you can edit pictures and sound electronically without "crunching numbers." With unlimited creative options.
- Loading capacity: up to 4.5 hours of dailies. Critically important for directors accustomed to extensive shooting and printing numerous takes of any scene.
- Ideal for single- and multiple-camera film and television projects: commercials, dramatic series, documentaries, music videos, and theatrical features.
- Perfect for all documentary and archival projects where the sheer volume of original program material requires exhaustive record keeping and extensive manipulation of source footage.
- Designed to edit two sound tracks and one picture track, Montage tracks all three independently. You can trim picture and sound separately, frame-by-frame. Make changes with ease. Slip-sync. Create instant sound overlaps. You can even lay a temporary music or effects track, or record a narration.
- Clips can be viewed, copied, lengthened, shortened, and played in any order desired — in real time — along with fades, dissolves, soft cuts and wipes between the scenes. Without requiring lab reprints or rerecording. You can store and retrieve multiple versions of complete cuts for further evaluation at any time.
- Unique "Electronic Trimbin." Imagine having a wall-to-wall trimbin! With immediate random-access to thousands of clips of varying lengths, all uniquely and clearly identified by digitized pictures of their head/tail frames. And they can all be organized in "electronic workbins" — the way a film editor traditionally organizes his material!
- "Storyboard" printouts provide hard copy of digitized pictures of head/tail frames, user notes, and cutlists.
- Easy to learn. Visual/tactile control of program material is easily assimilated by film editors with no prior computer experience.
- Familiar, film-style editing tools, including electronic writing tablet and "grease pencil" to mark frames and write notes.
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- Generates frame-accurate, clean edit decision lists for electronic auto assembly of 1″ master and/or conforming original negative.
- Complete format flexibility: from any medium of origination — film or videotape, at any frame rate, in any format — to any medium of release.

These are but a few of the features that have made the Montage Picture Processor the standard of the industry. The only nonlinear electronic editing system to be honored by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences with a prestigious Scientific and Engineering Award.

Montage Picture Processors are available for short-term rental, long-term lease, or direct purchase.

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Montage Open House

On April 5 and April 6, 1989, Tom Mann, president of NL Leasing, the California based company which serves exclusively as a leasing agent for the Montage Picture Processor®, hosted an open house celebrating the opening of the new Montage Group, Ltd. facility at 4116 West Magnolia in Burbank.

The elaborate Montage sales, rental, service, and training center was displayed to the invited guests, who also had the opportunity to meet co-inventor Chet Schuler and the design team.

Montage's updated software package, Version 4.10, was a topic of discussion. It supports a wide variety of formats such as 35mm 4-perf, 3-perf, and 2-perf (Techniscope); 16mm (with edge numbers every 20 or 40 frames); and 65mm. The new software also supports frame rates of 24, 30, and 60 frames per second (used in the Showscan film process as well as in 1125/60 HDTV).

Letters
to the editor

Dear Sirs/Madames,

I understand and wholeheartedly agree with Leonard Nimoy (Fall '88) that, "I'm concerned management will assume electronic equipment means editors should work faster. And faster means formula."

The last 2 documentaries I have worked on, in between dramas, have been cut on VHS/Betacam. I even believe tape takes longer during the editorial process, overall.

Ken Sallows
Victoria, Australia

Dear Howard,

Just a short note of thanks to you and Denise (Associate Editor Denise Abbott) for your help in arranging the seminar and the subsequent article into the ***Cinemeditor***.

I have received many favorable comments on both the seminar and the article.

John Woodcock
Encino, California

Dear Howard:

As usual, we enjoyed the Winter 88/89 issue but wanted to call attention to an oversight in J.T. Way's article on telecines.

He mentions that only two companies—Steadifilm and Encore—have modified their Ranks to provide image steadiness while transferring film to tape. For the record, Image Transform holds the patent for electronic weave correction and has provided this service to its clients—in real time, incidentally, for several years.

Kind personal regards and keep up the good work.

Dick Lebre
President, Image Transform
North Hollywood, California

Vilmos Zsigmond ASC

Photo: Gene Stein

on film: "The director is like a conductor of a symphony orchestra. The rest of us follow his lead. Ninety-five percent of my job is to use light to create a new reality for the audience. They should be able to follow the story without hearing dialogue. I don't have any set patterns. You can carve more dramatic images with hard light, but soft light also has some advantages. It depends on the look you want. Ten years ago, there were times when we needed 10 units to light a scene. Today, I have a much simpler approach to lighting. I'll use one 12 K HMI unit for key light if I can. You don't have to fill every face in the shadows. I can create any look I want with today's 'fast' Eastman films because the contrast is there. If the director doesn't want contrast, I can alter the look in different ways. I feel my best work is still ahead of me. I want to work with great directors and make movies people will still enjoy 100 years from now."

Vilmos Zsigmond, ASC, won an Oscar for "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and nominations for "The Deer Hunter" and "The River." Other credits include "Deliverance," "McCabe and Mrs. Miller," and "The Witches of Eastwick."

Eastman
Motion Picture Films

Kodak

Vincent Desjardins

To Cut Negative Or Not To Cut Negative That Is The Question

by Leon Silverman
Vice-President, Marketing and Sales
Pacific Video, Hollywood, California

From studio boardrooms to cutting rooms, one of the hottest questions of the day is ...Do we need a cut negative? Many have reconsidered the benefits of new electronic post-production techniques for film television because of concern over foreign delivery and the future of HDTV (High Definition Television). And there are still some major studios and production companies that choose not to utilize electronic post because they feel it limits their ultimate distribution options.

Electronic Post Maturing

With the advent of electronic post-production, film television producers were able to realize savings in certain key areas. Print film dailies were replaced by the more time and cost effective electronic transfer and syncing of film directly to videotape. Electronic title and optical techniques yielded significant time and cost savings over traditional methods. The electronic equivalent of negative cutting and answer print—"online" assembly and electronic timing—proved to be quicker, cheaper and yielded superior quality. Even though some of these cost savings are offset by the dramatically higher cost of the electronic edit system itself, electronic post has still proven time and cost effective.

The ever changing and improving electronic edit systems, although far from perfect, can simply not be denied. Of the film editors who have learned and used electronic edit systems, there have been very few who prefer traditional film cutting techniques. The dramatic increase in the amount of prime-time network television now cut electronically is not only due to cost savings, but also is a result of the better quality product electronic post delivers both technically and creatively. The quick options and choices available on an electronic edit system are especially valuable to the television editor, who is constantly fighting the constraints of time.

NTSC To PAL Conversion Quality

The growing importance of international distribution and financing of American film television has been on a collision course with the rapid emergence of electronic post. Now six years into the electronic post "experiment," overseas markets are rebelling against the quality of American transfers sent to their markets.

Foreign distributors have been receiving electronic standards conversions—a direct transfer from our American NTSC 525 line standard master to a European 625 line standard master—an inferior product to many foreign distributors. Consequently, American producers are finding it increasingly difficult to sell standards converted programs as they look noticeably inferior when broadcast in the PAL countries, especially when intercut with PAL produced programs and commercials. There are even some distributors that will no longer accept standards conversions. Transfers to the higher resolution PAL system satisfy foreign distributors when they are made directly from cut negative film elements, but most shows that finish electronically do not have that option.

Over the next few years, the competition for programming between the veritable plethora of European communication satellite channels will mean increased opportunity for American program producers. It is imperative that the product a producer has to market is indeed marketable.

There have been great strides in the technology of converting NTSC video to the PAL standard in recent years. Digital video techniques and new "four field" converters have dramatically improved the quality of these transfers. However, even the newest state of the art devices are not completely free of objectionable motion defects. Problems such as "judder" or motion/frame lag are especially noticeable during action sequences. 'Smear" causes colors to bleed and the overall picture to appear pasty and desaturated. There is a noticeable lack of sharpness during movement. Because of this, foreign distributors have always ***preferred*** receiving film elements when available.

Go Back To Film?

How can we balance the need for film elements with the desire to take advantage of electronic post? There are many producers who, out of concern for their foreign delivery and worry over proposed future HDTV systems, are insisting that they have a cut negative version of their show. There is much talk these days of how to cut electronically and "go back to film." The need for cut negative is expressed with such an intensity that to challenge the conventional wisdom is to court certain rebuttal and intense scrutiny. Well, here goes..."YOU DON'T NEED A CUT NEGATIVE." How 'bout, "You may not need one now for domestic or foreign television release." OK,OK, "If you want to cut it, you can cut it, but you may not have to."

Introducing Image Translation

Cutting negative today for the PAL release is no longer necessary due to the new technology developed at Pacific Video called Image Translation™. Image Translation is a method of transferring NTSC video images to PAL with quality heretofore available only by re-transferring film directly to the PAL standard. With Image Translation, electronic post becomes an even more viable option. Now, a superior quality PAL copy can be made directly from the domestic

release NTSC master ***without*** need for cut film. However, the decision to not cut negative today in no way affects the ability to cut it anytime in the future. This new technology allows for the storage of negative cutting information directly in the video master. Should a cut negative be needed for any reason, this information can be used to conform original film elements.

