


# IN MOTION

USC Cinematic Arts

A black and white photograph of two people. On the left is a man with white hair, a beard, and glasses, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. On the right is a woman with dark hair, smiling, wearing a white, textured, possibly sequined or beaded, dress. The background is blurred.

## LUCAS & HOBSON

ESTABLISH FUND FOR DIVERSITY

### WHAT MAKES A SHOWRUNNER?

Chris Cantwell, Nahnatchka Khan, Tim Kring, Eric Kripke, Gabe Sachs, and Melissa Rosenberg weigh in

After 40 Years, **PROFESSOR RICK JEWELL RETIRES**

ON THE COVER:

George Lucas, alumnus and member of the USC School of Cinematic Arts Board of Councilors, with his wife Mellody Hobson, President of Ariel Investments and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Dreamworks Animation.

IN MOTION FALL 2015

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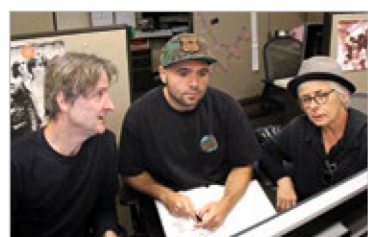
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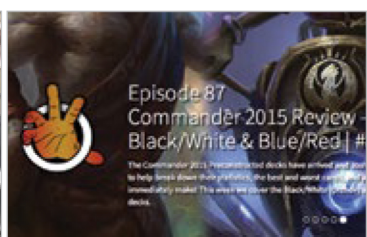
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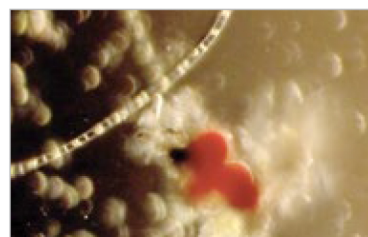
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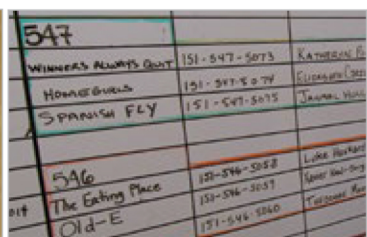
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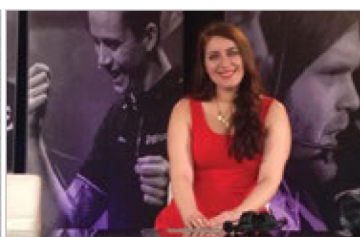
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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

It's a new era for *In Motion* magazine. With this issue we move from being a print publication to one that is delivered by email. You can now access *In Motion* on your computer or mobile devices, anywhere in the world. We hope this means you'll read it from beginning to end.

As usual, there's a lot happening at the School of Cinematic Arts. While we are only ever able to report on a fraction of it all, we hope that in exploring this issue you'll share our pride in the unparalleled contributions of our entire SCA family to the creation, analysis, and future of moving image media.

Our cover story addresses an issue that resonates across the entertainment industry: the lack of opportunities for women and minorities. While we may not have a say in who gets hired, we can ensure there will always be a diverse pool of applicants for industry jobs by making sure the best cinematic arts education in the world is accessible to talented students from underrepresented communities. Our efforts in this area recently got a boost from George Lucas and Mellody Hobson, who gave SCA its largest single donation for student support. African American and Hispanic students will receive priority consideration for help from the fund.

We also visit with our alumni who are overseeing some of the best programs on television to find out how they tackle the incredibly important job of being showrunners. And you'll meet Animation

division professors Mike Patterson and Candice Reckinger who started their careers at MTV and now make "music videos" on a completely different scale by creating massive, immersive marriages of animation and live classical music. With this new digital version of the magazine, you can link to videos of Mike and Candice's spectacular work.

In this issue, we also say goodbye to longtime professor Rick Jewell, who is retiring this year. He will be greatly missed in the classroom, but we hope he'll continue to visit.

I'm always aware you receive *In Motion* during the holiday season. This is a time for family and those of us who spend our days on campus are always eager to reach out to our family members who are scattered around the globe with news of home. I hope you'll reach back to us too. Our presence on social media has also increased and we are enjoying connecting with you in real time on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Let us know what you're up to by emailing us at [communications@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:communications@cinema.usc.edu), updating your profile on SCA Community, and following us @USCCinema. We always look forward to hearing from you.

I hope you have the happiest of holidays this year!

Elizabeth M. Daley  
 Steven J. Ross/Time Warner  
 Professor and Dean

Dean Daley and Production Division Chair Mike Fink at an event for admitted students.

# #realityendshere

SCA life in 140 characters

## usccinema

Fantastic Q&A moderated by @leonardmaltin w/ Bryan Cranston, writer/producer John McNamara, and Dir./Alum Jay Roach '86 #FightOn #RealityEndsHere #Trumbo



## USC School of Cinematic Arts •

October 1

The success story continues: Sam Regnier's #Nicholl-winning script lands at CBS Films! Oh, and Scott Shooman, CBS Films' VP of Acquisitions and Co-Productions? Also an SCA alum... #TrojanMafia

**William Colby** This is great. SCA dominates the industry, controls the message, and sets the standard. Truly... #TrojanMafia

April MarshallMiller @aprilmm - Feb 25  
Things to come! #DreamBigWorkHard @USCCinema #eyeonthe future



## @usccinema

Welcome #SCA #Classof2019 and all new @uscedu students! #FightOn #USC #losangeles #california #SCALife #RealityEndsHere



**Doug Cummings** @filmjourney • Mar 24  
Very happy I've been admitted to grad studies @USCCinema for the fall.

**Herman Phillips** @HermanGPhillips • Mar 26  
Almost passed out when I got accepted to @USC and @USCCinema today. Beyond excited and blessed to be attending \*the\* USC. #Trojan2019

**rukayat** @rukayat • Mar 5  
The moment when your dreams come true, and you begin dreaming even bigger. Excited to be 1 of 24 this upcoming fall at the #1 film school in the world. #IWillWhatIWant #ICanAndIWill #TakeYourTime #USC (#GoBears)



**usccinema** Was a privilege to be the 1st American audience to screen #Spectre Thx to former #Starkie Jonathan Glickman & 2nd Unit Director Alexander Witt for dropping by for Q&A w/ @leonardmaltin #JamesBond #007 #RealityEndsHere

**Kay Angrum** @kayangrum  
@USC students were the FIRST audience in America to see #SPECTRE aka #JamesBond starring #DanielCraig. So cool!

**Leonard Maltin** @leonardmaltin  
@USCCinema I've had the pleasure of teaching this class for 17 years. It has been and continues to be one of the best parts of my life



**Michael Kelly** @michaeljkellyjr - Mar 6  
Had a blast talking @HouseofCards @netflix with @JamesFoleyJr & the bright young minds @USCCinema

# George Lucas and Mellody Hobson Establish Fund for Diversity

African American and Hispanic students to get priority consideration

By **Desa Philadelphia**



The School of Cinematic Arts' diversity efforts recently got a boost from alumnus George Lucas, who together with his wife Mellody Hobson established the George Lucas Family Foundation Endowed Student Support Fund for Diversity at the School this fall. The fund will provide financial support to both undergraduate and graduate students, with African American and Hispanic students receiving priority consideration.

Lucas says the goal of the fund is to give more minority students the opportunity to eventually compete in Hollywood. "Hispanic and African American storytellers are underrepresented in the entertainment industry," he said in a statement. "It is Mellody's and my privilege to provide this assistance to qualified students who want to contribute their unique experience and talent to telling their stories."

The fund also addresses a fundamental problem the School of Cinematic Arts faces in enrolling minority students. It's not just about admission, but also enrollment. Applications to SCA by African American and Hispanic students more than doubled between 2011 and 2014. Those who are offered admission to the School and choose not to attend most often say they are declining enrollment purely for financial reasons, noting in many cases that their families express doubt about making an investment in their desired careers in the media field.

Where SCA is having unprecedented success is in attracting female students of all races. Women made up a majority of the incoming 2014 and 2015 freshman classes.

The Lucas diversity fund aims to address both gender and ethnic representation. Each year the scholarships it awards will be divided equally between male and female students across the School's divisions.

In announcing the fund, SCA Dean Elizabeth Daley expressed gratitude that Lucas and Hobson "recognized the importance of encouraging the Hispanic and African American storytellers of tomorrow" and were making a gift that would not only benefit USC students but would hopefully challenge the industry to respond to the overwhelming need for greater diversity in employment.



The Lucas Foundation scholarships also come amidst a greater push by Dean Daley and the School's advancement team to increase endowments that are earmarked for student support. With more than two-thirds of the School's students requiring some kind of financial aid, the need is acute. In recent years scholarships from parents (Vijay and Ram Shriram; Alexandra and Steven Cohen), alums (Javier Grillo-Marxauch), and industry friends and partners (Kelly and Ron Meyer; Robert Rodriguez and John Fogelman; Lionsgate) have helped lighten the load. But in the interest of helping as many students as possible, the average

awards are still often small. And most of the scholarship money awarded to students still comes from the School's operating budget.

The hope is that the Lucas Family Foundation Scholarship will make it easier for the School to attract and enroll other students like writer/producer Grillo-Marxauch (*Lost*, *The Middleman*), game designer Kellee Santiago (thatgamecompany, Google Play), or writer/director Ryan Coogler (*Fruitvale Station*, *Creed*) across its divisions.

Join the conversation @USCCinema



# YEAR IN REVIEW

Throughout the year, the **USC School of Cinematic Arts** welcomed guests, alumni, lecturers, and friends from the entertainment, technology, and video game industries to speak to students and faculty. In addition to these guests, the calendar included a Directing Workshop with James L. Brooks and Larry Moss, the dedication of a new Bart Simpson statue in the Harold Lloyd Lobby, and an evening recognizing Taiwanese filmmaker Hou Hsiao-hsien with the School's Eisenstein Award.



John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts' graduate student organization POV (Persistence of Visionaries) hosts Studio Day, an annual event where Animation students receive feedback on their portfolios from representatives from top animation studios.

USC Games hosted its twice-annual exhibition of student games Demo Day which included live demonstrations in Frank Sinatra Hall followed by hands-on demos in the SCA Gallery. In addition, the Spring Demo Day hosted a panel discussing the creation and publishing of games from multiple points of view.



USC student feature film *Don Quixote: The Ingenious Gentleman of La Mancha* made its debut at the Palm Springs International Film Festival. The class was taught by Professor John Watson and actor James Franco. From Left: Brandon Somerhalter, Xu Zhang, Mahin Ibrahim, Alana Waksman, Will Lowell, Franco, Austin Kolodney, Dave Dorsey, and David Beier.

(Right) Cyberpunk Symposium guest panelists Roger Trilling, Bruce Sterling, and Mark Pauline. (Below) Audience views screening from Cyberpunk event.



(Far left) The 2015 Commencement honored showrunner and alum Melissa Rosenberg as the Mary Pickford Award Winner and director and alum Jay Roach. (Middle Insert) Alum John Milius with graduating daughter Amanda Milius. (Middle) Students in the Shrine Auditorium. (Right insert) Nicole Segal with parents, alum Peter Segal and Linda Segal.

Harvey Weinstein (right) speaks to students at An Evening with Harvey Weinstein, moderated by SCA Director of Programming and Special Projects Alex Ago.



(From left) Professor Howard Rosenberg welcomes USC alum and showrunner Nahnatchka Khan and writers Melvin Mar and Sanjay Shaw for a special screening and Q&A of *Fresh Off the Boat* for Rosenberg's Television Symposium class.



Hou Hsiao-hsien was awarded the SCA Eisenstein Award. (Left) Hsiao-hsien with Professor David James. (Above) A capacity crowd at a Q&A with Hsiao-hsien, moderated by Vice Dean Akira Lippit.



(Left) Vice Dean Akira Lippit and Dr. Rick Jewell at Jewell's retirement celebration. (Upper Right) Jewell with his daughter, SCA alumna Annie Brownell Jewell. (Right) Jewell with long-time collaborator and friend Dr. Drew Casper.



James Gunn joins Professor Jason Squire and students from Squire's Art and Industry of the Theatrical Film.



(From left) USC alumni Kevin Feige and Tim Story after a screening of Avengers: Age of Ultron for Professor Leonard Maltin's Film Symposium.

Professor Leonard Maltin, alum/director Jay Roach, actor Bryan Cranston, and writer John McNamara after a screening of Trumbo in Maltin's Film Symposium.



Ralph Bakshi speaks at An Evening with Ralph Bakshi and Fritz The Cat, celebrating Bakshi's groundbreaking x-rated 1972 animated feature.



Bart Simpson and the Trojan Marching Band welcomed Nancy Cartwright to USC for the unveiling of her original Bartman sculpture celebrating The Simpsons' 25th anniversary.



Shriram Fellows join Ram Shriram (seated) to celebrate the establishment of The Shriram Family Graduate Support Fund, which supports talented MFA and PhD candidates with significant financial need.



(Left) CEO of Electronic Arts Andrew Wilson speaks to students in Robert Nashak's Business and Management of Games course.



USC grad and Senior Production Artist at GoPro, Abe Kislavitz, CEO and Founder of GoPro Nick Woodman, Dean Elizabeth M. Daley and GoPro SVP of Media Zander Lurie at the launch of the new partnership of GoPro and the USC School of Cinematic Arts.



(Left) Dean of Research Scott Fischer, and professors Henry Jenkins, Alex McDowell, and Ann Pendleton-Jullian speak at the Sloan Science Seminar. (Below) Alex McDowell presents on Worldbuilding at Sloan Science Seminar with faculty panels.



Steelcase Senior Researcher Paul Noll, Professor Chanel Summers, Researcher Jen Stein, Steelcase Principal Researcher Frank Gaziano, SCA Dean of Research Scott Fisher, Steelcase Director of User Led Experience Nicolas DeBenoist, and Steelcase Director of Research Workspace Futures Terry West visit SCA for collaborative work sessions.

(Top) USC Comedy hosted a master class on directing comedy performance with legendary directors James L. Brooks and Larry Moss. From Left to Right: Chair Jack Epps, Jr., Moss, Professor Barnet Kellman, Professor David Isaacs, Dean Elizabeth Daley, and Brooks. (Middle) Students getting instruction from Larry Moss. (Bottom) Barnet Kellman directing actors in scene from Crazy, Stupid, Love for Brooks/Moss Master Class.



SCA Director of Programming and Special Projects Alex Ago interviews alum and writer/director Walter Murch and producer Paul Maslansky during Q&A for Movies We Love: Return to Oz.



The First Look Film Festival, which includes First Film, Adobe First Frame, and First pitch, was held in April at the DGA Theatre, the Four Seasons and the USC School of Cinematic Arts Complex. (Middle) Host of First Pitch Pam Veasey and Chair of the Writing Division Jack Epps, Jr.



The Cacavas family, friends, and fans of the late film composer John Cacavas gathered at the Stark Family Theatre to celebrate Cacavas' legacy as a renaissance man. (TOP) The Cacavas Family. (MIDDLE) Professor Ken Hall, Composer Richard Sherman, and Director of the Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television Program at the Thornton School of Music Dan Carlin. (RIGHT) Bonnie Cacavas, widow of John Cacavas, with grandson Eric Cacavas.



