

IN MOTION

USC Cinematic Arts



Virtual Reality Begins Here

REMEMBERING
Kenneth Hall and Ian Sander

Andrew Marlowe on
CASTLE'S EPIC RUN

...sense your daughter of zzzzzzz
...weary heart and let the Lord Marlowe
...py and whips again

IN MOTION FALL 2016

Dean Elizabeth M. Daley

Senior Associate Dean, External Relations Marlene Loadvine

Associate Dean of Communications & PR, In Motion Managing Editor Kristin Borella

Communications & Development Writer/Editor, In Motion Story Editor Desa Philadelphia

Contributors
Brendan Cowles
Keryl Brown
Kacie Chow
Ryan Dee Gilmour
Claudia Guerra
Hugh Hart
Sabrina Malekzadah
Matthew Meier
Desa Philadelphia
Justin Wilson

Photographers
Carell Augustus
Alan Baker
Ted Catanzaro
Eric Charbonneau
Steve Cohn
Michal Czerwonka
Charles Hess

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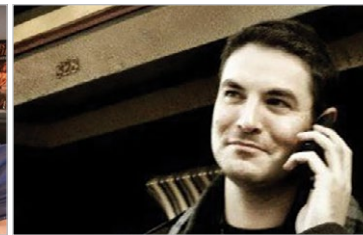
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Message from the Dean

At the School of Cinematic Arts, we have always been good at reimagining our real world. Now we are bringing that storytelling prowess to conjuring up virtual worlds and experiences and making them central in compelling films, episodic shows, games, and interactive media. Our SCA motto, *Reality Ends Here*, has taken on new meaning as we explore virtual reality across our divisions.

Our goal is not only to integrate virtual and augmented environments into our storytelling but also to be part of the conversation around the establishment of best practices in this nascent but exploding field. This year we launched a Virtual Reality Content Development Initiative, organized around four critical areas: classes, research, projects, and internships. You'll find information about these efforts in our cover package which features VR work being created by our students and faculty, some of it under the auspices of our new Jaunt Cinematic Virtual Reality Lab, a partnership with Jaunt, the groundbreaking cinematic VR company.

SCA's focus on both media creation and research is most apparent in the curriculum of our Media Arts + Practice Division, which launched in 2013. In May 2017, its first full cohort of B.A. candidates will graduate (MA+P was previously a Ph.D. program and offered an honors certificate) and in this issue of *In Motion* we, write about their genre-blending work. You'll also read about the students of MEGA (Makers of Entertaining Games Association) who, for five years now, have been getting together to make games for the pure joy of it, without the pressures of classroom grades or investors. We also feature two very different thesis projects that were singled out by

the Student Academy Awards this year. *Once Upon A Line* features the exceptional, unique drawing style of Alicja Jasina—who graduated this year from the John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts—and won the Gold Medal for Animated Short. *Amelia's Closet*, a short film about a young girl who lives with her single father, made the short list of nominees in the narrative category. It was written and directed by Halima Lucas, who graduated from the Film & Television Production Division.

We also visit with alumni Andrew Marlowe, whose hit series *Castle* is in its final season, and Eric Fleischman, who is building his company, Diablo Entertainment, by focusing on microbudget projects, and hear from producer Jason Michael Berman, whose latest project is *The Birth of A Nation*.

Our summer was bookended by sad news. At the end of the spring semester we learned that alum and lecturer Ian Sander had died. Ian taught producing and writing for television for many years and was a mentor to countless students and alums. As was Production Professor Kenneth Hall—music editor, teacher, and friend to everyone at the School—whose passing we mourned as we returned for the fall. We remember Ian and Kenny in this issue, and in our continuation of the work they loved and helped shape.

I hope these articles will inspire you to reconnect with us as you reminisce about the last time you were on campus. We would love to hear from you on social media (@USCCinema), by email (communications@cinema.usc.edu) or by updating your profile on SCA Community. We always look forward to hearing from family.

I hope you have a wonderful holiday season!

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

Year
in review



Leonard Maltin @leonardmaltin
A massive thank you to JJ Abrams for ending our @USCCinema semester with a bang #466
pic.twitter.com/ddWTFwblPJ



GAME DEVELOPER'S CONFERENCE

1 USC Games' Director Tracy Fullerton welcomes students, alumni and special guests at the celebration at the 2016 Game Developer's Conference

AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON

2 & 3 Professor Leonard Maltin with J.J. Abrams at a screening of *An American Werewolf in London*

FIRST LOOK

4 Tom Sito, Chair of the John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts, welcomes the audience at the Division's annual First Frame Festival at the Director's Guild of America

5 First Pitch is a round robin-style showcase where students pitch their projects to agents, managers and producers at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills

6 CAA's Bryan Lourd and Larry Auerbach speaking to students at the First Look Film Festival

7 This year the First Look Film Festival went directly to the talent agencies. Here students are at Creative Artists Agency at a post screening mixer, discussing their films

8 Alum Aaron Rashsaan Thomas welomging guests at First Pitch



Year
in review



Nicolas Raganato @pnrt7
With one of my favorite directors of all time: Richard Donner!!! @USCCinema @USCSNetwork #TheGoonies pic.twitter.com/zJq2JG2NFL



SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

9 USC Alumni outside of the Riverhorse Tavern at the Sundance Film Festival

10 SCA Filmmakers' Breakfast at the Sundance Film Festival

USC DAY OF SCERVICE

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13 USC Day of Service hosted by SCA in the Michelle & Kevin Douglas IMAX Theatre of the Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts

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14 & 15 Don Granger, Alum David Ellison, and Professor John Watson after an SCA Network screening of Jack Reacher: Never Go Back in the Michelle and Kevin Douglas IMAX Theatre and Immersive Lab.