Image Translation is a technique totally different from traditional standards conversion. It is an encoding process that begins with the initial negative transfer to NTSC videotape. This encoded information contains proprietary motion interpolation data and can include additional information such as key numbers, camera rolls, sound rolls and scene/take data. In addition, reference information to original digital audio tracks can be included for future digital assembly of sound elements. The encoded data is then tracked transparently through assembly, titles/opticals, formatting and final color timing.

The Image Translation data is then retrieved when making a PAL master. This method is not a "dub" process like standards conversion, where the NTSC master is played through a "black box" device in real time. The encoded data, along with the images on the NTSC master tape, are "translated" through a computer to create in non-real time, an Image Translation PAL master. The resultant PAL copy appears sharper and more detailed than the NTSC original. Indeed, the Image Translation process is an outgrowth of Pacific Video Engineering VP, Doug Jaqua's early work in HDTV.

The quality of Image Translation is now undisputed in the world television markets. This television season, the world's most discriminating television networks and buyers in countries such as Britain, Australia, France, and Germany have been enthusiastically accepting Image Translation PAL masters.

You now say, "Gee, that's nice that I don't have to cut negative for the PAL release, but won't I need a negative for HDTV?" Maybe someday, but most likely not for a while, and possibly not at all. The international political, industrial scramble for control over this promising new technology has wreaked havoc on everyone's dream of a global international HDTV standard. As of now, there are many incompatible proposed HDTV standards and transmission schemes that will take many years of planning, development and implementation. And that's *if* this cacophony of competing interests can reach a bit of common ground.

Don't preclude electronic post based on fear of the future. Why spend today's post-production dollars cutting negative, when it probably would be five years before a practical HDTV standard could be implemented?

Preparing For The Formats Of Tomorrow

Broadcasters are pushing for methods of transmitting HDTV that would be compatible with the existing 525 line format. In one of the proposed 1050 line standards, the television receiver would be equipped with a device that would double the lines *at* the set itself, thereby increasing what is called "effective resolution." Research has found that this doubling technique, when screened at typical home viewing distances and displayed on a monitor showing the new proposed HDTV aspect ratio, compared very favorably to "true" higher line resolution HDTV standards.

No matter which HDTV plan finally wins out, it can be quite cost effective to be ready for any of tomorrow's standards—today. After electronic post, break down and store the original camera "A" or circle take negative along with negative cutting information in the form of a list generated by the electronic edit system. All the most commonly used non-linear edit systems support software for negative cutting. In addition, Pacific can provide a reference cassette with burned in keys, time code and the other information that was encoded during the initial transfer that can serve as an "electronic workprint," when and if the time comes to cut the negative.

So you say that you "absolutely, positively, in spite of the foregoing, don't want to hear another thing about all this, desire to, need to, want to, and will by golly cut negative!" Well, OK, go ahead. Don't let me stop you. In fact, Pacific will cut it for you. But we think that it's important for you to know that, contrary to some of the current thinking, you don't necessarily need a cut negative today in order to obtain the highest quality PAL delivery and to ensure that all your programming is "HDTV ready." □

The State of the

"When you come right down to it, special effects are magic. It's making an audience believe they saw something other than what actually happened...If you do it exactly right, the audience will participate in the illusion. You can help set a mood which makes the audience part of what is happening."

That definition of the art and science of special film effects comes from Richard Edlund, ASC, who has been in the front ranks of a new generation of specialists who have mastered the art and science of visual effects.

From early split screens—where black velvet was taped over half the lens for one side of shooting, and then alternated for the other side—to complicated modern computer graphics that manipulate tiny dots of picture called pixels, visual effects have enhanced the art of cinema. For this special edition of the ***American Cinemeditor,*** we offer the thoughts of some of the leading personalities in our industry.

Gemini: The Link Between Film and Video

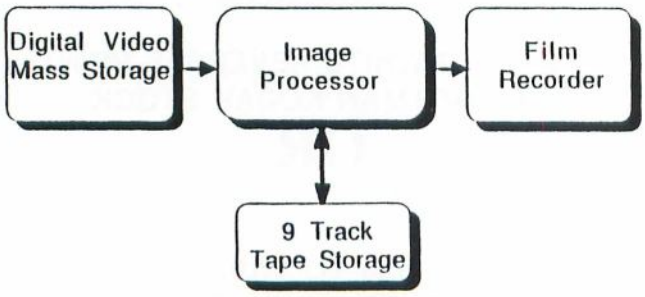
by Billy Pittard
President, Pittard Design

If you happened to tune in to the NBC mini-series *Around the World in 80 Days* this April 23-25, you'd have seen a main title and bumper graphics that were produced entirely in video and then transferred to 35mm film for final editing.

The ability to transform video to film is nothing new. However, in the past the quality of the transformed image has not been suitable for something like a network mini-series. The breakthrough quality of the image in the "80 Days" title is due to a new process called the Gemini process, which has just been developed by Pacific Title and Art Studio and The Post Group. To really appreciate the quality of the image, you have to see it on the big screen—and then you may find it hard to believe that it was ever video at all. It is incredible!

We got involved with the Gemini process when Renee Valente, the producer of "80 Days" for Harminy Gold, asked us if we could do the title on film instead of video as we had planned. We knew that Pacific Title and The Post Group were developing the process, so we asked them if we might be able to use it for the title. The answer was maybe, so we did a couple of tests which were shown to the Harmony Gold folks including editor Les Green. Everyone was satisfied with the image quality, so we moved ahead with only minor changes in our original production plan.

GEMINI PROCESS



There were big advantages for working in video on this project. We used a wide variety of techniques, including live action shot on film and transferred to digital tape, computer assisted motion control photography of models and artwork, 3-D computer graphic animation, traditional hand lettering treated and painted on an electronic paint system, rotoscoping, digital video effects, and digital video compositing and matting. All this was visually created on the video screen, so there was no waiting for film processing to see what we had. We were able to send out video cassettes of work-in-progress for approval and review. We didn't have to be concerned with film shrinkage or generation loss. Most of the piece had five or more generations on it and included complex transparent mixes of images and very soft edged traveling mattes. In general, we had every type of video tool and technique at our disposal.

There was one effect that we didn't use on this project, but where we see a great potential. One could create graphics or effects in video, create a matte for the effects, process the material through Gemini, and then optically composite the effects or graphics with a traditional film background. While the effects are still in video, they can be composited over the background, so that you can see what the final piece will look like before going to film. Of course, at this point it is easy to make video cassettes for viewing the work.

One of the reasons that this system works so well is because it takes advantage of the new digital format known as 4:2:2/D-1 format. This format carries much more picture information than the standard NTSC format and therefore is better both in terms of resolution and image quality. The digital nature of the format is also very important because it means that a picture can go through a tremendous amount of processing or generations and remain first-generation quality. It is also fairly simple to archive

sequential steps of a project and that makes changes easier to handle—which of course saves money.

If you ask Pacific Title or The Post Group how they get the video onto film, they'll tell you it's done with a "black box," but I can tell you a little more. The video picture going into the process must be D-1, or be converted to D-1 (a simple process), and then they use some proprietary software running on an image processing computer to enhance the resolution of the picture before it goes into a film recorder, where it is captured on high-res 35mm film.

The process came about when effects specialist Bruno George got together with Phil Feiner of Pacific Title to talk about a way of marrying film and video effects. The two then approached Rich Thorne of The Post Group to seek help with the video side of things. Thorne assigned Bill Villarreal to engineer the process with the help of software specialist Stewart Dickson. Meanwhile, Pacific Title was busy developing a film system that would assure the highest resolution possible with the least generation loss. The result is the Gemini Process.

As a user of the system, I'm very impressed with what these two companies have done. And what they have done is break down the barrier between film and video. The process has a very exciting future. □

Pittard Design is a Hollywood based firm specializing in design, graphics and animated effects for the entertainment industry.

Image Processing

by Ed Jones
Post-Production Manager
Industrial Light & Magic (ILM)
San Rafael, California

The ILM digital composite printing and effects animation system is an image processing system for live action motion picture sequences, capable of supplementing a combination of traditional special visual effects techniques, including optical printer manipulations, rotoscoping, articulate matte animation, travelling matte extraction and optical compositing of multiple motion picture film elements. Digital storage of images allows infinite amount of copying and duplicating with no quality loss (just like computer data). Traditional optical photography requires a duplication process that degenerates the image quality. ILM uses a Vistavision format that lessens the loss of image quality, but the future lies in digital storage.

Digital compositing allows an unlimited number of effects to be applied to an image. An artist is able to manipulate images by stretching, warping, creating painting effects, etc. The image processor is able to combine the images without creating line mattes in the composites. In this case, the two images combine down to the pixel. Also, it's possible to matte without any screen material (i.e. blue screen). By photographing two versions of a scene, with and without the people or items to matte, the computer can compare the two and show the differences. This technique is done by the military and in assembly line productions to check for missing parts. The matting process is similar to the Ultimatte system, where you can control and retain shadows and ignore seams in the material. One area of the scene can be adjusted separately from the other areas without creating articulate mattes and complicated split screens.