## Alumni Profile

# Kevin Feige

by Ryan Dee Gilmour



**KEVIN FEIGE IS ONE OF HOLLYWOOD'S MOST INNOVATIVE AND SUCCESSFUL STUDIO EXECUTIVES. AS PRESIDENT OF MARVEL STUDIOS, HE IS THE PRODUCER BEHIND MARVEL'S BILLION-DOLLAR FRANCHISES BUILT AROUND ITS SUPERHERO CHARACTERS INCLUDING IRON MAN, THOR, CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE HULK. FEIGE ALSO OVERSEES MULTIPLE-CHARACTER, GROUP-HERO PROPERTIES LIKE THE AVENGERS AND GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, AS WELL AS TELEVISION SERIES INCLUDING AGENT CARTER, AGENTS OF S.H.I.E.L.D., DAREDEVIL AND JESSICA JONES. HE ALSO MASTERMINDED WHAT'S REFERRED TO AS THE "AVENGERS INITIATIVE" TO CROSS-POLLINATE THE MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE SO THAT CHARACTERS FROM ANY MARVEL FRANCHISE CAN POP UP IN ANY MARVEL PROPERTY.**

Feige graduated from the Film & Television Production Division in 1995. At SCA's 2014 commencement ceremony, he was presented with the Mary Pickford Award, which is given annually to an alumnus whose achievements bring special distinction to the School. What most people don't know is that Kevin Feige almost wasn't an SCA alum. As he told the graduation ceremony audience, he was originally admitted to USC but not to Cinema. However, he didn't take the rejection lying down. Feige applied to be a film major again and got a second no; then a third no; then a fourth no. Then a fifth no. He finally got in on his sixth attempt. Feige credits his success to his tenacity.

Marvel's films are among the most popular screenings on campus and Feige returns every year to talk to students and give insight on filmmaking and his career. This past Spring, Feige came to Professor Leonard Malin's Film Symposium class to screen *Avengers: Age of Ultron* and answered students' questions. He sat down for an interview with *In Motion* and we asked for his top five pieces of advice on navigating the post-graduation world.



**1 DON'T BE ABOVE STARTING FROM THE BOTTOM**  
You have to start low on the totem pole. Unless there's some secret new doorway that all the young kids know about that I don't know about, you have to pay dues. I didn't even start as an assistant; I started as an unpaid intern. It's about the experience, it's about the connections, it's about the foot in the door. There are companies out there that need smart, dependable people and students can get into areas they want to work in by doing tasks that other people don't want to do.

**2 ALTHOUGH THERE IS MORE CONTENT, GREATNESS STILL STANDS OUT**  
If you're interested in narrative storytelling, there are a lot more avenues than there were back in the day. There's just more narrative storytelling going on today than there was when I was a student. Students should generate content. It's hard to get it seen by the masses but it's not impossible. When I worked on the film *Volcano* as an assistant, we shot five weeks of nights in Torrance where we built a Wilshire Boulevard we could blow up. Someone brought in a video cassette—that was the viral video of the time—and it was this weird little cartoon called *The Spirit of Christmas*. It ended up becoming *South Park*. If you do something great, like *The Spirit of Christmas*, it ends up being passed around. Greatness stands out.

**3 MAKING GREAT CONTENT IS WORTH IT, BUT IT'S VERY HARD**  
It's hard to do something great and you're not going to do something great right off the bat. It takes patience. I thought I would come into USC and make my *THX1138* and be on my way. You quickly learn, if you're smart, that it doesn't work that way. You keep going and you discover what you're good at and what you're drawn to but it's a process that only works if you produce a ton of content.

**4 PEOPLE SKILLS AND QUICK LEARNING ARE A MUST**  
Be reliable. Don't be weird with people. Know how to read a room. Know when you can ask a question. I didn't know anything about the industry when I started interning. But everyone in the industry wants nothing more than smart, willing-to-work people surrounding them at all times. Marvel wants people we can promote. I know it's tough out there but you can rise above if you show up on time and do what's asked of you and show initiative at the right time. Show up. Do what's asked of you. Do a little bit more. Jeremy Latcham, who is the Executive Producer of *Avengers: Age of Ultron* started as an assistant. We always say at Marvel, "We need smart assistants. We need smart interns. We need smart writers. We need smart directors."

**5 DO IT YOURSELF AND "WORKING YOUR WAY UP" AREN'T MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE**  
If I were just graduating from USC and it was as easy as it is now to shoot and edit content, I would be shooting on nights while working as an assistant. Get your friends together. Absolutely do that. If you're getting coffee for the person who works for the person who works for the person who makes decisions—if you're in that, it increases your chances of whatever you're doing being shown to the right person. This is important. You only have one or two chances with a person. Just a fair warning. If you're doing something and it's fun and you learn, that's fine; but make sure you do something worth showing. Do this after you do what you were paid to do, especially if you're working at Marvel.



# THE New Marriage of Music and Video

MTV vets Mike Patterson and Candice Reckinger create new audio-visual experiences

On a Saturday evening in March, 2015, Canada's internationally renowned Penderecki String Quartet sat in the campfire-like glow of their music stands, the lone source of light in the Alfred Newman Recital Hall at USC's Thornton School of Music. As they started to play, the darkness scattered as animated projections began to dance on the walls around them.

The packed house, decisively younger and more diverse than one would typically associate with contemporary classical music, leaned in with a sense of wonder as the performance unfolded: five dissonant and hypnotizing compositions paired with equally entrancing visuals projected across an immersive three-screen display.

The event, *Measures & Frames*, was a collaborative effort between Thornton and the School of Cinematic Arts, designed to illustrate the complimentary nature of the two art forms in creating moving, immersive multimedia experiences. It's a rare feat to evoke wonder from young audiences today; but two of the event's organizers, John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts Professors Mike Patterson and Candace Reckinger—longtime partners both personally and professionally—have made a career of capturing lightning in a bottle. "In the cinematic arts, you have film, television, games—then there's everything else," says Patterson. "It's the 'everything else' that gets us excited."

*Measures & Frames* is just one example of Patterson and Reckinger's willingness to wade into unexplored and untraditional corners of the arts. In 2011 and 2013, more than 1000 people gathered at SCA for their *Rhythms + Visions/Expanded + Live*, Parts I and II. Multi-sensory, audio-visual experiences, they featured mapped animation, projected onto buildings and weather balloons, and turned the campus into a free-flowing art walk of new media and live music. *Measures & Frames*—co-organized with Thornton faculty Veronika Krausas (Associate Professor of Practice) and Marek Zebrowski (Director & Curator of the Polish Music Center), both of whom contributed

original compositions—builds on the duo's efforts to expand the way that animation is received as an art form.

## I Want My MTV!

Music has long served as the conduit for Patterson and Reckinger's work. They first made a name for themselves in the music video scene of the 1980s, which proved to be the ideal sandbox for their kind of artistic exploration. As a new form, it was free of restrictive expectations that existed at the film studios where they had expected to seek work. "It wasn't as hyper-business and marketing focused," says Patterson. Moreover, says Reckinger, music videos allowed them to explore but still stay connected to Hollywood. "It was really an opening for artists to get in there and try new things. MTV was a huge moment in mass and popular culture, because it merged the experimental and the artistic with the entertainment industry."

Their breakthrough success was their animation for the music video for the hit song *Take On Me* by the Norwegian band A-ha. Patterson and Reckinger's visually distinct rotoscoping technique instantly became synonymous with the song itself and earned them a "Moonman" statue for special effects at the 1986 MTV Video Music Awards, where the video was nominated in all major categories and won several others. They went on to direct other award-winning videos including Suzanne Vega's *Luka*, Sting's *Be Still My Beating Heart*, and Best Music Video

Grammy Award-winner *Opposites Attract* for Paula Abdul and MC Skat Kat. Seven of their videos are part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

## Inspiring New Directions

As illustrated by *Measures & Frames*, Patterson and Reckinger continue to find ways to practice traditional arts differently. At the School of Cinematic Arts, where they both joined the Animation faculty in 2007 (he in the spring semester; she in the fall), they've come to be known for a style of teaching that influences rather than dictates what students should create. "Animation is a fundamental component of the entire audio-visual culture that's developing," says Reckinger. "Our class is about giving students a tool kit and learning a blended media approach as opposed to just traditional character animation."

They are also known for encouraging new voices and new ideas, regardless of the directions in which they lead. "Our teachers could not have said to us, 'go into music videos,' as MTV was just emerging on the scene. That new world was opening up right when we were ready to go," says Patterson. "There are parallels to today's landscape with all the changes happening in media and technology, so we don't want to predetermine a specific career path to our students. The world they're going into is going to be different."

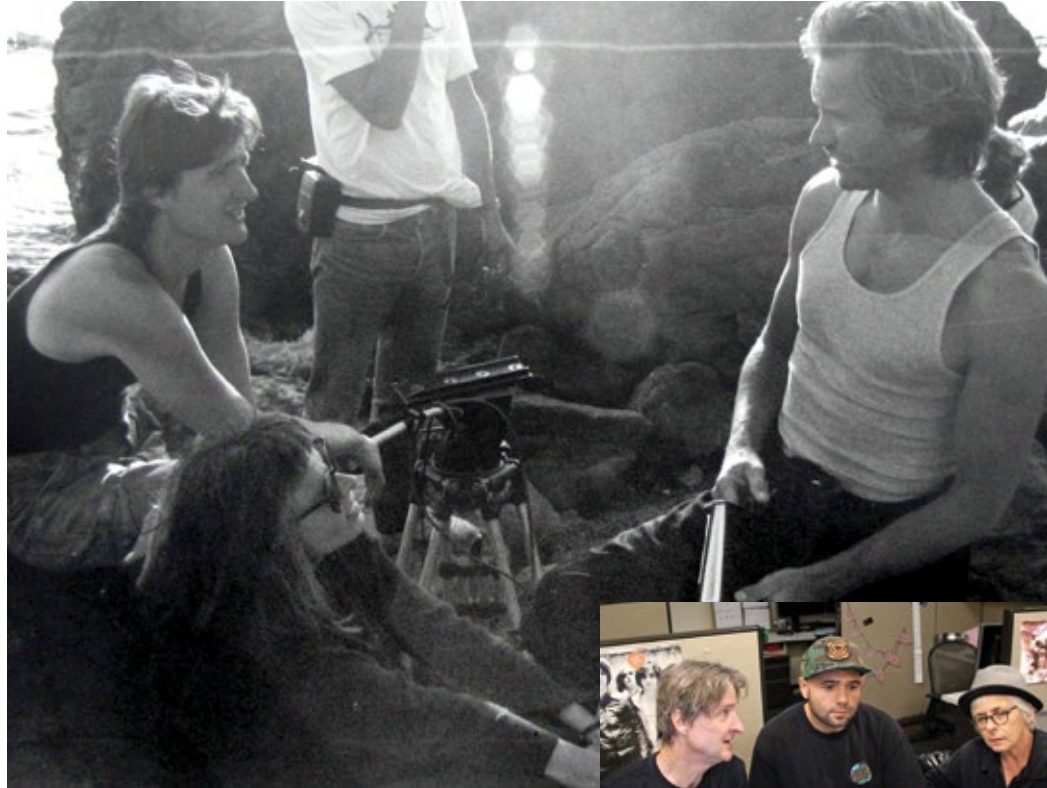


Pictures at an Exhibition: Performed by New World Symphony Academy with animation from Patterson and Reckinger.

By Matthew Meier 

The list of the various types of animation that emerge from their classes is long: from traditional character animation to visual music projects, blended media, virtual reality, and more. Reckinger encourages an atmosphere of creative diversity, which sometimes elicits radical solutions. One of her favorite examples of this was when a student who, when assigned to create a short film using black and white imagery with music, used the class syllabus itself, which the student photographed, manipulated, and animated using various techniques. "And at first I thought, 'Is she making fun?' Like she thought this was a dumb assignment?" Reckinger laughs. "But she really took it seriously when I told the class, 'Do whatever you want—surprise me!'"

The result, says Reckinger, "was a beautifully designed motion graphic piece cut to electronic dance music." Today, that student works at a premiere motion graphics animation studio and is one of the many success stories to come out of Patterson and Reckinger's upper-division animation classes, including projects that have won Student Academy Awards.



## Redefining the Music Video

In creating another take on music-meets-video, Patterson and Reckinger engaged a team of eleven animators (including students and recent graduates) to create new work to complement Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky's 150-year-old suite *Pictures At An Exhibition*. In January 2011, the animations were projected onto five massive screens as Miami's New World Symphony Academy performed the Mussorgsky suite as the inaugural performance in their new concert hall, designed by Frank Gehry. Their most recent project includes animation to Bach and other composers (including Tristan Perich's *qsqsqsqsqqqqqqq: 3 toy pianos and three-channel 1-bit tones*) performed by student musicians from the UCLA Department of Music.

Patterson and Reckinger consider these works—which include many forms of animation—a natural progression of their experimentation, which they see as contributing to a redefinition of the genre that is happening throughout the industry. "A lot of what we're pushing, a few years ago people would say, 'That's not an animated film. They used a camera, they didn't draw'—that kind of thing," says Reckinger. "Now I'd say people accept a lot of things that even two years ago they wouldn't have."

That sort of excitement about what's fresh and what's new is what brought Patterson and Reckinger together in the first place. They met in France at the 1981 Lille Short Film Festival when he was studying at CalArts and she at UCLA. He was showing his short film *Commuter*, which would heavily influence their work for the A-ha video a few years later. "Filmmaker Chris Marker saw my film there and wrote me a fan letter, which really surprised me," says Patterson. "He was Candace's favorite film

artist on the planet, so this was very good PR for me." Their love of experimental techniques, like Marker's exclusive use of still photographs in constructing his film *La Jetée*, encouraged them to take risks themselves. "When we started out, we couldn't figure out where to go," recalls Reckinger of their time following film school in the early 1980s. "People would look at our work and say, 'we love it but we wouldn't know what to do with you.'"

That's the sort of thing Patterson and Reckinger would never say to their own students. Instead, their message is about embracing detours and learning to appreciate differences. "Just like all artists, you have to be true to your own point of view," says Patterson. "You get a sense of who you are as an artist and what your gifts are and then you ask, 'Can I do anything with that?'"

"Because if you're open and you're interested in what's happening right now," he says, "anything can happen." ○



Go online to check out Mike Patterson and Candice Reckinger's video projects, including *Commuter*, Patterson's student film that influenced the award-winning video for A-ha's *Take On Me* ([vimeo.com/75682934](https://vimeo.com/75682934)), as well as excerpts of their classical music collaborations ([vimeo.com/user488525/videos](https://vimeo.com/user488525/videos))

# AROUND THE WORLD WITH alex ago

By Renato Ruiz



SCA's Director of Programming and Special Projects brings the world of cinema to campus screens.

In a remote region of Tajikistan, Alex Ago and a team of film experts and filmmakers transport projection equipment through mountainous terrain, determined to reach an eager audience made up of many people who have never met an American, or even seen an American film.

This isn't a National Geographic expedition, but a meeting of cinema lovers. In Tajikistan, Ago is part of the School of Cinematic Arts team that plans and oversees the American Film Showcase (AFS), the partnership between SCA and the State Department that sends American filmmakers around the world to screen and discuss their work. Ago is AFS' curator. For the Tajik audiences (there were several screenings) he chose *Kids With Cameras*, a documentary about an animation summer camp for autistic children. A connoisseur of international cinema, Ago is also on a reverse mission: to find movies from other cultures to introduce to audiences at home.

