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CINEMEDITOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE HONORARY PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY—AMERICAN CINEMA EDITORS, INC. Summer 1990 Vol 40, No. 2

ARTICLES OF
POST-PRODUCTION
IMPORTANCE

Edward Zwick

Achieves Glory in Two Mediums

Glory

Theatrical Feature

thirtysomething

Television Series

SPECIAL REPORT:

Effects

Visual Film Effects

What Are The Costs?

The Name Dropper

Alfred Hitchcock

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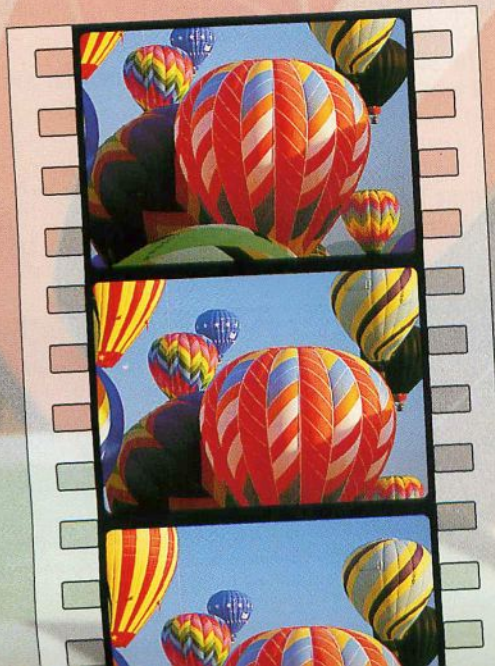
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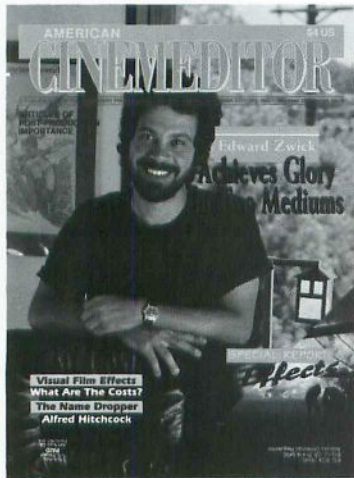


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ACE CREDO

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

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From The Editor...



"This is the most over-rated replica I have ever seen!" explained my #1 son as we stood in the back of the small, unimposing Ford Theatre in Washington, D.C.—the exact place where Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, was assassinated approximately 120 years earlier.

It's not always easy to instill the excitement of your heritage in children, and my kids were a tough audience. I tried to persuade them. "This theatre is no copy; it's

the real place you have all read about. President Lincoln sat in that box on the right side of the theatre behind the red, white, and blue bunting. John Wilkes Booth snuck in behind his seat and assassinated him; the pistol is displayed in the basement," I disclosed.

"Dad, just think about that short distance from the presidential box to the stage," piped up #2. "On TV I see most pro basketball players doing that kind of landing with ease. Are you trying to convince us that Booth broke his ankle with that little jump in this little theatre?"

Skeptic #3 was still in grammar school, but his eye for operational details foretold his future career as a restaurant executive. "The President of the United States came here? Where did he and his assistants park their horses on this crowded street?"

"I'm hungry," said #4, the youngest and most disinterested of my accidental tourists.

I led them down to the basement museum. We had to fight our way to every display case and stretch our necks to read each explanation. But something magical seemed to happen. The mere fact that others were devouring the same fragment of history seemed to bring it new respect in my children's eyes. It was as though they were in a movie theatre and everyone else was laughing. Or crying. Or just absorbing an experience. The excitement was contagious.

The crowd and my family were very impressed with the famous pistol and the assassin's bloody boot. No one in the room questioned the dazzling evidence in the glass cases and neither did my flock. It was all very believable.

We went across the street to the house and bedroom in which President Lincoln died. By happenstance, we were the only people in the small bedroom for about ten minutes; experiencing a page of this country's drama together seemed to electrify each member of the family. It was awesome.

Someone read the inscription on the bed. "Protected under this clear plastic shield is the pillow purported to be the one on which Abraham Lincoln died."

"Stand back! I want this entire 1865 bed in my shot without my 20th century brothers!"

"You stand back! That cheap plastic lens in your pocket camera won't get that shot anyway. My 35mm zoom will."

"Dad, is it asking too much for you to stretch out on the bed for my picture?"

❖ ❖ ❖
Creating believability is not easy. Our business invariably deals in re-creations or fictional enactments as part of practically every feature or TV show. Even on the rare occasions when a story is true and is shot in actual locations, the time or surroundings or people have changed. So we must constantly work hard to make every scene of our story seem real to our audience. That's true whether we are producers, editors, actors, or directors.

There is an old "show biz" warning about losing your audience. If they're bored, or worse, if they don't accept what's on the screen or monitor, you've lost them. The "word of mouth" will be negative, and the feature, TV program, commercial, or corporate presentation will be replaced.

This issue of the *American Cinemeditor* contains a special report on effects. The manipulation of screen images has always been one of the most fascinating parts of our business, but now effects have also become significant audience draws to many pictures. And the consistent innovation in video effects has created the large facility industry that didn't exist a few short years ago.

Many of us in the industry credit *Star Wars* with starting the phenomenon of big pictures using big fantasies to create big box-office. Steven Spielberg is convinced that a significant portion of the *Star Wars* audience never gave a thought to the fact that they were watching models, paintings, and animation in all the exciting parts of the film. It was all done so well that audiences just assumed there really were rocket ships up there, photographed somehow.

With each new effects spectacle, we seem to have educated our audiences a little more, and perfectly "seamless" effects are what current theatre-goers have come to expect. Some of the great spectacles of past movie eras would be rejected quickly in the environment of today. Do any of you remember the carriage ride in *Gone With The Wind* to the front of the Tara mansion? Anyone recall the matte paintings of the approach to the house? They were very obvious, but matte painting photography today is much more believable. Do you remember the parting of the Red Sea in *The Ten Commandments*? It's almost amateurish if judged by the standards of today. Blue screens of just a few years back would be rejected today. Actors were often surrounded with a blurred line; the finished dupe negative produced a print with an obvious unnatural color, and the altered sharpness and contrast of a blue screen shot made any sophisticated viewer aware that something wasn't quite real.

Much of this enhanced screen quality must be credited to the incredible quality engineered into the never-ending stream of improved film stocks introduced by Eastman Kodak. But I'm sure Eastman would agree with me; the industry should pay homage to a group of magnificent innovators, who made us believe images shot through a debris-filled box of water for *The Abyss* were actually taking place on an ocean floor. Or that a forest fire for *Always* created on the floor of a warehouse could actually endanger an actor flying high overhead ... but then again he was flying in a miniature airplane! I can't always figure out reality on the screen the first time I see a picture. But who wants to try? That's the magic of show business effects. □

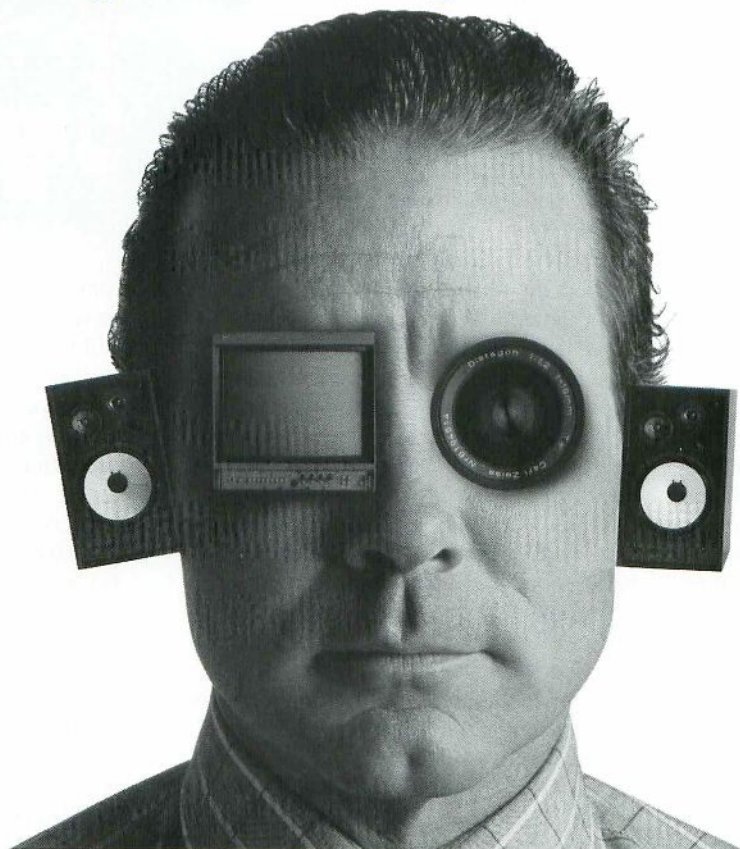
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Edward Zwick

Achieves Glory in Two Mediums

As the director of *Glory*, a film that critics hailed as one of the first great films of the '90s, and as the Creator and Executive Producer of *thirtysomething* – ABC's generation defining hit about yuppies coping with angst and doubt and each other – Ed Zwick is as hot as they come. "Hot" fits him like a favorite pair of loafers. Dressed casually in jeans and sneakers, Zwick props his feet up on the coffee table in the office of his Bedford Falls Production Company, named after the fictitious town in Frank Capra's classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*. Indeed, life would seem to be wonderful for Zwick, who is 30-something himself and managing the rare trick of simultaneous careers in TV and movies.

"Television is a little more exempt from the pressures of the marketplace and therefore offers more creative freedom than features," he explains. "On the other hand, the stakes in features are extraordinarily high. It's not just the \$15 to \$20 million it takes to make the movie, but the stakes include almost that much again to sell it. Film studios exist in anticipation of the home run. But if I may wear out a sports metaphor, great players aren't necessarily just the home run hitters. That would be denying who Ty Cobb was. Television is more about trying to maintain a high level over time, and getting rid of some of the preciousness about each piece of work having to be extraordinary."

But anyone who's seen *Glory*, the story of the first black regiment to be called up by the North in the Civil War, has to wonder what ever prepared him to take on such a grand scale project. "After my first film, there's no way I could ever have done *Glory*," he says without hesitation. "But the two years in between involved the shooting of about 50 hours of *thirtysomething*. I gained the kind of experience that directors used to get working on two-reelers. Take John Ford, the first movie of his you're aware of is *Stage Coach*, but he'd done 22 two-reelers before that. So had Howard Hawks, Frank Capra, all those guys. Today's directors often have to skip steps because they do one movie and then it's two years until they do another.

"What prepared me for *Glory* was the actual business of shooting, writing,

producing and cutting film hour after hour. Although the subject matter is different, the process is the same. It's all about preparation, attention to detail, and visualization."

When it came to *Glory*, Zwick went to great lengths to ensure historical accuracy concerning the regiment that had to overcome bigotry to obtain its equipment and be permitted to enter combat, where its troops distinguished themselves by their heroism. He studied literature and history, read some 2,000 letters by Robert Gould Shaw (the 25-year-old white colonel who led the unit), arranged for the recruitment and training of a battalion of men in the tactics of the period, and enlisted the help of numerous scholars and Civil War reenactors from around the country. "I steeped myself in the time, and the knowledge gained found its way into the film in different ways," he says. "During the battle sequence in the woods, for instance, I tried to recapture the confusion and the sense of swirling tumult that people described in their accounts of those battles."

Zwick acknowledges his approach to *Glory* was greatly influenced by the work of the great Japanese director Akira Kurosawa. "What I learned from him has to do with economy, particularly his ability to make things so vivid with so little. He works with surprisingly low budgets and few people, and his genius is all in the strength of the image rather than the size of the canvas. There's a great deal of slight of hand in *Glory*, a great deal of compensating for what we didn't have. There are many fewer men than you imagined. We took advantage of the kinetics of cutting and smoke, and dark and light to lend the illusion of violence and numbers."