Restoration of old film or damaged film is another option. Scratches, blotches, etc. can be removed and then replaced with pixels. Salvaging scenes is also possible to some extent. An out of focus image can be put in focus with image processing. It's also possible to increase or decrease exposure and/or contrast to a much larger extent than with standard film processes.

Many hand done functions can be automated, such as rotoscoping, thus making some projects more economically feasible. Faster turnaround time, dependent on the complexity, is also a great advantage. Rather than waiting a day or more per stage for the film to get back from the lab, all steps could be done and output that same day.

A wide variety of image manipulation effects can be obtained whether for film or television, but those created for television can be reproduced to a higher quality level and more subtlety. Being able to combine images in situations that are impossible with traditional optical and electronic techniques is another area of entertainment and education where ILM continues to extend the boundaries of technology. □

Photo Courtesy ILM

A photographic look at the woman/tiger in *Willow*.

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A View FROM THE BAY

Blue Screen Compositing With Ultimatte

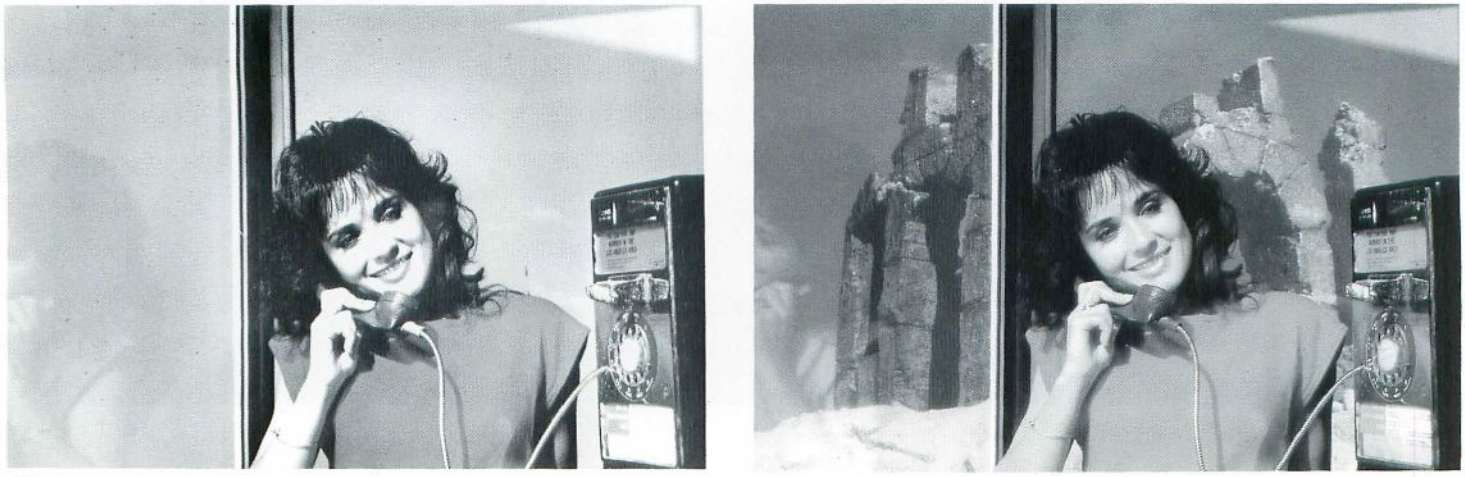
by **Richard Patterson**

If your show has to be delivered on film and the production calls for a blue screen composite with smoke, shadows and transparent objects in the foreground, you should probably add two weeks for optical printing to the post-production schedule. You might also want to light some candles and pray that the optical department is up to the task of creating realistic composites when the foreground subject includes fine hair detail, soft edges, out of focus objects, reflections in glass, or glossy black objects.

Deliver the same show on videotape and the compositing process may add a few extra hours to the post-production schedule. And the same foreground elements which create such headaches in optical printing may be a piece of cake in video compositing, even if the original photography is done on film. The reason for this is Ultimatte.

Ultimatte is a video image compositing system which has its roots in blue screen travelling matte photography. Ultimatte requires an RGB video signal for its foreground in order to generate the matte signal used to control the compositing. The matte signal is based on the

Foreground blended with background via Ultimatte



Photos Courtesy of Ultimatte

difference in the level of blue (or green in the case of a green screen shot) and the higher of the other two colors. The purer the color of the backing, the better the unit will function, and the more it is capable of distinguishing similar foreground colors from the backing.

The Ultimatte matte signal is comparable to a hold-out matte used in optical printing. However, it is not just a hi-con image. It is a fully linear image with all shades of gray as well as black and white. The principal adjustment made in the operation of an Ultimatte controls the density of this signal. It is called the Subject control on the Ultimatte-4 or the Matte Density control on the Ultimatte-5.

If the matte signal is viewed on the monitor as this control is adjusted, you can see the silhouette corresponding to the foreground subject getting darker. Setting the control is like setting the exposure or density for a hold-out matte. The object is to set it at the level where any area of the foreground which is supposed to be opaque is a dead black in the matte signal. Over-cranking the control will have an effect similar to shooting a hold-out matte that is too dense. The edges of the silhouette which should be gray become black, and a black edge will appear around the foreground subject in the final composite.

Any area in the matte signal which is gray will be a mix of the background and the foreground in the final composite. Any area that is a full white will be just the background with no trace of the foreground in the final composite image.

An Ultimatte uses the matte signal to do two things. First of all, it suppresses the backing color in the foreground to produce what is called the processed foreground. The processed foreground is the foreground subject in a black limbo after the backing color has been suppressed. It is the matte signal which tells Ultimatte where or how much to subtract from each color in order to suppress the backing to black. Any discoloration of the edges of the foreground subject caused by spill light or flare from the backing color is also removed in the processed foreground. The Ultimatte has very complex circuitry designed to remove this "blue spill" or "green spill" from the foreground subject by analyzing the relative levels of the RGB signals independently of the generation of the matte signal.

The second use of the matte signal is to modulate the background so that its level is lower anywhere that the foreground will be translucent. In any area of the image where the foreground is opaque, the background scene will be taken to zero.

Once the foreground has been processed and the background has been modulated, they are then added together in the output stage of the Ultimatte. This is done by means of what is called a fully additive mix. There is no further modulation or attenuation of either signal. The two elements are simply superimposed. This method of combining the two signals differs from what is normally called an additive mix in a video switcher. The additive mix in a switcher is a balanced mix where each signal is turned off in proportion to the amount that the other is turned on.

Many television productions and commercials shoot blue screen elements on film and composite them with the Ultimatte process when the film is transferred to tape on a telecine. While care must be taken in shooting the film, this technique can offer a production the best of both worlds. Image compositing in video post-production is a great deal faster and more economical than compositing in an optical printer. In many instances it can also yield superior results, provided the end product is to be distributed on videotape.

There are a variety of options available to the production shooting film for compositing in video. Originally the best place to do the compositing was in the telecine suite as the foreground was transferred. More recently, however, the introduction of component recording formats such as the digital D-1 format or the Betacam-SP format, has made it possible to move the compositing into the editing suite. The foreground scenes can be transferred to tape without going through the Ultimatte and without having to decide precisely how the action should line up with the action in the background scene. Off-line editing time can be used to select the best takes and make the necessary choices about the relationships between the background and foreground action. □

THERE'S A BOTTOM LINE BELOW THE LINE

Dick and Dan Christy

Hollywood's Post-Production Entrepreneurs

by Paula Lumbard

Five years ago I started my own business. I left production and went to work "below the line" opening a stock footage library and archive. I expected a difficult undertaking, but I never dreamed what a roller coaster ride it would be. There are times when I could not imagine how the individual entrepreneur with limited capital could succeed in the wildly creative and competitive world of the entertainment industry. However, as I began to look around me, I became aware of, took heart and inspiration from, people who had done it and were prospering.

This column will introduce those men and women, who with little more than a dream, a lot of knowhow, and tremendous stamina, have opened up businesses servicing the entertainment industry's post-production needs. Through interviews they will share their stories, insights, fears, failures and successes to give us a glimpse of what it is like to take the entrepreneurial gamble and win.

■ ■ ■

CHRISTY'S EDITORIAL SUPPLY

A striking success story of perseverance and imagination is that of the Christy brothers. Dick and Dan grew up working in their father's restaurants, moving from Los Angeles to Lancaster to Tahoe and back again. They had the opportunity to make a life in the family business, but for kids who grew up around movies, and in a movie town, Hollywood presented more exciting options.

In 1961, Dick, the oldest of the two, left his father's restaurant and became a driver for a film lab. Dan followed three years later. By 1969, Dick had become a successful negative cutter, working in Burbank on shows such as *Laugh-In.* Like other cutters in the San Fernando Valley, he often became frustrated when work was delayed by supplies running out. At that time, all the film suppliers were located in Hollywood, and they would only make limited deliveries to the Valley. Editors and negative cutters often waited a week or more for a delivery or were compelled to make a trip over the hill to pick up supplies themselves.