A graduate of both the B.A. and M.A. programs of the Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies, Ago has been programming at SCA for six years. He oversees special screenings as well as Outside the Box [Office], a weekly screening series of contemporary international, independent, and documentary cinema that he describes as "a yearlong film festival." The quality of his Outside the Box [Office] presentations made Ago a natural choice for the AFS program, which exports films that offer more realistic portrayals of American life than generally featured in the macho blockbusters familiar to international audiences.

Ago has both an insatiable appetite for cinema and a fascination with other cultures. He is right at home in the far reaches of the globe, especially when using movies to communicate. "People around the world connect with individuals and their stories," he says. "It doesn't matter what the context is. As long as they can identify with someone, it has an effect—a powerful effect." Sometimes the effect is overwhelming. At the *Kids With Cameras* screening in Dushanbe, the Tajik capital, things got "very emotional," says Ago. "A lot of mothers came with their autistic children and used the film as a springboard to discuss the many obstacles faced by families in Tajikistan who live with this condition. There's a fair deal of sweeping the issue under the rug and not supporting education and social services for families that have autistic children."

Even if he wasn't working at SCA, Ago would probably still be traveling the world to watch movies. He developed a love of international cinema as a teenager, working as an usher in a popular art house theater in Washington, D.C., his hometown. Growing up, he also spent time in Europe, visiting his Italian father—a diplomat based in Rome—and traveling around the region.



Alex Ago with local military during the screening of Jason DeSilva's *When I Walk*, which took place in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Not surprisingly, Ago clocks as many hours on planes as he does in front of screens (sometimes doing both at once). Outside the Box [Office] has showcased mini film festivals from India, Italy, Ireland, and across Latin America. It also regularly screens projects from SCA alumni and faculty. Screenings are free and open to the public. Recent films include the award-season frontrunner *Room*, Michael Moore's latest documentary *Where To Invade Next*, and *The Assassin* from acclaimed Taiwanese filmmaker Hou Hsiao-hsien. The films are usually followed by Q&As with the filmmakers who travel from around the world to attend.

A talented curator, Ago chooses films that cover a variety of issues while showcasing the cultural touchstones of their places of origin. And while he's a true world traveler in the physical sense, it is his global sensibility towards all cinema that makes his work shine. "My taste in film has developed alongside a lot of contemporary world cinema," he concedes. Then adds, with a grin: "But I also love blockbusters."



# DIRECT TO THE INTERNET

For a growing number of creators, the web is the first choice for distribution

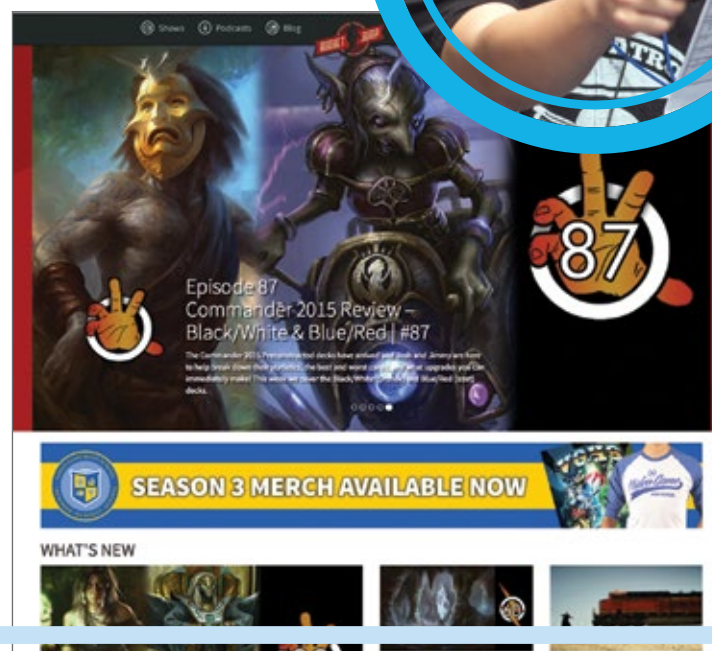
By Desa Philadelphia



Not so long ago, the internet was thought of as a supporting platform, a place to promote network and cable shows and provide short, supplementary videos that could drive audiences offline. Not anymore. With Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon competing shoulder to shoulder with traditional distribution platforms for eyeballs, advertising, and even accolades (all three have now had Emmy-nominated shows), online is now a first-choice destination.

School of Cinematic Arts graduate **Freddie Wong** (Production, 2008) always thought the web was the place to be. Along with his brother Jimmy and fellow SCA grads Matt Arnold and Desmond Dolly, Wong formed RocketJump, a production company that continues an obsession with the web that began when he was a student making YouTube videos. Wong says his friends were “baffled” when he decided to make web content his professional focus, but he saw the web as a place where tastemakers were congregating and knew that meant that something important was happening. “When I graduated, the prevailing path to success was very much as defined by indie filmmakers in the nineties—make a film, go to a festival, get shown at a festival, get a deal from the festival,” he says. “After graduating, we realized there’s a whole audience and a whole group of people who were using online as their primary way of consuming things—even myself.”

After some success making shorts, Wong and his friends gained a following with a series called *Video Game High School* that started on YouTube and ran for three seasons. By the end of the first season, they were on Netflix. By the time the show ended, each episode ran about 40 minutes, longer than usual for online content. The experience gave them the confidence to pursue a range of projects of any length, including a docu-series for Hulu that’s all about their efforts to grow RocketJump—which now has 27 employees (about half of them USC grads)—into a multiplatform production company.



The web’s appetite for interesting content of any length is also a fascinating challenge for **Brian Firenzi**, a Writing division alum who also graduated in 2008 and collaborated with Wong on *Video Game High School*. As a freshman, Firenzi saw a prompt for an online competition to make a car commercial that was five seconds long. He and a friend so embraced the concept that their films became a hot commodity around School (even winning the Ed Wood Film Festival, which was right up their alley since it featured five second films). By graduation it was time to launch a site and the production company 5 Second Films was born.

For five years — between Halloween 2008 and New Year’s 2014, to be exact — Firenzi and friends managed to post a new 5-second video every day. “I have a worse record coming into work,” says Firenzi, who kept it up with the help of about 15 other friends, many of them SCA grads. Comedian Patton Oswald became a fan and not only started acting in the films, but invited friends like Juliette Lewis and Weird Al to join the fun (Must-see shorts featuring Dick Van Dyke and Stan Lee are hilariously campy). The sharing platform Vine eventually came along and convinced Firenzi and his collaborators that the micro-film genre was well taken care of, and with their site not generating enough to make it their full-time jobs, they decided to move on to features. “That is really our next stage,” says Firenzi. “We still make five second films whenever we have a good idea but for the most part our minds and our hearts are set on longer form content now, stuff that we are able to put ads on and can show what we can do with characters and narrative.” Their debut film *Dude Bro Party Massacre III*, a horror genre satire, is available for download on the site, complete with a Leonard Maltin review: “It’s much worse than the first two.”

While 5 Second Films isn’t yet a money-making endeavor, Firenzi says the site has helped shape their work in a “low stakes” way. “The biggest advantage of the web is instant feedback,” he says, citing the common advice young filmmakers always receive: “make a short film, screen it for friends, get notes, then scrap it, make another short film, and keep going.” That’s essentially what 5 Second Films was, he says, “just on an incredibly smaller scale. Still it just made us work so much faster. We’re a machine now, and we get it.”

The creation of web content is now very much a part of the fabric of SCA life. And while students are constantly creating and uploading their work independently, the School’s classes that focus on creating web content are very much about how to do it in a way that generates income. A standout is a year-long class that launched last fall. Funded by New Form Digital—a division of Ron Howard and Brian Grazer’s Imagine Entertainment, the fall semester of the class is comprised of ten to twelve students from the Writing and Production divisions who



develop and pitch ideas for web series. The second semester class, in the spring, is made up of the three or four students who have been chosen to create episodes of their shows, as well as the students who have agreed to be on their teams. Along the way, the students get feedback related to content creation and marketing from New Form’s team. After the class ends, New Form can choose to continue developing the projects for release.

Sean Mullin, who teaches the production segment of the class, says the pace is an eye-opener for students who come in with an auteur approach and are jolted into the hurry-up-and-fail mentality. “A lot of them feel very precious about everything’s got to be perfect and this is their one shot and they’re at USC and they’ve got to make something perfect,” he says. “And I’m like, ‘make some crap that’s gonna suck, realize why it sucks and make something better.’”

For New Form Digital, it’s a way to find creators who already value the internet as a distribution platform. “Some of our best collaborations are with young filmmakers who have built a strong presence on YouTube by sharing their stories with the online community,” says Kathleen Grace, the company’s Chief Creative Officer. “This relationship with SCA allows us to help foster the talent of those students who value the digital platform as a very real way to successfully tell stories and share content to an ever-growing online audience.”

At the end of the spring semester, New Form chose to continue developing one series that emerged from the class. But even the runner-up fared well. *Virtual Mortality* by Ilan Benjamin, which is billed as an interactive horror series, already has millions of views on YouTube. Once again, the internet wasted no time in showing its approval.

# FRANK SINATRA TURNS 100!

## SCA Celebrates the Legendary Crooner

This year marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Frank Sinatra's birth. The famed entertainer was born on December 12, 1915 in Hoboken, New Jersey.

By Vanessa Okoth-Obbo



Over the course of his career he reached dizzying heights of fame and traveled the world to promote his art, but he settled in Southern California and considered it his home for most of his life.

It's fitting then that one of the most interesting tributes to his legacy is found in Los Angeles, in the School of Cinematic Arts' Eileen L. Norris Theatre Complex on the USC campus. The complex's Frank Sinatra Hall was dedicated in November 2002, thanks to donations from Sinatra's daughters Tina and Nancy. It houses precious Sinatra memorabilia including his platinum and gold records, Emmys, Grammys, Oscars, Golden Globes, photographs and more. **It is open to the public year round, from 10:00am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday.**

Nancy's daughter A.J. Lambert graduated from SCA in 2001. While attending her commencement ceremony, the family decided to do something special to give back to the SCA community and honor her time spent here. The Sinatra family also established the Frank Sinatra Endowed Fund for Student Support at the School. It has provided financial assistance to students across the School's divisions.

To commemorate the Sinatra Centennial, USC hosted celebrations this year in collaboration with the Sinatra family. First to launch was an appeal to friends and fans to dedicate the seats in Frank Sinatra Hall, with all gifts going toward the student support fund. For a \$2,500 contribution donors can have an inscribed plaque affixed to a seat in the hall, either displaying their name or with some other dedication. "We are on a mission to name all the theatre seats in Frank Sinatra Hall," says Sabrina Warren, director of annual giving at SCA, who is overseeing the project. "It's really a way for [USC constituents and friends of the family] to connect to the legacy that was created for him here."



Tina Sinatra, Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, Nancy Sinatra and SCA alum A.J. Lambert.

Then, at the beginning of November, SCA hosted the Frank Sinatra Film Retrospective, a week of screenings that showcased some of Sinatra's most memorable performances. Ten films from 1949's *On The Town* to 1962's *The Manchurian Candidate* and including Sinatra's Oscar-winning performance in 1953's *From Here to Eternity*—played in Sinatra Hall. On the final day, SCA Professor Drew Casper the Alma and Alfred Hitchcock Professor of American Film, delivered a keynote lecture about Sinatra's career and legacy, followed by a Q&A with Nancy and Tina Sinatra.

"This year, his centennial, has been a true gift," Nancy Sinatra told the audience. "We wanted to take advantage of the timing to make sure the next generation and the generation after that know his work and know him as a person."

"SCA is incredibly honored to be a part of preserving Frank Sinatra's legacy," says Dean Elizabeth M. Daley. "All of our students grew up with either Frank's music or movies and I hope the centennial celebrations here at the School inspire them to look further into his incredible life."

The centennial celebrations will wrap up in 2016, but Frank Sinatra's legacy will live on at USC. Purchase of theatre seats and other donations in honor of Sinatra can be made to the School of Cinematic Arts by going to [sinatra.usc.edu](http://sinatra.usc.edu) or contacting Sabrina Warren at [giving@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:giving@cinema.usc.edu).



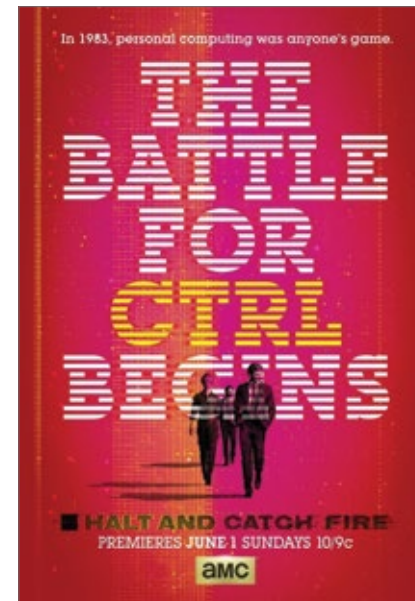
# What MAKES A Showrunner?

By Oliver Jones



*Alumni at the helm of some of today's hottest shows reflect on how their SCA education prepared them for the job*

What is the most surprising thing many of today's top showrunners have in common? They had never heard the term 'showrunner' back when they were studying to become one. For many, in fact, television was barely a blip on the radar screen of an education that was geared almost entirely towards features. "Not only did I not know what a showrunner was when I was in school, I really didn't have much interest in the television business either," explains Eric Kripke, who graduated from the School of Cinematic Arts ("We called it film school back then") in 1996 with an eye towards building a Lucas/Zemeckis/Spielberg kind of career. "I was a clichéd '90s film student: the only thing I was interested in was directing features."



It's certainly a different world today. "Pound for pound, the most interesting stuff going on is in television, and television attracts a much wider variety of people," says Kripke. "But back then, in the mid-90s, it didn't have the same allure. Everybody was heading towards directing movies, and I was one of them."

While Kripke may have exited USC with little to no interest in TV, he also left with the seed of an idea that would come to define his career in that medium. Always fascinated by urban legends, he pitched an anthology film based around four or five different modern myths to one of his professors. "She very wisely talked me out of it, but the concept of an urban legend anthology stuck with me," recalls Kripke. "When I was taking my first meetings in the television business, it was always one of the first two ideas I went to. For a while, I kept pitching it as an anthology, and no one was interested. Then someone told me it wouldn't work without recurring characters. Finally, I landed on two brothers and the Route 66 version of the story, and it really took off."

Now in its eleventh season, the CW's *Supernatural* boasts some of the most passionate fans the medium has ever known. In addition to creating the show, Kripke was its showrunner for five seasons before moving on to create and run the post-apocalyptic *Revolution*, as well as the forthcoming adaptation of his comic book *Amped*.

It may be a job he didn't know existed as a grad student at USC, but that didn't mean Kripke wasn't learning how to be a showrunner while he was in school. "That education was really essential," he says now. "The television business requires you to get along with people in some of the most brutal and intense circumstances. So I have found the most valuable lessons from USC for me weren't necessarily found in the curriculum as much as it was in the atmosphere that the School created around the curriculum. We had to learn how to work with different creative people, even though they have different opinions and personalities, and figure out how to get them all pursuing a similar creative vision. That turned out to be crucial to my job, and I really learned how to do that at USC."