Born in Winnetka, Illinois, Zwick began directing and acting in high school. He trained as an apprentice at The Academy Festival in Lake Forest. While studying literature at Harvard, he continued writing and directing for the theater. Upon graduation, he was awarded a Rockefeller Fellowship to study abroad with some of the major innovative theater companies. In Europe, he supplemented his fellowship

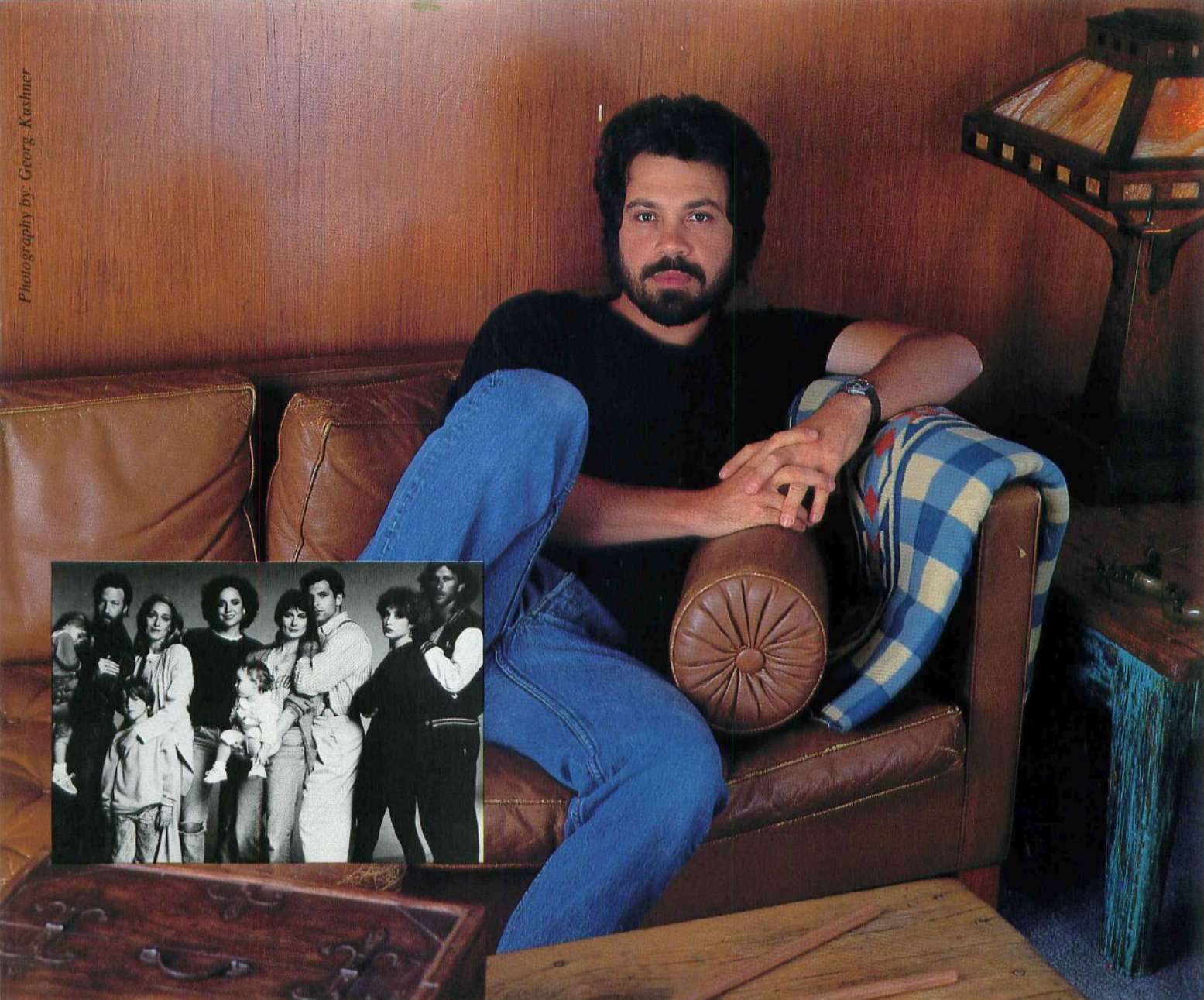


income by writing magazine articles and later worked for Woody Allen in Paris on the film *Love and Death*. In 1975, he was accepted as a directing fellow at AFI. *Timothy and the Angel*, Zwick's AFI short film, won first place in the student film competition in the 1976 Chicago Film Festival. It caught the attention of the producers of *Family*, and Zwick made a beeline for Hollywood.

Editing, he declares, is his favorite part of moviemaking because it's the closest thing to writing. "Just as you write a script, you rewrite it with film. That's a very elastic process. It's a period of grace after the intense and difficult process of shooting. You can have the leisure of a cup of coffee and not feel guilty that your little relaxation is holding up the progress of an \$80,000 day. About the third or fourth week of shooting I begin looking forward to editing."

The editor Zwick turns to most is Steven Rosenblum, who cut the AFI student film, as well as the pilot of *thirtysomething*, and *Glory*, which became his first feature. *Glory* was shot on location in Georgia, and that presented problems because there are no processing facilities there. The film had to be sent to New York, processed and shipped back to the location two or three days later. "It made for hell in scheduling if there was something we wanted to pick up or add."

Zwick and Rosenblum watched dailies together on a make-do projection system they'd set up in a warehouse. "It was my first opportunity to work within a schedule that had some flexibility to go back and readdress things not entirely successful. Steve was constantly there, driving me crazy. He's very greedy. He'd always ask for 10



more things, and I'd only have the time to give him two."

Glory was also the first time Zwick worked with a post-production sound supervisor. He hired Lon Bender, who he believes was as much a writer on the film as was Rosenblum or Zwick himself. "Some of what Lon accomplished as far as horror, immediacy and period feel were very poetic and textured. It took an extraordinary kind of imagining and planning." Each explosion (and there are hundreds in the movie) required the synthesis of about six different elements—a whoosh of air, debris falling, bodies crashing, an explosive element, etc.

Zwick was involved in every step of post-production, going to the dubbing stage for predu checks. While he was still posting *Glory* he returned to *thirtysomething*, where things obviously got "pretty crazy." "I kept imagining that Michael and Elliot were going to have a

Civil War fantasy," he quips.

When the first cut of *Glory* came in at two hours and 20 minutes, Zwick came up with a unique way to distill it. He put the cut on tape, took it home and watched it at high speed. "Playing it at three times the normal speed enabled me to look at the film as an outsider. It gave me a sense of shape and let me understand what I didn't need. I reconceptualized what I had and saw how to join things that hadn't been joined."

What he ended up cutting, he says, was a lot of the expository material in the beginning. "Audiences are much swifter in knowing than we give them credit for. If you state something well enough, they will endow situations and characters with all they know."

Whether it's film or television, Zwick likes to give Rosenblum and his other editors latitude in terms of trying to reimagine what the writers and directors have imagined. "The difference is obvious in

terms of time. TV's post-production process is entirely visceral, you have no opportunity for reflection. It's a polish at the best. In film, you do sometimes have the opportunity to reinvent from the inside out."

Zwick admires editors. "Harry Keramidas, who cut *About Last Night*, expressed something to me that I felt was very important. He said that shooting film is the director's way of talking to the editor and that cutting film is the editor's way of answering—it amounts to a dialogue among peers. Although the director has the authority and the final say, I think it's good to choose an editor with a strong point of view who is similarly a storyteller. If I had to select another editor I'd select someone who's my intellectual equal and emotionally strong because I'm looking for a real contribution. Most important, I'd hire someone who I wouldn't mind sitting next to for four months in a dark room. If you

Continued on page 10

Zwick continued from page 9

don't like one another, it would be a very Sartre-esque hell."

So, how does he feel about returning to *thirtysomething* after experiencing all the glory of an Academy Award winning film? "It's like coming home," he responds with a glance around his office. "It's family. I faced a very different situation after *About Last Night* when I looked around and saw nothing on the horizon. It was very daunting. It's much more comforting to come back to what you are accustomed. And you know what? It's a great leavening. Two months after *Glory* I directed an episode of *thirtysomething*, and I was terrified. I had to do a story in eight days, and it was every bit as difficult as I remembered it."

Meanwhile, Zwick is starting to gear up for his next feature. "It's what I'd have to call a road movie," he reveals. "Essentially

nothing happens until the end when you realize everything has happened." One thing's for sure, his next project promises again to be unlike anything he's ever done before. "A tertiary motive for doing *Glory* was to shatter any expectations of typecasting that might happen," he concedes. "Had I done another contemporary, wry, sensitive piece of business, I think I might have risked that. Instead, my message was 'Don't presume to know me too quickly or too well.' That's the legacy of my repertory training - Strindberg one night, Sam Shepard the next, followed by a musical or Pinter or the classics. That's the kind of director I want to be." □

by Denise Abbott

Touchvision Picks Dick Darling

Dick Darling, A.C.E., has been appointed manager of West Coast operations for TouchVision electronic editing systems, it was announced by company president, Bruce Rady. In his new position, Darling will oversee sales and client relations; he will also supervise the training and support staff.

Rady revealed that Darling's selection is part of a planned market expansion for TouchVision, manufactured by BHP, Inc. "With Darling's appointment we will be able to give better training to editors," noted Rady. □

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ShowBiz Expo '90 Draws Crowds

Attendance at the seventh annual ShowBiz Expo grew an unprecedented 45% over the 1989 event, gathering 13,800 industry pros over the three day run of the show June 2, 3 & 4 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. "We showed a 25% increase in production and post-production suppliers on the show floor," disclosed show co-producer, Bob Lasiewicz.

ShowBiz Expo, a production of Live Time, Inc., featured the latest in video and film technology in a festive and lively setting. Billed as "World's Fair of Film and Video," the special attractions of this year's event included an exciting Special Effects/Graphics display with animatronics, sets and fog machines, a two-day visit by Orion Pictures' Robocop, and a 4,000 sq. ft. High Definition Television (HDTV) exhibit by Sony. At Sony's display visitors were "shrunk" on camera, videoed while "flying" a miniature helicopter and then presented with a tape of their performance.

ACE personnel manned a booth featuring the American Cinemeditor magazine. The contingent was captained by Drake Silliman, A.C.E. □

ACE Moves Office

ACE has recently established its new office in the Warner/Hollywood Studios at 1041 North Formosa Ave, West Hollywood, California, 90046. The new telephone number is 213-850-2900.

Oreck Association Management is no longer connected with the organization; all ACE inquiries and mail should be directed to the address noted above.

All matters pertaining to the American Cinemeditor will still be handled separately by the magazine staff at P.O. Box 16490, Encino, CA 91416; the publication phone is 818-907-7351. □



SPECIAL REPORT:

Effects

Effects have evolved into one of the most exciting parts of post-production business. Their magic can bring a fantasy to life, or give life to a sequence that couldn't be photographed properly in the worlds of features, TV programs, commercials, or industrials.

The picture on this page was photographed while Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) was shooting 24-foot wing-span model airplanes flying through a roaring fire in a miniature forest built for Steven Spielberg's feature *Always*.

The *American Cinemeditor* is proud of this Special Report and the collective knowledge it draws from a distinguished group of industry contributors.

SPECIAL REPORT:

Compositing: Video's Most Powerful Editing

by Rich Thorne,
Executive Vice-President, Creative Affairs
The Post Group,
Hollywood, California

Imagination ... The mental power of forming images of unreal or absent objects.

Someone was recently quoted as saying, "Post-production has become almost as important as the actors in motion pictures and television." Though the concept is arguable, could you imagine Luke without the ability to fly (*Star Wars*), Indiana without holy ghosts (*Raiders Of The Lost Ark*), Riker without the ability to beam up (*Star Trek*), or Jim without the ability to disregard this message (*Mission Impossible*)?

All of these screen innovations have been made possible with the combination of imagination, technology, and post-production. In video post-production, digital technology has closed the gap between what the mind can conceive and what effects and graphics can actually be created. Combining film optical techniques with 4:2:2 digital technology, the industry has come up with the most powerful form of videotape editing – compositing.

Compositing has become the art of combining multitudes of video images; all of it has been made possible by the ability to multilayer



Your Own Video Composite

video on digital disk recorders. The most significant devices are the A64 and A60 Digital Disk Recorders by Abekas and the Harry by Quantel. All are 4:2:2 component digital. Though Harry is

SPECIAL REPORT:

Digital Arrives In Film

by Christopher Woods
Executive Producer
Head of Research and Development
R/Greenberg Associates, New York

The digital technology revolution hit the video industry several years ago. At that time, digital video equipment was designed to co-exist within a mostly analog equipment environment, so the first digital video installations were only part of predominantly analog systems. These configurations could not compete with the quality attained by traditional film opticals and effects. But they were fast.

Meanwhile, 35mm film remained the first choice for original photography. If special effects were to be used, then a pin-registered camera was needed to allow the film effects to be finished with precision. The development of pin-registration for film-to-videotape transfers was the major advancement that fueled the further development of video graphic and effects devices.

Our decision to become involved in video post-production was made at the time when the full post-production cycle – from film-to-tape transfer through finish – was suddenly able to occur in a digital format.

Software Importance

Concurrent with these developments in the video industry, we are writing (and re-writing) computer software to produce all

types of three-dimensional or two-dimensional, but always digital, animation. Until the opening of our digital video department, we shot all computer-generated images onto 35mm film with our Celco film recorder, which scans images out at several thousand lines, although the images are not generally computed at such a high resolution. The necessity for both types of animation to be displayed in "pixel space" (pixel stands for picture element and is the smallest single spot in a computer graphic image) gave us a great deal of experience with the concepts and specific technical issues involved in digital video. The optical printer had always been the "combiner" that made the imagery from all R/GA's different departments a coherent composite. Now we had all these real-time video devices that were the "combiners," at least for our commercial/broadcast work.

The video industry always required real-time video processing for post-production, but these digital video boxes only worked for one specific resolution in one specific format. They were very fast at what they did, but you could not make them do things that were not on their original menus. Real-time work was captivating to us but not so much so that we could forget the benefits of slower, software-driven systems. These benefits are:

- 1) You tell the system what resolution you want and you aren't scrapping the equipment every time there is a change in format or resolution.
- 2) You can add capabilities to the system as long as you're willing to put the time into developing that capability and to

much more than a disk recorder, it is that capability that makes it as powerful as it is.

Disk recording is significant because it allows for fully transparent transferring of digital pictures. Videotape, even the newest D1 and D2 formats, cannot achieve transparency beyond 20 generations, if that. The full power is realized when these recorders are used with a keyer or matting device that allows images to be layered on top of other images. The composite image is then recorded on another disk drive. This can go on for thousands of generations. This is the technology that makes it as powerful as it is!

Dream Your Own Video Composite

If you've been dreaming of an effect or graphic, take the time to draw it out or storyboard the sequence. Then analyze the components. This is the beginning of the compositing process. In the special effects world, it is the elements that are critical. The technology is merely the means of execution. Here's a special effects sequence to break down and digitally create:

Bill, our leading man, is being beamed down from a spaceship. He is going to land on a wide shot of a deserted town, somewhere in the future. Upon arrival, he is greeted by an unfriendly band of rebels from the mother planet. Things are complicated by the fact that there is a treacherous windstorm brewing; the rebels are on the attack and are shooting futuristic laser beams at him. He shoots back with a more powerful laser gun.

The first step is to analyze the elements:

The deserted futuristic town does not exist, so a matte painting will have to be created. This could be done with oils very easily. It also could be pieced together on a video paint system by combining

write new software. The menu changes to suit your needs and works for all resolutions and formats required in the future.

- 3) Modern software-driven systems are getting more and more hardware independent, so that when you buy more equipment you can use the previously developed software capabilities. As usual, there are trade offs to either method.

One of our main interests was to find out which video post production graphics or effects operations benefited from non-real-time, but totally programmable, devices, such as a Sun computer, a Pixar Image computer, or a Silicon Graphics workstation. We have found that there are benefits for certain operations.