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Year in review



Year in review



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 30 Mark Burnett and Professor David Weitzner, the holder of the Mark Burnett Endowed Chair to Honor the Director of the Summer Producing Program in front of Chair plaque
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 36 Production students at Commencement 2016



Year
in review



37 Director and Alum Ryan Coogler (Right) discussing *Creed* in Professor Leonard Maltin's Theatrical Symposium



38 Actor Sylvester Stallone

39 Full house during the Q&A session for Leonard Maltin's Symposium 'Creed' screening



Year
in review



45 Vice Dean of Academic Affairs Michael Renov in front of the Haskell Wexler Endowed Chair in Documentary plaque



46 Mary Jo and Caleb Deschanel, '69

47 Michael Renov with this family, wife Cathy Friedman, daughters Maddie(L) and Veronica (R)

48 Rita Taggart Wexler, wife of Haskell Wexler

49 Michael Renov, the first holder of the Haskell Wexler Endowed Chair



50 Screenwriting is Rewriting, an event with Chair of the Writing for Screen & Television Division, Jack Epps, Jr.

51 Professor Jack Epps, Jr. signs copies of his book *Screenwriting is Rewriting*

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53 Professor Barnet Kellman and SCA alum Judd Apatow

54 SCA alumna Suzanne Todd, Nicole Byer, Maria Bamford and Carmen Esposito participated in *Women In Comedy - Stars of Their Story*

55 SCA alum Jay Roach moderated the panel *The Changing Face of Politics - It's All Comedy* with Norman Lear (inset)

DEAN ELIZABETH DALEY • 25 Years of Visionary Leadership

This year marks Dean Elizabeth M. Daley's twenty-fifth as Dean of the School of Cinematic Arts, easily making her the longest tenured dean in the School's history. In honor of the School's tremendous growth under her leadership, and to celebrate the accomplishments of our alumni community over the past year, the Alumni Development Council honored Dean Daley by establishing a fund in her name that would support the School.

"Elizabeth's been honored many, many times, but we decided to take it up a notch," said Bob Osher, Chair of the Alumni Development Council. "First, we're establishing the Elizabeth M. Daley Fund here at the School of Cinematic Arts. It's a fund that allows the Dean and future deans to have additional money in their budget to get the little things that need to get done around the School. Second, we're giving Dean Daley the honorary alumni award. She didn't go to USC, so making her an honorary alumni is our way of thanking Elizabeth for her first twenty-five years as Dean. We're expecting another twenty-five."

Dean Daley was also celebrated at this year's commencement day faculty luncheon where she was presented with a crystal obelisk commemorating her 25 years of unparalleled leadership.

41 Bob Osher announces support fund honoring Dean Daley's tenure

42 Dean Daley with members of the SCA Alumni Development Council

43 Award given at Commencement acknowledging Dean Elizabeth M. Daley's 25 years of service as Dean of the School of Cinematic Arts

44 Vice Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs, Akira Mizuta Lippert presents Dean Daley with an award commemorating her 25 years of service

For more information and to contribute to the Elizabeth Daley Fund, please contact Justin Wilson at alumni@cinema.usc.edu



KING OF CASTLE

With *Castle* in its final season we sent one of the show's fans, a fellow screenwriter, to document Andrew Marlowe's journey from SCA to his epic hit series. He takes us back to the real beginning of it all.

BY BRENDAN COWLES



“So **Andrew**, give me a snapshot of you as a kid? You know, like, what was your brand as, say, an eleven year old?”

The question was one of my first for *Castle*-creator and award-winning screenwriter **Andrew W. Marlowe**. And yes, it came off just as lame as it reads. Worse, in fact. I really hit the word brand—*braaand*.

At least I warned him. The basic concept was a piece on him written from the perspective of another screenwriter; though I may have said “through the *lennns*.” I hoped not. I also hoped my label as screenwriter, i.e. non-journalist, would excuse the clunky start to the interview.

Andrew paused for just a second after the question, but long enough that I was convinced we were thinking the same thing: wow, you kind of suck at this. I then added the curious prompt, “You know, like, I don’t know, were you an athlete?”

What am I doing? Luckily it was a phone interview so he couldn’t see me fake slamming my head on the desk, over and over. I’m interviewing the creator of one of the most successful primetime television shows of the past decade, an Ivy Leaguer, a USC School of Cinematic Arts graduate, a Nicholl Fellowship recipient, and this is what I go with? I want to know if “athlete” was Andrew W. Marlowe’s *brand* as a pre-pubescent boy growing up in Silver Spring, Maryland?

Turns out, it was a great question.

Or to be more precise, it was a great answer: “I actually was an athlete, in that I fenced and I went to the Junior Olympics in fencing.”

“Really? Fencing. Huh.” I was trying to decide if this was cool.

“Yeah, I fenced because I was a member of the Star Wars generation so it was as close as I could get to a lightsaber.”

Okay, definitely cool. It was a funny, almost throwaway line, but one that I later came to realize was a thin vein of gold to be mined and, ultimately, a key to understanding his process and the manner in which he pursues his passions.

There is quite a bit to unpack here. First and foremost, Andrew Marlowe has the innate ability to make just about anything cool—even fencing. But, the statement also provides an early glimpse at a couple of his other career-defining traits: extreme curiosity backed up by a seemingly inexhaustible work ethic.

All three are gifts. The first—a unique flair for transforming the mundane into something intriguing and cool—insofar as the craft is concerned, is a gift from the writing gods. Just like “star quality” for an actor; they say you either have it or you don’t. The latter two, however—curiosity and work ethic—are gifts bestowed upon him by his parents during what was, at least in the beginning, a fairly unconventional upbringing.

Marlowe was born in Thailand to a pair of cultural anthropologists doing field work abroad. They moved back to the States when he was eighteen months old and, as he explains, “switched languages on me,” effectively delaying his ability, or at least desire, to speak for another full year. That year of watching and listening was a disposition born of necessity for a toddler, but would eventually cement itself as the social perspective he preferred as an adult. “I was kind of a typical writer and a bit of a wallflower, on the edge of a bunch of different groups. And I think that between that and my parents being cultural anthropologists, I had the observation bug early, watching people’s behavior or watching how all the dramas played out.”

The Marlowes also shared with young Andrew their love of film, and from the time he was seven years old, began hosting a movie night once a month for friends and colleagues. “They bought a beat-up sixteen-millimeter projector from a local school system and would check out movies from the Prince George’s County Library,” he recounted, enjoying the memories. Wine and cheese was served during the first reel, coffee and desert for the second, and when the lights came up after the final reel, a lively discussion would inevitably ensue. “I saw Abel Gance’s *Napoleon* for the first time in my living room—Preston Sturges, Alfred Hitchcock, Ingmar Bergman. So I had a pretty good film education growing up.”

You think? I was starting to wonder if his parents might have been conducting a covert anthropological experiment on how best to engineer a successful filmmaker.

After high school it was off to Columbia’s School of the Arts where he ran with an eclectic group. “I had friends who were pre-med, some who were pre-law, and I was clearly pre-unemployment because I was an English major with a Philosophy minor.”

“Uh huh, and how did your parents like that?” I asked with a jaded chuckle, expecting to expose at least a small crack in the foundation. Nope. His response was matter of fact: “They just assumed that they would be paying my health insurance into my fifties. They were very supportive.”

Okay, wow. Unabashed parental support of a child facing extreme odds of success. I'm certain parents like this exist in the real world but, like the Arctic fox, I don't know anyone personally that has ever actually seen one. My anthropological experiment theory was gaining traction.