Showrunner: **Eric Kripke**

Show: *Supernatural*  
CW



Showrunner: **Chris Cantwell**

Show: *Halt and Catch Fire*  
AMC



Supernatural—Photos by Katie Yu/The CW; Halt and Catch Fire—Photos by Annette Brown/AMC

## The Era of the Showrunner

To be fair, Kripke was still figuring out his way around campus when the term “showrunner” was first coming into vogue. While it may have been a profession for several decades, the term itself was coined by the trades around 1992 as a way to distinguish the writer-producer who guided day-to-day production and ran the writers’ room from all the other producers listed on a show’s title card. The first person to whom the term was regularly attached? John Wells, the 1982 Peter Stark Producing Program grad who was head writer and producer of the NBC Thursday night juggernaut *ER*.

The concept of the showrunner as an artistic and creative force—akin to the maverick auteurs of 1970s or the indie filmmakers of the 1990s— took hold in the popular culture thanks in large part to David Chase’s *The Sopranos*. To fans of the show, Chase was as much a household name as Tony Soprano, the character he created. In 1999, Chase read the pilot script of *Mad Men*, written by Matthew Weiner—1990 Production MFA—and put Weiner on his staff. That same year included the premiere of the acclaimed HBO TV movie *Introducing Dorothy Dandridge*, written by future showrunner extraordinaire Shonda Rhimes. The ’94 MFA Writing grad currently runs ABC’s top-rated Thursday night lineup of *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Scandal*, and *How to Get Away with Murder*—a.k.a. #ShondaNight.

Back in the day, students were pretty effective at piecing together a kind of practical education out of the program as it existed. Indeed if the USC School of Cinematic Arts’ DNA seems intrinsically tied to the very idea of the showrunner—the School boasts more than a dozen alumni as head writer-producers on current network, cable, or streaming shows—it’s chiefly that the School was teaching people to do the job long before anyone knew what it was.

## Pulling Favors

“In school, part of your job as a student was to help the other students figure out what their film is,” says Gabe Sachs, BA ’84. As an SCA student, Sachs was tasked with producing five super-8 short films, an endeavor that required him to constantly have to ask for help from people—which was exactly what he was doing when he got out of school and started making pilots on spec. “The whole process of making those films—pulling favors and getting people to help out—that was producing, even though you didn’t really know that that is what you were doing,” says Sachs, who created and runs NBC’s *The Night Shift* with longtime writing and producing partner Jeff Judah. “That’s invaluable training for this kind of work.”

In the last decade or so, SCA has been taking a more formal approach, adding classes focused on the question of what makes a showrunner, in large part as a response to students’ growing demand for a more television-centered program that teaches the principles of both writing and production. “Our idea was to create some curriculum to give students a soup-to-nuts experience of creating a series,” says SCA screenwriting professor David Isaacs, who has been involved as a writer, producer, and/or showrunner in more than eight-hundred episodes of TV comedy. “Writers create a show one semester and when the next semester comes they take a production class to actually produce the show. We do it for an hour drama, one-camera comedy, and we just started a new forms class in which the students write and produce webisodes.” (For more on the webisodes class, see page 16.)

## Competitors & Co-Conspirators

Gabe Sachs landed early, crucial writing gigs on *Freaks and Geeks* and then *Undeclared*, both created by two SCA alums—Judd Apatow and Paul Feig.

“It was an alum who got me my first gig and it was an alum who got me my first agent,” says Melissa Rosenberg, MFA ’90, showrunner of the Netflix series *Jessica Jones*, which is set in the same Marvel Cinematic Universe as *Avengers* and Netflix’s other hot Marvel property, *Daredevil*. “The relationships are what you come out of USC with. That is what you get there that you can’t get anywhere else. You can go to another film school and get a lot of the chops, a lot of the craft. But USC may be one of the best places in the world to do that and also establish relationships.”

It’s not just about knowing who can get you into the right meeting; it is not “a mercenary thing,” says Rosenberg, who is currently working with another alum, Marvel President Kevin Feige. “It goes to the very nature of the job. Film and television is collaborative. You are always working with people and relying on people, whether you are hiring people or being hired by them. When you meet those people in college and form those circles—that’s what sets you on the right path.”

SCA showrunners speak of their former classmates as equal parts collaborators and competitors. “This is an extraordinarily competitive industry,” says Rosenberg. “There are people in this industry who are collaborative and communicative and selfless, and there are people who are mercenary. That is the nature of the industry and my old class at USC, we are all very much a reflection of that.”



Showrunner: **Gabe Sachs**

Show: *Night Shift*  
NBC



Gabe Sachs—Photo by Charley Gallay/Getty Images; The Night Shift—Photos by Lewis Jacobs/NBC



Showrunner: **Melissa Rosenberg**

Show: *Jessica Jones*  
Netflix





Showrunner: **Tim Kring**

Show: **Heroes Reborn**  
NBC

Tim Kring—Photo by Christopher Polk/NBC

For some, however, making friends and contacts among their classmates was the furthest thing from their minds during their time at USC. “The truth is, with my class, a lot of us kind of went our separate ways after we graduated and made it on our own,” says Tim Kring, class of 1988, creator and showrunner of *Heroes* and its current spin-off, *Heroes Reborn*. “For me personally, there was not a lot of trading on the idea that I had gone there. It rarely if ever came up in conversation,” says Kring, who was working sets while still in school as a PA, gaffer, and occasional DP on commercials and music videos. (One fond memory from that period was working as a second assistant and loading magazines for legendary Hungarian-American cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond.) “I have to say that where USC gave me an advantage was that it gave me a language and a confidence. Hollywood is filled with so many impostors, guys that last year were selling vacuum cleaners in New Jersey and now are producers. USC really gave me a kind of legitimacy in terms of the way I thought about my role in the business.”

## Just Making It

For **Chris Cantwell**—class of 2004 and the co-creator and co-runner on *Halt and Catch Fire*—one of the key benefits of being a USC graduate was the constant feedback from both his teachers and fellow classmates, as well as the sheer number of assignments he had to complete in the writing program. Those things, he said, were the perfect preparation for what he now faces every week. “The key to this job, and something I definitely picked up at this school, is writing fast and writing well,” says Cantwell. “USC was instrumental in that. Because of all of that writing I did there, I already had the muscles for writing episodic television.”

“It was an incredible expansion in my understanding of the process,” **Melissa Rosenberg** says of her time in the Peter Stark Producing Program. “I really got a complete education in terms of what it takes to produce a film, as well as an understanding of what it takes to tell a story on screen. You can have all the ideas in the world, but if you can’t translate them into a document that can in turn be translated into film, your work is not going to make it very far.”

For **Eric Kripke**, comments in the margins of scripts were far from the only benefit of his Production degree. “One of the best things that I did at SCA and the thing I look back on most fondly was just having the time and resources to really educate myself about film history,” he says. “I saw classic films, foreign films—I saw everything. I think as a student, I really took for granted that I had the time and the ability to go see really almost any movie ever made, whether it was at screenings or at the USC film library.”

“When I go to a set, there’s something that I’ve learned at film school that helped me confidently navigate that world,” says **Tim Kring**. “It’s really nice to know how to change out a carbon in an arc light if you had to. These things give you confidence. Not only did that education give me a certain legitimacy, but I also learned the filmic language needed to communicate with all the people on a crew and on a staff.”

**Gabe Sachs** said the lesson he learned is that school is a time to prove to yourself that you can actually make something. “That atmosphere is so precious, and you should make as much as you possibly can there, stuff that will help you when you are on the outside,” says Sachs. “That is the key thing to understand about film school. People are too lazy to read your script—just make it.”

# ASK A SHOWRUNNER

## Featuring Nahnatchka Khan



Nahnatchka Khan graduated with a BFA from the Writing for Screen & Television division in 1994. Since then she has captained two ABC sitcoms: *Don’t Trust the B— in Apartment 23*, which ran in 2012–2013 and featured characters she created (plus James Van Der Beek), and the current hit *Fresh Off The Boat*, which is based on food-scene personality Eddie Huang’s memoir of the same name. We asked Khan to give us an inside look at her showrunning operation.

**How did your training in the SCA Writing Division prepare you to be a TV writer and showrunner? Are there any classes/faculty members/moments from your time at USC that stand out as being particularly important? I don’t know that there’s anything in the world that could prepare you for being a showrunner, that truly is just being pushed into the deep end and hoping you don’t drown. As far as being a TV writer goes, I would say that one of my most memorable moments came from Abraham Polonsky, one of my professors. When he met my parents for the first time the weekend I was graduating, he told them I had “a deceptive discipline that would serve me well.” He had never said anything like that to me before and at the time I didn’t know what to make of it, but now I think he was right. And that quality has served me well in terms of working in TV. It’s as much a discipline as anything else, because there’s so much product and it takes a lot of dedication to make sure the quality stays where you want it to.**

**SCA has now launched an interdisciplinary Comedy program for students who want to focus in this area. What would be your advice for students in the program in terms of what they should be doing to launch their careers? Oooh, Interdisciplinary Comedy Program—you fancy, huh? My advice would be to keep writing/performing/creating content. The more you do it, the better you will get. And don’t be too precious or proprietary about anything.**

**Comedy is very much a community. When you find people with your shared sensibilities, try to keep working with them as much as you possibly can. You will all make each other better.**

**What is your working process like? How much time do you spend alone writing and how much is working in the writers’ room and in the production process? It’s crazy. During production, there’s so much happening, I split my time between the writer’s room, the set, and the edit bay. But my preferred place to be is definitely the room. When we’re not in production, there’s more opportunity to write alone, when you go off to write a draft or something. But the rest of the time it’s certainly a collective.**

**As a show creator, how do you deal with the voices in the news media or social media criticizing or praising your work? How much do you listen to them? At the end of the day, you hope people respond positively to your work of course, but you can’t tailor what you do to try to achieve that. All you can do is what you feel is the best. So you have to just take it all with a grain of salt, the good and the bad, and trust your instincts. Ultimately, you know yourself if you feel good or not so good about what you’re putting out there.**

**Your current show *Fresh off the Boat* was just picked up for a full second season. How much do you pay attention to ratings? Does it change your creative process at all to know you have a full season’s order of shows to work with? Well, it certainly changes Wednesday mornings when the overnight ratings come out—you don’t stress about that as much! It doesn’t change the creative process though. We’ll still tell the stories we want to tell, but it just makes everyone a little more relaxed, I think. Except when you think about having to actually make a full season worth of episodes. Then you just want to start day-drinking immediately.**



Show: **Fresh Off The Boat**  
ABC

# THE PACIFIC GOES TO TENNESSEE

## SCA PROFESSOR'S REMOTE 4K MICROSCOPE CONNECTS STUDENTS IN THE SOUTH TO THE COAST

by Hugh Hart

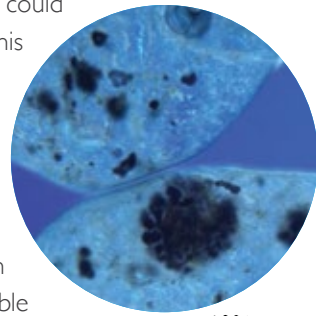


Last spring, high school students in Chattanooga, Tennessee peered at microorganisms wriggling around through Richard Weinberg's microscope in the Animation Research Lab at SCA—1800 miles away.



Delivered through a hyper-fast cross country network connection, high-def algae played the starring role during a series of weekly video conferences that were unlike any seen before. Thanks to Weinberg's system, Chattanooga teenagers could

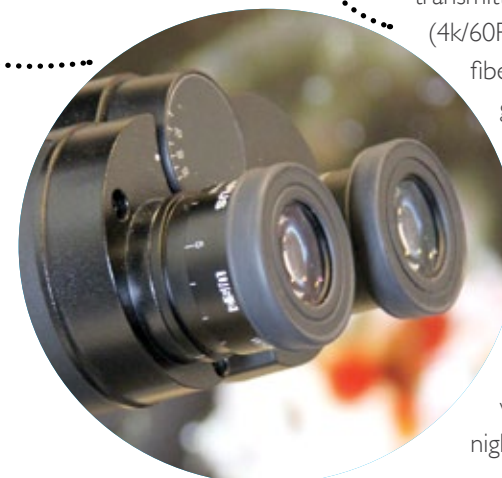
remotely operate his high-powered microscope, moving it around to magnify, focus and home in on tiny microorganisms as they flitted about. Organisms so small they can't be seen with the naked eye, yet were visible on the 65" flat panel in Chattanooga.



Weinberg, Research Associate Professor and Charles S. Swartz Endowed Chair in Entertainment Technology at SCA, facilitated the long-distance learning by fusing a digital cinema camera, research microscope, high-speed connectivity, and HD video conferencing to yield student-empowered interactivity. The experimental class represented a defining moment. "I wanted to bring

high school students in contact with a top-tier research university and give them a chance to see through and control a microscope that was far more advanced than anything a high school could afford," he says. "Exploring the microworld remotely with high definition or 4k images would, I thought, be a great way to energize students, excite them about research, and get them interested in science." The National Science Foundation agreed. When Weinberg submitted the proposal for his "Digital Tele-Microscopy in Support of Teaching Biology" pilot program in July 2014, NSF management funded it just one month later through the EAGER program: EARly concept Grants for Exploratory Research. "The EAGER program, which supports potentially transformative, high-risk, high-payoff interdisciplinary research combined with the US Ignite mission to foster high-speed network applications, allowed us to take the project to the next level," Weinberg recalls.

Weinberg joined USC with a joint appointment in Cinema-Television and Computer Science in 1985 as founding director of SCA's Computer Animation Laboratory and traces the development of "Digital Cinema Tele-Microscopy" back to his personal passion for computers, visualization, digital cinema, and scientific instruments. "This is really a home brew project that eventually made its way into the university," he explains. "When RED Digital Cinema released the 4k RED One camera in 2005, I got hold of one and built an interface to connect it to a simple microscope I had sitting on the shelf. It became this little construction project where I stabilized the camera on top of the



microscope, added in some optical components I had been collecting over the years as a hobby, and used the camera instead of the eye to peer through the microscope." Working with some pond water he scooped up, Weinberg says, "I started shooting 4K movies with a digital cinema camera through a microscope with that rig. It turned out that no one else was doing that. And there was this intricate microscopic world teeming with life in a drop of water, just waiting for its close-up."

Weinberg screened his first 4k microscopy movie *In the Pond: Through the Microscope* in 2008 at the CineGrid conference at the University of California San Diego in La Jolla, followed by *MicroOrganisms* in 4k on the big screen and on a 66-monitor videowall. *Welcome to the AnyQuarium* and *Crystallized Sea Water* followed in 2010.

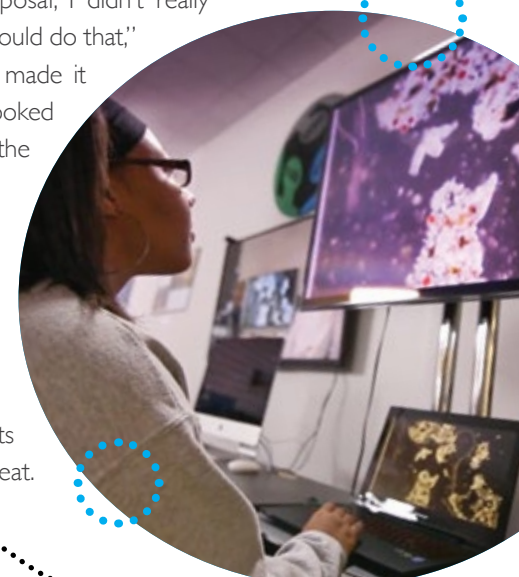
He also streamed high-res microscopic imagery to an auditorium full of scientists at UC San Diego in 2009, then raised the stakes two years later by transmitting 4k video at 60 frames per second (4k/60P) across the Pacific Ocean, via optical fiber, to an audience of techie cinephiles gathered before a large screen at the Tokyo International Film Festival CineGrid session. But his largest scale projection of microorganisms was onto the facade of the Exploratorium museum in San Francisco for its grand opening in 2013, where projected microscopic creatures seemed to swim around the building's windows and doors during the outdoor, nighttime event.