You might well ask what could general purpose programmability provide us with that would make up for the relative slowness of such a system? In general terms, a quickly changeable menu of capabilities is the first, second, and third reason. In our experience, change is the norm, not the exception. We write some amount of custom software for almost every job that goes through the system. The system can be quickly changed to do all things at all resolutions and also has an almost unlimited potential to be further modified – making it unique and giving it the ability to stay unique.

Digital Benefits

We have pursued the concept of tightly coupled filming systems for many years. Accordingly, all of the computer-controlled robotics and digital video devices at R/GA exchange motion data with the computer graphics department. This includes animation stands, our fully computerized optical printer, and the motion-control system. Any department, through the CGI system, can send and receive motion (or other) data from any other filming

painting with elements from other sources. Whichever option is used, paintings look like paintings, so something will have to be done about that later.

If Bill is going to beam down onto a painting, he's going to have to be shot in front of a blue screen so that he can be matted in later. The same goes for the rebels, who, too, will be on the painting. Care should be taken that the camera angles and lens characteristics match that of the painting. It doesn't matter which, but one should be completed first so that they may be matched up with the other. The actors have to act out the shooting because they don't have laser guns. The actual laser beams will be added later to match their action.

Beaming down requires some type of visual effect to make it look special. This could be painted on a paint system and given motion on the Harry. Or it could be an effect like a pixel explosion on a Mirage digital effects system. Or it could be swirling glitter in a jar full of water. In this case we'll opt for the swirling glitter as it tends to look more natural than pixellation and costs about 1/10th as much to produce.

The windstorm could be a problem. Rather than experimenting with which digital effects device could produce this effect, let's try shooting some type of flaky material blowing in front of a black curtain with the help of a fan. Either crushed potato or rice flakes might work. Light it right, and it'll look like sand. Because the scene is a wide shot, the "sand" should be shot at various distances so that many layers can be matted on the scene to give it depth. Don't be afraid to throw in some crushed leaves or other material, it'll probably help the effect.

The last elements are the explosions. Call an expert in on this one

Continued on page 20

department; the design allows very tight choreography of elements from disparate filming systems with almost no roto-scoping.

The basic video technology that revolutionized the video world over the past few years is now on the brink of doing the same thing to the film world for many of the same reasons. Two questions pop up now.

- 1) Do film people even want to use this technology if they can get such great things without it?
- 2) If video and print people have this technology, then why don't the film people? (I should note that the print world has been using this same basic technology longer than the video people have had it, and they demand extremely high resolution).

Perhaps predictably, many of the reasons the video and print industries have embraced digital imaging are the same reasons why the film industry will embrace it. The best-known benefit for digital work is that there is no generation loss, an important consideration in the visual effects world, where there are many layers of imagery to be combined. There is also a greatly reduced chance of having hair and dirt problems, a most prevalent annoyance in film. Other perpetual challenges are color-correction and density problems. Again, visual effects are susceptible because of the number of elements to be corrected, any of which could cause a reshoot when not properly exposed. With a digital system, you do color correction once and then, as long as you have that file, you are corrected. Also, there are a number of things that can be done digitally with much better results than any traditional film method would yield.

Another important advantage of digital techniques is interactivity. In the optical world, tests take days or weeks to

Continued on page 20

Who Needs Opticals?

by **Chuck Workman**
President, Calliope Films

I like a good straight cut. I've got nothing personal against dissolves, and I like wipes I guess, especially if I'm playing with a period look. But a good hard cut is like the punctuation at the end of a sentence. We take a sub-conscious moment, a few milliseconds at most, to stop, absorb, and then subliminally move on. A wipe or dissolve, which probably evolved to make transitions more painless, actually makes us much more conscious of the transition because it exists longer in time. You can see it happen.

In 1986, I made a short called *Precious Images* that celebrated the role of the image in the American film. It was basically a montage, to various pieces of music, of 458 different films, 458 straight cuts in six minutes. But, although *Precious Images* had nothing but those 458 cuts, every shot depended on an optical house, in this case B/G/L Post, in Hollywood. In many ways, the style of the film and its impact with audiences depended very much on the optical process we chose to use.

The idea of *Precious Images* was to celebrate movies and their directors, from *Grapes of Wrath* to *Lassie* to *Rambo* to *Citizen Kane*. I wanted a second or two or three from as many movies as possible; then I needed the facility to edit them with as much freedom as possible. I also wanted it to look good. But I never really knew up front just which seconds I wanted from these films.

The classic way to show other films in a new film is to make new

dupe negatives from existing masters that you can find somewhere, you hope, that haven't shrunk or changed color, you hope, and that don't require a court order and letters from various heirs to secure. It's a very expensive, time-consuming process, and more often than not, just gets you a piece of material that doesn't work as well as you need once you start editing.

I needed the chance to study, let's say, a chariot race, pick out what I wanted and cut it. Then I would move it around, shorten it, go back and get a new section, change my mind again, take it out, put it back somewhere else. Once I decided what to do with it, somehow I had to make it a part of a negative that could be printed in quantity. In other words, I needed what any filmmaker needs to edit. I needed dailies.


We could have made dupe prints of sections of movies by simply borrowing the movie and printing reversal work prints of the sections we wanted. Then once we picked the scene, we could order up the proper interpositive or fine grain – masters used to make new negatives of a movie – then find the selected section, print a new negative, make a print from that, replace the work print with the new print, and cut the negative. Or, we could have shot only the frames we needed and built a negative, scene by scene, totally in the optical house. But all this seemed a lot of work that would inevitably get in the way of the real work, which was cutting the thing. All I wanted were, like I said, dailies, with a negative somewhere that could be cut to match those dailies.

The optical house provided the dailies in a simple way. They shot them, on an optical camera, directly from the release prints of the movies themselves. I would simply pick a movie, select the scene I wanted, mark a generous section of scene for myself, and send it off. I didn't have to count any footage from the beginning of the film, or go through transcripts, or try to figure out what those numbers on a home videotape counter mean in seconds or feet. I just found the part I liked (okay, that wasn't easy but it sure was interesting), put one removable tape at the beginning of a short section, one at the end, and sent it to the optical house. They'd shoot it, we'd remove the tape, and return the print. We did this about 700 times, and I used 458 of the scenes.

To get around the scratches in the release prints, they liquid-gated to neutralize the refraction of the scratches. There is inherent extra contrast when one shoots off a print and doesn't use a low contrast master intended for duping. To correct that problem, the optical house often used low contrast negative rawstock and sometimes used low contrast filters. They never told me exactly which they did when they did it – they just made it sound quite complicated.

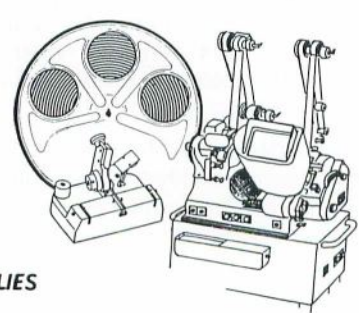
I wouldn't recommend using this method where long scenes are playing out. The loss in quality using print as a source becomes more apparent the longer the scene stays on the screen, especially in color. And, if more intricate opticals are needed, it certainly makes sense to take the time to get the best source quality possible. I recently made a very elaborate multi-panelled film for Disney's "Great Movie Ride" in Orlando. The split-screening was so tricky that it was certainly worth the additional trouble to go back to original masters. Still, on one or two clips where we just couldn't find a decent master, a print turned out to be the best source. However, Disney has been scrupulously replacing a lot of shots as new masters become available.

But for *Precious Images*, I feel the way I was able to work with an optical house really gave me the ability to edit flexibly and freely and make the film I wanted to make. *Precious Images* won an Oscar, and naturally I forgot to thank the optical house. But after all, I told them, it was just a lot of straight cuts. □



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The State of "Mixed Media"

by **Steve Soffer**
Executive Producer
Studio Productions, Los Angeles

To grab and hold the interest of today's more sophisticated audience, special effects designers and producers are coming up with creative combinations of CGI (Computer Graphic Imagery), animation, motion control, and live action. Whether Studio Productions is designing main titles, image campaigns, corporate logos, or special effects, we're employing this hybrid approach more often, mixing and matching the best of the different technologies as the answer to creative challenges.

Paramount Pictures

Our first major foray into this field was redesigning the well-recognized mountain logo for Paramount Pictures. The piece combined motion control photography of a miniature mountain with computer animation of the stars flying over and into position. To accomplish this, a wireframe skeleton of the mountain was built in the computer data base. That was then used to approximate the flight path and timing of the stars; the resulting information determined the motion control camera moves during the shoot. The motion control footage was transferred to video, input back into the computer, and final positioning of the stars was match-frame rotoscoped. The dramatic result is a wonderful feeling of open space not possible with a single technique.

Universal

To retain a sense of integrity to the historic elements of this hallmark logo, yet add a contemporary touch of fantasy, it was essential to "mix media."

The Universal logo opens with a dramatic solar flare as a dimensionally rendered model of the earth eclipses the sun. Simultaneously, it is revolving and traveling away from camera. Animated letters circle out from behind the planet to create the word "UNIVERSAL," and finish in a final front position.

The globe is really the centerpiece of the logo. To bring the needed graphic sense of reality to life, Yourgos Lamphakais, a National Geographic mapmaker, spent six weeks constructing the four-foot sphere, using hand-molded copper to create continents in the plaster-cast sphere. He meticulously worked out the exact mathematical proportions defining the topographic relationship of each land mass, then referred to NASA photos to airbrush the model the true colors of the earth as it appears in space.

Nine eight-inch solid brass letters weighing thirty pounds each were hung from rods on a specially designed, rotating, articulated arm. It turned out to be a bit of an engineering feat to get these letters to hang properly and still be able to move in exact registration.

Four different star backgrounds and gaseous nebula making up a fantastic space galaxy were choreographed to "marry" with the motion of the globe. These backgrounds were airbrushed on specially prepared black masonite sheets and shot top-lit on a motion control camera.

The Universal logo was particularly complex, but the different techniques were absolutely necessary to achieve the wonderful look of multi-planed dimensionality.

Prime Ticket



The two previous sophisticated projects centered on motion control and computer work, but as I said, designers and producers are also blending CGI, animation, and live action to create exciting visuals with incredible impact. For example, we recently designed and produced a complete image package, including three opens, for cable station Prime Ticket, using 3D animation, paintbox, and live action.

The three opens – football, hockey, and basketball – were unique. We proceeded from the belief that it would be important to integrate live action but always in the context of computer generated animation. In these spots a computer animated football stadium with video scoreboard automatically assembles, live action hockey players skate across a 3D rink, and a basketball bursts through a television screen as a real player slam dunks a ball into a 3D hoop.

The hockey open is a particularly good example of what can be done by combining available technology. The spot was inspired by the kid's game that has little hockey players spinning and flipping a puck into goals. We inserted live action players into video panels to imitate the movement of the flippers of that game, shuttling a 3D puck from panel to panel down the animated rink and scoring against a live action goalie. The production team brought the wireframe motion onto an ice sled on a rink and shot players at approximate angles and motion to the animation, using video assist. In the completed spot, it's as if there's real interaction between the players and animation – and the effect is captivating.

The Bottom Line

Digital technology affords new ways of experimenting and creating, and we've really only seen the tip of the iceberg. More and more, the best answer to a creative problem is multiple choice. By combining different media on a single project, people are getting unique and exciting results. Whether we're working on a feature, TV main title, an image campaign, a logo, – even if it's the simplest of concepts to execute, we try to "mix it up." □

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SPECIAL REPORT:

Three Dimensional Animation Explodes!

by Joe Benadon, President
Action Video
Hollywood, California

We have all seen dazzling 3D logos, sport titles, and show openings and closings that amaze us and grab our attention with their unique movements and compositions. Video people were the first to do this type of work. Then film producers, directors, and editors experimented with this unique video art, but the work could only be accomplished by certain personnel who had the necessary artistic and technical ability. When projects were successful, many of the film people were impressed by what could be created, but they were also dismayed at the relatively high costs.

It used to take computers hours to calculate the contents of a video frame, and there are 30 video frames in each screen second. The work was demanding, tedious, and very costly. However, computers can now calculate the high resolution needed for film within a reasonable time and cost, and the prices of recorders have recently dropped sufficiently enough to get people's attention.

Speed and Costs of 3D Video

At Action Video we have a Wavefront animation system, supported by two Tektronics work stations. Interaction between client and 3D animation designer/operator is now easier than was ever possible in past procedures. The client can see what the artist is doing at the moment he does it, and can tell the artist to fix, adjust or redo the scene right then and there. Compare that to the film animation environment, where the client does not see anything until the pencil test is completely drawn, shot and processed in the lab and then finally projected - a process that takes from a minimum of four days for a very short and simple concept to weeks for more complex ideas.

In 3D animation, a wire frame representation (a pencil test equivalent) can usually be shown on the Wavefront during the first or second day of the project. After adjustments and approvals, completion of the project will take a night or two for the rendering (the equivalent to ink and paint, clean up, shooting and lab processing). At completion, the client might decide that the light source is coming from the wrong direction, but that's no problem. The computer is instructed accordingly, and the project can be completed with its new light source. The speed of this new technology allows clients to try new ideas; in the past they sometimes accepted a project they weren't pleased with simply because there wasn't enough time to do another version.

Possibilities

Costs today in 3D animation are in the range of \$2,750 to \$3,250 per screen second as compared to film animation costs of approximately \$1700 a screen second. The advantages of time savings and more client options give 3D animation a flexibility that more than makes up for its differential in cost. The look and cost of 3D video animation is so desirable that new markets, such as corporate, industrial and music videos, have been created.

Garri Garripoli, department head and chief designer at Action Video, relates how a last minute idea for a logo came in on a Tuesday morning, along with a completion request by Friday afternoon. "We sat with the client and asked what he was hoping to see. Based on what was said, artist/ animator David Necker drew several storyboards over the next couple of hours. We then met, discussed

and integrated the best ideas. I went to my workstation and laid out a wireframe to show movement, depth, and design of the logo. The following day the client made some minimal adjustments, which I executed for him. He then approved the wireframe logo. We went into rendering the wireframe, and by Thursday noon (a day and a half earlier than expected) the project was completed. The client was ecstatic."