Dick had the idea to provide the services they were not getting in the Valley, and to provide them with speed and enthusiasm—two qualities he saw lacking in what would soon become his competitors. Dan, who was working at that time at MGM, was invited to join the venture, and on May 15, 1969, the brothers joined forces. With a loan of five thousand dollars, plus the help and support of their wives Betty and Alice, they opened the doors of Christy's Editorial Supply in a 1,000 square foot building on Magnolia Boulevard in Burbank.

The infant years of Christy's Editorial Supply saw the children sleeping on the cots in the office, while their parents worked around the clock. To supplement the family income and help to put food on the table, Dick taught Dan negative cutting. A rhythm was set; they cut negative at night and launched Christy's by day. Betty and Alice ran the office and were responsible for the bookkeeping and handled all the paperwork. A tradition was born in those early days, one that has become a Christy's trademark; no order was too small, and deliveries were made the day an order was placed.

After the first eighteen months, it became increasingly apparent that there was a conflict of interest between the negative cutting service and the Christy's supply business. The brothers found themselves bidding against their own customers for negative cutting assignments. It was apparent that they were not going to succeed if they held on to both businesses. So they followed a hunch that was true to their enterprising nature; they let go of the more lucrative negative cutting service, taking the gamble that the supply business would be more profitable in the long run. They were right.

All negative cutting jobs were turned over to their supply customers. They sold their family vehicles and bought identical white trucks, which they painted with the now familiar Christy's logo. Although there were only two trucks, they painted the front of one with the number one and the back with a number three, while the other truck had a number two painted on the front and four on the back. By sometimes pulling in, other times backing in, they gave their customers the impression that there was a fleet of new trucks. Because they were on a shoestring budget, these same trucks were used to take studio executives to lunch and also ferry the children to school.

In 1974, they moved into a building seven times larger than their original site. The partners worked to create a feeling

of an extended family in their work place, sensing that to succeed they needed employees who felt valued and who would stay on to contribute to the growth of the business. As more and more people joined the company, employees were advanced into management and leadership roles. Annual company trips to Las Vegas or deep sea fishing helped to keep morale high. Also, the constant sight of the owners chipping in to help wherever needed—unloading trucks or cleaning the warehouse—contributed greatly to a sense of community and shared purpose.

Financial challenges continued to confront the brothers. Although they were experiencing rapid and consistent growth, they found themselves undercapitalized. The demand for their services exceeded what they could afford to purchase to keep their warehouse stocked. Confronting again the principle that risk-taking is endemic to all entrepreneurial ventures, the brothers borrowed thirty thousand dollars, paid off all their bills, and invested the rest of the money in inventory. It was not long before they took still another calculated risk; they diversified and expanded into the equipment rental business. The business has not stopped growing since.

Today, the Christy brothers own a spacious 12,000 square foot building, and the children are grown and work for Christy's. Both staff and sales have more than doubled in the last three years, and two competitors have been bought out.

Sitting with both brothers, I asked them if they had any advice for those readers who too share that "entrepreneurial restlessness" and have a persistent urge to start a business. Dan immediately burst out with an affirmative "go for it," but leavened his enthusiasm with a caution "never take money out of the business in the first year or two. Don't be greedy ... pay your bills and yourself enough to get by." To this, Dick added "You suffer for the first few years, and you need to be prepared for that. You can't go out to dinner much...there will be sacrifices."

What did Dick think was the key business principle in their formula for success? "Learn from your competitors' mistakes, and sell your customers what they want, not what you think they need." Dick has retired, but true to his nature, he has started a new venture, "IN SYNC" magazine. Dan runs the show at Christy's but still consults with his brother.

On May 15, 1989, Christy's will celebrate twenty years of success with a party complete with gifts for their clients, including trips to Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Catalina for a few lucky customers. Surely they have much to celebrate. With a five thousand dollar investment, Christy's has become one of the leading film and video supply services in the nation, possessing twenty-five employees, a real fleet of trucks, and a business that is still growing.

The Christy's story has validated my own experience in starting a business in the entertainment industry. That is, with a good idea, strong nerves, and relentless dedication to provide a quality product or service, one can survive and even make it in entrepreneurial Hollywood. □

*Paula Lumbard is owner and President of the **FILM BANK**, located in Burbank, California*

THE TRIM BIN

by Bob Bring, A.C.E.

Byron "Buzz" Brandt

Guts and Glory: The Rise and Fall of Oliver North

Executive Producer: Mike Robe
Producer: Bob Papazian
Director: Mike Robe
Cast: David Keith, Annette O'Toole, Peter Boyle, Barnard Hughes
"A four-hour mini-series; George Nicholson is editing half the project on 'glorious film' at C.F.I."

Donn Cambern

Ghostbusters II

Executive Producer: Ivan Reitman
Producers: Michael Gross, Joe Medjuck
Associate Producers: Gordon Webb and Sheldon Kahn
Director: Ivan Reitman
Cast: Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver
"Editing at Burbank Studios with Sheldon Kahn."

Scott Eyler

Nightingales

Producers: Aaron Spelling, Doug Cramer
Cast: Suzanne Pleshette, Barry Newman
"Editing at Warner-Hollywood Studios, assisted by Sharon Bernard."

Robert Florio

A Deadly Silence

Producers: Robert Greenwald, Phil Kleinbart
Director: John Patterson
Cast: Mike Farrell, Charles Haid, Sally Struthers, Bruce Weitz
"Editing on the Montage at Pacific Video, as well as co-producing this docudrama for A.B.C."

Joe Ann Fogle

Common Knowledge

Executive Producer: Michael Manheim
Producer: Greg Hoblit
Director: Greg Hoblit
"For N.B.C. Productions."

Duane Hartzell

Parent Trap III

Producer: Henry Coleman
Director: Molly Miller
Cast: Hayley Mills, Barry Bostwick
"Editing on the Montage with Howard Kunin for Magical World of Disney."

Buford F. Hayes

In The Heat Of The Night

Producers: David Moessinger, Jeri Taylor
Cast: Carroll O'Connor, Howard Rollins, Jr.
"TV series for Fred Silverman Co. and MGM/UA."

Alan Heim

Valmont

Producer: Michael Halsman-Renn
Director: Milos Forman
"Another version of 'Dangerous Liasons.' Editing at Duart Labs in New York City."

John (Jack) Horger

Love Hurts

Producers: Bud Yorkin, Doro Bachrach
Director: Bud Yorkin
Cast: Jeff Daniels, Cloris Leachman
"I am spending 8 weeks in New York City to supervise the EFX editing and mixing. Doing sound editing at Sound One and Dubbing at Todd-AO."

Doug Ibold

B.L. Stryker

Producers: Tom Selleck, Burt Reynolds, Chas-Floyd Johnson, Alan Barnette, Chris Abbott, and Rick Weaver
Cast: Burt Reynolds, Ossie Davis, Rita Moreno
"A segment of ABC Mystery Movie, shooting in and around Palm Beach, Florida. Editing at Universal Studios in California."

Lynzee Klingman

The War Of The Roses

Producers: Jim Brooks, Arnon Milchan
Director: Danny De Vito
Cast: Danny De Vito, Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner
"Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner are a married couple named Rose..."

Jerrold L. Ludwig

Stella

Producers: Samuel Goldwyn, Jr., David Picker
Director: John Erman
Cast: Bette Midler
"An updated version of 'Stella Dallas' for Goldwyn and Touchstone Pictures. Editing in Toronto and Disney Studios in Burbank."

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

WHAT PICTURE
ARE YOU CURRENTLY EDITING?

The following responses were received by the deadline for this issue.

Alan C. Marks

Alien Nation

Executive Producer: Kenneth Johnson
Director: Kenneth Johnson
Cast: Eric Pierpoint, Gary Graham
"A 2 hour pilot, based on Fox's film of last summer, which hopefully will be around longer than the movie. Editing at Fox."

Barry D. Nye

Bali—Gift Of The Gods

Producer: Miriam Birch
Director: Miriam Birch
"Preparing to dub this 'National Geographic T.V. Special. Produced in D.A.T. stereo at WQED West."

Leon Ortiz-Gil

Loose Cannon

Producers: Fred Silverman, Dean Hargrove
Director: Chris Hibler
Cast: Shadoe Stevens
"Editing this 2-hour action pilot for Viacom."