The high frame rate produces extremely crisp motion compared to the standard 24 frames per second rate used for most theatrical release movies. "That was a big step forward because microorganisms have tiny biological mechanisms moving so fast you can only see them properly at

high frame rates," says Weinberg. To illustrate the point, Weinberg shows off some of his self-taught marine biology expertise. "When these specimens beat their cilia or rotate their flagella, which is a microscopic thread-like biological motor that propels them at microscopic rates, viewing that kind of activity at 60 FPS makes the imagery clearer. And since it's digital, once you capture the image, that clarity carried through all the way to Tokyo." CENIC, the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California, recognized this project with their 2012 Innovations in Networking Award.

Weinberg became inspired to take his microcinema system to the next level after meeting technologists from Chattanooga during a USC Annenberg Innovation Lab conference. "They're the leading city in the United States for high-speed network connectivity with their citywide gigabit fiber optic network," he explains. "So Chattanooga has become a testbed for high speed network research projects." Excited to combine interactivity, micro-cinema, and high-speed image delivery into a single package, Weinberg developed his virtual marine biology classroom concept. The remote manipulation of the microscope wasn't initially guaranteed. "I had hoped we could get students to steer the microscope from another city, but when I wrote the proposal, I didn't really know how they could do that," he says. "But we made it happen, and it hooked the students into the experience."

Once NSF funded the proposal, Weinberg devised a system to put the students in the driver's seat.





He combined the Olympus CellSens software that controlled the new microscope with the Remote Graphics System (RGS) that HP developed so that digital artists and animators could work away from the computer room. "RGS allows you to see the desktop of your computer from some other place, and to use a mouse and keyboard as if the computer was right next to you, even if it's across the city or across the country," he says. "I thought, if it's good enough for professional animators, and free to boot, then it should be good enough for high school kids to use in a biology class to control a microscope. And it was."

While Weinberg perfected a system that would allow the students to control a microscope from half a continent away, network engineers at USC, CENIC, Internet2, Southern Crossroads (SoX), UT Chattanooga, and Chattanooga's EPB (Electric Power Board) configured a fiber optic pipeline to deliver high-def imagery from LA to STEM School Chattanooga with only about 60 milliseconds of latency, or delay. Hundreds or thousands of times faster than the typical consumer Internet connection, the "fat pipe" infrastructure speeds along the 10 gigabit (10 billion bits) per second Trojan Express Network on-ramp from Weinberg's lab to USC's 100 gigabit network core, part of another NSF funded project in which Weinberg is a researcher. From there, it's a 100 gigabit per second path to CENIC in downtown LA, then on to Internet2's 100 gig AL2S backbone all the way to Atlanta, then 10 gig to the University of Tennessee. Then they take "the Gig," as they affectionately call the local gigabit network in Chattanooga, straight into the high school classroom.

To create the curriculum for his Tele-Microscopy program, Weinberg recruited USC Professor David A. Caron of USC Dornsife College's Department of Biological Sciences. "Richard is a tinkerer for sure, and I think 'genius' is about right too," says Caron. "Richard basically cold-called me and asked if he could bring some of his microscopic movies by my lab. The stuff I saw was phenomenal."

After the virtual marine biology classroom launched in March 2015, Caron and his five-person team would gather every Tuesday in Weinberg's lab armed with fresh algae samples culled from the Pacific Ocean or from a fountain in the

courtyard of USC's Physical Education Building. "That became our go-to source for great pond scum," Weinberg laughs. "It was so full of microscopic life that we used it to excite the kids from the get-go."

Weinberg streamed real-time images of magnified microorganisms along with board-room quality HD video conferencing so students and teachers in Chattanooga could see the USC biologists on a separate big screen flat panel and converse with each other as if they were down the hall. "I was flabbergasted with the program Richard came up with," Caron says. "It worked flawlessly every single time we went over there. My cable TV isn't as dependable as the set up Richard put together."

The transmission of high-resolution microscopic imagery served as a spectacular point of entry for the course, designed to look at the life forms teeming within a single drop of water from the Pacific Ocean, a local pond, or the Tennessee River. Just as Weinberg had hoped, the students became even more immersed in the topic once they got the chance to control the microscope with their own hands. Describing the interface, Weinberg says, "One of the students said it was easy to operate the microscope because she just applied what she learned playing the *Grand Theft Auto* video game. It took all of 90 seconds to teach each student how to steer the microscope remotely. Click here and the image moves left. Click here and the lens changes robotically to higher magnification and the students are making it happen from across the country while speaking with USC researchers." Caron adds, "To engage high school students, you need to bring them out of their 'too cool' shell, so the best way to grab their attention was by letting them drive the microscope."

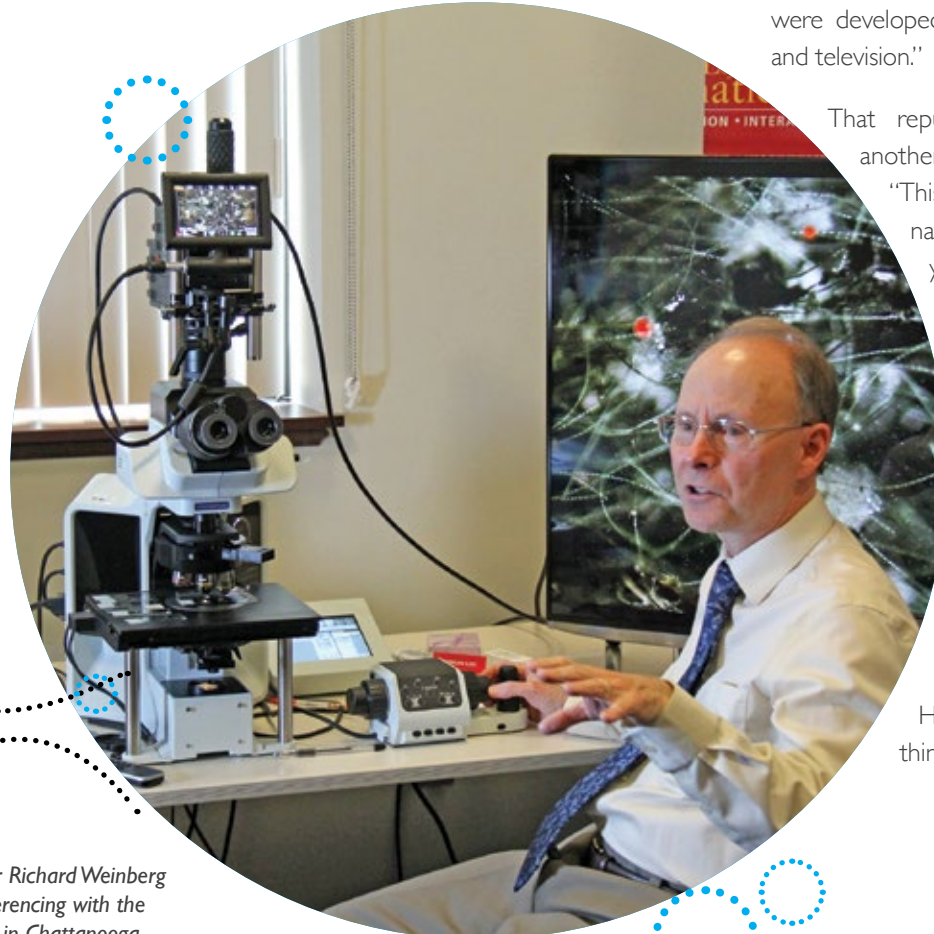
The same month that "Digital Tele-Microscopy in Support of Teaching Biology" launched in the 11th grade biology class in Chattanooga, Weinberg unveiled his technology for policy-makers at the SmartFuture 2015 conference in Arlington, Virginia. Weinberg's demo, remotely controlling

the microscope at USC, wowed the crowd, which included National Science Foundation leadership, White House Office of Science and Technology staff, and technology leaders from the Department of Education. Conference organizer Glenn Ricart recalls, "The sense of discovery in that room when Richard did his demo was palpable." Founder and CTO of US Ignite, a nonprofit group that champions high-speed Internet gigabit broadband applications, Ricart says, "Richard's application is one of the best examples of leveraging the 'Next Internet' for student learning. Never before could you 'turn the knob' in Chattanooga and see the results streaming live from Los Angeles."

Weinberg's NSF grant was recently extended through September 2016, so he will be exploring additional microscope imaging techniques, holding additional tele-microscopy classes, conducting a series of high profile demos, and exploring ways to extend the project's reach in the coming months. Beyond its potential as a research and educational tool, networked microcinema appeals to

Weinberg as an example of extending entertainment technology into other realms. "This project did not come out of USC's engineering school. It did not come out of MIT. It's from the Division of Animation and Digital Arts in the School of Cinematic Arts," Weinberg says. "Building on the rich history of the microscope since its invention in the 1600s, we're capturing the images with digital cinema cameras, which weren't developed for scientific applications, they were developed to shoot Hollywood movies. We're using flat panel displays, which weren't developed for education, but were developed for consumers to watch movies and television."

That repurposing of recent advancements is another delightful aspect of the experiment. "This combination of technology, along with nationwide high-speed networks, allows you to peer right into the micro-world, to capture, stream, and share all of the science and beauty waiting to be discovered there," adds Weinberg. "You could examine aquatic biology, plant life, cells from people, microscopic crystal growth, or slices of meteorites billions of years old. The possibilities are endless. Here's a way for researchers to share the fascinating microworld with distant students and colleagues with the resolution of Hollywood movies, and get students thinking like scientists. How cool is that?"



Professor Richard Weinberg teleconferencing with the students in Chattanooga.

# BRINGING “THE BUSINESS” TO SC

By Vanessa Okoth-Obbo



Celebrating the program that trains new leaders for the executive suites.

## This fall the School of Cinematic Arts is celebrating the 15-year anniversary of the Business of Cinematic Arts (BCA) program.

Launched in 2000, the four-year undergraduate degree was designed in collaboration with USC's Marshall School of Business with a goal of fostering the next generation of entertainment industry leaders.

“The curriculum is exclusive to those accepted into the program,” says Bonnie Chi, Senior Director of Industry Relations at SCA. “All cinema courses within this program are taught by entertainment industry executives, exposing students to the training necessary to succeed in the entertainment industry.”

the BCA include *The Future of Digital Media & the Entertainment Industry* and *The Business & Management of Games*.

The programs were spearheaded by Larry Auerbach, a veteran Hollywood agent who spent nearly five decades at the William Morris Agency, first in the New York office heading the feature film department and then later in Beverly Hills, running the Television department. “What makes both programs unique is that all classes are taught by industry professionals,” Auerbach explains. “These are men and women at the forefront of their fields who work in the business everyday.”

As with the graduate certificate, the Business of Cinematic Arts' students benefit from the expertise of the professionals who give guest lectures, and they also learn from faculty advisers like Larry Auerbach himself. The highly competitive program welcomes around 50 students each year, selected from a pool of over 200 applicants. BCA hopefuls are admitted to Marshall first, and then can apply for the business of entertainment as their emphasis. Admitted students go through the program as a cohort and will likely become colleagues and collaborators after graduation.

“Of all the people who go through the program each year, the majority want to stay in the entertainment world,” says Auerbach. Former students have gone on to jobs as agents, producers, and studio executives—on occasion hiring other BCA graduates down the line.

The BCA degree gives students a unique opportunity to blend instruction in media theory with the business skills needed to navigate today's fast-paced industry.

Although there are plenty of opportunities for mentorship within SCA, graduates of the program are also great sources of inspiration for those going through it. Over the past 15 years, this aspect of alumni involvement has been one of the most positive developments for Chi, who teaches for the program and also facilitates the necessary networking between past and current students. “I see an amazing camaraderie between our alumni who have become established professionals and current students,” she says. “There is a nice outreach from the BCA alumni to assist current students and recent alumni with internships, entry level jobs and mentoring opportunities.”

The four-year undergraduate degree was launched after the success of the popular Graduate Certificate in the Business of Entertainment program, which allows students to earn the certificate alongside whatever graduate degree they are pursuing. The BCA curriculum centers on much of the same subject material as the graduate program, although the specific focus might be different. For example, the certificate program allows students to dig deep into courses such as *Entertainment Marketing in Today's Digital World* and *Feature Film Financing*, while course offerings for



# The Office of Making It Happen

Physical Production helps SCA projects go from the page to the screen

By Ryan Dee Gilmour



## Joe Wallenstein and Margie Sperling

head up The Physical Production Office, overseeing a deceptively calm-looking operation from a suite of rooms in the School of Cinematic Arts Complex. Asked to describe their role in the life of SCA, Wallenstein puts it this way: “We are an office of facilitation. If ‘A’ is the creative vision and ‘C’ is the screening of the completed project, then we provide ‘B,’ the heavy lifting of physical production. In other words, we help take the project from the page to the stage.”







That sums up the centrality of Physical Production's role in students' lives. But it doesn't even begin to touch on the vast number of services the office provides. Physical Production is how students and faculty navigate through bureaucracy. The office helps students secure locations anywhere in the world, provides permits for shooting on campus and around Los Angeles, schedules soundstage shoots, provides liability and property insurance, spreads information about working with union actors, and designs safety procedures for potentially dangerous shots. Need a vendor who provides specialty equipment? Physical Production has a list of dozens of companies. Have a script that requires your hero to rappel off a roof or go surfing at midnight? Physical Production will make sure you have all the necessary safety equipment and insurance coverage.

Virtually every student who goes through any of the programs at the School of Cinematic Arts will need help from Joe and Margie at some point. Physical Production facilitates some 1,600 student projects every year. In terms of sheer numbers, that means the School of Cinematic Arts produces more projects than all the studios in Los Angeles, New York, and Atlanta combined. SCA projects may be smaller in scope than Hollywood productions, says Wallenstein, "but they can be just as comprehensive. Big or little, they need actors, crew, locations, stages, permits, vehicles, wardrobe, insurance, and other support. We have great reach and many relationships."

## The Professionalism Office

An SCA education is a two-fold experience. First, there is the scholarly/artistic component, which is primarily led by faculty in classes and workshops. Second, it is a real-world, practical experience of making content. This is where Physical Production comes in, especially in making students understand that even student projects

require a professional approach. "I care about professionalism," says Wallenstein. "I want the kids to leave here being able to work as professionals. The most gratifying thing that's been said to me is, 'I can tell by the way they carry and conduct themselves when we have USC alum on a job. It is obvious you train them the right way.'"

The goal is that when students graduate and start their first jobs, things won't feel any different from when they were making content at SCA, even if the stakes are higher. "When other people's money is at stake, the industry wants creators and craftspeople who can hit the ground running," says Wallenstein. "It's about knowing how things really work. It's about being legitimate."

"We are always trying to teach students how to behave respectfully and responsibly," says Sperling. "Toward your vendors, your actors, your locations—treat everyone with the respect they deserve and that you would expect. I think that's an important lesson to learn and, hopefully, we teach that both verbally and by example."