Post Columbia, Marlowe continued to steer into situations that seemed incongruous and random but once assembled create a definite symmetry. He interned for a company producing educational videos, then worked on a low-budget film shot in Manhattan and learned to work fast while wearing multiple hats. He took a job as a literary agent's assistant and got to know some local playwrights—you know, guys like David Mamet. "Yeah, I was able to pick his brain, and that was a really remarkable thing for a 22-year-old."

He applied to USC's School of Cinematic Arts, then abruptly moved to Seattle "because it was voted America's most livable city." And his Gumpian knack for timing had him showing up right at the apex of the grunge rock explosion—a moment in music history he admits was pretty cool to experience firsthand but by no means what he values most about his stint there. You see, Seattle is where Andrew Marlowe learned how to sell.

he was teaching." He paused for my inevitable reaction. Daniel was a legendary screenwriting guru long before the phrase existed. It was another Mamet moment, only better, and it lasted for an entire year. USC seems to be where Marlowe's defining experiences all came together. If good parenting, aka good engineering, predisposed him to this particular collection of experiences, then USC provided the glue that bound them together into the filmmaker that was about to be released into the wild.

Once out, he took another sales job to keep food on the table while he began chipping away at the notoriously hard-to-break-into industry, and then promptly broke right in when he was awarded the coveted Academy Nicholl Fellowship for one of his screenplays. He signed with a top agent, got his first job doing a book adaptation, wrote multiple episodes for a TV show, had a lull for about a minute to assess and retool, then wrote and sold an action movie spec to a major studio, then created and sold a pitch for an even cooler action movie, only this one had Kevin Costner attached, all in the span of about four years. Pretty good, right?

It gets better. Costner drops out, replaced by none other than Harrison Ford. So Andrew W. Marlowe—the Star Wars Gen, lightsaber-fencing, ex-(Jr) Olympian—soon found himself chilling with Han Solo on the set of his first produced film as sole screenwriter, a blockbuster action movie that would become one of the best reviewed and most successful of the '90s: *Air Force One*.

Talk about a mic-drop moment...

Only it wasn't. Marlowe was barely thirty years old, and not the mic-drop type anyway. He's too much of a process-driven grinder: He got two more big films made, *End of Days* and *Hollow Man*, before he began to have issues with staying in that lane. Creatively, the work was feeling repetitive and, professionally,

the lane itself began to move. "I think that there was a shift away from a particular kind of action movie that made it harder to get those kinds of things done."

He was entering into his first professional dry spell. But unlike most writers, or every other writer, he welcomed it as an opportunity. "I wanted to do something fresh and a little bit more interesting—reinvent myself." It gave Marlowe a chance to spend some quality time with a character he'd been thinking about for a while. A guy named Richard Castle.

"I was drawn to this idea of a writer in a position to go out and live some of the stories they were writing about." A great jumping off point, but it needed something else. Then a peculiar thing happened in Hollywood during the aftermath of 9/11 that sparked the idea that brought *Castle* to life. "Everybody was

Marlowe and actors Nathan Fillion and Stana Katic celebrate *Castle*'s 100th episode with a cake-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, February 27, 2013. (ABC/Eric McCandless)

(Right) Marlowe with his wife and collaborator, writer/producer Terri Edda Miller



calling 9/11 unimaginable. But at that time, there were actually a couple of spec scripts in town that had eerily similar plots. So the CIA and some people from military intelligence actually came out to interface with the Hollywood community and said, 'Hey, what else are you guys thinking about? What are we missing?'"

Marlowe took the little known but very real situation—screenwriters helping agents apprehend terrorists—and tweaked it. "So, if a guy is a crime novelist who is spending his time thinking about how murders are committed, why people commit murders, what the story of those murders are—would that person have any value to a homicide detective? Would they have anything to add?"

I'm going with yes. And so did ABC. They bought the show the day it was pitched, and Marlowe was off to the races once again. His first challenge was creative. He had a nifty hook, but was it enough to separate his show from the existing sea of crime procedurals? We'll never know, because he never intended to rely upon the concept. What did separate *Castle* were the characters, the style and its throwback, light-hearted tone, the linchpin for it all being *Castle* himself. So finding the right Richard Castle was a task Marlowe knew he needed to get exactly right. Zero wiggle room—he had to nail it.

Done.

Marlowe felt Nathan Fillion might be his *Castle*; Fillion knew he was. "I sat down for a meeting with Nathan in his trailer, and he just said, 'you can stop looking. I am this guy.'" Marlowe agreed, and even took it a step further by adding a dash of pure Fillion to the role. "Nathan can walk that line between being dickish and charming, where you don't hold the dickish against him because he's so charming. I found myself slightly altering the trajectory to write towards Nathan's set of skills because it would have been a crime not to take advantage of his talent. He can do it all."

Stana Katic was then perfectly cast as *Castle*'s muse, Kate Beckett, but finding her wasn't as easy. "He (Fillion) must have read with

a hundred and twenty actresses. We all knew the chemistry was really important. And when we got them together in the room, it was magic. We knew we had something special!"

They certainly did.

Like a lot of great shows, *Castle* got off to a rocky start, ratings-wise, but eventually found its audience and thrived. It aired for eight seasons totaling 173 episodes, garnered too many awards to name, and launched a New York Times Best-Sellers franchise. Marlowe, of course, correctly attributes the show's overall success to the entire team. "Everybody starts adding to the stew and, if you're a good showrunner, you take the really great stuff and use it to elevate the material." But ultimately, Marlowe was the driving creative force behind *Castle*, and its fearless leader—and fearless he was. *Castle* is a study in taking creative chances. It was all over the map, but in a good way, in a way that kept it fresh and fun for its devoted audience—counter-programming to the slick, cold, and much darker CSI-style crime procedurals.

Did this just become an opinion piece? Whatever.

Marlowe was not afraid to go out and make the show he wanted to make. If it's a little rough around the edges, I would argue it is by design. I think he deliberately traded slick for soul. *Castle* is an unapologetic throwback to the kinds of TV shows and movies and characters Marlowe grew up on.

"I love James Garner in the *Rockford Files*, having that personality counterbalance the darkness. I love the bicker-banter, will-they-or-won't-they stuff from *Moonlighting*, but even before that: Rosalind Russell and Cary Grant, Hepburn and Tracy, the *Thin Man* series." Great stars playing great characters that, no doubt, Marlowe watched for the first time as they were projected onto his living room wall as a kid. In fact, I'm starting to think Andrew W. Marlowe created *Castle* to be his own personal time machine, with each new episode providing him another opportunity to be transported back to Silver Spring for movie night.