David Saxon

When We Were Young

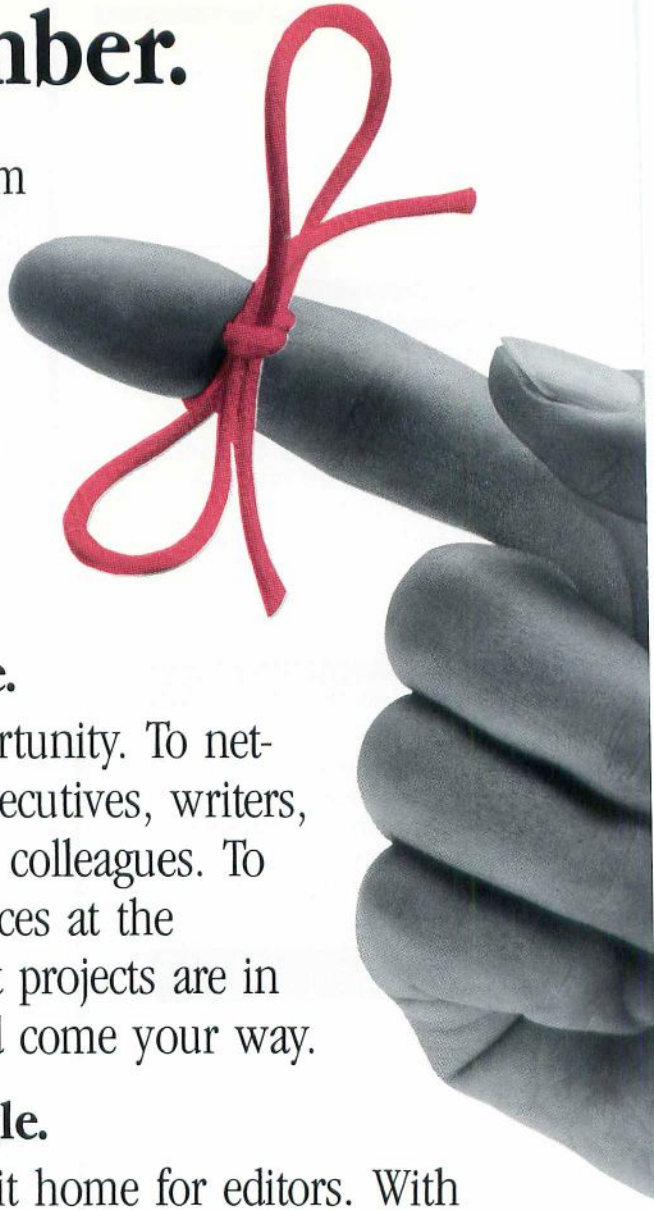
Producer: George Eckstein
Director: Darryl Duke
"A two-hour pilot."

David Simmons

Blind Fury

Producers: Tim Matheson, Daniel Grodnik
Director: Phillip Noyce
Cast: Rutger Hauer
"An action comedy for Tri-Star."

Remember September.



The glamour and glitter of a major film and television festival...the hot issues of a major international Conference... an international film market for the buyers and sellers of the film world...a Production & Location Expo to show off the best technologies and locations.

CINETEX. This September.

Cinema Editors, Get the Big Picture.

For editors, CINETEX is a special opportunity. To network with producers, directors, studio executives, writers, and cinematographers. To talk shop with colleagues. To catch up on all the latest technical advances at the Production & Location Expo. To see what projects are in the works. And what opportunities could come your way.

Conference Topics From Every Angle.

The CINETEX Conference will really hit home for editors. With sessions focusing on topics that affect your future—such as how the emergence of computer/video technology will affect the future of the traditional cinema editing process, plus many other key issues.

A Star-Studded Film Festival.

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The Production/Location Expo & Film Market.

Rounding out CINETEX are two world-class industry events. The Production & Location Expo, where international and domestic film

commissions, their leading locations along with production suppliers will show you what's hot. And the CINETEX International Film Market, North America's only international fall film market that draws film, video and television producers, distributors and buyers from across the U.S.A. and around the world.

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Join your colleagues in Las Vegas this September for the entire CINETEX experience. Phone, fax, telex, or complete and return the coupon *today* for attendee information.

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Introducing Digital Sound Editing

by Laura Cohen

Imagine this situation. It's your second day on the dubbing stage. Schedules are tight, nerves are tense and what makes matters worse—all the sound editing has been done electronically. Digitally. You have no idea what to expect. Reel 2 arrives and you want to explode. It's a laser battle, and none of the lasers sound right! You know full well there isn't any time to change them. Then, magically, someone from the machine room appears and explains that he can fix the problem instantly. Then—instants later—the problem has been solved. The mixers play the scene and the lasers sound fine. Sharper, crisper, faster.

"HOW DID YOU DO THAT?"

"Oh, R.A.M." He smiles. "You wouldn't understand. That's a digital term."

But you DO want to understand—to learn—everything you can about this magical thing... digital technology.

Learning about the state of digital sound editing technology is not an easy task. There are all sorts of different devices you can buy: keyboard samplers, sound manipulators, digital work stations, and the prices for these various systems can range anywhere between fifteen thousand and a quarter of a million dollars.

Digital systems can essentially be separated into two categories: the sequencer samplers and the hard disk recorders. It's easy to tell these two breeds apart because the sequencer samplers look like pianos, and in fact, the "Rolls Royce" of sequencer samplers is called the Synclavier (which means synthesizer piano).

The **Synclavier** goes for $250,000 for a full-blown system; the Synclavier 3200 (a modified version without a piano keyboard) sells for a more modest $67,000. The system is musical in origin and the tool of choice for composers ranging from film composer Alan Silvestri to pop artist Stevie Wonder. But what makes it appealing to musicians (the ability to load, store, edit, speed up, slow down and generally manipulate musical notes or sounds, and build synchronized sequences of these sounds) makes it an excellent sound effects editing tool as well.

Star Trek, the Next Generation, is the perfect kind of TV show to be edited on the Synclavier (and it is). The show occupies a high-tech world, and many synthetic sounds are used (all of which can be manufactured using the Synclavier's FM Synthesis Process). The whooshes, shazaams and laser beams can further be digitally manipulated, using the Synclavier's pitch wheels and foot pedals, so that they can be slowed down to even half their original pitch or reversed or given a warble.

Piano keyboard editing is fast. Many editors like to just lay their hands on the piano keys and shoot in their effects Foley-style. If they get it wrong, the Synclavier provides a method whereby they can achieve perfect sync.

If the Synclavier is caviar, then the **Emulator** is tuna. Manufactured by E-mu Systems in Santa Cruz, California, the Emulator is a sequence sampler, with the obligatory piano keyboard. It does what the Synclavier does, but to a more limited extent because it has less memory and less sound fidelity. It does a lot for its price, $14,000.

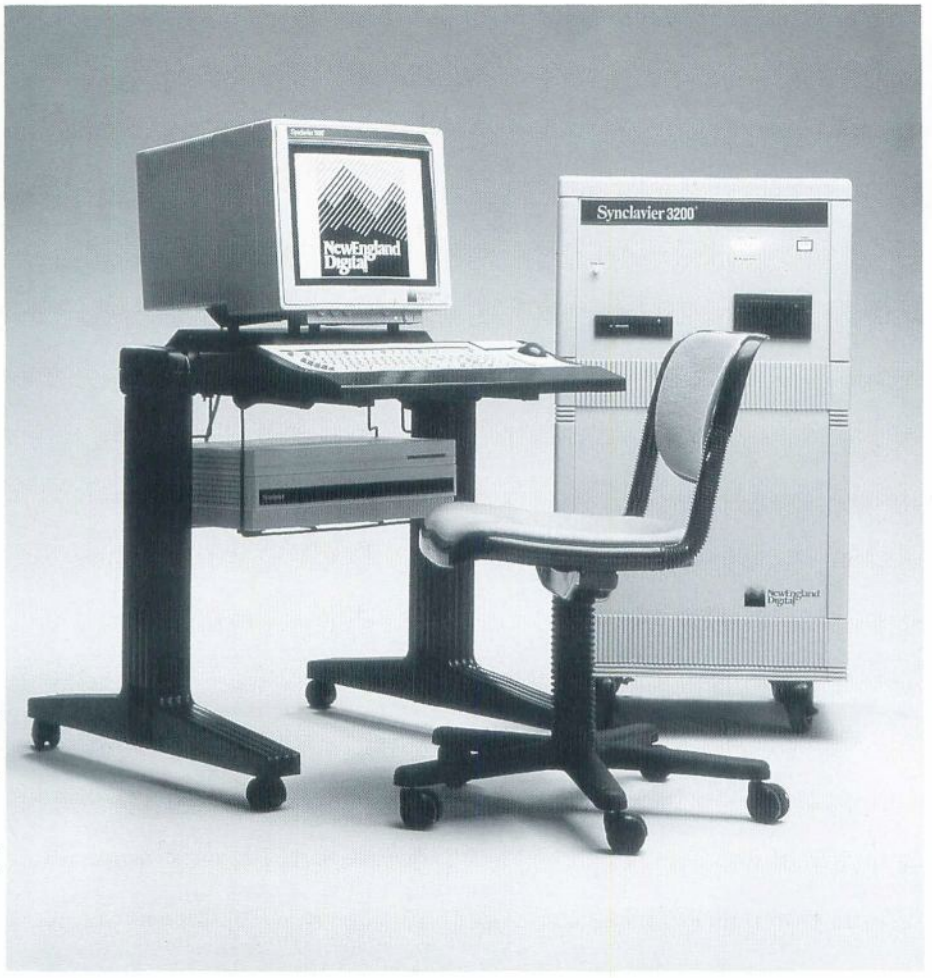


Photo Courtesy of New England Digital

Synclavier 3200

The **A.M.S. Audiofile** is a hard disk recorder, and lacks a piano keyboard. It is manufactured by the British company, Advanced Music Systems, and represented by Harry Harris in Los Angeles. The Audiofile and all hard disk recorders differ from the sequence samplers in a number of important ways. Unlike the Synclavier or Emulator, they don't have random access memory, so neat magic tricks like slowing things down or reversing a sound can't be accomplished with these systems.