The possibilities in the new 3D animation are endless. You can use the tremendous number of text choices available in the system, which include any variation of Bitstream type supplied by over 3000 software vendors. The type can be manipulated in a multitude of options that can't be duplicated on the traditional copy stand. Textures, shadows, multiple light sources, reflections, gleamings, flexible text manipulations, stretched texts, modified texts, beveled texts, kerned texts (loosened spacing), thickened texts, glass looks, and zooms going very close to any objects (not just text) are all possible.

The architecture of the system is based on vector based data, which means the letters or objects won't break up and lose resolution as you get very close to them, as a film or normal video subject will do. On film a close camera move will even show the texture of the paper on which the text is printed and even pick up a tiny error in the stat copy of the film image. In 3D video once you make a corner, it's a perfect corner, even if you fill the screen with it. The real magic of 3D video is not necessarily its ability to flip and tumble dimensional text but its capacity not to lose image quality, even when that text takes up the whole screen.

Resolution

The key is resolution. An everyday Macintosh computer has a paint program like the Paintbox, and it's based on the same software as the Paintbox. But a 3D video animation system carries a huge difference in quality and cost due to its superb resolution.

Everything at Action is recorded digitally onto an Abekas A60 to overcome video resolution limitations. In standard video it's a common practice to record to 1", which has the standard 500 line resolution limitation of video. In the digital world we go to 720 lines of resolution; that first step alone increases the resolution by 45%. In addition, color renderings are much better and much closer to the film gamma interpretation of the color spectrum. Many suppliers are now taking D-1 digital output recorded from the Abekas and going to film with spectacular results. The whole process is starting to get rave reviews even from hard-liners who never considered it.

3D video animation is being executed on high-end video, many station breaks, and on several sport programs. It's finding increasing usage in the everyday commercial. Agency personnel are saying, "Make me something." ... or ... "What if I did this?" We recently accomplished a job with a fast turnaround. In six weeks we finished work that would have taken six months using previous procedures. We did the job for a third of what the cost would have been six months ago. It's a big movement forward, partly due to the Wavefront equipment, but due more importantly to some very talented people who have mastered the technique. The engineering of these sophisticated video systems is becoming less of a factor as software is becoming more interactive and as personnel get more adept in the use of this equipment.

Past environments have made film people more creatively oriented, while tape people have been more engineering oriented. Both backgrounds are needed to contribute to the future of our business, and each need to respect the other. More and more, in all image media, support processes in post-production are tending to be video. We have entered an era of specialization, where clients will gravitate to the place where the equipment and people are best able to perform a job with the most quality for the most reasonable price. I believe 3D video animation is an exciting process that will grow rapidly. □

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Compositing continued from page 13

or buy them from an effects library. They'll be needed when the lasers hit an object in the scene. Choose wisely as this is an important aspect to the realism of the effect.

So much for the imagination. Now for the magic. 4:2:2 digital magic is suggested as it allows for more options later. All of the elements should be shot on film, as the resolution is far better than video. Because film has a tendency to weave when being transferred to video, it has to be pin-registered during the transfer. The new Rank Ursa 4:2:2 digital telecine is recommended, as the resolution is some 15 to 25 percent greater than other Rank telecine machines. The transfer should be to a D1 4:2:2 digital recorder for optimum quality. The execution of the effect will be done both on the Harry and in a 4:2:2 digital editing suite. The digital suite will be used first to build the basic sequence and then sent to Harry to add the final touches.

Layering

The first step is to lay the matte painting down on a disk recorder. Then a layer of sand is added for depth. The painting will be passed through a digital switcher, where the sand can be matted on top, and this composite image recorded onto another disk recorder (ping-ponging). On top of this our hero, Bill, will be beamed down, so first we dissolve on the chroma key or blue screen matte. (Chroma keying is a process where blue or green is dropped out of a scene allowing only the other colors to be visible.) Now that he is dissolved on, several layers of swirling glitter can be added on top. If it's too big, it can be put into an ADO, Kaleidoscope, or D/FX digital effects device to reduce its size and move it onto the proper place on the screen. All of the elements in this scene will probably have to be positioned in this manner.

It's probably time again to add another layer of sand in order to give the scene more depth; the ping-ponging of the composite image from one disk to another goes on throughout the process. With the basic scene laid down, it's time to add the rebels. They are closer to the viewer so they go on last. They may be added one at a time or all together, depending upon how they were shot. Sometimes it's better to shoot them separately so they can be individually positioned. They may be hiding behind rocks or other objects; therefore, the ability to individually position them could become critical. The last step is to add one more layer of blowing sand on top of the rebels. The finished product here matches the description, without the lasers and explosions.

We began using the pin-registered material that was on a D1 tape recorder; the material was played back and recorded on a disk recorder. That material then went through a 4:2:2 video switcher, where an effect was added. The composite image was then recorded onto another disk recorder. Then it was played back off

Digital Arrives continued from page 13

assemble. Electronically that goes to minutes or hours. For test work one doesn't always need full resolution, and we realized that our digital video system, with all of its speed, could save a huge amount in pursuing a look that is initially in a director's mind and nowhere else. There are many stories about special effects people who thought they knew what the director wanted until they showed it to him.

I have not given an exhaustive list of reasons why the film industry will benefit from digital post-production techniques, but, be assured, it will.

Why Not Now?

Why is it that the mighty film industry, America's pride and joy, doesn't have these benefits right now? The video people enjoy them daily and largely in real time. The print industry also has them at much higher resolution, although not anywhere near in

that recorder into the switcher where an element again coming off the D1 tape recorder was added. The resulting composite was then recorded onto the other disk recorder. This process was repeated about 25 times to produce Bill's effect. Then the fully composited sequence was recorded onto a D1 tape recorder, so that it could be loaded into the Harry when time became available.

The Harry is a marvelous device. It is comprised of digital disk drives, a video switcher, a Paintbox, an editor, and a digital effects system. It is tremendously powerful because it gives the artist total control of video, one frame at a time. It may sound slow, but it's actually incredibly fast.

Harry is going to add the laser beams and the explosions. The Harry artist will record the completed sequence into Harry first. Then good explosions are selected from the D1 tape and recorded into the Harry. The decision is made as to where and how often the explosions will occur. They will be positioned using the digital effects device, matted or keyed, and then recorded onto a different section of the Harry disk drives. This process will continue, one explosion at a time, until they are all composited. Compositing 20 explosions may take two or three hours. Compare that to what it would take to accomplish the same thing on film!

With this complete, it's time to paint in the laser blasts. This might be done frame by frame, or by painting a line and animating and positioning it with the digital effects device. Or it may be a combination of both. A sequence fifteen seconds long with 20 laser blasts may take as much as an eight-hour day to complete.

Now that everything is done, one more layer of blowing sand needs to be added. This time, it could be done in the Harry. And voila, we have an incredible effect! The composite goes from Harry back to the D1 recorder, and from there it may be edited into a video master of a show or it may be transferred to film. Yes, film. The purpose of maintaining the 4:2:2 digital quality throughout this process was to leave open the option for a tape to film transfer. If it seems hard to believe, keep your eyes open during the credits of the current generation of effects movies. Look for "Harry Artist" or "Digital Effects Compositing." You're going to see video compositing used more and more in television programs and feature films.

The new generation of video effects is assembled with creativity, ingenuity, imagination, and 4:2:2 component digital effects compositing. It doesn't matter whether it's a special visual effect or graphic production; the thought processes, techniques, equipment, and results are the same - impeccable image quality and unbelievable effects. □



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real time. Well, film is starting to enjoy these benefits in a limited way. But there are still huge problems to be solved. It seems that the film industry inherited by far the toughest problem, simply because feature films have a large number of very high-resolution frames running in quick succession. This difficulty is really a testimonial to the very high-quality image experience that film affords.

Just the mechanical tolerances for film work have always been greater than those of video and print work. So the transport mechanisms that exist for video tape work will not be at all sufficient for film work.

More important is the issue of resolution. A good-looking film image requires at least 2,500 lines of resolution. There is a raging debate as to how much resolution one needs to be faithful to the camera negative. This is an issue that will only be solved by real-world projects that get out in front of the public.

Then there is the data consideration.

Let's use some ballpark numbers to get some idea of what we're talking about. We'll keep our estimate of 2,500 X 2,500 pixels with enough color data to accurately represent the full dynamic range of film. This would give us about 448,000,000,000,000 or 48 trillion bytes of data to represent a 1000' roll of film.

Some images could be compressed to be much smaller, while others might be bigger if we were determined not to sacrifice image quality.

Where do we store this picture data? Disk drives will probably be used, but at present a large disk drive stores something just over one billion bytes, or a gigabyte. That's just one and one-half seconds of film. It's clear that we won't be storing a lot of frames on disk, although a disk gives a good interactive environment. So we're still looking for a solution.

There are problems with processing speed and transmission speed between the input scanner and the disk, or the disk and the output film recorder. None of these areas are engineered to the point where one could take a motion picture with one hundred special effects shots to make on schedule and still do the job at the proper resolution. This is an issue which the hardware manufacturers need to address and, fortunately, they have started.

In the meantime, we have our hybrid approach which takes digital video data and shoots it back out to film with as much quality as possible. Again I want to point out there are different answers to different questions.

Over the last few months we used our own prototype digital film optical system for a project that is now showing at the Universal Studios theme park in Florida. The format was very demanding; 3-D VistaVision using polarized glasses to separate the right eye image from the left eye image and the image of each eye being projected from a single strip of VistaVision film.

It was our first foray into the long-awaited world of pure digital film opticals and, as such, was extremely exciting to us. It was also very slow and painful. Things, in general, will move much faster now, both for us specifically and for the industry in general because a critical mass seems to have been reached. It will be some time, though, before the optical printer is obsolete and longer still for 35mm motion picture film to be replaced.

Christopher Woods is Executive Producer of the R/Greenberg Feature Projects Division, and Chairman of the R/GA Research & Development Committee. He joined the company in 1981 to launch its Computer Generated Imagery Department, and in 1986 laid the conceptual foundations for the R/GA Digital Post-Production Department, which led to its present capabilities spanning video, print, and film. □