"I was poor. I had no money, and at this point, I knew I had gotten into USC but I had no way to pay for it. So I got a job selling theater subscriptions." *Nailed it. Again.* In one of his last jobs before entering the showbiz gauntlet, Marlowe added the ability to sell and close a deal to his expanding quiver. In the business, it's called being good in a room, and it's critical. "I'm doing these cold calls, selling these musicals, really my first foray into mastering the skills that I would need later on pitching: how to read an audience, how to get disinterested people interested, how to graciously take the 'no' and move on to try and get the 'yes.'"

The "yes" given to Marlowe by USC was the beginning of his full immersion in the craft of filmmaking, and the place where his raw materials were shaped by the hands of bonafide masters. "I was lucky enough to have Frank Daniel back in the day when

Animation alumna *Alicja Jasina* Wins at this year's Student Academy Awards



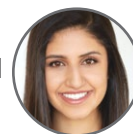
Jason Michael Berman

Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies, 2006

THE BIRTH OF A NATION PRODUCER REFLECTS ON THE ANSWERS HE GIVES WHEN STUDENTS ASK FOR CAREER ADVICE



BY SABRINA MALEKZADAH



Alicja Jasina, recent alumna of the John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts won the gold medal at the 2016 Student Academy Awards for her film *Once Upon a Line*. The animated film follows the story of a man who leads a dull life until he falls in love.

Jasina said she was grateful for the attention she's gotten for being nominated and for the subsequent win: "I think that every artist sometimes has a moment when they question themselves and have doubts if what they're doing is the right thing. Such an award is a great encouragement to carry on and stay true to my vision."

Jasina, who graduated from SCA in May, was born in Poland and went to university in England before enrolling in the graduate Animation program. Her inspiration for the film, she said, was simplicity, which is reflected in her use of line drawings, albeit beautifully detailed ones. "One of my big inspirations was the American illustrator Saul Steinberg," said Jasina. "His work is smart, conceptual, and often minimalist. I wanted to convey complex ideas in a simple way as he does."

Another recent SCA graduate received a nomination for narrative work. Halima Lucas of the Film & Television Production Division was recognized for her film *Amelia's Closet*, which follows an 11-year-old girl

from a low-income family who lives with her single father. Lucas told USC News that she made it on a shoestring budget. "We made the film on God's grace and gaff tape," she said. "Truly it came together with a team of people who were passionate about the story and deeply committed to the project no matter what we were facing or resources we had."



Jasina receiving her Student Academy Award

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences established the Student Academy Awards in 1972 in order to recognize filmmakers at the collegiate level. It is a national competition where more than 500 college students from the United States and abroad compete for gold, silver, and bronze awards and cash grants. The nominating categories are Animation, Documentary, Narrative, and Alternative, with recognition for domestic and foreign entries in each category. In the past five years, SCA has had six students win a Student Academy Award. SCA graduate Robert Zemeckis is among the Student Academy Awards' most successful alumni.



Photo: Courtesy of A/M.P.A.S.

Four and a half years ago, I, along with fellow USC School of Cinematic Arts alum and classmate Michael Jenson, approached Dean Elizabeth Daley, Larry Auerbach, who heads the School's Industry Relations Office, and Michael Taylor, who was then the Chair of the Film & Television Production Division, with an idea to develop a course called "The Entertainment Entrepreneur: Getting Your First Project Made."

Since graduating in 2006, several of my professors had asked me to speak to their classes to share my own journey of becoming a film producer. In the ten years since I have graduated I've had five films premiere at the Sundance Film Festival, helped to develop and start the Sundance Catalyst Forum, and went from being an independent film producer with no office to Vice President of Mandalay Pictures. In early 2017, I will begin production on my twenty-first feature film.

Our idea for the course grew out of conversations with former professors who would invite me to speak to students because they thought I might be able to provide some insight into the ins and outs of the industry, particularly in the independent film arena. And that is basically what I do for my students. Now in my fourth year of teaching the course, one of the first questions they invariably ask is, "What's the best piece of advice you can give a filmmaker about to graduate?"

Of course there is not just one roadmap anyone can use to navigate the terrain that lies ahead, but I can offer what has—and has not—worked for me thus far. Some of those things are internal—unbridled passion, a sense of unlimited possibilities, and an unrelenting persistence. But some of those things come with time and experience—most importantly, building and maintaining solid relationships and showing resilience when you encounter obstacles. I also emphasize the importance of taking a holistic approach to your career (understanding all aspects of the industry), as well as the benefits of collaboration. And bear in mind that where you begin isn't necessarily where you'll end up.

These lessons all culminated in the experience of my largest budget project to date. In June of 2014 my producing partner Kevin Turen sent me an email with the subject line, "The Birth of a Nation." The body of the email began: "For your eyes only. Script and mood reel attached.



Read on plane. This film can be important." I knew from the moment I read the script that *The Birth of a Nation* was a film that had to be made. But I also knew with this title (borrowed from D.W. Griffith's notorious Ku Klux Klan epic), a first-time writer and director (who was also starring), and a period piece with complex and serious content and context, as well as the violence being depicted, this feat would not be easy. Despite all of the obstacles that I knew would lie ahead, writer-director Nate Parker's passion for this project and urgency to tell the story convinced me that we had to make this happen.

For the reasons I just mentioned, the rollercoaster of ups and downs we faced began during financing and pre-production. While I had always been persistent (occasionally to my own detriment), being resilient was equally important. The ability to bounce back a little bit wiser and equally, if not more, determined was essential. We got the film made and caught lightning in a bottle when we took it to the Sundance Film Festival and achieved a record-breaking sale as well as widespread critical praise.

What followed was an even more challenging ride that served to illustrate a bit of advice I have heard a lot over the years: Life (and the projects that make up a creative life) is a marathon, not a sprint.

News reports of Nate Parker's acquittal of sexual assault when he was a college student made this project take on dimensions that we could not have imagined, much less anticipated. I kept reminding myself of the reasons why I wanted to work on this film in the first place, which boiled down to Nate Parker's passion, my belief in his brilliance as a filmmaker and storyteller, and of course the importance of Nat Turner's own story and his fight and ultimate sacrifice for equality in America.

BUILDING A CAREER

The Birth of a Nation will undoubtedly be a milestone film in my career regardless of what I do next. And I look forward to showing my students just how much it illustrates that holistic



Birth of a Nation producers (left to right) Kevin Turen, Jason Michael Berman, Nate Parker (who also wrote and directed) Preston L. Holmes, and Aaron L. Gilbert at the Los Angeles premiere of the film

“Of course there is not just one roadmap anyone can use to navigate the terrain that lies ahead, but I can offer what has—and has not—worked for me thus far.”

understanding of the industry that I stress to the new filmmakers I teach.