According to Ray Niznik of New England Digital, hard disk recorders are kind of like "tapeless multi-track recording systems, great for dialogue editing, A.D.R. (Automated Dialogue Replacement) or mixdowns." While sound manipulation is not possible with these systems, precise editing work is. Lines of dialogue can be trimmed, director's voices removed, and fill inserted. A.D.R. can be recorded directly into the system and edited in sync with the picture inside the system. These machines sell for about $90,000.

Direct-To-Disk is New England Digital's hard disk recorder. It has more tracks and memory than the Audiofile and also a higher price tag, $120,000.

The preceding four digital systems are generally considered to be professional top-of-the-line systems. What drives the price of a system up? Ray Niznik explains, "R.A.M. (Random Access Memory) is expensive. That's why there's such a price difference between the Synclavier and Direct-to-Disk." The more of something a system has, the more expensive it will be. More tracks. Higher sampling rate (for higher fidelity sound). More voices (so the system can play lots of sounds at once).

And then, there are the things you can't see. Niznik comments, "People see the hardware, but they don't realize software is expensive too." Other factors that make the Synclavier so expensive are availability of free training, service calls, etc.

Indeed, digital tools can work magic on the dubbing stage or in the cutting room. Learn all you can about digital technology first, and then you can successfully make it work for you! □

EDDIE AWARDS MAKE EXCITING EVENING

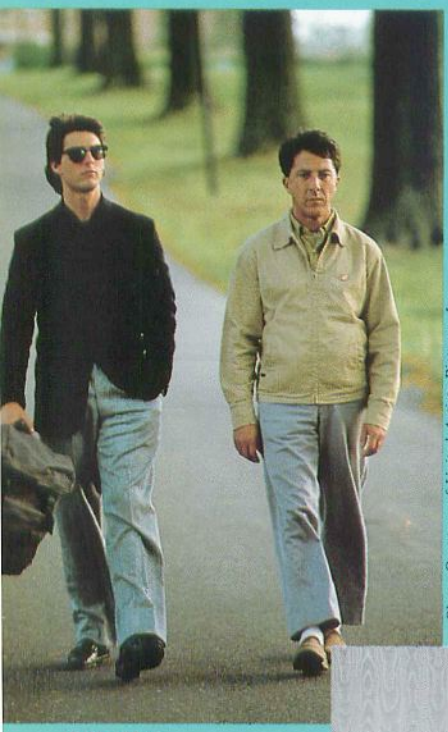


Photo Courtesy of United Artists Pictures, Inc.

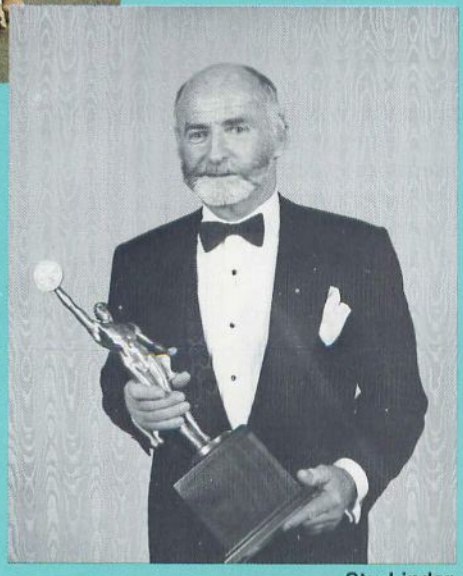
Rain Man

A surprise tie saw *Mississippi Burning's* Gerry Hambling and *Rain Man's* Stu Linder both walk off with Eddie Awards for Best Editing of a Feature Motion Picture at the 39th Annual American Cinema Editor Awards competition held March 18 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

Director John Badham, the evening's keynote speaker, lauded the contributions of editors. "You've bailed me out more times than I can think of and saved me from a lot of bad mistakes," he told the crowd in the filled-to-capacity Grand Ballroom. He called editors "the most under-appreciated people in film and television."

Badham's's sentiment was echoed by Master of Ceremonies Ritch Schydner—a very fun guy who's also a regular on *Married With Children.* "Being an editor is like being an interior lineman on a football team," he quipped. "The way I judge an editor's work is, like, if there's a two-and-a-half minute blank spot on my TV screen—then I know someone screwed up in the editing room."

Editors in the 1988 field deemed best by their peers included James U. Galloway Jr., A.C.E., who won Best Editing of a Television Special for *The Taking of Flight 847: The Uli Derickson Story;* ACE President John A. Martinelli, who took top honors in the Best Editing of



Stu Linder

Mississippi Burning

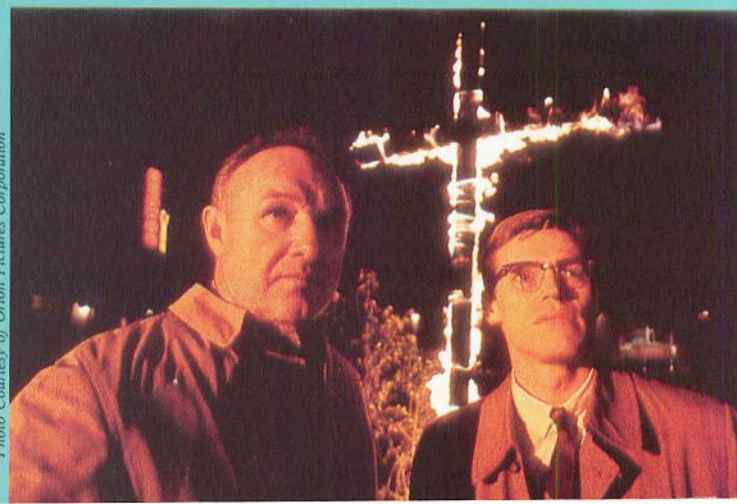
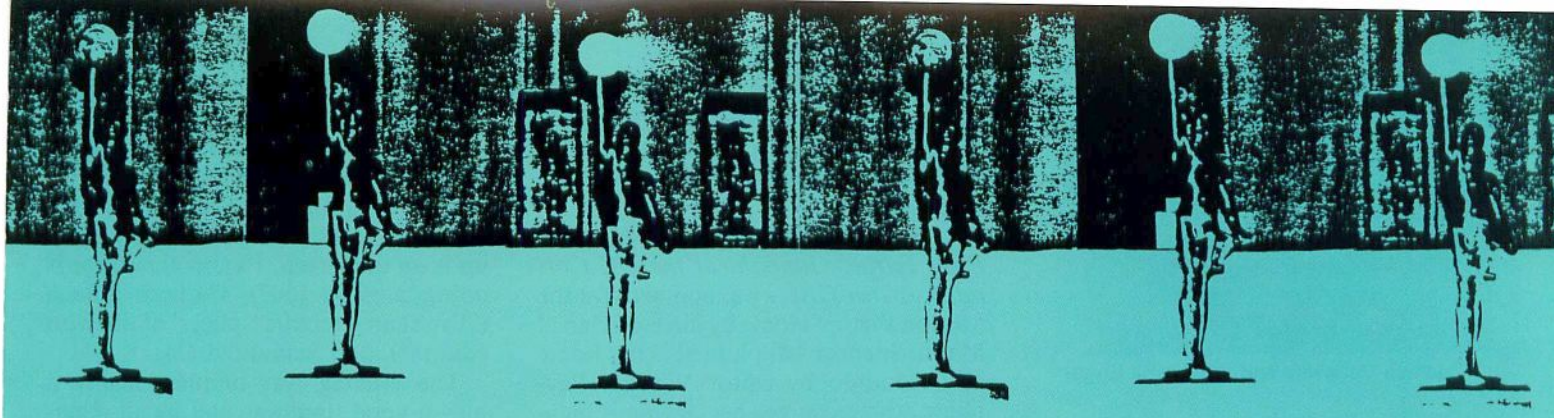


Photo Courtesy of Orion Pictures Corporation



an Episode from a Miniseries category for *The Murder of Mary Phagan: Part II;* and Victor DuBois and Steven Rosenblum, who garnered the Best Editing of an Episode from a TV Series trophy for their *Accounts Receivable* episode of *thirty-something.*

A.C.E.'s Barry D. Nye was voted tops in the Editing of a Documentary for *The Explorers: A Century of Discovery,* and student winner Joe Lunne of Montana State University proved best in a field of 41 contestants at editing a *Dynasty* episode.