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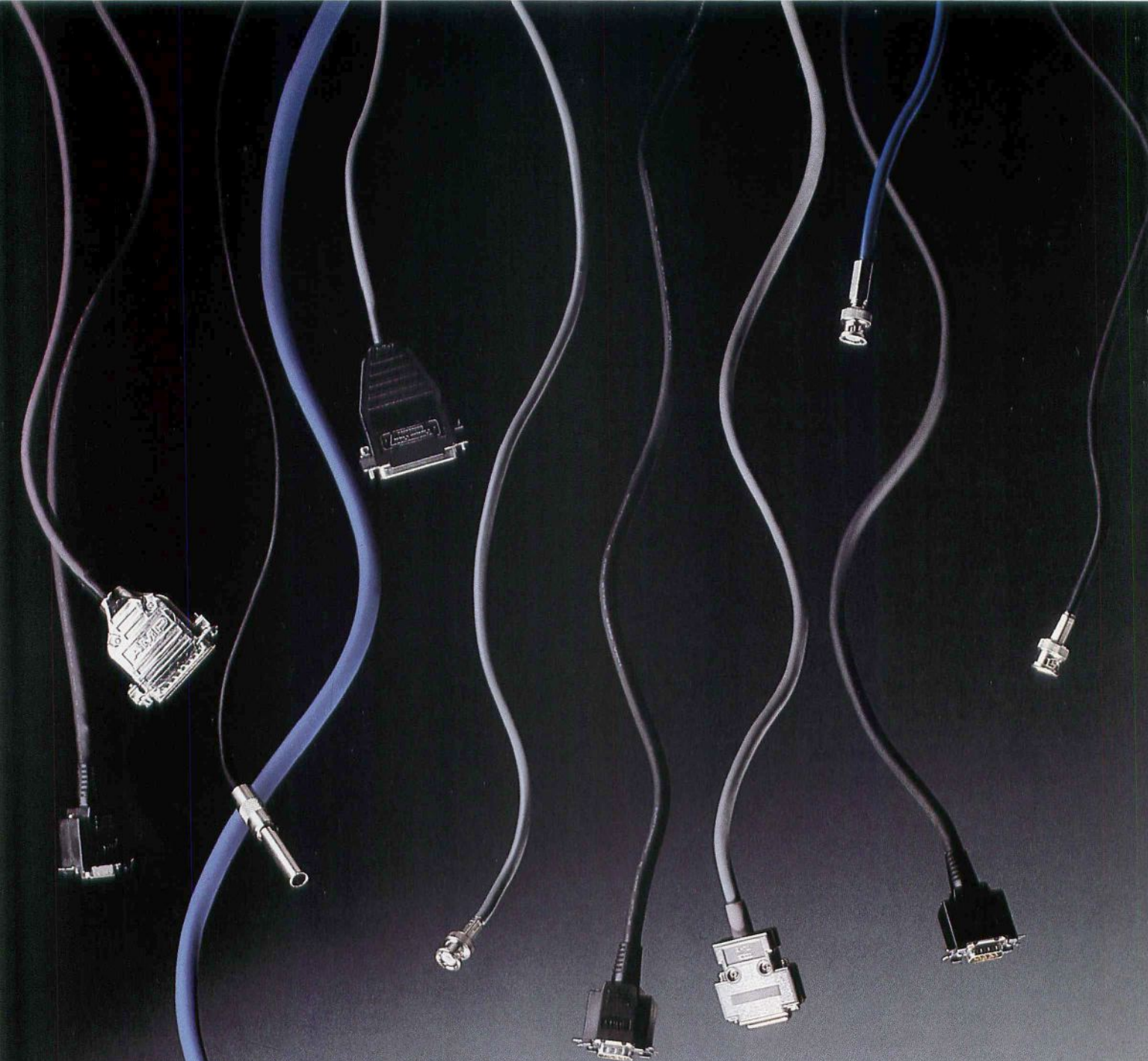
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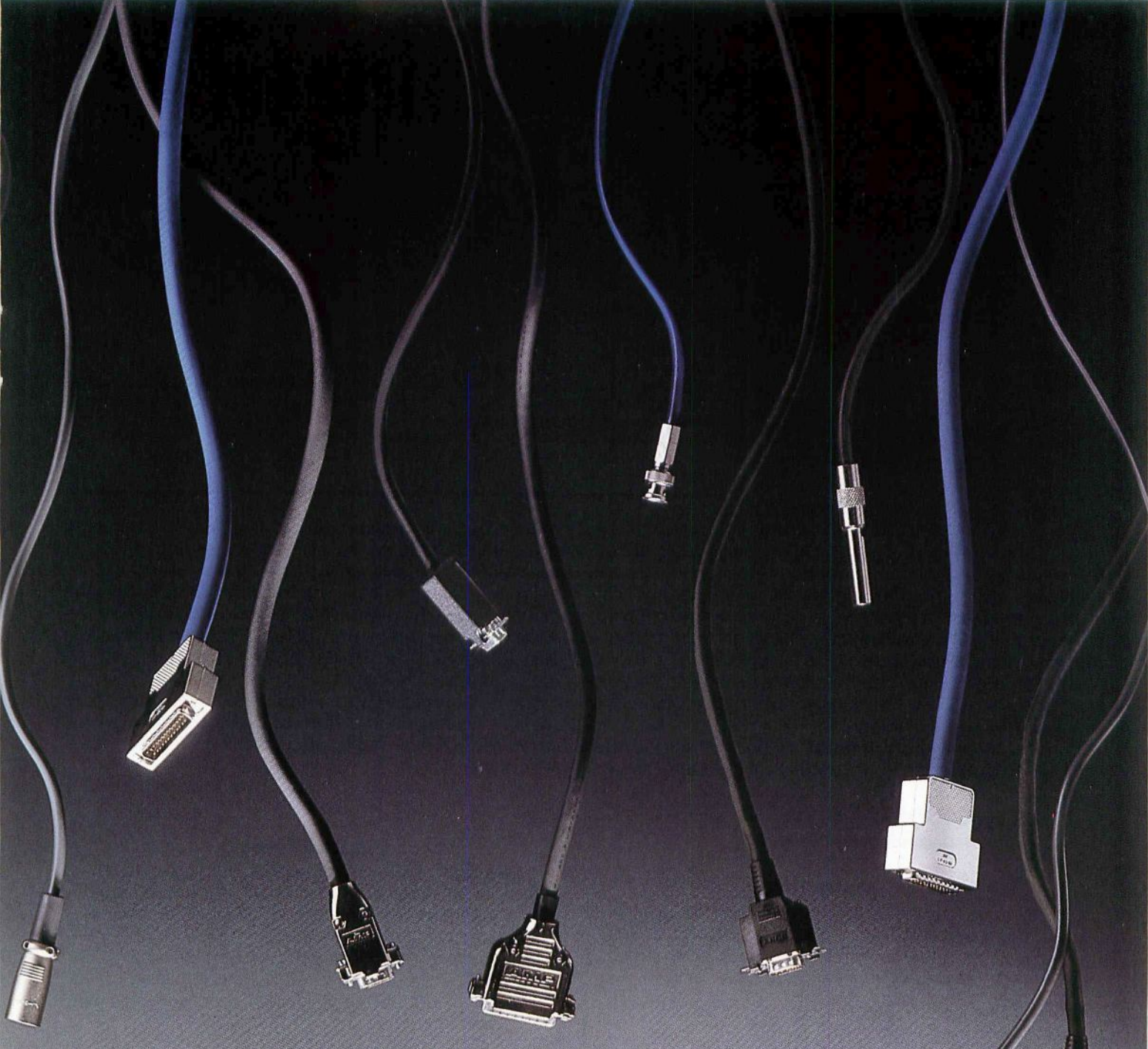
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The State of the Eco

Visual Film Effects...What An



by Howard Kunin

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Industrial Light & Magic
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Hollywood, California

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Terry Roughtean, Head, Billing Department
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Hollywood, California

An audience of today will accept images that are unreal or contrived, but only if they don't look unreal or contrived. Consequently, sophisticated effects shots are becoming increasingly important, even in pictures not usually considered to be effects pictures. In an effort to assist our readers in planning or working on such projects, the **American Cinemeditor**, in cooperation with its distinguished group of contributors, has gathered data on the probable costs and schedules for film optical and visual effects in the feature of today.

As noted in previous **Cinemeditor** budget articles, the figures listed won't apply to every project. They are not meant

to be exact, and each production company will experience somewhat different costs and schedules. Even our contributors don't always agree on the most cost effective manner in which to make the simplistic shots noted – and real life situations may call for more complex procedures. Adding to this comparison difficulty is the fact that every shot is different, with different ingredients of personnel, equipment, and facilities.

But the **American Cinemeditor** believes this article can be valuable reading for those who must answer the question ... what are the approximate numbers for the effects we need to tell our story?

NOT INCLUDED

(* = not always needed)

Main Title

Normal feature uses approximately 20 title cards. Figure a title shot over a black background @ \$200 a card; if shot over a scene figure \$250/500 a card. A textless version will begin at \$500.

*Design
*Special art
Interpositives
Textless version

2 weeks • \$8-15,000



End Title

Normal feature titles start over end scene and finish over black background.

Interpositives
Textless version

2 weeks • \$3500-10,000



Split Screens

(Two-way split calculated)

Depending on the screen split and other complexities, this optical can vary widely. This price applies to a locked camera only; special work for a moving camera not included.

1 week • \$2000-10,000

Visual Effects

Example: Two soldiers are firing from behind a haystack at an offstage enemy. They are photographed with a static locked camera against a blue background so a blue screen composite can be made later. During the later shooting of the big battle sequence, 100 "enemy" extras are photographed firing at their direction from a distant hill. A simple two-element shot is budgeted.

Blue Screen Composites

Simple foreground (against blue); Simple background

Visual effects supervision

2 weeks • \$3500-7000



Example: It's decided that the frame will be too empty, even with 100 extras. More items, such as cannons and tanks, must be added to the visual image, as well as a large oak tree that was never in that field. A matte painting is added to the shot (making it more than a two element composite, but for purposes of budgeting, we won't adjust that previous cost element).

Matte Painting

No visual effects supervision
3-4 weeks • \$15-20,000

Editor's Art The Costs?



Example: We need a night shot of the two soldiers firing from behind the haystack. It's shot night for night, but it just won't look realistic without some effects help. Animation will be used to show tracer bullets, and the flash of the gun barrels will be augmented by animation to light up the men and the haystack. The editor figures he will need three cuts to use in the battle.

Animation 2 weeks • **\$7500**



Example: It's decided to add more danger in the shot we have been augmenting. A moving insert of a grenade will be shot so that it will appear to land on the top of the haystack. To fit into the cuts properly, motion control will be needed to match previous camera moves.

Motion Control

To perfect the move - Five R & D hours **\$200/hour**
Three shooting hours **\$350/hour**

Please note that adding matte paintings, animation, or motion control to a blue screen composite will add to its cost.



Original Photography Visual Effects

There is a trend today to shoot sequences of visual effects on location or even in special temporary stages converted from warehouses or similar structures. It can be a very efficient way to shoot a lot of special effects shots, inasmuch as the shots may be completed totally on location, without going through the added costs of the optical process. There is also the consideration that such photography provides the show a first generation negative on the shots.

In such a case, the cost of the effects crew has to be calculated just like a normal production crew, with all the costs associated with maintaining a crew away from the studio. ILM calculates an average post schedule for visual effects on a normal effects feature to be 26-30 weeks (and figuring 35-100 shots); a larger show such as **Who Framed Roger Rabbit?** could take 52-80 weeks. The per week costs that should be considered are:

Visual effects (supervisor and office)	\$7300
Production or support staff (Producer, coordinators, production assistants, office and overhead, research, shipping, etc.)	8700
Art department (Art director, overhead, research)	2600
Still photographer (frame blow-ups for animators, matte painters, model makers) including lab costs	600

Editorial staff (visual effects editor, assistant editor, negative cutter, projectionist, room rental, expendables, etc.)	6500
--	-------------

Stage cost
For facility, grips, electrical crews, cameramen, model support, animation, rotoscoping, matte painting, effects cameras, matte photography, and final optical compositing

Add per shot to previous - depending on difficulty
\$50/75,000



Rear Projection

Rear projection, once discarded in much feature work for its unrealistic quality, has made a strong comeback. It is still an economical way of photographing actors in a location background environment. Estimate the cost as follows:

Normal production costs plus \$3-4000 a day for projection equipment and crew. Depending on the complexities of the shooting situation and the speed of the production crew, you will probably shoot between 12 and 16 setups a day.



Rear Projection Plate Photography (or live action)

There is another trend occurring today in visual effects. Plates are being shot in VistaVision, a process that runs the 35mm negative through the camera perpendicular to the usual path. Consequently, the picture is exposed on a frame 8 sprockets wide, giving a larger image area of approximately 40%.

The quality of these plates has provided a new look to old-fashioned process photography and has made many filmmakers reevaluate the rear projection process.


The weekly cost of a crew going out to shoot extensive rear-projection photography can be figured as follows:

Visual effects supervisor	\$1500
Camera operator	590
First camera assistant	440
Second camera assistant	325
Camera technician	475
Production staff	475
Model or creature technician	490
Effects engineer	505
Key effects technician	525
Effects technician	440




Computer generated graphics

There is a wide range of possible costs in this category. In most cases, you are pushing new image ideas through new technology that no one has done before. To develop the creature in **The Abyss**, the cost was \$7-10,000 per week per team (two teams were used for 26 weeks). That kind of concept might take 6 weeks to 6 months to complete a satisfactory image. In addition, there is an equipment cost (special computer equipment, scanners, etc.) of approximately \$15,000 per week. □



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FREE CATALOGUE

Ace Hosts Visual Effects Seminar

On June 14th the American Cinema Editors hosted a special effects seminar at the Cary Grant Theater on the recently renamed Columbia (nee MGM) lot in Culver City.

Participating were John Dykstra, executive creative director of Apogee Films, Roger Dorney, vice-president of post-production of Apogee Films, Jackie Cambas, editor of *My Stepmother Is An Alien*, and Brian Chambers, associate editor of the same production. Scenes of *My Stepmother Is An Alien* were shown. The group explained the intricacies of the various effects shots, as well as describing the relationship between the cutting room and the optical house.

Michael Gleason, visual effects editor from ILM, screened scenes from *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* He put on a before/after demonstration that illustrated the many elements used to composite the live action and animation

in the film. The audience was dazzled watching dailies of actors working in front of empty stages with blue backgrounds and then seeing working film such as pencil tests, inserts, matte paintings, etc. shot separately to be used later as part of the final illusion.

Lynn Dunn had been in charge of the RKO special effects department when it was one of the seven major studios. He captivated the gathering with his behind-the-scenes information on classic films, such as *Citizen Kane*, the original *King Kong*, and *Gunga Din*. His entertaining stories of really unusual effects jobs ranged from an assignment of optically shrinking the stomach of a pregnant actress to redoing the design of the Eiffel Tower.

George Hively, A.C.E., chaired the engrossing evening, with the able assistance of George Grenville, president of the American Cinema Editors. □

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Letters

Howard Kunin, A.C.E.
Editor, American Cinemeditor

Dear Howard-

This is a long overdue note to commend you on the truly fantastic job you are doing in putting together ACE's magazine.

I believe the articles on electronic editing and new technologies are most informative and exceptionally well-written for such difficult subjects. Your editorials are dynamic theses on important current issues; they should be cut out, framed and hung where they might do the most good.

And I look forward to those humorous, enjoyable reminiscences by that name-dropper, John Woodcock. Who would have thought that this fine, creative editor had such hidden talents as a writer! Keep writing them, John.

Bernie Balmuth
North Hollywood



George Grenville, President
American Cinema Editors

Dear George,

This is a quick note letting you know about Bob Bring's guest appearance at my FX and Music Editing class at Columbia College. Bob screened and discussed two excellent scenes from TV shows he has edited. Bob then introduced Robert Ferretti (a graduate of Columbia College) who discussed his role as one of the editors on *Die Hard II*. It's always a tremendous experience for students to hear and talk to people working in the industry. These are the rare opportunities of learning about the real world. In the case of Bob and Robert, the educational experience was of exceptional value to my students. Their response was both positive and enthusiastic.

I want to extend my thanks to Bob Bring and Robert Ferretti and to the American Cinema Editors for their appearance in my class.

Anthony R. Barsha
Columbia College, Hollywood

WHO SAYS?