Although I had produced six thesis films as an undergraduate at USC, I thought my ability to notice talent, and sell my passion for them, made me suited to becoming an agent. And so my first job out of film school was in the William Morris Agency's Agent-Training program. It didn't take me long to realize that I felt too far removed from the creative process and needed to move in a different direction. That experience gave me a far more comprehensive understanding of the industry than if I had only focused on producing right out of school.

A subsequent job as the special projects assistant to the COO of MGM Studios gave me a birds-eye view of the ins and outs of the marketing, distribution, acquisitions, finance, and business affairs of the studio system. Following MGM, I moved on to be an assistant to writer/director Gary Ross, something I couldn't pass up because I was going to be able to see firsthand how a top-level writer/director

operates day to day. Those experiences were not producing jobs, but they gave me the ability to form and maintain relationships with a wide range of people. The knowledge I gained from interacting with the variety of positions in the entertainment industry became part of the skillset I would later use as a producer.

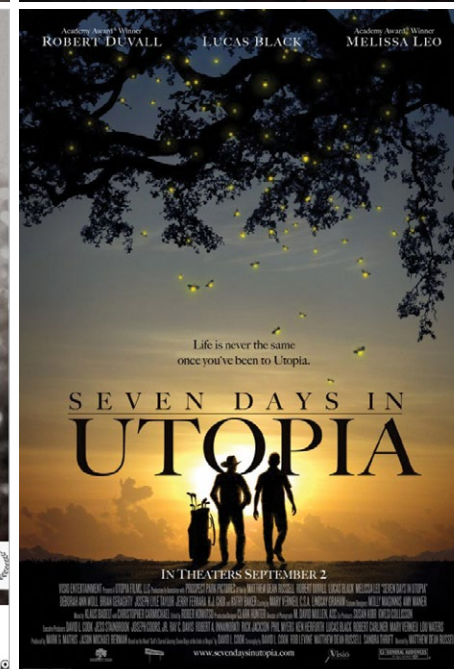
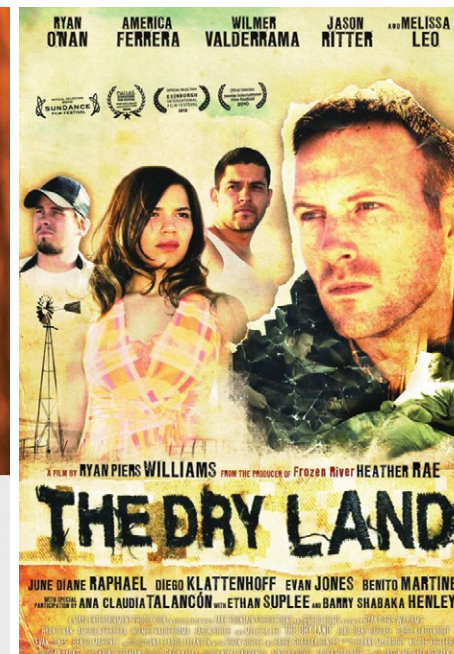
While I was working for Gary Ross, SCA alum Ryan Piers Williams, whom I had collaborated with on his short film while in school, reached out to me about co-producing his first feature film, *The Dry Land*, which co-starred America Ferrera, another SCA alum who worked with us on his short film. *The Dry Land* was accepted into the 2010 Sundance Film Festival, and the momentum of my career shifted dramatically. Shortly after, I was offered the opportunity to produce *Seven Days in Utopia* starring Robert Duvall, Melissa Leo, and Lucas Black. Then, Ryan O'Nan, one of the lead actors from *The Dry Land* asked me to produce his new project, *The Brooklyn Brothers Beat the Best*. I also co-produced *LUV*—written by USC alums

Sheldon Candis (who also directed) and Justin Wilson—with Michael Jenson, my co-teacher at SCA. By the time it opened at Sundance in 2012, *LUV* was my third film to premiere at the festival. In 2013, I began to foster relationships with the incredible team at the Sundance Institute Feature Film Program, which afforded me the opportunity to produce projects for their screenwriting and directing labs fellows and to help develop and start the Sundance Catalyst Forum, a new lab that helps connect forward-thinking, creative investors with independent filmmakers.

The common thread I notice though all these endeavors is the value of relationships. Making those connections is not enough. Maintaining, even nurturing, those relationships, even some that may have seemed incidental at the time, remains one of the most fundamental components of my career: Bear in mind that it is not simply what advantages those relationships can provide for you, but also how you can be of service to others as well. This is a key cornerstone I convey to my students, that this is truly a two-way street.

I also tell them symbiotic relationships often lead to prolific collaborations. I was introduced to Kevin Turen, one of my frequent collaborators, by Andrew F. Renzi, a filmmaker I met through the Sundance Labs. The first film Kevin and I produced together was Andrew's film *The Benefactor*. Kevin and I then went on to produce *Mediterranea*, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2015, before working together on *The Birth of a Nation*. I quickly learned that when you find a producing partner or co-creator you work well with, try to find as many projects as possible on which you can collaborate. Another example of this is Benjamin Renzo, a co-producer on *The Birth of a Nation*, whom I have worked with since *LUV* to put financing together for multiple films. Kevin and Benjamin are not only close colleagues, but have become very close friends and confidants. Value these connections. This synergy might be difficult to find, but it is nearly impossible to replicate.

I've had a very fulfilling career for the last ten years and I'm very grateful for the accomplishments and the friends and colleagues I've made along the way; but I know I have many miles ahead of me in my own marathon, and I'm certain (almost hoping) there will be more twists and turns, hills, and valleys. I share my experiences with my students not as an instruction manual of how to get where I am, but as an example to help them start their own journeys. The best advice I give them? Take that first step forward, keep pushing even when you think you can't, and recognize you are not in the race alone. Savor each step; there will be a lot of them. After all, life is truly a marathon, not a sprint, and you have to remember to breathe along the way and try to enjoy it.



VIRTUAL REALITY

BEGINS HERE

BY CLAUDIA GUERRA



SCA'S DIVISIONS AND LABS ARE INNOVATING THE ART OF VR STORYTELLING

The promise of virtual reality is very real. According to SCA's Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) think tank, industry estimates say the VR market will top \$30 billion by 2020. In the past year hardware companies like Oculus, Samsung and Sony released new headsets aimed at demonstrating the power of games, livecasting, and even narrative entertainment in VR, with the goal of bringing the virtual experience into the home entertainment space.