Career Achievement Awards went to Warren Low and Dorothy Spencer, who both have careers spanning 50 years with

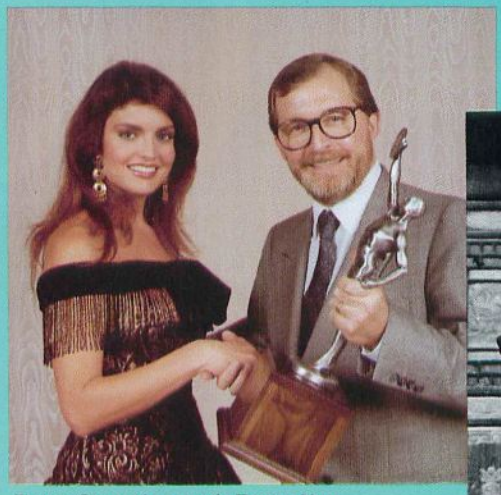
continued on page 42

The Martinellis—Norma, Tony, and John

Photo Courtesy of Orion Television

Scene from *The Murder of Mary Phagan*

Roddy McDowell and Gerry Hambling



Tracy Scoggins and Barry Nye

PHOTO COURTESY WQED/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Scene from *The Explorers: A Century of Discovery*

James Galloway and Samantha Eggar

continued from page 42

four Academy Award nominations each. Neither was able to attend, due to poor health, but they accepted their awards by phone with emotional and touching speeches.

Low—who edited such classics as *The Rose Tattoo, Gunfight at the OK Corral,* and *True Grit* —was contacted at the Motion Picture Home by director Daniel Mann. Spencer was phoned at her home in Escondido by editor William Reynolds, who recounted her cinematic highlights including *Stagecoach, Decision Before Dawn,* and *Cleopatra.* Actor Roddy McDowall—Spencer's buddy from *Cleopatra* and also a presenter that evening—came on stage to congratulate and share a few warm words with her.

Other presenters included Mark Hamill ("I never realized how much I appreciated editors until I started working in theatre"), Tracy Scoggins ("If my close-up is on the screen, I know the editor is doing a good job"), Catherine Bach ("I've shared terrific 'splices' of life with editors"), and Samantha Eggar.

The evening was unquestionably a hit—a good time was had by all. Congrats to co-chairs Edward M. Abroms and Bob Bring for one of the best Eddie Awards evening ever. □

by Denise Abbott

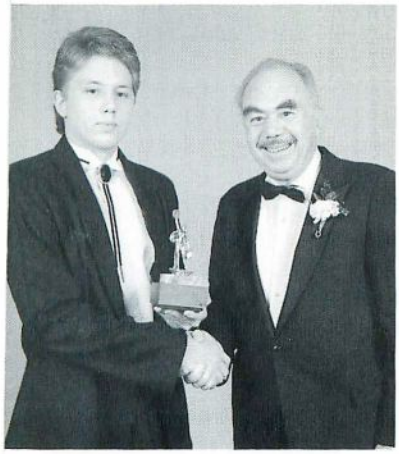
Photo Courtesy of Columbia Pictures Television

Scene from *The Taking of Flight 847: The Uli Derickson Story*

Photo Courtesy of CAPITAL CITIES/ABC, INC.

thirtysomething

Catherine Bach and Victor DuBois



Student Winner Joe Lunne and Student Award Committee Chairman George Grenville

Editor's Note...All pictures of the 39th Eddie Awards on March 18, 1988 were taken by photographer Ed Abroms, Jr. Reprints of his work are available by calling (818) 772-1285.

Low Presented Award

Warren Low, co-recipient of the Career Achievement Award, together with his wife Shirley and their family, was visited by many of his long-time friends at the Motion Picture Home on Sunday, April 2, 1989.

A.C.E. President John Martinelli and Vice-President Bernie Balmuth took the occasion to formally present Warren with his award.

Ed Abroms, Fred Berger, Jack Davies, Bill Elias, Stan Frazen, Walter Hannemann, John Hathorne, Danny Kahn, Hazel Marshall, Irv Rosenblum, Lindy Schlesinger and Rusty Wiles were there to add their admiration and affection to the touching tribute.

Bernie Balmuth, Warren and Shirley Low

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Scene and Heard

1989 got off to a terrific start for ACE members and friends. **Lee** and **Mike Denecke** recently bought a home in North Hollywood...and their lives haven't been the same since. "The work never ends but I'm happy we did it," says Mike, whose Denecke Inc. manufactures items such as interlocks for Kem editing machines. Between overseeing the home improvements and creating new products for his company, Mike says he's never been so busy.

Editor **Ann Coates** spends as much time outdoors as her schedule allows. "Editors are stuck indoors for such long periods," says the English native, about to begin **Lawrence Kasdan's** *I Love You to Death.* "So I love taking advantage of this beautiful Southern California weather whenever I can." Sailing and horseback riding are her favorite pastimes. She loves nothing better than blazing trails in Hidden Valley and Malibu, and is hoping to buy a horse of her own in the near future.

English editor **Chris Wimble** is working with his assistant **Alex Olivares** on the feature *Defenseless* at New Visions Pictures. Chris cuts his film without a Moviola, using the Compeditor (a motorized sync machine with picture and sound heads) to make his cut decisions. That's the way he cuts all his pictures back in Great Britain.

David and **Sylvia Saxon** report that their two children, **James** and **Jennifer** have both graduated from college. "Time and money—it sure went fast," sighs David.

Life member **Archie Marshek** would like to hear from some of his old friends in A.C.E. His address is 204 N.W. 44 #A, Lawton, OK 73505.

Foto-Kem's **John Shafer** thinks everyone should move to Canyon Country. Where else, he asks, can you ski, play golf and race dirt bikes—all in a single weekend? Shafer, who taught daughters **Cassie** and **Marissa** to ride off-road, feels strongly that bikers should wear helmets. "I understand those who don't wear them, but I think they're foolish. Bike riders are the last of a rugged breed, or so they think anyway." When John isn't bike riding or golfing, you'll find him in the stands cheering for Canyon High School's football team. Team spirit is a Shafer family endeavor—with Cassie, John's eldest, managing the Varsity team, and Marissa managing the sophomores. "Managers used to be called 'water boys,'" John explains. "Now they're 'managers' and they're nearly always female."

Scott Eyler, currently editing *Nightingales,* is into the swing of his new favorite hobby—golf. "I started playing during the writers' strike and have really taken to it." In addition to the sport itself,

Marissa, John, and Cassie Shafer; Sally Gerlich (sister)

he enjoys the camaraderie golf provides. "I meet a lot of interesting people—very few jerks."

Sam Katz, director of Focus—the largest national student film competition in the U.S.—is working hard on her first venture into developing a book for a feature film. She's had her eye on **Marcy Heidish's** novelized biography *The Secret Annie Oakley* ever since it was first published in 1983, and she finally optioned it last fall. "It's a beautiful and serious historical drama about a fascinating woman, whose life was far from the fatuous musical comedy image that's been perpetuated through the years," says Sam, who's co-writing the screenplay with **Camille Thomasson.** "The story is by no means a Western but the principal characters (Oakley, Buffalo Bill Cody, Chief Sitting Bull) are still perceived in that vein. With the success of *Young Guns* and *Lonesome Dove,* I think things will be opening up somewhat for 19th century American history to make its way back to the big screen. I certainly hope so!" Sam's hoping to interest an actress such as **Debra Winger** or **Holly Hunter** in the title role.

Peter and **Mimi Parasheles** are preparing for their upcoming two-month trip to Greece at the end of May. Peter tells us he's actually "exploring the possibility of moving there" and has his sights set on the island of Lesbos. Though he's of Greek descent and has "remnants of family" still living there, he hasn't been back in more than 30 years.

Former A.C.E. President **James Blakeley, Sr.** recently addressed the annual conference of the World Airline Entertainment Association (WAEA), held this year in Los Angeles. He spoke about his work at 20th Century Fox, where he re-edits features for airline presentation—an ancillary business which grosses millions of dollars each year. James condenses films such as *Die Hard* and *Working Girl* to airline regulation 115 minutes and eliminates nudity, excessive violence, and profanity from the track. "Ninety percent of what I edit these days is profanity," he says. "At the conference, I demonstrated how I cut out a dirty word and replace it with a clean one. The audience loved that!" According to James, airlines screen the feature-length version first, and then may decide to buy it with certain restrictions. Different airlines and countries all have their own sets of restrictions. "In Moslem countries," he says "you can't show men kissing women."

James Galloway has been working non-stop on CBS Movies of the Week for "what seems like forever," he says. "I can't remember the last time I took a vacation. I guess I'll just have to insist on one at some point. But after working so hard, I need a rest more than a vacation. Actually, my wife and I enjoy simply puttering around the house whenever we have time." James recently tackled the CMX-6000 for a MOW directed by **John Erman.** "It was frightening at first," he admits, "because I've worked on the Moviola for so long now. But I had very little time to learn the CMX, and necessity is the mother of invention. Everything worked out."