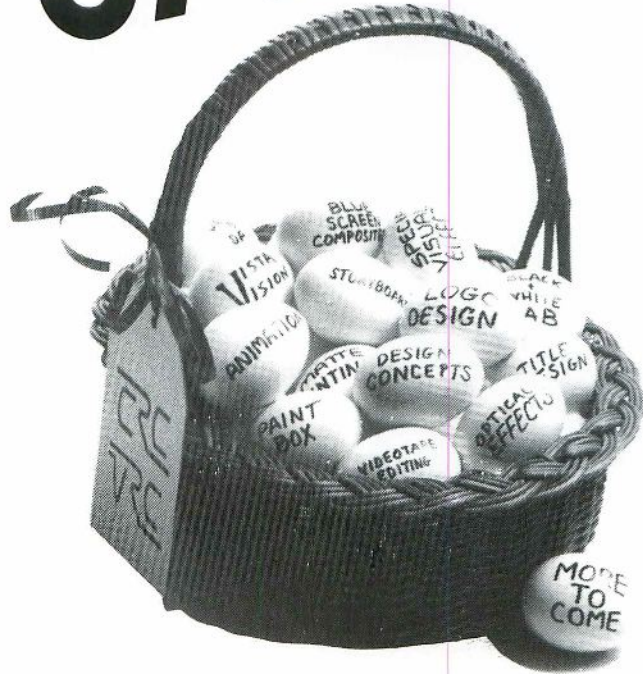


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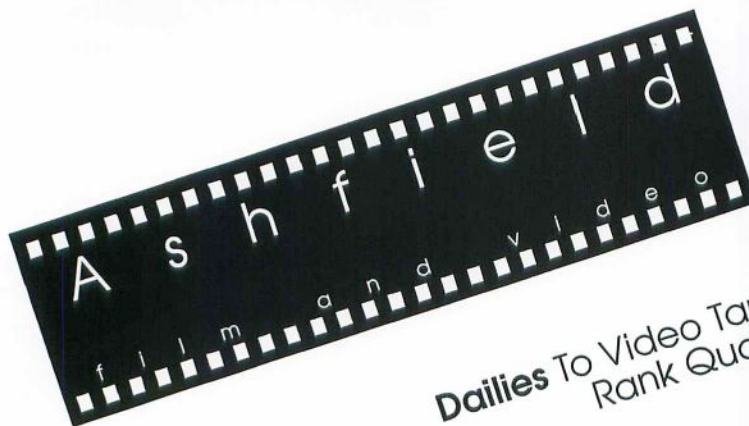
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McDonald's Video Offers A Varied Menu

by John Ciszek
Editorial Coordinator
McDonald's Creative Services
Elk Grove, Illinois

McDonald's Creative Services Television in Elk Grove, a northwest suburb of Chicago, Illinois, is one of the most active corporate communication facilities in the United States. Videos produced and posted in-house get distributed in a multitude of languages to the 11,000 McDonald's Restaurants in 51 countries around the world. We produce or update approximately 200 videos each year, and each McDonald's Restaurant keeps a library of approximately 40 titles for employee use.

The biggest annual production is the taping of the annual shareholder meeting. It's a three-camera shoot with three 1" roll-in playback decks, two 1" recorders and an isolated camera recording to 3/4". The gathering is seen live by 600 people in the main hall; it's beamed to about 1000 additional viewers at Hamburger University and corporate headquarter locations in the immediate area; satellite transmission across the country reaches further audiences. Six to eight months are spent planning the show, and it takes about four weeks to edit.



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Another important job is our preparation of tapes for the McDonald's manager meetings. These gatherings are attended by 500-700 participants at approximately 15 locations; they are intended to keep managers informed about nutrition, equipment changes, the economy, etc. Our job is to put together a program that is always stimulating, so we try to include different twists to keep our audience interested. The program is made interactive; attendees sit down at a computer, view our tape, and are given twenty seconds to answer questions such as:

You're understaffed by two employees; there are too many customers at the counter ... how would you handle the situation?

The observations and comments of each participant go into a score for comparison with other attendees.

The number of topics covered by our staff is extensive. Video subjects can embody training on how to prepare French fries, proper use of the grill, filet of fish preparation, heating and air-conditioning considerations, and management training. The McDonald's family receives messages from the president on subjects such as environmental issues, nutrition, and sanitation — one of our most important topics. It's an effective way for employees to see facts as McDonald's sees them. We shoot at McDonald's locations all over the country, but most of our production takes place at one of two interior restaurant sets in Chicago and Los Angeles (City of Industry). These sets are actually fully functioning McDonald's Restaurants and have the food preparation and service facilities found in a typical McDonald's Restaurant, including a working drive-thru. The Chicago restaurant set is scheduled primarily for industrial training, but it is being used more and more for commercials. In Los Angeles the standing set exists solely for commercial production. The restaurants are shot filled with extras; it's usual to have at least 50 talent and crew on the set during production.

Our typical program is shot in English, but we dub Spanish language for many of our domestic deliveries. The M & E (music and effects) tracks are isolated during the editing stage so that we can later dub voices in the languages required for international operations. We use our Dubner character generator to add in supers for foreign titling requirements.

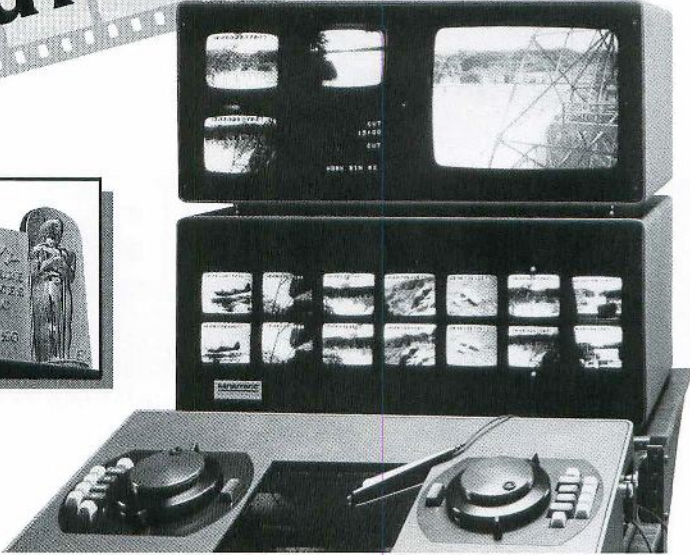
There are ten full-time employees, but we hire quite a few free-lancers at various times. Everybody is expected to be able to perform multiple functions. The department is proud of the unique bar code system we have devised to identify the history and status of each video. These codes tell us in which room the tape was produced, which VTRs were used, and from which library the tape

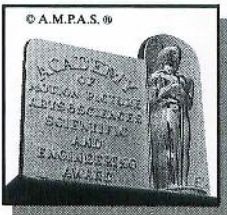
originated. All this information is very valuable for later changes or updating.

In Elk Grove there are two online suites. The control room during a shoot becomes, by pushing a few buttons, an edit suite when we are not in production. The facility has an Abekas A-53 digital effects system, a Dubner paint system, a Grass Valley 1680/10X switcher, a Grass Valley 41 editor, either Ampex VPR-3 or Sony 2000 1" VTRs, Ikegami HK-322 high resolution cameras, and some simple animation equipment. Production is recorded to 1", or when we need portability, 3/4" and Beta. The facility is never rented out to others; it's not considered a profit center, just a very busy place doing work that would be a considerable expense to the corporation if not done in-house. □

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Getting The Most Out Of Dubbing

The Creative Side

By Jeremy Hoenack, C.A.S., M.P.S.E.

Sound is one of the most subjective of the senses. The physiology of sound perception causes the sounds we hear to be heavily colored or edited by the brain. What we think we hear is in fact the result of intense processing by the brain; this is the nature of sound itself. Without this processing, it would be difficult to make sense out of all the sounds that enter our ears in any but the most quiet of circumstances.

We all are aware that our eyes focus on one object at time. Our eyes, by their very nature, point in only one direction. Therefore, our vision can exclude or at least relegate to the periphery everything but the specific object of our interest. Sound, on the other hand, permeates the air. Even sounds that originate from a single point will usually result in dozens of reflections from many directions reaching our ears. Our ears, unlike our eyes, are only slightly directional. The result is that many sounds

are entering our ears from all directions simultaneously.

Actually, each ear by itself has a very poor sense of direction. In addition, many sounds are so short in duration that we cannot move the head in time to determine the direction the sound is coming from. Fortunately, we are endowed with a miracle, binaural hearing. Surprisingly, the ears get only 5% of the glory. The party that is 95% responsible for this miracle is the brain! Why? Because the temporal lobe of the brain routinely measures differences as small as 50 millionths of a second between sounds arriving at each ear and equally subtle differences in level and phase shift at each ear. Then, it instantly calculates the distance and the direction of the sound in three dimensions, accurate to several degrees. As a bonus, the brain makes accurate judgments about the surrounding space by simultaneously analyzing dozens of other reflections. And it does this while filtering out many other extraneous sounds. All of this occurs in the blink of an eye through no conscious effort on our part. The processing power of this one small part of the brain humbles the most powerful Cray computer!

Most of the time, our ears are assaulted with dozens of sounds, each with dozens of reflections. Through the miracle of brain processing power, they are analyzed and isolated without any conscious effort on our part. Once isolated, sounds can be selectively filtered out. This is how we avoid hearing everything that vibrates the air around us. We choose to not see something by simply looking away. But sound, arriving from all directions, must be filtered and sorted by the brain. By its very nature, our hearing is selective. The ability to ignore much of the sound around us is crucial to our survival and sense of peacefulness.

Indeed, our hearing is totally subjective. Given the same sounds, two people might hear completely different things. In fact, what we actually hear at any given moment is a function of our state of consciousness. During sleep we are aware of only the most alarming sounds. At other times, we may be shocked by a sound as subtle as our own heartbeat.

During normal consciousness, the sounds

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that we hear depend largely on our mood. Many sounds that are present are simply not heard because they have no relevance to our present state of consciousness. Also, one sound may affect us completely differently, at different times, depending on our state of mind.

How does this information relate to a motion picture sound track?

1. The sound track sets the mood of the viewer of the motion picture. The sounds (or lack of sounds) that accompany the picture make a powerful statement about how the picture is to be perceived. In effect, the selection of sounds simulates a "mood" for the audience by "pre-filtering" extraneous sounds. The appropriate sound accompaniment depends on how we desire the scene to be perceived by the audience. Score, when introduced, is an extreme case. It directly injects pure emotion.

2. Many sound effects are practical in nature. They add nothing to the emotional content or story line. While necessary, they should be unobtrusive. If they draw attention, they draw away from the drama.

3. Important sounds should be limited only by the imagination. Story point sound effects should almost never be constrained by reality, or the drama will be diminished. Remember, all sound is subjective.

Why not make it new and different?

4. Room must be made for important sounds. Too many elements make a confusing sound track. Even the best theatrical sound system does not provide the subtle cues necessary for the brain to isolate various sounds.

5. Saturation of a particular portion of the sound spectrum effectively "jams" that portion of the spectrum. For instance, music with relentless treble will make the brightest sound effect sound dull, and dialog unintelligible. Steady sounds are the most likely to cause this "jamming" effect.

6. Every sound should have an imaginary point of origination in space. If that point is defined, it becomes a simple technical process to find a proper balance. The balance will almost always include some type of reflections.

7. Ambiences should change with the point

of view. If they don't change, they will tend to lessen the drama.

8. Volume is relative. The best way to make something loud is to slowly creep the level down just before it.

9. When things get loud, it's time to think about how to weed things out.

10. No matter how hard you try, only one of the three – dialog, music, or effects, can end up on top. Deciding which shall have the top position at any given moment should be the first order of business.

11. Offstage sound effects, when used as story points, should be used with extreme caution. Often the script will call for a subtle offstage sound while a cacophony is occurring onstage. Since this is impossible, invariably another solution must be devised. Unless the scene is very quiet, offstage sounds should be very simple and clear.

12. The sound track must be experienced in

context for its true effect on the viewer to be revealed. This means playback under circumstances that closely match the audience's.

Dubbing at its best is "casting a spell". Making movie magic is compelling audiences to view the film from a particular point of view and engaging their emotions completely. To accomplish this requires sensitivity, as well as an ability to manipulate sound. Dubbing can quickly be reduced to a banal chore, but the opportunity is there to catch a creative wave and ride it to the end. All it takes is imagination and concentration! □

Note: Jeremy Hoenack designed dubbing stages 2 and 4 at Sound Trax Studios and is a supervising dialog mixer with numerous credits.

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Zap The Show And Watch This Commercial Art

Chevrolet Beretta Commercial

by Greg Laube
President
Laube-Roth
Burbank, California

Editor's note: As part of the continuing effort of the *American Cinemeditor* to inform its readership of fascinating developments in our post-production industry, it has inaugurated a new series of articles recognizing notable work in the commercial field. The editorial staff welcomes your comments on this new series.

Find it comforting to know that an editor in commercials is often given an opportunity to be as creative as a budget will allow, unlike editors in other disciplines who work under different creative restrictions. In fact, many editors or editing companies are given commercial jobs because an agency or director wants their creative expertise and input to heighten the spot. Our company was chosen by Lunapier Productions to augment a smooth collage of overlapping images on a commercial featuring the Chevrolet Beretta. The spot was created by Vic Olsen & Partners, a California advertising agency.

Editors and post-production companies are relied on to bring ideas forward. We are not responsible for the concept, but we are expected to bring it to life – to say that certain equipment will accomplish something or achieve an effect at its maximum value. In the bidding stage of this spot I put in 8 hours to use digital effects equipment; once the agency liked the outcome of the rough cut, it left the online expertise to the editors on the job to decide how to achieve the digital effects. This is not uncommon, and I believe we are increasingly being given more artistic freedom to edit commercials.

The basic premise of the spot is that a young man has a dream, featuring a beautiful girl and a beautiful new Chevrolet Beretta. He's tormented by the choice he has to make and ultimately picks the _____ (readers get one guess of his decision!). In a concept commercial such as this one, a director is hired by the agency

and given a sheet with a description of what the story idea should be. The director, working with the writer and art director at the agency, then conceives the set design and finalizes the storyboard. In our spot, it was decided to construct set pieces that would parallel the lines and the curves of the automobile.

After director Blair Hayes had his initial meeting with the agency creatives, he had a conversation with me concerning how best to achieve the objectives of the spot. Originally, we talked about letting these images self-matte by use of the set design; perhaps the colors, grey and black tones with highlights of gold, would give us the matte separations. It was decided to build high set walls and to shoot with movement, and enough material to use for editorial options and technique.

Weaving the images of the girl and the car, I let my imagination go in blending master shots and intimate shots and in

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During our initial online, offline operator J.J. Rogers did a list cleaning and took it to Action Video. The computer list was given to online editor Brian Robinson, who spent at least three hours loading numbers before doing the first edit of our 30-second spot. We used four recorders and the Abekas A62, which allows you to do pre-builds in digital without losing generations.