School of Cinematic Arts faculty have been involved in VR innovation from its beginnings (see centerfold). Today, virtual reality and augmented reality projects of every scale are underway across SCA's divisions and research labs. The ETC is also working on helping to define best practices, whether in creating big, immersive experiences for multiplex-sized crowds or those that could allow someone to travel the world from their bedroom. And SCA students are active participants in VRSC, the university-wide club that allows students to create original work for VR platforms.

This year the School launched the Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality Content Development Initiative aimed at partnering with leading companies and content creators to develop comprehensive, cross-disciplinary approaches to teaching, developing, and creating compelling VR/AR content. A partnership with Jaunt VR created the Jaunt Cinematic Virtual Reality Lab where SCA faculty and students are working on projects that address questions like how to edit in VR, move characters in and out of the frame, and, notably, avoid making viewers sick. The lab is focused on learning-by-doing, with a roster of projects that will help define the genre.

SCA's VR efforts will be organized around four critical areas: classes, research, projects, and internships. Internships are especially important for students interested in learning and experimenting on their own. Through VRSC, students from across the University are also creating teams that can facilitate each other's VR projects.

This prevalence of VR projects is bringing new meaning to our motto Reality Ends Here as SCA faculty and students are eagerly engrossed in the task of creating new realities.

JAUNT CINEMATIC VIRTUAL REALITY LAB

The new Jaunt Cinematic Virtual Reality Lab is dedicated to exploring the art of storytelling in virtual reality. Headed by John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts Professor Candace Reckinger, the lab is funding a diversity of short projects, from the script-based to the experimental, in hopes of maturing VR from an exciting new technology into an artistic medium capable of meaningful and transformative experiences.

As Interactive Media & Games Division Professor and Vice Chair Richard Lemarchand explains, "Virtual reality gives designers opportunities to explore the fundamentals of human perception, cognition, and emotion in ways that jump boundaries in terms of a certain kind of immediacy and impactfulness." In the world of VR, this immediacy is termed "presence"—the sense that you, the viewer, have been physically transported to, and are completely spatially immersed in, a different place.

However, as VR creators are discovering, applying the idea of presence to a live-action narrative comes with a unique set of challenges. In this omni-directional world, traditional 2D composition is irrelevant. With a 360-degree narrative space, designers must find alternate ways of directing the viewer's attention, whether through narration, staging, action, lighting, or music. Traditional editing techniques must also be reconsidered. Because VR cuts between physical locations, instead of between shots, causing nausea in the viewer is a very real concern. So a new language is needed, one which references film, theater and the fine arts, but

which takes into account VR's 3D narrative space and the physical effects of immersion on a viewer.

This is why the Jaunt Lab was set up—to give students, faculty and alumni the opportunity to experiment and discover and, in so doing, to write the rules for VR by developing a vocabulary for successful storytelling. According to Reckinger, "The lab is a kind of incubator. We're incubating talent. We're incubating how to make things and we're incubating the actual projects themselves, which I'm sure will grow and evolve as we make them."

Virtual reality's maturation depends on these kinds of experimentations. While VR finds its legs, it will probably be used mainly as an extension of current media, a bonus feature added on to the price of a ticket. But soon, says Eric Hanson of the John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts, "VR will be its own medium unto itself. This will probably come from mostly experimental artists doing something very compelling that's not rooted in tradition. And that's where the Jaunt Lab is great, because we have students that will take those chances."

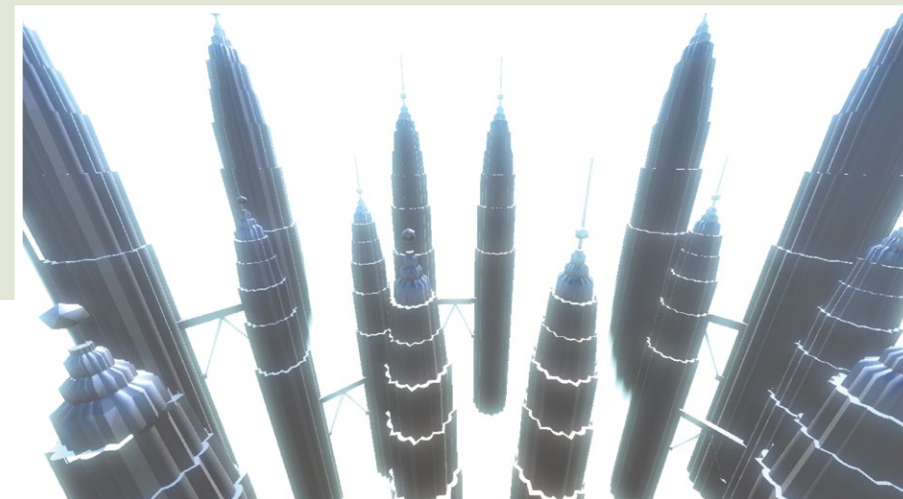
Here are some of the projects currently being incubated in the Jaunt Cinematic Virtual Reality Lab.

MINmax, by Richard Lemarchand

A co-production with USC's Game Innovation Lab, *MINmax* is a music-driven, experimental game design project that creates a highly immersive live-action environment and atmosphere, interspersed with short sequences of playful interactivity. While there is no traditional story, the game aims to juxtapose human experiences of despair with the hope that allows us to transcend those same emotions.

MINmax continues Lemarchand's research into VR as a perfect platform for "experiential" games, which focus on exploration instead of competition. The open and expressive nature of experiential gameplay is especially enhanced by the way the human gaze traverses a virtual 360-degree scene and by the "gaze control" interactivity capabilities of VR (where a player can interact with an object just by looking at it), leading to a completely new kind of audience engagement.

In this new game, players will move through environments via instantaneous teleportation. For Lemarchand, the momentary disorientation that occurs when we are teleported is a creative opportunity. He hopes to orchestrate the sequencing of these teleportations to evoke a particular state of mind, the "hypnagogic" point when we're not sure if we're asleep or awake. In the end, teleportation becomes an immersive editing technique that, combined with music, can create poetic, personalized, and meaningful narrative experiences.





Stagecoach, by Eric Hanson

For his *Stagecoach* project, Eric Hanson is visualizing archaeology professor Lynn Dodd's research on Catalina history into a narrative format. In this piece, a young, newly wedded couple makes their way across Catalina Island. As they do, a series of transitions based on narrative cues brings us back to a similar couple making the same journey 100 years earlier. Historical photography is combined with modern footage to create an immersive vision of the past.

To create the feeling of riding in a historic stagecoach, Hanson and his team scanned an actual stagecoach to create a 3D model of the artifact, shot the trajectory of the ride with the Jaunt camera rigged to a Jeep, and are warping historical photography to make it experiential and immersive. The background footage will be authenticated to make it more period and the 3D model will be composited over the moving vehicle shot in such a way that, as you look down in VR, you will physically feel that you are riding in this carriage 100 years ago. You will be present in this special place, feeling the echoes of what came before.