## The New York in Los Angeles Office

Talk to Joe Wallenstein and you'll know you're dealing with a New Yorker before he gets done with his first sentence. With Sperling, it takes a bit longer, but the cadence is there. Sperling and Wallenstein both learned their professionalism on grueling New York shoots—training they wouldn't trade for anything.

Wallenstein majored in film and television production and direction at New York University. Upon graduating, he went to work as a Production Assistant at a television commercial production company. Within a year he was accepted into the Directors Guild of America as a Second Assistant Director. His first job was on *The Godfather*.

Sperling's entry into the industry was



through her life-long mentor Michael Jay Rauch, the veteran producer and executive who passed away in July 2015. Rauch recognized Sperling's potential and offered her a job based on his gut feeling. "Although I was attending NYU at the time, pursuing an MBA, I met Mike and he asked me if I would like to work in the film business," she says. "Once I completed my final exams, he hired me on his next project." Sperling credits Rauch with influencing the way she works. "The main thing Rauch taught me is

that this isn't a job: it's a lifestyle. You have to decide what kind of person you want to be. Regardless of technologies or platforms, this is a business of relationships and reputation, and it's important to behave with integrity." His other enduring message, she says, is that "you can always do more than you think you can." She passes on those lessons to SCA students.

During the course of his career, Wallenstein has been a First Assistant Director, a

Production Manager, Associate Producer and for twenty-two years was a producer of such hit shows as *7th Heaven*, *Knots Landing*, *Jake and the Fatman*, and *Hotel*. He was the producer of the highly rated CBS mini-series *Dallas: The Early Years*. Wallenstein is currently a director member of the DGA and a member of the Writer's Guild of America.

Beginning with the feature film *Brewster's Millions* starring Richard Pryor, Sperling's projects span film and television and include the acclaimed Oliver Stone mini-series *Wild Palms*, and stints on the sci-fi cult series *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and the hit sit-com *Murphy Brown*. Starting as a Production Assistant, she moved quickly up the ranks of Assistant Director positions, ending her career as a First Assistant Director, with some 2<sup>nd</sup> unit directing on her resume. A long-time member of the Directors Guild of America, she was active for over ten years on the Women's Steering Committee and continues to be a leading advocate for women in the entertainment industry.

## The Safety First Office

Even with precautions in place, film sets have the potential to be deadly. Physical Production is SCA's hub for safety. Wallenstein literally wrote the books on safety. His first book, *Practical Moviemaking: A Handbook for the Real World*, is fast becoming the industry production bible on the topic, and *Nothing Dies For Film* deals with best practices for safety in filmmaking. Wallenstein and Sperling are uncompromising when it comes to safety, and Joe leads a mandatory safety seminar for anyone who receives a production number at SCA. They stress to students that safety isn't just about protecting yourself and others on set but it is a part of media education. They also work to have students (who might be tempted to shoot guerilla style) understand that the office isn't going to try to undermine their visions

of spectacular shots. "Safety isn't about what you can't do," says Wallenstein. "It's about how you achieve your vision safely."

And although the School of Cinematic Arts enjoys a stellar safety record on over eighteen-thousand projects, Wallenstein says the secret to success is staying vigilant. "Safety is not something you come in here one time and just cross off your list."

## The Make It Happen Office

Making films can be challenging. Making television may be stressful. Making video games has its hurdles. Although doing things "the right way" can seem unhip or old fashioned in the modern world of YouTube and Vine, there's a method to SCA's philosophy of training media makers. For starters, it's easier to get a job at a studio if you have the right training. On a deeper level, there's a tradition and a style that comes with being a Trojan in the working world.

Generations of Trojans have Joe Wallenstein and Margie Sperling to thank for a part of their education. "What we do is help students to look at what they're intending to do and how best to tell their story," says Sperling. "That's the fun part. Amidst all the managerial and administrative tasks we tackle with the help of our invaluable student workers, assisting the students is definitely the best part of the job. They are so smart and creative. I learn as much from them as they do from me."

"Facilitation is how you take your idea and put it in the practical world so that you achieve the result you sought in the first place," says Wallenstein. "You are shooting at night? You are going to need lights and an electrical source. You are shooting in the ocean? You will need lifeguards. Perhaps you are going to film on the streets? Will you need police? The key is, you must always control your location and anticipate the unglamorous, real issues."

# Why Cinema & Media Studies Matter

By Matthew Meier



**Critical Studies has a new name, but is the Division still relevant? An alumnus reflects on its changing role.**

Two years after receiving an endowment from the Division's most recognizable alum, the historic Division of Critical Studies has been rebranded as the Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies. Just as the name Bryan Singer represents the immense success of the Division's alumni in both academia and entertainment, Cinema & Media Studies better reflects the broadening spectrum of the cinematic arts, and the Division's dedication to preparing its students for an industry that is perpetually in motion.

Cinema & Media Studies has long been the academic yin to the practice-centered yang of the School's better-known divisions, namely Film & Television Production and Writing for Screen & Television. It dates back to the first two film classes ever taught at USC: "The Science and Technique of Cinematography" and "Composition, Literature, and Criticism for Motion Picture Scenario and Continuity Writing" (apparently, brevity has never been one of our strong suits). Since then, however, the yang part of that equation has expanded exponentially, as the School's video game design program has come into its own and new technology-driven programs continue to emerge. With



self-explanatory than the Division's former title. Like many SCA alumni who graduated from the Singer Division (we make up nearly 25% of the alumni network), I've spent a lot of time at dinner parties and family gatherings explaining what "critical studies" means when asked about my major. Yet the academic principles around which it was founded as one of the School's original two divisions remains largely the

**Cinema & Media Studies is the study of media in all its manifestation and implications. It's a liberal arts education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

—Aniko Imre, Division Chair

the School's curriculum increasingly—and wisely—looking to media's future, how can we find relevancy in a Cinema & Media Studies Division still inherently rooted in exploring media's past?

Granted, "Cinema & Media Studies" is a bit more

same. As Division Chair Aniko Imre, who took over the job this year, explains: "Cinema & Media Studies is the study of media in all its manifestation and implications. This means across platforms, across genres, across historical periods, and across cultures." In short, she says: "It's a liberal arts education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Vice Dean and Professor (and former Division Chair) Akira Lippit says what that essentially means is that the Division is completely on board with the School's future-focused approach. "We are constantly thinking about the ways in which individuals today engage or encounter media on various new platforms," he says. "Change is essential to the health of the Division, in part because the media themselves are in a constant state of flux."



**Cinema & Media Studies taught me how to think about people and stories, and people listen to my advice because I can talk very specifically about those things.**

—Valerie Turpin, PR Manager for Video Games

The Division is still home to many of the iconic classes and professors that SCA students have come to know and love through the years. But while Todd Boyd is still keepin' it 100 in 192 (*Race, Class, and Gender in American Film*) and Drew Casper helps another generation of freshman fall in love with the 1940s in 190 (*Introduction to Cinema*), new courses on interactive and emerging media technologies reflect the Division's growing acknowledgement that film is now but a small fraction of what defines the cinematic arts of today—and, more importantly, the cinematic arts of tomorrow. "Our purpose is to cover as much as possible so that students can find the approaches and the methods that are most compelling to them," says Lippit. "Students understand what has happened that has brought us to this point, and they are given the tools to envision what is yet to come."

But does this leave us with a classic "Jack-of-all-trades, master of none" scenario? Or, as a family friend asked following my graduation: "What do you DO with a major like that?"

"Students go into the Production division to work in production. Same with Screenwriting—you study screenwriting because you want to be a screenwriter," says Division alum Valerie Turpin, who graduated in 2013. "There's no position like that for Cinema & Media Studies students. And I think that's great but also terrifying for people when they're young and don't know exactly they want to do." As an undergraduate, Turpin did production design for students in other divisions, played video games, and wrote journalistic stories for the SCA website. She now works as a PR Manager for a boutique firm in New York City that represents independent video games and consumer technologies. "I had these things that I liked doing, and they all kind of culminated into a career that I didn't realize existed for me until after I was in Cinema & Media Studies," she says. "Cinema & Media Studies taught me how to think about people and stories, and people listen to my advice because I can talk very specifically about those things. I understand the most newsworthy points of an interview and can talk about

how a trailer should look, and that's because of Cinema & Media Studies."

"People think Cinema & Media Studies is purely an academic thing, but it's been instrumental for me professionally," says Jennifer Au (BA '05), a literary manager at Untitled Entertainment. "It helps

you start analyzing, start thinking, start asking the right questions and to understand story from multiple points of view. I specifically chose Cinema & Media Studies because learning how to think critically is one of the most important skills, not just professionally, but in life."

Being situated at SCA alongside divisions that, perhaps other than Media Arts + Practice, have relatively well-defined career tracks may leave Cinema & Media Studies a bit more vulnerable to scrutiny than other liberal arts majors like Philosophy, History, or Communications. And yet it is this versatility that makes the Division so appealing to begin with, and why its alumni have gone on to succeed in such a wide spectrum of fields—from the film directing path chosen by Bryan Singer, Rick Famuyiwa, and Gaz Alazraki through writing, talent management, academia, and even video game design (alum Davey Wreden created the wildly successful *Stanley Parable*).

And as more and more people across many other fields use moving image media to communicate messages and to sell ideas and products, the profile of a Cinema & Media Studies student will continue to expand.

"Everyone is producing media right now. You go on YouTube, you go anywhere—we're all surrounded by these media screens," says Peter Labuza, a PhD student and contributing film critic for *Variety*. "And if you're going to learn how to [make media], you also have to learn what these images mean to an audience and how they are being received. I think that's a big question of Cinema & Media Studies: whether it's a Hollywood film or avant garde or YouTube—what do these images mean within our society and how can we use them to produce new knowledge?"

"If you understand that there are consequences to the media that you're putting out there, it makes you responsible," says recent alum Zoe Marshall (BA '15), who is currently an executive assistant at a major talent agency. "Cinema & Media Studies seeks not only to create filmmakers and storytellers. They want us to be socially conscious of what it is that we're creating and what we're doing, and I feel really proud to have graduated from a program that really values that."

This, in many ways, is at the core of any liberal arts education: develop a broader understanding of the world around you while cultivating the professional skills necessary to help influence it. That's hardly an easy sales pitch, particularly when compared to breaking stories in a true writers' room setting or gaining hands-on set experience using the most advanced equipment. And when you're eighteen years old with starry-eyed fantasies



**I specifically chose Cinema & Media Studies because learning how to think critically is one of the most important skills, not just professionally, but in life."**

—Jennifer Au, Literary Manager

of making the next *Big Lebowski* or *Usual Suspects*, majoring in the liberal arts sibling of the most renowned Production and Writing programs in the world can sometimes feel like settling—it certainly did for me.

Full disclosure, Cinema & Media Studies was not my first choice. I applied to Production, got rejected, "settled" for CAMS over cameras, and picked up a screenwriting minor a year later—just in case a film studies degree wasn't sufficiently employable, I joked. Not a day passed that I regretted the major I ended up with, but it would take about two years before I could begin to

understand what I wanted to do with it. In that time, I edited movie trailers, worked a variety of crew positions, co-wrote a feature (and a few other projects that never saw the light of day), and tackled a variety of odd jobs in the interim. Today, I work as a communications writer at SCA while applying to PhD programs with the goal of a career that takes me from SCA Staff to SCA Faculty.

Perhaps my path fits that jack-of-all-trades stereotype of a Singer graduate. Sure, Cinema & Media Studies may not come

with the perception of a tangible career path—if there is truly such a thing—but it equipped me with a spectrum of skills that uniquely enabled me to forge that path for myself.

So now I can answer that post-graduation question that tripped me up before: What DO you do with a major like that? Being a proud graduate of Cinema & Media Studies, I'll answer with Russell Hammond's famous quote:

**"To begin with, everything."**



**Dr. Rick Jewell** first joined the SCA family forty years ago while earning his PhD and was immediately recognized by then-Department of Cinema Chair Bernard Kantor as a rising star in academia. Not a moment after Jewell finished his dissertation, Kantor offered the young scholar a faculty position at the School, where Jewell would remain for the duration of his career. His tenure as a beloved Professor and the first chair holder of the Hugh M. Hefner Chair for the Study of American Film concluded this year with Jewell's retirement.

Dr. Jewell will be known in academic circles for authoring *The Golden Age of Cinema: Hollywood 1929-1945* and other preeminent works on Classical Hollywood. But his true legacy is the one he leaves here at SCA, where he was respected and loved by colleagues and, especially, his students. In addition to teaching some of the School's most iconic classes like "Censorship in Cinema" and "The James Bond Phenomenon," Dr. Jewell served for five years as Chair of the Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies (then known as the Division of Critical Studies) and for eleven years as Associate Dean. Here, in his own words, Professor Jewell reflects on his life and career at the School of Cinematic Arts:

*"I was fortunate to jump on the Cinema School rocket just as it was about to blast off. Now forty years (and three buildings) later, I marvel at the size of our spacecraft and its ever-increasing velocity. SCA has become a pulsating sphere of ideas, pedagogy, creativity, scholarship, and achievement. I leave it with an immense sense of satisfaction and gratitude that I was on board for the ride."*

**On behalf of the entire SCA family: thank you, Dr. Jewell, for your invaluable role in carrying us to such great heights.**



**Everyone is producing media right now... And if you're going to learn how to [make media], you also have to learn what these images mean to an audience and how they are being received.**

—Peter Labuza, Ph.D. Student and film critic

# THE ONES TO WATCH IN game design

By Katherine Vu



On March 12, 2015, on the brightly lit London stage of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts' (BAFTA) Games Awards, in front of a crowd of industry luminaries, students Kevin Wong, Catherine Fox, Alec Faulkner, Esteban Fajardo, and Tommy Hoffman—representing USC Games—were heralded as the next big talents of the game design industry.

## The group won the BAFTA

"Ones to Watch" award for their game, *Chambara*, a visually striking, dichromatic, stealth-deathmatch game in which players must seamlessly camouflage themselves within their environments in order to stalk, ambush, and assassinate opponents. The BAFTA Ones to Watch Award is given in association with the international Dare to be Digital game development competition for university students. It recognizes talented young developers whose work show exceptional potential. Three finalists are short-listed each year and the USC team, who call themselves Team Overly Kinetic (Team OK), received the news of their nomination in late 2014. "We were overjoyed and deeply honored when we were announced as one of the three games from Dare to be Digital to be nominated," said Kevin Wong, head of Team OK. Wong, Fox, Faulkner and Fajardo are all students in the Interactive Media & Games Division. Hoffman is a student at the University of Colorado Boulder.



Wong described the months between the nomination and the ceremony as "nerve-wracking" but added that, after the win, "the first thing we felt was incredibly grateful." Just waiting for their category to be announced on the night of the awards was an experience in itself, according to Esteban Fajardo. Team OK was up against Too Mechanic, a team from India, and UK-based Torque Studios. "The pounding exhilaration and nervous tension in the

room was unlike anything I've ever experienced," said Fajardo. "When our names were called, we were ready to faint!"

Team OK's talent and passion for games is evident in *Chambara*. The name means "sword-fighting" in Japanese and is a term commonly associated with a sub-genre of samurai films, though the game itself was more directly influenced by different kinds of media. "An iconic fight scene from the animated series, *Samurai Jack*, where Jack and a ninja do combat in a black and white landscape and use camouflage to outsmart each other, inspired *Chambara*'s primary gameplay mechanic," explained Wong. "We also looked into the films of Akira Kurosawa, and the sport of kendo for stylistic and tonal inspiration."