There is another method we could have used. Scenes could have been put together, and then original negative could have been transferred to D1 digital. They could have been pre-built in a Harry configuration, but that wouldn't be my choice for this project. That would be all right if we were going to composite 2 or 3 scenes together using mattes. We specialize in this kind of visual effects compositing job, and it was our feeling that it was valuable to keep a filmic look by rolling everything first generation. We stayed in the 1" format and built onto the Abekas where needed or rolled all the 1" machines live. In essence, we took a simple dissolve structure and took it to new levels. The spot contains an elaborate style of images, which are constantly changing based on two choices in a man's dream. We used the Abekas for building layers of scenes, but basically it

combining traveling moves from different directions. I made seven versions during the editing. As was to be expected, the story was told better in some versions, and the imagery came together better in other versions.

Many scenes were designed to "marry" together when they were shot, but how and where was left to the editing room. Basically, I used a multiple bi-pack technique, starting with cut A and cut B dissolving together. Then two more scenes, such as cut C and cut D were dissolved together. That resulting image was dissolved together with the image of the first dissolve so that in the end we mixed up to five scenes together to become one.

was a matter of combining images in editing that were strikingly photographed.

The basic editorial idea was simple; the execution was elaborate. Take two pieces of film and look at how they double expose or composite against one another. Now take the images, build on them layer by layer, up to 5 layers at one time, to give a dream quality to the spot. Take full advantage of the brilliant cinematography, the way the sets were designed, the lighting, the camera movement, and the way scenes were composed.

I grew up editing on film with a Moviola and then the Kem. It's comfortable to cut film with its non-linear style of editing and its inherent freedom of scene manipulation. Choosing to do this Beretta spot in the offline world, where I had a switcher that could do very sophisticated dissolves, enabled me to reach this level of film editing ease. However, if I had started to cut this on film I probably wouldn't have gotten past 2 or 3 layers until I would have had to finish in the online stage. Using all the online equipment we needed, the cost would have been around \$1000/hour, and that wouldn't leave much time for experimentation. I'm very happy with the results. □

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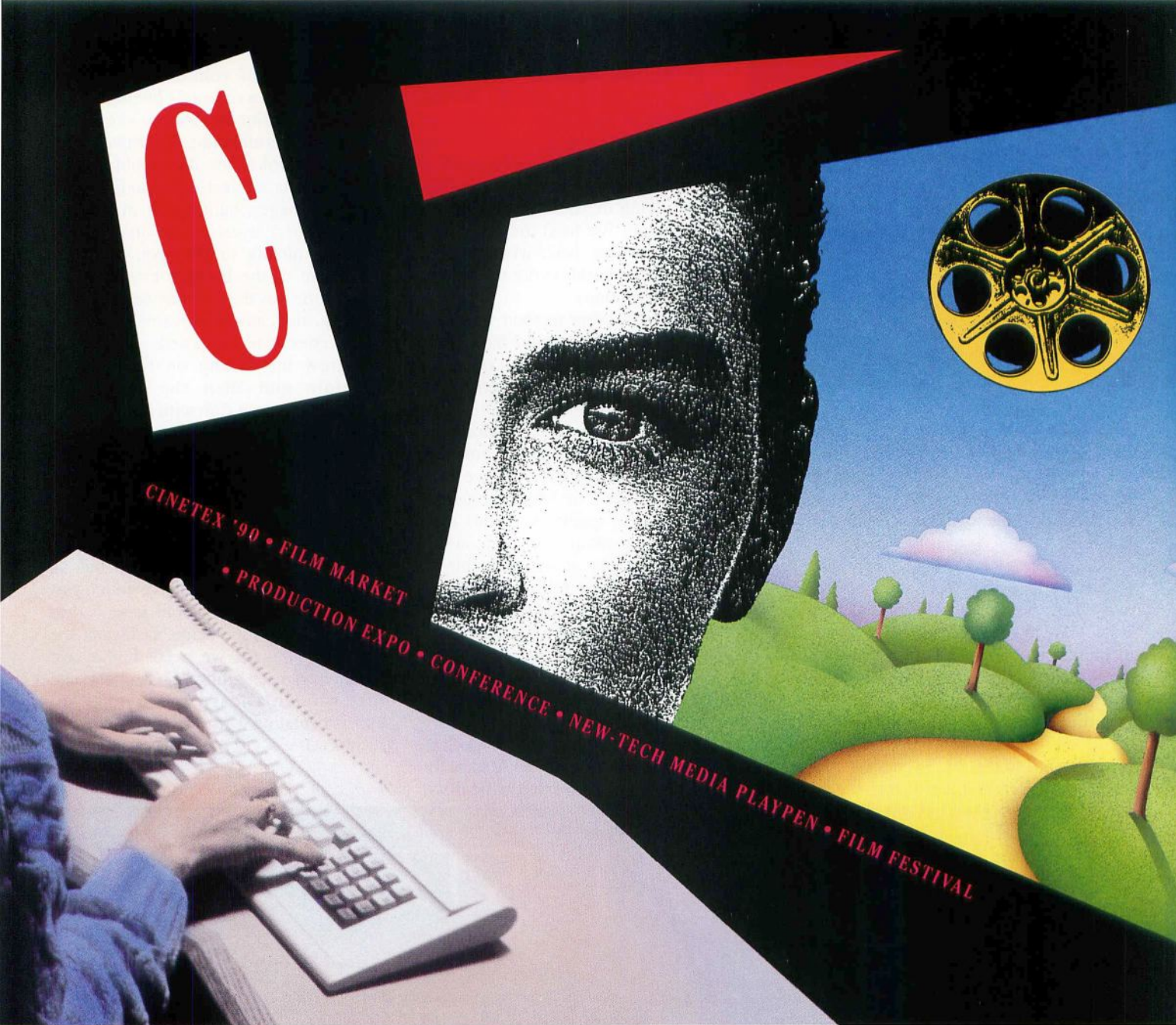
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The Name Dropper

Alfred Hitchcock

by John M. Woodcock, A.C.E.

1953 Hitchcock is coming! This information swept through the sound stages and departments at Paramount Studios. Alfred Hitchcock had completed his contract at Warner Bros. and was reporting to Paramount to commence a multiple picture deal. His first project was to be *Rear Window*, a mystery (what else?) starring James Stewart, Grace Kelly and a fine supporting cast. As yet, no film editor had been assigned and there was a certain amount of jockeying and politicking to win this editor's plum. Ultimately, it fell into the lap of George Tomasini, who actually received a second plum – he got me as his assistant!

The newer members of our profession may find it strange that Hitchcock didn't arrive with a retinue of his favorites accompanying him, but in 1953 the system didn't work that way. The major studios

each made from 40 to 60 features a year and to do this they kept their personnel employed year around. Seniority was important to editors, as it usually guaranteed a lifetime job, and there was a reluctance to abandon it to follow a wandering director – even one as famous as Hitchcock. Also, their reception at the new studio would have been icy at best. I know; I received such a reception at MGM several years later. The advent of television would begin to erode this system, but it would take more time.

George and I had become acquainted while working together in sound editing and had expanded that acquaintanceship



Photo courtesy MCA/Universal Pictures

into friendship through numerous fishing and camping trips. We got along! My introduction to our famous producer/director came at a pre-production meeting in his office, which was also attended by Bob Burks (director of photography), Lenny South (camera operator), and a man who turned out to be a graphic artist. Hitchcock sat behind a large desk attired in what had almost become a uniform for him – a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie.

At present, when most editors and directors dress much like the back lot craftsmen, it may come as a surprise to many readers that the dress habits of that era dictated that even male employees of the editorial department wore suits or sport coats – and always with a tie.

After we were introduced, and Hitchcock offered me a limp handshake, my immediate attention was attracted to what seemed like cartoon panels covering three walls of the large room. It turned out to be a story board – the first that I had ever seen – in which every scene in the picture was portrayed by simple sketches that indicated the camera angle and action. It was Hitchcock's most potent adjunct to scripting and pre-production planning, apparently stemming from his earlier experience as a draftsman and artist. It was kept up to date and changed to reflect any changes in the actual shooting and was used to great effect in *Rear Window*.

As I'm sure you remember, the story concerned Stewart, a news photographer confined to his apartment with a broken leg in a cast, sitting in a wheelchair and suffering terrible boredom. He finds relief

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by watching the activities of his neighbors in the apartments across the courtyard. As the story progresses, he brings these people's pursuits closer by the use of binoculars and his various camera lenses. Naturally, I was concerned by the obvious amount of optical work and, at a break in the conversation, voiced those concerns. Hitchcock answered rather disdainfully, "You should stay in your own pew, dear boy. Mr. Burks will handle the camera problems." I shut up and listened—a smart move. Not one of several hundred POVs (points of view) was done in an optical printer—there were no mattes, and no blowups. Everything was made in the camera with the lens size that corresponded to the one through which Stewart was looking. Thank God for the story board. We even had a copy to assist in the editing.

I never have worked before or since on a picture that was planned with such precision nor one in which it paid off with such great results. In my opinion, it was the best of Hitchcock's best, and he is quoted as agreeing with me!

Since starting this article, I've been agonizing over one phase of an admittedly limited association with Alfred Hitchcock. I didn't like him! I'm sure I could have written about him without so stating, but somehow it would have seemed dishonest. His pictures and his scripts show humor but very little emanated from the man himself, and that which did was usually at someone else's expense. Don't misunderstand; he was a most dedicated and professional filmmaker. His sets were models of businesslike efficiency—no horseplay, no loud talking, little joking—perhaps because Hitchcock prided himself on adhering closely to the budget and the schedule. Also, British directors of that day seemed more aloof than their American counterparts who, more often, made buddies of the cast and crew. Not Hitch! He sat regally in his director's chair surveying the crew's activity on the set and nailed any misbehaving member with a few well-chosen words. Hitchcock could deliver those broad English "A"s with devastating and intimidating effect.

Rear Window proceeded harmoniously under Hitch's direction. What a delight to work on a picture that produced dailies that pleased everyone and from which you knew a good film would emerge! Some of the credit belongs to John Michael Hayes who wrote the deliciously sexy dialogue. Some belongs to the genius that designed the huge set that filled Paramount's largest double stage. The entire picture was filmed on this one set

that included the interior of Stewart's apartment, from which he not only viewed the activity across the courtyard but could see traffic moving in the street beyond. Needless to say, I was fascinated by the mechanics of this difficult shoot, as well as with the glamorous cast. It was the type of project that you hated to see finish; it was that fascinating. But, finish it did, and a few short weeks later we showed Hitch a rough cut of the picture that wasn't rough at all. Somewhat long perhaps but a very entertaining, amusing, and frightening motion picture. It was during this period that we got to know our director better, as we were closeted with him in a projection room for many hours. Hitchcock, unlike some producer/directors, approached the editorial phase sans retinue and refused to view material on the Moviola. Thus, when there were lulls in the screening room and talk turned to everyday subjects, George and I were Hitch's audience.

It has been my experience that periods such as this and the down-time on the dubbing stage provide the editor with an opportunity to cement a relationship with a director; perhaps even establish a friendship.

One conversation that I can recall was on the subject of wine. Actually, it was more of a lecture. When I thought it was becoming a conversation, I stated that I got a sour stomach from wine, and that remark immediately relegated me to the status of outcast. George, on the other hand, pleased Hitch immensely when he let it be known that he imbibed wine nightly with his dinner. When it became evident that a month-old Chianti by Gallo was George's favorite vintage, Hitch gave out with, "Ooooh Gaaawge!" He was the only person that I have known who could deliver an exclamation and sound as if he were creating a sound effect at the same time.

More Hitchcock in the next issue, along with *To Catch A Thief*, *The Trouble With Harry*, and the *Trouble With Woodcock*! □

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Ads must be sent to the Cinemeditor office noted above. Insertions that are mistakenly sent to the American Cinema Editors organization office at 1041 N. Formosa will often miss publication dates and not be included.

Elections Held At Annual Meeting

More than seventy members attended the American Cinema Editors annual meeting on June 26th at the Valley Hilton Hotel in Sherman Oaks, California. George Grenville was re-elected president by acclamation. Bob Bring was chosen as vice-president to replace the retiring Bernie Balmuth. George Hively was re-elected secretary and Frederic R. Knudtson was picked as treasurer to replace Les Green, who also plans to retire.

Five new board members were elected: Eric Sears, Ed Abrams, Michael Knue and Noelle Imparato were selected for two-year terms and Fabian Tordjmann for one year; they will join holdover board members Jan Ambler and Doug Ibold.

Renewing an old tradition, Warren Strang of the Hollywood Film Company presented Golden Scissor plaques to the winners of the 1990 Eddie Awards. In addition, thirty-four new active and affiliate members were officially awarded membership plaques.



New ACE Board (l. to r.)
Fabian Tordjmann, George Grenville, Doug Ibold, Noel Imparato, Edward M. Abrams, Michael Knue, Eric Sears NOT PICTURED; Jeannene Ambler



New ACE Officers (l. to r.) George Hively, Secretary; Bob Bring, Vice-President; George Grenville, President; Frederic L. Knudtson, Treasurer

ACE Leads Seminar

The American Film Institute held a two-day seminar on the Art of Editing on June 8th and 9th. Co-sponsored by the American Cinema Editors, the four sessions were moderated by ACE President George Grenville and were held on the AFI campus.

Panel members who participated in the several sessions led the audience through the various steps and stages that the assistant editor and the editor face from the time the film enters the editing room to its completion. The mechanics of the process were examined and illustrated by Bernie Balmuth, A.C.E., Tina Hirsh, A.C.E., and Michael Hoey, A.C.E., who explained the editor/director relationship during the early stages of the process. They also discussed the input of the director to the editor during the screening of dailies and the sometimes complex decisions that are made to select the best takes based on performance and drama. Each of them contributed personal reminiscences relating to their origins and experiences in the film industry.

The second session dealt with the creative process. Michael Kahn, A.C.E., who won an Oscar for *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and Ralph Winters, A.C.E., who won an Oscar for *Ben-Hur*, supplied intimate details of their approach to the editing process. The audience was made privy to the directorial styles and attitudes of two famous directors with whom they have worked – William Wyler and Stephen Spielberg.