Going Home, by David Beier

Going Home is an intimate portrait of an elderly man who is suffering a heart attack. As he is rushed to the hospital, his life flashes before his eyes and we witness some of his past experiences, particularly with his late wife. The narrative jumps between his memories and his current condition, creating a dream-like reality in which we, the viewers, are fully immersed.

By taking live-action elements and compositing them in a surreal way, Beier hopes to exploit the subjective nature of VR to create a visually stunning experience that is truly personal—an immersive dream state that mimics the altered levels of this man's consciousness.



Undertones, by Bryce Morgan & Ilan Benjamin

In *Undertones*, Bryce Morgan & Ilan Benjamin put the viewer right in the middle of a crowded family dinner table with one conspicuously empty seat. Shot in one long take, every family member reveals a piece of the story, but we, the viewers, create the actual narrative by choosing whom to focus on and when. As our focus shifts to a particular character, we hear that character's inner thoughts, which are often in sharp contrast to their actual proclamations. By interacting with the characters and learning their true positions we can solve the riddle of who is missing and why.

For these creators, VR is a way to take a classic storytelling trope—the family drama—and explore it on a deeper level. Not only are we given insight into the characters' motivations in a unique way that is only possible through VR, but we are also active and interactive participants in the story by choosing the direction of the narrative at any particular time.



1969, by Kathy Liu

A fable in the form of an immersive music video, *1969* creates a world full of animal-people who terrorize our shrouded heroine with their taunting as she escapes a mysterious and violent murder scene. We follow her through crowds of protestors and exploitative images, forced to confront her hyper-sexualized objectification head on as we are occasionally subjected to heckling ourselves. When she is finally caught, the tale unspools in reverse, revealing the true nature of the crime and the culpability of those closest to her.

1969 plays with collage and 3D worldbuilding to condemn the glamorization of sexual violence and female exploitation. Surrealistic, saccharine-sweet 2D images of an anthropomorphized pin-up culture are adapted to stereo-360 degree video, while experimental immersive editing techniques compel us to face the disturbing nature of today's society.



THE VIRTUAL REALITY THESIS

MORE SCA STUDENTS ARE TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF VR TO CREATE STANDOUT PROJECTS

Now that School of Cinematic Arts students have virtual reality cameras, headgear, and software at their disposal, they are starting to create content for VR platforms. Not surprisingly, students in the Interactive Media & Game Division (IMGD) were among the first to embrace the technology. VR projects from the Division's advanced games class include *Project Holodeck/Wild Skies* (2012-2013) and *ElemenTerra* (2015), both of which are now fully funded companies. IMGD thesis projects, shot in VR, include *Séance for Cinewava* by Patrick Meegan (MFA 2014), and *Shayd* by Julie Griffo (MFA 2012). Not to be outdone, students in the other SCA divisions are catching up, creating group and individual works. These students and recent alumni have embraced VR to great visual effect. We asked them to talk about creating for the burgeoning field.

BY DESA PHILADELPHIA



Ante Cheng
Film & Television Production Division
MFA 2017
Project: *Euude*

An immersive experience in which the protagonist is on a first date and relies on the audience's advice on how to proceed. It features dance and music set against the backdrop of Los Angeles' Walt Disney Concert Hall. It transports the viewer into a performance by classical musicians and ballerinas, surrounded by Disney Hall's mesmerizing architecture. Cheng is a director and cinematographer from Taiwan whose portfolio already includes commercials for major brands like Microsoft, Samsung and Lexus and music videos for top-selling Asian artists.

On creating for a cutting-edge platform: "It is fun and liberating. Virtual reality has the potential to be an advancement as from stills to motion picture, from black and white to color, from silent to sound. It is the closest we have come to capturing and playing back real life, and it's only at year one of hardware distribution. Now it's time for the filmmakers

Robin Cho
Film & Television Production Division
BA 2017
Project: *Nightscape: USC*

Cho posed the elusive question "What is USC?" to faculty from different disciplines, and their answers narrate this time-lapse portrait of the University at night. Korean-born, Hong Kong-raised Cho left USC after his freshman year to fulfill his military service requirement in Korea (he served as a translator for joint drills with U.S. forces) and returned to filmmaking just as VR was taking off.

On bringing VR to new audiences: "I went home to Hong Kong and showed my family a VR short that I had created during my junior year. To be honest, it wasn't that great and they soon began to play around with the other VR features, but that didn't matter to me. What mattered was that between my sister, mother, and father, a fully-charged battery was entirely drained during one shared sitting. That's about three hours, and when they weren't talking about how cool it was, they were talking about what would look really cool in VR. Moments like that remind me that I'm part of something far beyond myself and my creative endeavors. It's going to change our relationship to stories."

Frederico de Sa Fernandez (AKA F3d)
John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts
MFA 2016
Project: *Animal Kingdom (AK)*

AK, which features a talking bear whose mission to harvest food is interrupted by an invader, is about exploration and interactive engagement and is a hybrid between an animation short and a video game. A graffiti artist from

Bahia, Brazil, F3d spent a year coding and designing the project and describes his final creative approach as "tapping into a new language."

to create good content with the new tools. Films have been bounded by a rectangular frame until now. It's going to be an exciting challenge to tell stories when the audience has the new freedom to look around."



On problem-solving in VR: "There were many challenges. For example, I had to implement path-finding AI to let the character avoid obstacles and decide where to move on his own, because I wanted the animations to blend with the player interactions in real time, so that a character can move anywhere despite the animation assigned to the scene. It was part of the design to let the user make choices on the journey, or narrative. The more common sit and watch experience is less effective in VR, something that most people would not think. One of the first signs of immersion in virtual reality happens when a user tries to reach out and touch an invisible character or object with his or her real hand."

Natalie Gravier
Interactive Media & Games Division
MFA 2016
Project: *Southland*

Inspired by LA car culture, *Southland* is an exploration of historical but forgotten aspects of the city, with the goal of creating awareness of its layered past and inspiring appreciation. Gravier, who grew up in Miami and now lives in Los Angeles, says the piece was inspired by her own love of long drives through cityscapes.