The game's unique battle mechanics necessitated methodical planning and teamwork between the programming and art direction. "*Chambara* is fascinating in that the main gameplay mechanic and the art style are intertwined," explained animator Catherine Fox. "Having those contrasting light and dark areas for players to blend into was imperative to the game." Fajardo agreed, adding that the game's innovative style frequently forced them to think outside the box. "Every art decision was also a game design decision," he said. "We had to invent a lot of new vocabulary; it took lots of cleverness and trial and error to figure out how to make everything work."

For sound, Team OK got an assist from Berklee College of Music student, Austin DeVries, whom they had previously worked with on a game called *Pilgrim*. "They let me experiment quite a bit, which is a luxury for someone in my shoes," said DeVries.

Team OK is working with a cohort of friends to continue to develop the game for eventual commercial release on consoles. For them, games are more than entertainment, they're essential forms of expression. "Video games celebrate play," said Fajardo. "Our society doesn't place much value on play, but it's the most beautiful thing we have. Play asserts our humanity. Play makes us laugh, talk, and share experiences that are out of our world and norms." That sense of fun permeates *Chambara*, and is an essential part of its success.



**Mark Mayfield**  
(1989–2015)

**Mark Robert Mayfield was born on October 16, 1989 in Gainesville, Florida to William R. Mayfield and Shirley A. Mayfield.**

He graduated from The Westminster Schools (2008) in Atlanta Georgia, where he was an avid tennis player, actor, and peer leader. In 2012, Mark earned his BA in Cinema & Media Studies with a minor in Business. He explored the world of cinema through his passion for fantasy, action, and adventure films, his favorite being *The Lord of the Rings* series. He produced and filmed digital video content and was an exceptional writer, excelling in screenwriting.



**Jeffrey Vincent Shank**  
(1951–2015)

**Jeffrey Shank, an SCA alumnus, visual effects pioneer, and humanitarian died on September 10th 2015.**

Although Shank was best known for his visual effects work on groundbreaking films such as *The Howling* and *Ghostbusters*, Shank was also a writer and a documentarian whose work focused on human rights in the Middle East.

Shank was a dedicated Trojan and a connoisseur of Hollywood culture who was once the head of the USC Cinema-Theatre Alumni Association.

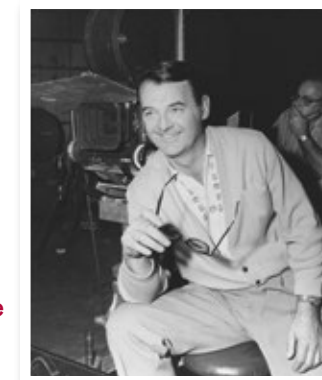


**Gene Coe**  
(1925–2015)

**Gene Coe was born in McCool Junction, Nebraska on August 8, 1925. He died in Los Angeles on February 27, 2015.**

Coe, as he preferred to be called, was Professor Emeritus of the School of Cinema-Television at USC where he taught film graphics and experimental cinema for 29 years. He established and directed the Film Graphics Program from which many distinguished filmmakers emerged. With SCA Professor Richard Weinberg, Coe established the Masters Program in Computer Graphics, a precursor to the John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts.

# IN MEMORIAM



**Richard L. Bare**  
(1914–2015)

**Richard L. Bare, an SCA alumnus and former professor of cinematography and directing, died on March 28, 2015, at his Newport Beach home.**

The 101-year-old's prolific career notably included directing all six seasons of *Green Acres* (he set a record by directing 168 consecutive episodes of the show) as well as episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and *Maverick*—he's often credited for discovering actor James Garner.

Using a 35mm camera given to him by his father, Bare directed his first film, *West of the Rio Grande*, as a sixteen-year-old student at Modesto High School, with help from a group of school friends that included George W. Lucas, Sr. Among the first generation of Cinematic Arts students, he arrived at USC in 1933 with an already well-honed technical understanding of filmmaking. Bare is credited with conceiving and directing USC's first student film, *The Oval Portrait*, in 1934.



**Howard Lipstone**  
(1928–2015)

**Howard Lipstone earned his BA at the School of Cinematic Arts in 1950.**

He was a longtime TV executive whose company produced *In Search Of...*, *Gimme A Break* and several socially conscious telefilms and miniseries in the 1970s and '80s. He passed away at the age of 87 at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in Westwood.

# ALUMNI QUICKTAKES

**Malek Akkad** will produce *Halloween Returns*, the next installment of the *Halloween* franchise for Dimension Films and Trancas International Films.

**Judd Apatow** will produce Universal's untitled music-based comedy to star The Lonely Island members Andy Samberg, Akiva Schaffer, and Jorma Taccone. Lastly, Apatow will direct the pilot of HBO's *Crashing*, a single-camera comedy to star comedian Pete Holmes.

**Joe Ballarini '99** will adapt the New York Times bestselling children's novel *Greenglass House* for Paramount Pictures. Ballarini will also adapt his own novel *Babysitters Guide to Monsters* for Walden and Montecito Pictures.

**Dan Barnz '95** will write and direct, and **Aaron Kaplan '90** will executive produce *Valentina*, an adaptation of the telenovela *Mi Gorda Bella Valentina*.

**Jason Michael Berman '06** will produce and **Clay Jeter '06** will direct *IO*, a coming of age sci-fi drama which Jeter developed at the Sundance Institute's Writers Lab and wrote along with **Will Basanta '06** and Charles Spano. Berman is also producing *The Birth of a Nation* along with executive producer **David Goyer '88**.

**Jeffrey Blitz '97** will direct *Table 19*, a wedding dramedy written by the Duplass Brothers and starring Anna Kendrick.

**Gillian Bohrer '03** was named Co-President of Production at Lionsgate.

**Keith Calder '04** will produce *Antarctica*, the next feature-length animated film by Oscar-nominated filmmaker Don Hertzfeldt.

**Sheldon Candis '02** & **Justin Wilson '98** will write *Throw Like Mo*, a biopic based on the inspiring true story of Little League pitcher Mo'ne Davis, now in development as a Disney Channel feature.

**Jean Canellas** and **Alex Kubodera '13** of the independent game development team White Rabbit signed a deal with Turner Network to further develop *Death's Gambit*, an action RPG side-scroller set on a medieval alien planet.

**Joey Chavez '05** has been named SVP of Original Programming at TNT.

**Jon M. Chu '03** and **Hieu Ho '07** will produce Paramount's *Escape*, an action adventure story about a group of tech-savvy criminals.

**Chris Coggins '02** was hired as Vice President of Production and Development at EuropaCorp USA.

**Gabriela Cowperthwaite** will direct an adaptation of Peter Heller's novel *The Painter*, the story of a famous artist who goes on the lam after he's suspected of murder.

**R.J. Cutler** will co-write and direct an adaptation of *My Dark Places*, a memoir by James Ellroy about the crime writer's attempt to re-investigate his mother's

1958 murder some 36 years later. Cutler will also executive produce *The Drop*, a drama series set in the world of Miami's electronic dance music scene, for The CW and CBSTV.

**Kristen Davila's '13** script *Counterintelligence* won Showtime's Tony Cox Screenplay Competition at the 2015 Nantucket Film Festival.

**Caleb Deschanel '69** received the 2015 Franklin J. Schaffner Alumni Medal during the AFI Life Achievement Award Gala Tribute to Steve Martin.



**Susan Downey '95** and **Dan Dubiecki** will produce an adaptation of Paul Tremblay's forthcoming thriller novel *A Head Full of Ghosts* for Focus Features.

**Tim Doyle '87**, after signing a two-year overall deal with ABC Studios, has signed on as a consulting producer for The ABC Family—soon to be Freeform—comedy series, *The Real O'Neals*.



**Megan Ellison** was honored by the Screen Actors Guild Foundation with a Patron of the Artists Award at the Foundation's 30th Anniversary celebration.

**Ryan Engle '01** wrote *Rampage*, a live-action feature based on the classic 1980s arcade game. Production has been set for summer of 2016 with Dwayne Johnson to star.

**Joe Farrell '11** will executive produce *Funny or Die presents America's Next Weatherman* at United Artists.

**Chris Fedak '98**, will write an untitled pilot for CBS.

**Brian Firenze '08** Writer, **Michael Rousselet '08** Writer/Director, and **Jon Worley '08** Producer, completed *Dude Bro Party Massacre III*, a feature which premiered at the L.A. Film Festival.

**Scott Foundas '98**, former film critic at *Variety*, joined Amazon Studios as a film acquisitions and development executive.



**Dana Fox '00** will write Universal's upcoming rom-com *Best Thing That Ever Happened*.

**Josh Goldsmith '95** and **Cathy Yuspa '95** co-wrote *Jay Berger Wants To Be Your Friend*, an indie comedy to star Haley Joel Osment. Goldsmith will direct.

**Alfred Gough '94** and **Miles Millar '94** will executive produce and showrun *The Shannara Chronicles*, an

action-adventure series based on the best-selling books by Terry Brooks.

**David Goyer '88** and A24 have teamed up to produce a currently untitled high-concept horror film to be directed by Marc Munden. Goyer will also executive produce the pilot of *Brooklyn Animal Control*, a thriller based on the comic book created by JT Petty.

**Brian Grazer '74** will executive produce an untitled

**Luke Greenfield '94** co-wrote and will direct a supernatural love story titled *Destiny* for DreamWorks.

**Taylor Hackford '68** will direct *The Comedian*, a drama about an aging insult comedian to star Robert De Niro.

**Ron Howard and Brian Grazer '74** will executive produce an event series titled *Red Planet* for the National Geographic Channel. They've also partnered with All Nippon Entertainment Works and Namco Bandai to produce a live action, English-language remake of the superhero anime series *Tiger & Bunny*.



**Ramses Ishak '92** was promoted to partner at UTA.

**Polly Johnsen '95** will produce a feature film titled *The Garden*, a sci-fi reimagining of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* based on the proof-of-concept short by director E.B. Rhee.

**Aaron Kaplan '90** will executive produce an HBO miniseries about the life of Emmett Till, the black teen whose brutal murder in 1955 galvanized the emerging Civil Rights Movement.

**Charlotte Koh '02** was named Head of Features and Series at GoPro.

**Kip Konwiser '88** and **Kern Konwiser '92** will write, direct, and produce an untitled feature-length documentary for Legendary Pictures designed to inspire American youth to develop a passion for math and science.

**Tim Kring '88** will executive produce the USA Network and Universal Cable Productions two-hour backdoor pilot of *The Wilding*, a supernatural drama.

**Eric Kripke '96** will co-write and executive produce the pilot of *Time*, an action adventure drama which sparked a bidding war among the Big 4 networks and has been described as "Back to the Future meets Mission Impossible."

**Tim Krubsack '92** was hired as EVP and Head of Programming at the health and wellness cable network Z Living.

**Salim Lemelle '12** created the new web series *CLASS*, which follows six characters involved in a campus sexual assault case.

**Shawn Levy '94** will produce and **Lee Toland Krieger** will rewrite and direct *Vanish Man*, an action thriller about a man who helps people assume new identities by staging their deaths. He and **Billy Rosenberg '00** will produce *Fist Fight*, a comedy to star Ice Cube and Charlie Day.

**Doug Liman** will produce a feature adaptation of the Carrie Ryan novel *The Forest of Hands and Teeth*.

**Katie Lovejoy '09** sold a character-driven psychological thriller titled *In Sight* to Universal Pictures.

**George Lucas '66** will receive one of 2015's Kennedy Center Honors.

**Zola Mashariki** was named Executive Vice President and Head of Original Programming for BET Networks.

**David Melbye, PhD '02** & **'06** is teaching in the Visual and Digital Production Department at Effat University in Saudia Arabia, the only all-female media program in that country.

**Joe Micallef '08** is the author of *Beginning Design for 3D Printing*.

**Neal Moritz '85** signed a two-year overall deal with Sony Pictures Television.

**Don Murphy '88** will produce an adaptation of the Philip Francis Nowlan novella *Armageddon 2419 A.D.*, the work that introduced the iconic adventure hero Buck Rogers. Murphy will also produce a feature adaptation of the New York Times bestselling novel *Little Brother* for Paramount Pictures with a view to create a reality-based YA franchise for the studio.

**Jeffrey Nachmanoff '94** will write and direct the Fox put pilot commitment to a drama series adaptation of the feature film *Behind Enemy Lines*.

**Tracy Oliver '10** will pen the ABC put pilot commitment to *Ordinary People*, a single-camera romantic comedy with musical elements.

**Maren Olson '03** was hired to join CAA's Film Finance & Sales Group.

**Prentice Penny '95** will executive produce and showrun *Insecure*, an HBO comedy pilot about the awkward and racy tribulations of a modern-day African American woman. He wrote and **Brian Grazer '74** will executive produce a single-camera family comedy pilot at NBC about a loud, quarrelsome family from the Bronx who takes in their wide-eyed 10-year-old nephew.

**Blake Pickens '14** & **Stephen Love '14** were selected as fellows for the 2015 Sundance Institute's Feature Film Creative Producing Lab.

**Ben Proudfoot '12** shot, directed, and produced *Turns*, a documentary short on the master woodcutter Steven Kennard. The film was chosen to be a Vimeo Staff Pick.

**Ben Queen '96**, creator of *Powerless*, a workplace comedy to star characters from the DC Comics

universe, has been put to pilot production commitment by NBC. He will executive produce the Fox series *ESL*, a comedy about the students and teachers in a class on English as a second language.

**Sam Regnier '06**, sold CBS Films the rights to his Nicholl Fellowship winning script *Free Agent*.

**Jason Reitman '99** will write and direct an adaptation of *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend* for DreamWorks Animation.

**Patricia Resnick '75** is developing *Florent* with Showtime, a half-hour dark comedy about a colorful New York restaurateur.

**Shonda Rhimes '94** will executive produce a new comedy titled *Splitsville* and an untitled one-hour drama about a Bronx-based convent of Catholic nuns, both at ABC. ABC is also developing an untitled medical drama from Rhimes, a project that centers on a U.S. Army Medevac team in Baghdad circa 2004. Simon & Shuster published Rhimes' first book, *Year of Yes*.



**Ian Richter '00** was named Executive VP of Franchise and Emerging Platform Development at Legendary Entertainment.

**Powell Robinson '14** and **Patrick Young '14** co-directed the feature film *Bastard*, which has been signed for distribution by After Dark Films and Fox Home Entertainment.

**Melissa Rosenberg '90** will executive produce *The Mighty Camilla*, a half-hour project at TV Land. Rosenberg will also produce *The Untitled Kay Scarpetta Project*, a feature based on Patricia Cornwall's best-selling crime novel series. Rosenberg also sold to Hulu the drama series *Sleepless*, an adaptation of the Kenneth Calhoun novel *Black Moon*.



**Caroline Ryder** will participate in the first Hedgebrook Screenwriters Lab in Seattle, WA.

**Ari Sandel '05** will direct the CBS Films comedy *Preconception*, a story about a mid-30s couple who take on their pre-parenthood bucket list before trying to have a baby.

**Josh Schwartz** wrote and will executive produce *Horrorstör*, an hour-long dramady inspired by the Grady Hendrix novel, which Fox has committed to pilot.