The third session covered the post-production process after the film is turned over to the music and sound effects editors. Participating in the discussion was Anne Coates, A.C.E., editor of *Lawrence of Arabia*. Sequences from the restored version of the film were screened and Ms. Coates described her long relationship with director David Lean during the initial editing and finally through the restoring procedures. Richard Anderson, a sound editor who worked on both *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and the restoration of *Lawrence of Arabia*, described his varied experiences on both films. He was joined by his associate, Andy Patterson, who discussed the manifold problems relating to the recording of dialogue, once named looping, now called ADR or automatic dialogue replacement. Dan Carlin detailed the responsibilities of the music editor from the moment film is turned over to him through his relationship with composers, the scoring and the final dub.

The final session was devoted to a forum

on the new electronic editing devices. Participants included George Hively, A.C.E. and Jill Stanton, an affiliate of ACE, who represented the Editroid editing device. They were joined by Herb Dow, A.C.E., who spoke for Ediflex and Les Green, A.C.E., who explained the Montage system. Comparisons were made to the other devices which preceded electronics – the Moviola and the Kem.

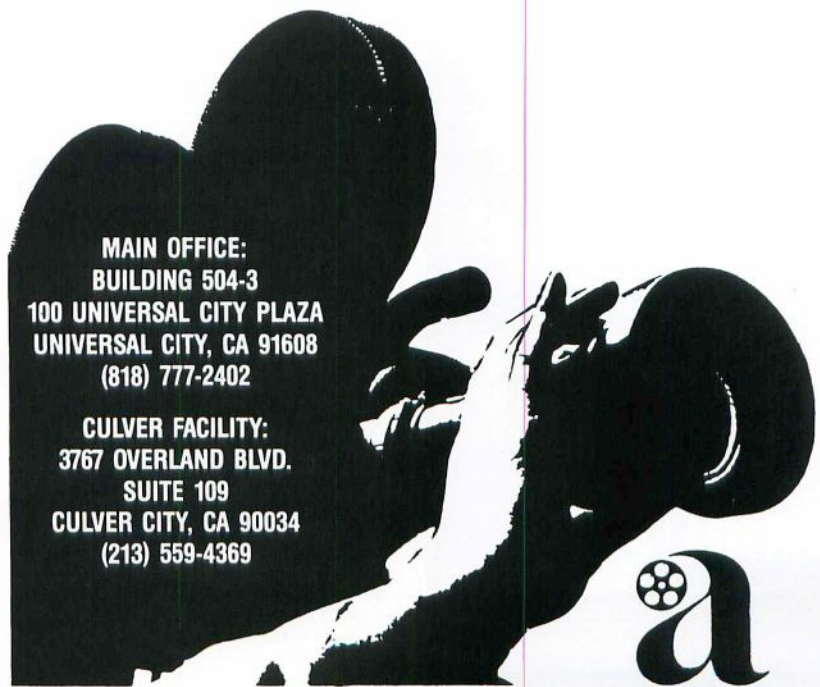
All the sessions ended with the attendees crowding around the panel members. The enthusiastic audience peppered them with added questions and expressed its gratitude for shedding light on the complexities of the post-production process. □

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TRIM BIN

by Bob Bring, A.C.E.

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.

Michael F. Anderson

To My Daughter

Producer: William Schwartz
Director: Larry Shaw
Cast: Rue McClanahan
"Editing this emotional family drama for NBC at Warner Brothers."

David Berlatsky

Tennessee Nights

Producer: Bill Harman
Director: Nickolas Gassner
Cast: Julian Sand, Rod Stieger
"We were finally able to hire an American composer and dump the old score. Editing at Big Time for Condor Productions."

Kent Beyda

Gremlins 2

Producers: Mike Finkel, Steven Spielberg
Director: Joe Dante
Cast: Zach Galligan, Phoebe Cates, John Glover
"This job lasted one year. The last optical came in one week before the picture opened."

Byron "Buzz" Brandt

In the Line of Duty

Executive Producer: Ken Kaufman
Producer: Dick Lowry
Director: Dick Lowry
Cast: Charles Haid
"Based on the Dallas drug murders. I am editing this M.O.W. at CFI, my second home. This Patchett-Kaufman Production is on film again! I'm still hanging on to the old technology, and loving it."

Bob Bring

Jail Birds

Producer: James L. Conway
Director: Burt Brinckerhoff
Cast: Dyan Cannon, Phylicia Rashad
"A M.O.W. for the fall on CBS. Shot on location in Louisiana. Editing on the Ediflex at Pacific Video."

Les Green

Lucky

Producer: Susan Baerwald
Director: Buzz Kulik
"A six hour mini-series for NBC."

Alan Heim

Billy Bathgate

Director: Robert Benton
Cast: Dustin Hoffman
"Shooting in Montreal and New York, for Disney Studios."

Robert K. Lambert

Blue Sky

Producer: Bob Solo
Director: Tony Richardson
Cast: Jessica Lange, Tommy Lee Jones, Powers Boothe
"Shooting in Alabama, Florida, and Texas, for Orion."

Tony Lawson

Crisscross

Producers: Goldie Hawn, Anthea Sylbert
Director: Chris Mengers
Cast: Goldie Hawn
"Shooting in Key West, post-production to be completed in London for Pathe Entertainment."

Priscilla Nedd

Fear No Evil

Producers: Steve Reuther, Arnon Milchad
Director: Irwin Winkler
Cast: Robert De Niro, Annette Benning, George Wendt
"The story of the Hollywood Blacklist. The first film written and directed by Irwin Winkler - producer of 35 films including the Rocky movies. For Warner Brothers."

Martin Nicholson

Thirtysomething

Producers: Marshall Herskovitz, Edward Zwick
Cast: Ken Olin, Mel Harris, Patricia Wettic, Melanie Mayron
"Editing at CBS/MTM for MGM Television, and Bedford Falls Company."

Harvey Rosenstock

Decoration Day

Producer: Marian Rees
Director: Robert Markowitz
Cast: James Garner, Ruby Dee
"A Hallmark Hall of Fame TV movie for Marian Rees and Associates. Editing at Cineaste."

Michael A. Stevenson

Three Men and a Little Lady

Producer: Robert Cort
Director: Emile Ardolino
Cast: Tom Selleck, Ted Danson, Steve Guttenberg, Nancy Travis, Robin Weisman
"Editing at Walt Disney Studios."

Mark Westmore

With Deadly Intent

Producers: Bonnie Sugar, Larry Sugar
Director: Ruben Preuss
Cast: Scott Valentine, Joan Severance
"I'm at Warner Brothers, which is really Warner Brothers Studios, again after 18 years. TBS (The Burbank Studios) is dead and buried. Thank Goodness!!!"

INT. EDITING ROOM - DAY

JANE THE PRODUCER
I read about you the other day in that new credit book
The Hollywood WHO DONE IT. I thought you'd like to
know they've listed all of the feature credits of everyone
who's worked for the last six years.

ROGER THE EDITOR
Everyone? Really? They have me in print? What a
wonderful book! I wonder if they have the new one
I'm working on?

JANE THE PRODUCER
They seem to have everything on everyone. I've never seen
anything like it. It's huge! It has cast and crew credits on
every film released from '84 thru '89.

ROGER THE EDITOR
I wonder if they have those small independent films I assisted
on in '84 and '85

JANE THE PRODUCER
Why don't you call them and find out. Plus I understand they
want to include contact information on everyone in the book for
free. Sounds like a good book.

ROGER THE EDITOR
Sounds like a great book! I'd like a copy. The Hollywood
WHO DONE IT? Catchy title. What's their number?

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - SAME DAY
ROGER picks up and dials the phone.

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The

Hollywood

WHO DONE IT

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Scene and Heard

CFI's President **Tom Ellington** and his wife, **Nancy**, recently hosted a pre-wedding party for Lynch/Frost writer **Bob Engels** and his lovely bride, actress **Jill Rogescheuski**. The gathering, which took place in the Ellingtons' elegant San Marino home, included assorted industry folk. Among them: **Mark Frost**, **Ken Scherer** (who recently left his post as director of development for AFI to join Lynch/Frost as chief operating officer), and his wife, costumer designer **Shari Feldman**. The following day, everyone helped the



James Conway directing wife, Rebecca Balding on the set of Paradise

happy couple celebrate at their wedding in Beverly Hills.

We're into a long, hot summer and many of us are looking for ways to beat the heat. **Janette Boatwright** took a trip to Anzaborrego with friends, which, she says, turned into a comedy of errors. "It was like something out of a Chevy Chase vacation movie," she recalls. "The car's engine was destroyed, we got stuck in the sand, and the weather was so bad we had to come home early." Though the planets were clearly not aligned for the excursion, she has nothing but high praise for the beauty of the Anzaborrego desert, just outside of San Diego. "At night, the only light is what's provided by the stars. The word to

describe it is awesome."

Jack Teahan finds his stars on the Little League team he coaches out in Westlake Village. The team, on which Jack's 11-year-old son **Timmy** plays, goes to bat twice weekly, with practice on Sundays. "It's hard for me to beat the traffic from Hollywood to Westlake for the night games, so I have an assistant coach to help me." A baseball fan from way back, Jack also serves as director of public relations for the Board of Westlake Baseball Association, which sponsors the team. In August, he hopes to gather up his kids (in addition to Timmy, there's Jason, 14, John, 17, and Lisa, 20) and head down to Rosarita Beach for a week.

There's good news and bad news over at the **Urisote** homestead. The good news: *Total Recall*, which **Frank** edited, is one of the summer's mega hits. The bad news: He's flat on his back after undergoing emergency reconstructive surgery on his leg. As Frank tells it, "The day after we finished the film was my son's graduation. Before leaving for the ceremony, I was on a ladder hanging up a 'Congratulations' sign when I lost my balance, fell and completely shattered my leg." Needless to say, he never made it to his son's graduation. In fact, he was under the knife at the same time the ceremony was underway. Frank will be laid up for at least the next two months, while all the vacation plans he'd made are "out the window." He says he's keeping himself occupied by watching every video he's ever wanted to see . . . and then some.

Jerry Karpf, director of marketing for Image Bank Film Library, is off on a four-week blitz throughout Asia. Stops are scheduled in Japan, Taiwan, Seoul, Hong Kong, as well as Sydney and Melbourne.

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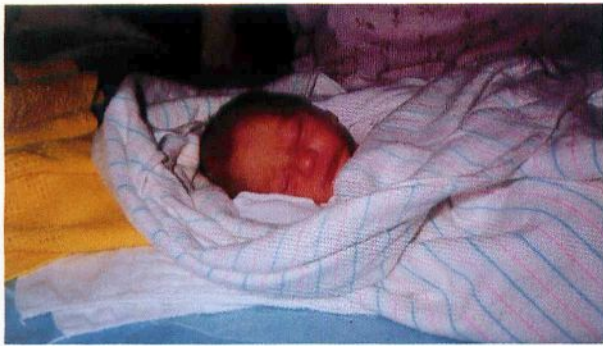
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Philip Charles Rosenblum

"Television and film advertising is taking off in these cities," he explains "I'm looking to sign up filmmakers and develop the stock film market in these areas." He anticipates an enthusiastic response. "Seoul and Taiwan are hosting parties to introduce stock film and me to the market."

A fund has been set aside in honor of the late **Samuel E. Beetley**, A.C.E., to assist aspiring editors. His widow and the board of directors of Motion Picture Editors Guild 776 have decided to purchase the book *Introduction to Film Editing* by **Bernie Balmuth**, A.C.E., and give one to each new entry level guild member. Bernie has just finished serving as ACE's vice-president.

We couldn't be happier for **Priscilla Nedd**, who's also got a summer hit on her hands with *Pretty Woman*. Priscilla's been

doing super work for years, what with *Tucker*, *Lucas*, *Flamingo Kid*, and others, but this is her first bona fide hit. "I worked on *Dead Poet's Society*, but as a co-editor, so I can't take credit for it," she demurs. "*Pretty Woman* is really my baby." After PW, she went straight into *Fear No Evil*, starring **Robert DeNiro**, a

project that marks **Irwin Winkler's** debut as a director - he also inked the screenplay. Priscilla says she's constantly amazed at what a small town Hollywood really is. "I did *Flamingo Kid* and *Pretty Woman* for **Gary Marshall**. He introduced me to **Irwin Winkler**, who I'm working for now. I hope I'm on the start of a roll." When shooting wraps, she plans to spend two weeks relaxing on the island of Hawaii with her boyfriend, **David Friendly**, who's a heavy hitter in his own right. The son of former CBS News prexy **Fred Friendly**, David is head of development and production for **Ron Howard's** Imagine Films. "It's great to be involved with someone who's in the business," Priscilla notes. "Sometimes dailies go until 10 p.m. Only a person who's in the business is capable of understanding that kind of schedule."

Producer/director **James Conway** awaits an air date for his CBS MOW *Jailbirds*, starring **Felicia Rashad** and **Dyan Cannon**. **Bob Bring** is editing. The production was shot on location in Lafayette, Louisiana, where, according to Conway, "The food's great and the people are friendly, but the weather's hot and muggy. We got lucky and missed some of the rain. All in all, we had a terrific time." Back in Los Angeles, James has been letting off steam during his free time by betting on the horses at Hollywood Park. "Fortunately, I have very little free time," he quips.

Robin Parkinson reports from New York City that editor **Jane Altschuler** wrote an original screenplay called *Inditeen* about a 14 year-old girl's ongoing struggle with her parents' 10-year-old divorce. Jane's plan is to be the director of the film. The president of a major studio gave the script a good read, and Jane hopes to start into production in the spring of '91.

Finally, congrats to **Marcie Alexander**, Director of Operations at the Dreamlight Images Film Library, and her husband, **Richard Rosenblum**, on the birth of their second son **Philip Charles Rosenblum** on May 3rd. That's all for now. Have fun, grab yourselves some R & R, and stay cool. □

by Denise Abbott

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