At the **Ernsts'** homestead, week-ends center around Buck, a four-month-old chow whose name is short for Buckeroo Bonzai. Says **Don,** "I've always wanted a chow, and this one's a dream—thanks to a trainer who comes to the house and works with us every Saturday. People warned me chows could be aggressive, but we've had no problems whatsoever with Buck."

Doug Ibold is still savoring memories of his "best New Year ever," shared with 12 friends in a cabin on Whistler's Mountain, 100 miles outside of Vancouver. "It was so incredibly beautiful," he recalls, "like a movie." He and long-time steady **Sonny Pettijohn** (she's the first assistant to sound effects whiz **Mark Mangini)** awoke New Year's to falling snow which continued throughout the day. "We stayed in, watched football and drank champagne. Out of 12 people, no one got drunk, and only two smoked—and we forced them to go outside." Though Doug's busy editing *B.L. Stryker,* he found time to judge the A.C.E. Award nominees for Best TV Special. "I gave everyone the same score," he admits. "They were all excellent—I couldn't possibly say one was better than another. I was inspired by their work and felt proud to be in this business."

Finally, a gentle reminder to please keep us abreast of your activities, news, comings and goings, etc.—so that we may continue to be actively Scene and Heard. □

by Denise Abbott

Doug and friends

PART-TIME JOB

The *Cinemeditor* magazine has a part-time job available for someone who is capable of performing light office work, including typing. Please write to P.O. Box 16490, Encino, CA 91416 or call 818-907-7351 if you are interested.

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IN MEMORIUM

Roland Gross

A.C.E. mourns the loss of Roland Gross, 80, veteran film and television editor, who died February 11 at UCLA Medical Center.

Not only will Gross be remembered for his brilliance as an editor but also for his noteworthy contributions to our organization, where he served as a charter member and as a director from 1954-1960.

Gross started his career in the Pathe property department in 1929 and two years later moved to RKO, where he spent a decade as an assistant editor. His first film as full editor was *Flight For Freedom* in 1943. He went on to cut such other RKO productions as *The Sky's The Limit, Tender Comrade, Government Girl, The Woman on the Beach, Sister Kenny, Mourning Becomes Electra, The Velvet Touch,* and *None But the Lonely Heart,* for which he received an Oscar nomination. Other films included: *The Set-Up, I Married a Communist, Stromboli, The Thin, On Dangerous Ground, Androcles and the Lion,* and *Son of Sinbad.*

In 1955, Gross joined Four Star Playhouse Productions and edited such TV hits as *Dick Powell Presents, Zane Grey Theater,* and *Four Star Playhouse Presents* —for which he twice won the A.C.E. Film Critics Award.

After a brief stint at Warner Bros., where he cut the features *The Story of Mankind, Too Much, Too Soon,* and *Deep Six,* Gross moved to CBS, where he spent six years editing TV's *Rawhide.* At 20th Century Fox, beginning in 1964, he was editor or supervising editor on such series as *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, Lost in Space, Lancer, Bracken's World,* and *Cade's County.* Gross also worked on *Gunsmoke, Gunslinger,* and *The Twilight Zone,* for which he won an A.C.E. award in 1959. He also won an Eddie for the 1975 telefilm *Cage Without a Key.*

In addition to Gross' contribution to A.C.E., he also served on the board of governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences from 1961-1963. He is survived by his wife, two daughters and three grandchildren.

Visiting Editors

The A.C.E. Board of Directors recently voted to make the "Visiting Editor" program a permanent part of its community service.

This program provides visiting lecturers, on a short term basis, who share their experience and expertise on the art and craft of film or video editing. Film schools are obligated to pay only costs for the duration of the stay of the "visiting editor."

Interested schools should contact the A.C.E. office at 213-660-4425 for additional information.

PROFILE: JOHN A. MARTINELLI, A.C.E. On Film-style Electronic Editing

FOUR TIME EMMY AWARD WINNING EDITOR:

John Martinelli has been in the motion picture business since he was 18 years old. Among the many shows he's edited are "The Murder of Mary Phagan", "The Defection of Simas Kudirka", "Murder in Texas", "The Legend of Lizzie Borden" and the epic "Marco Polo", on which he was also Associate Producer. He is constantly on the lookout for new developments and improvements in the editing profession.

John chose the TouchVision system to edit "Liberace" for Republic Pictures and ABC because it allowed him to work creatively while saving both time and money.

"Real Editing In An Electronic Medium",

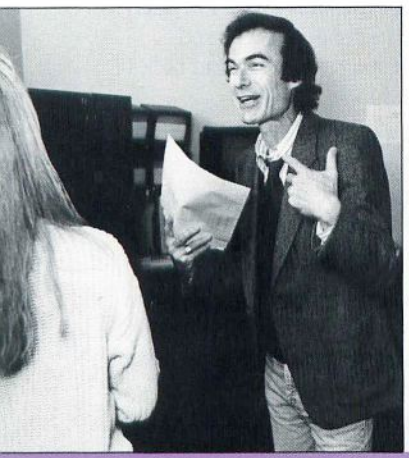
JOHN A. MARTINELLI, A.C.E.

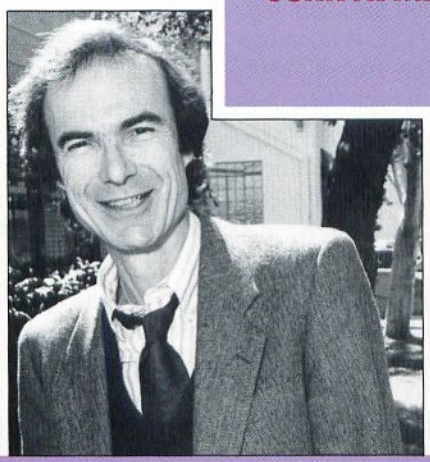
ON TOUCHVISION ELECTRONIC EDITING:

"We went from start to air-date on this 2-hour MOW in less than 8 weeks. Without the advantages of TouchVision we never would have made it.

TouchVision is like working on a 24-plate flat-bed. Its source monitors are completely independent of one another and can be interlocked in any combination you wish. This makes editing overlaps and playbacks a pleasure. The capability of making a picture or track edit separately, allowing you to go out of sync and then back into sync anywhere you choose, is another big advantage. TouchVision gives me flexible, 'real' editing in an electronic medium.

BHP support personnel and trainers respond immediately. That's a real necessity under tight deadlines. Working with TouchVision and BHP is a pleasure everyone should experience."





John Martinelli, editing "Liberace" on the TouchVision system.

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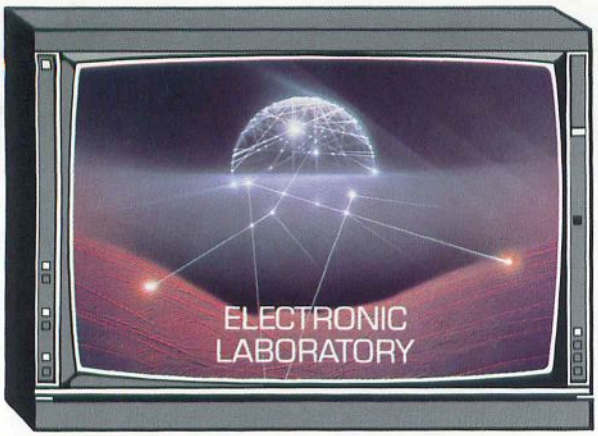

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A landmark achievement in our ongoing Electronic Laboratory™ R&D program, *Image Translation*™ provides the perfect solution for producers concerned about foreign delivery and future markets for their film shows. With *Image Translation* you can realize all the cost savings, speed, and creative flexibility of electronic editing, without the extra time and expense of transferring cut negative for the best PAL release.

How does *IT* work?

Image Translation is *not* standards conversion. It is a proprietary encoding process that begins with the initial film-to-tape transfer. This unique encoded information, completely transparent to the post-production process, is carried through the assembly and final color timing of the show. The encoded data is then "translated" from the NTSC version in a non real-time process to create a crisp and detailed PAL master that is completely free of the objectionable motion defects, smearing, and lack of sharpness commonly associated with even state-of-the-art standards conversion.

The result is so good that, in blind side-by-side tests, chief engineers of foreign TV networks could not tell the difference between an *Image Translation* and a *direct* film negative-to-PAL transfer. Some thought that the *Image Translation* looked even *better* than the film transfer. The cost, however, is significantly less than a comparable PAL master made from a cut textless negative.

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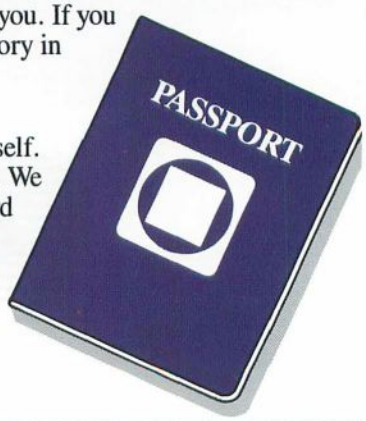

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