**Stacey Sher '85** will produce an adaptation of the Erik Larson bestseller *Devil in the White City*, which Paramount has packaged with actor Leonardo DiCaprio and director Martin Scorsese.



**Bryan Singer '89** will executive produce *World War III*, an FX series about a resistance movement in the American heartland against an enemy occupation during a future world war. Singer will also direct a feature adaptation of the Jules Verne novel *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* for 20th Century Fox.

**John Singleton '90** co-created and co-wrote of the pilot for *Snowfall*, a 1980s period drama, which was picked up by FX. Singleton will executive produce the series, which centers on the beginnings of the crack cocaine epidemic in Los Angeles.

**Brandon Sonnier '04** and Brandon Margolis wrote and will executive produce *Sawyer & Huck*, a modern-day reimagining of Mark Twain's iconic characters, which received a put pilot commitment from CBS.

**Scott Speer '04** will direct *Midnight Sun*, a young adult romance based on the 2006 Japanese film of the same title.

**Tim Story '94** directed the comedy pilot for *Brothers in Atlanta*, which has been sent to series by HBO. Story will executive produce. He will also direct a contemporary retelling of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* to star Ice Cube as a modern day Ebenezer Scrooge.

**Victoria Strouse '97** will write *Tink*, a Disney film to star Reese Witherspoon.

**Jennifer Todd** has teamed up with Matt Damon and Ben Affleck to executive produce the HBO Films drama *Thirst*, a movie set against the backdrop of the global water crisis.

**David Tolchinsky '88** wrote and directed *Where's the Rest of Me?*, a one-act play that debuted at the Hudson Guild Theatre in Manhattan.

**Shannon Triplett '10** wrote *Ascension*, a sci-fi action feature and potential tentpole that has been acquired by 20th Century Fox.

**Jon Turteltaub's** thriller-drama pilot *Stay* was picked up by ABC Family. He will executive produce.

**Freddie Wong '08** will create an eight-episode comedy series for Hulu to document the behind-the-scenes process of each short film produced by Wong's RocketJump Studios.

**Gwen Wynne '94** premiered her documentary feature *Tyrus* at the 42nd Telluride Film Festival.

**Chris Yost '02** will rewrite the Sony Pictures/Escape Artists reboot of *Masters of the Universe*.

We apologize if we missed anyone. Please contact Justin Wilson at 213.740.2804 or alumni@cinema.usc.edu for more information or updates.

# TV & FILM RELEASES

**12 Monkeys** — Charles Roven, Executive Producer

**30 for 30: Trojan War** — Aaron R. Thomas '02, Director

**Agent Carter** — Kevin Feige '95, Executive Producer

**AKA Jessica Jones** — Melissa Rosenberg '90, Writer/Executive Producer; Kevin Feige '95, Executive Producer

**Ash vs. Evil Dead** — Tom Spezialy '85, Writer; Robert Wright '93, Co-Executive Producer

**Baby Daddy** — Paul Maibaum '75, Director of Photography

**Banshee** — Greg Yaitanes, Executive Producer/Director

**The Bastard Executioner** — Brian Grazer '74, Executive Producer; Carly Wray '05, Story Editor

**Better Call Saul** — Peter Gould '90, Writer/Executive Producer

**The Blacklist** — Jon Bokenkamp '95, Writer/Executive Producer

**Blood & Oil** — Jennifer Van Goethem '00, Editor

**Bones** — Taylor Martin '13, Writer

**The Brink** — Jay Roach '86, Executive Producer/Director; Jon Poll '81, Co-Producer/Director; Michael Lehmann '85, Director

**Brooklyn Nine Nine** — Prentice Penny '95, Consulting Producer

**Casanova** — Stu Zicherman '93, Writer/Executive Producer

**Casual** — Jason Reitman '99, Executive Producer/Director

**Chef's Table** — David Gelb '06, Executive Producer/Director

**Documentary Now** — Alex Buono '95, Director

**Dominion** — Todd Slavkin '87, Writer/Executive Producer

**Empire** — Danny Strong '96, Writer/Executive Producer; Brian Grazer '74, Executive Producer; Ingrid Escajeda '02, Co-Executive Producer

**Eye Candy** — Jason Voss '13, Assistant Editor

**Fear the Walking Dead** — Dave Erickson '98, Writer/Executive Producer

**Finding Carter** — Scott Speer '04, Director

**The Flash** — Joe Peracchio '13, Staff Writer

**Fresh off the Boat** — Nahnatchka Khan '94, Writer/Executive Producer

**Fuller House** — Polina Diaz '14, Staff Writer

**Grace and Frankie** — David Ellison, Executive Producer

**Grey's Anatomy** — Shonda Rhimes '94, Writer/Executive Producer; Michelle Lirtzman '13, Staff Writer; Azia Squire '15, Production Assistant

**Ground Floor** — Laura Moran '03, Story Editor

**Halt and Catch Fire** — Chris Cantwell '04, Writer/Executive Producer; Nelson Cragg '03, Director of Photography; Kevin Ross '90, Editor

**Helix** — Steven Maeda '92, Writer/Executive Producer; Javier Grillo-Marxuach '93, Writer/Co-Executive Producer

**Heroes Reborn** — Tim Kring '88, Writer/Executive Producer

**House of Cards** — James Foley '79, Director; Joshua Donen '79, Executive Producer

**How to Get Away With Murder** — Shonda Rhimes '94, Executive Producer

**Hunters** — Bret VandenBos '10, Staff Writer; Brandon Willer '10, Staff Writer

**Into the Badlands** — Al Gough '94 and Miles Millar '94, Writers/Executive Producers; Stacey Sher '85, Executive Producer; Michael Jones-Morales '05, Writer

**iZombie** — Aiyana White '02, Writer

**The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst** — Marc Smerling, Writer/Producer/Cinematographer

**Kevin from Work** — Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

**Kobe Bryant's Muse** — Jake Bloch, Producer/Cinematographer; Martin Desmond Roe, Producer/Cinematographer; Saira Haider '14, Assistant Editor

**Legends** — Jeffrey Nachmanoff '94, Writer/Producer; Vahan Moosekian '75, Co-Executive Producer

**Legends of Tomorrow** — Chris Fedak '98, Writer/Executive Producer

**Life in Pieces** — Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

**Mad Men** — Matthew Weiner '90, Writer/Executive Producer; Marcy Patterson '02, Producer; Erin Levy '05, Writer/Producer;

Jonathan Iglu '05, Writer; Carly Wray '05, Writer

**The Man in the High Castle** — Jon Dudkowski '00, Editor

**Manhattan** — David Ellison, Executive Producer

**Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.** — Bobby Roth '72, Director

**The Messengers** — Trey Callaway '89, Writer/Executive Producer

**Mighty Med** — Jim Bernstein '91, Executive Producer

**Mistresses** — Zach Cannon '12, Script Coordinator

**The Mysteries of Laura** — Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

**Narcos** — Doug Miro '97, Co-Creator/Writer

**Nashville** — RJ Cutler, Executive Producer/Director; Dana Greenblatt '02, Writer

**New Girl** — Brett Baer '88, Executive Producer; Erin O'Malley '96, Co-Executive Producer

**Night Shift** — Gabe Sachs '84, Writer/Executive Producer

**Of Kings and Prophets** — Jeffrey Nachmanoff '94, Director; Jason Reed '95, Executive Producer

**Outer Space** — Matteo Borghese '11, Writer; Rob Turbovsky '11, Writer

**Person of Interest** — Bryan Burk '91, Executive Producer; Athena Wickham '02, Producer

**The Player** — Matt Bosack '13, Staff Writer

**Quantico** — Terilyn Shropshire '85, Editor

**Rectify** — Kate Powers '07, Staff Writer

**Revenge** — Bobby Roth '72, Director

**Rizzoli & Isles** — Sasha Alexander '97, Actor

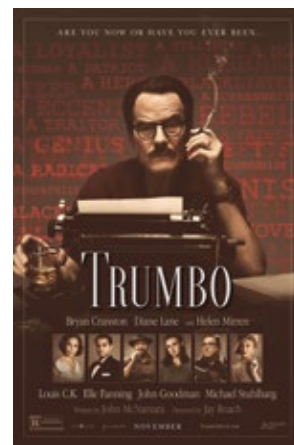
**Rosewood** — Vahan Moosekian '75, Co-Executive Producer

**Rush Hour** — Jon Turteltaub, Director; Trey Callaway '89, Writer/Producer

**Scandal** — Shonda Rhimes '94, Writer/Executive Producer

**Scorpion** — Bobby Roth '72, Director

**Scream Queens** — Joaquin Sedillo '89, Director of Photography



**Secrets & Lies** — Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

**Shades of Blue** — Julian Meiojas '06, Writer; Jack Orman '93, Executive Producer

**Shameless** — John Wells '82, Writer / Executive Producer

**Sleepy Hollow** — Heather Regnier '08, Writer

**Stitchers** — Paul Maibaum '75, Director of Photography

**Supergirl** — Caitlin Parrish '12, Staff Writer; Anna Musky '14, Staff Writer; James DeWitt '14, Staff Writer

**Turn** — Andrew Colville, Writer/Supervising Producer

**Undateable** — Adam Szykiel '99, Writer/Executive Producer; Laura Moran '03, Story Editor

**Unforgettable** — Kevin Ross '90, Editor

**Vikings** — Sherry Marsh '83, Executive Producer

**The Walking Dead** — Scott Gimple '93, Writer/Executive Producer; Angela Kang '09, Writer/Co-Executive Producer

**The Whispers** — Soo Hugh '06, Creator/Writer/Co-Executive Producer

**Z Nation** — Jen Dervingson '00, Writer/Co-Producer

**Zoo** — Carla Kettner '83, Writer/Co-Executive Producer

**The Age of Adaline** — Lee Toland Krieger '05, Director

**All Things Must Pass: The Rise and Fall of Tower Records** — Sean Stuart '00, Producer

**Ant-Man** — Kevin Feige '95, Producer

**Avengers: Age of Ultron** — Kevin Feige '95, Producer; Jeff Ford '91, Editor

**Batkid Begins** — Kurt Kuenne '95, Writer/Editor

**Before We Go** — John Axelrad '90, Editor; Jen Smolka '00, Writer

**Bread and Butter** — Liz Manashil '10, Writer/Director; Stephen Gible '14, Producer; Lia Burton '10, Production Designer; Lindsay Morrison '11, Co-Editor; Christine Weatherup '05, Actor; Sean Wright '11, Actor

**Bridge of Spies** — Gary Rydstrom '81, Re-Recording Mixer

**Burnt** — John Wells '82, Director; Stacey Sher '85, Producer

**Creed** — Ryan Coogler '11, Writer/Director; Aaron Covington '11, Writer

**Crimson Peak** — Matthew Robbins '76, Writer

**Difret** — Zeresenay Mehari '02, Writer/Producer/Director

**Dope** — Rick Famuyiwa '96, Writer/Director/Executive Producer; Nina Yang Bongiovi, Producer

**The Duff** — Ari Sandel '05, Director

**Echo Lake** — Jody McVeigh-Schultz, Writer/Director/Producer; Sam Zvibleman '05, Actor; Christine Weatherup '05, Actor

**Everest** — Evan Hayes '02, Producer

**Furious 7** — Neal Moritz '85, Producer; Peter Brown '95, Sound Designer/Sound Supervisor

**Goosebumps** — Neal Moritz '85, Producer; Scott Alexander '85, Writer; Larry Karaszewski '85, Writer

**Hot Pursuit** — Dana Fox '00, Producer

**The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2** — Danny Strong '96, Writer

**Jem and the Holograms** — Jon Chu '03, Director/Producer; Ryan Landels '03, Writer; Alice Brooks '01, Director of Photography; Phil Brose '02, VFX Supervisor

**Jurassic World** — Amanda Silver '89, Writer; John Schwartzman, Director of Photography

**Krampus** — John Axelrad '90, Editor

**The Last Witch Hunter** — Breck Eisner '95, Director

**Love & Mercy** — John Wells '82, Producer

**McFarland, USA** — Gordon Gray '86, Producer

**Mediterranea** — Jason Michael Berman '06, Producer; Andrew Kortschak '13, Producer

**Miles Ahead** — John Axelrad '90, Editor

**Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation** — David Ellison, Producer; Bryan Burk '91, Producer; Robert Elswit '75, Director of Photography

**Night Owls** — Charles Hood '05, Writer/Director/Producer; Seth Goldsmith '05, Writer/Producer

**Our Brand Is Crisis** — Grant Heslov '86, Producer

**Peace Officer** — Brad Barber '05, Director/Producer/Director of Photography

**Peanuts** — Paul Feig '84, Producer

**Pixels** — Tim Dowling '96, Writer

**Poached** — Eric Myerson '08, Editor; Gabriel J. Serrano '04, Re-recording Mixer

**The Lazarus Effect** — David Gelb '06, Director

**Rwanda & Juliet** — Ben Proudfoot '12, Director/Producer

**San Andreas** — Andre Fabrizio '02, Story By; Jeremy Passmore '04, Story By; Steve Yedlin '96, Director of Photography; Bob Ducsay '86, Editor

**Shaun the Sheep Movie** — Paul Kewley '97, Producer

**Sinister 2** — Scott Derrickson '95, Writer/Producer

**Spy** — Paul Feig '84, Writer/Director/Producer

**Straight Outta Compton** — Bill Straus '90 & '00, Producer

**Strange Magic** — Gary Rydstrom '81, Writer/Director

**Stung** — Adam Aresty '07, Writer

**Tentacle 8** — Kevin Lipnos '10, Editor; Jon Michael Kondrath '05, Line Producer

**Terminator: Genisys** — David Ellison, Producer; Megan Ellison, Producer

**Tig** — Ashley York '06, Co-Director/Producer

**Tomorrowland** — Walter Murch, Editor

**Trainwreck** — Judd Apatow, Director/Producer

**Trumbo** — Jay Roach '86, Director

**Truth** — James Vanderbilt '99, Writer/Producer/Director

**The Walk** — Robert Zemeckis '73, Writer/Producer/Director; Christopher Browne '02, Writer

**A Walk in the Woods** — Ken Kwapis, Director

**Winter on Fire** — Will Znidaric '96, Editor

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## SCA NETWORK MEMBERSHIPS

The **SCA Network** is a great way to stay connected to fellow SCA Trojans and make a difference in the School's future. Through exclusive screenings and mixers, the SCA Network provides an outlet for USC School of Cinematic Arts alumni and current students to gather and network. Best of all, Network benefits are complimentary with an annual donation to the USC School of Cinematic Arts. Recent screenings have included *Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation*, *Pixels*, *Marvel's Ant-Man*, *Entourage*, *Truth* and *Creed*.

**Supporter —\$25:**

Invitations to exclusive SCA Network-only screenings and mixers for member and guest, plus website recognition.

**Friend —\$50:**

SCA Network T-Shirt\*

**Ambassador —\$100:**

SCA Print Alumni Directory (updated annually) plus complete access to the SCA Community Online Alumni Directory\*

**Innovator —\$250:**

SCA Blanket\*

**Visionary —\$500:**

SCA Hoodie and Reserved Seating at SCA Network Events\*

**Leader —\$1,000:**

Invitation to SCA Special Events as part of the Annual Leadership Circle membership and naming opportunity throughout the SCA Complex\*

\*Denotes you also receive gifts from lower levels. For a full list of benefits and more information please visit us online at [cinema.usc.edu/Network](http://cinema.usc.edu/Network)

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