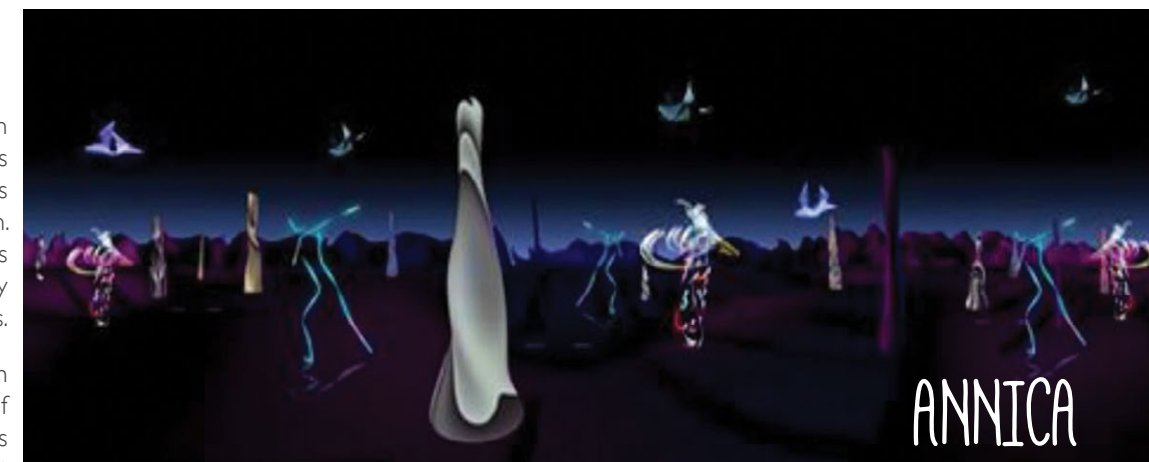
On working in VR: "The newness of the platform leaves many questions unanswered. A lot of experimentation, trial and error, and headaches went into developing *Southland*. A difficult part of VR is that now we design with the player's health in mind, not just their enjoyment, since many people are prone to motion sickness in VR. Rapid iteration of mechanics and constant testing in VR helped my team and I polish *Southland* into an experience thoughtfully and carefully designed from scratch specifically for the medium."

Cecilia Sweet-Coll
John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts
B.A. 2016
Project: *Annica*

Annica means impermanence in the ancient Buddhist canon, and in this immersive piece, everything is always transforming. Sweet-Coll, who is Mexican- and Irish-American, has a strong interdisciplinary background, including fourteen years of classical and latin jazz piano and seven years of ballet training. All these influences come together in this short film that uses motion capture to film dancers'

performances, which were then used as the foundational movements for colorful objects that constantly mutate against a backdrop that evokes a vast, galactic experience.

On her career goals: "I made my senior project as somewhat of a proof-of-concept for its combination of VR animation, music, and dance, in hopes of working with musicians and choreographers again in the future. I am also very interested in using nature to more explicitly inspire the spaces and movements in my work, so I am applying to several artist residencies in national parks. And recently I have worked on a couple maker-oriented projects and am interested in exploring that. But I would say my career goal is to create work which brings joy, beauty, and practical help to people."



Lindsey Townley
John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts
MFA 2016
Project: *Children of the Moon*

Children of the Moon is an abstract narrative work, combining live-action with visual effects, to tell Plato's myth of the soul mates. During her time at SCA, Townley was the President of VRSC, a university-wide club that allows students to create VR projects together.

On the importance of a VR student club: "It was hard for students at USC to find a place to meet and talk about VR, to get involved with VR. The goal of VRSC is to create a community of students, staff and faculty who are interested in virtual reality, interested in learning more about it, interested in developing it. For those who are eager to work on new things, new projects, this industry is so new. Everyone has equal chances."

Deena Khattab
Media Arts + Practice
B.A. 2016
Project: *Womynographye*

An immersive experience that invites viewers to experience the streets of Cairo, Istanbul and Beirut as a woman, and witness the social problems women confront in these cities. It's a map-based archive of urban women's realities in the Middle East, which is undergoing political change, particularly with regard to women's rights.

On using a cool technology to influence change: "Most of my potential users aren't actively interested in women's social issues in the Middle East. I wanted the project to be as immersive as possible in order to make the subject matter more exciting and also encourage users to empathize with these difficult problems. I think it ended up being the perfect medium for that reason."

Origins of VR @ USC

The emerging new medium of Virtual Reality (VR) is a significant example of how USC faculty, staff and students are helping to shape new forms of immersive experiences. This exhibit traces the complex evolution of VR from seminal early work in the field through the ongoing development of unique immersive content and design tools.

1985-1990 VR AT NASA'S AMES RESEARCH CENTER

From 1985 to 1990, Scott S. Fisher was Founder and Director of the Virtual Environment Workstation Project (VIEW) at NASA. VIEW developed the "goggle and glove" system commonly associated with many VR technologies.



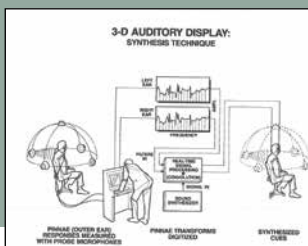
DATAGLOVES

The earliest device for interactivity was the "Dataglove" developed at NASA. The gloves were fitted with sensors and a magnetic tracking system that allowed for the glove to be followed in 3D space and handle virtual objects freely.



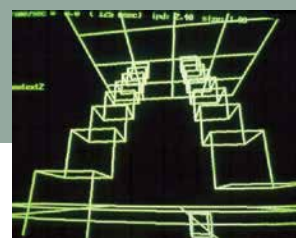
3-D AUDIO SYSTEM

Based on how humans localize sound in space, a 3D audio system was developed that allowed for sound cues to be associated with different points in the virtual space.



VIRTUAL ESCALATOR

This was an early interactive virtual experience programmed by Warren Robinette with simple vector graphics in the VIEW system.



1986 VIEWLAB THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT WORKSTATION PROJECT

NASA's VIEW system consisted of a stereoscopic display unit, glove-like devices, speech recognition, gesture tracking, 3D audio, and computer graphic and video image generation equipment. This resulted in imagery that appeared to surround the user in 3D-space.



1987 BOOM DISPLAY BINOCULAR OMNI-ORIENTED MONITOR

Until now, technology lacked the nuances needed to achieve what is now called "presence." The BOOM display solved this problem. The handheld Boom was able to provide a high-quality performance that became the gold standard of VR displays.



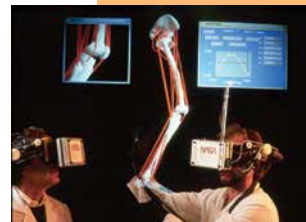
The BOOM enabled VR to be used for a number of applications. Users included: Lockheed Martin, Fiat (Italy), Deneb Robotics, Infobyte at the Guggenheim SoHo, Walt Disney World-Epcot Center, and many others.

TELEPRESENCE MOBILE ROBOT

The 'Molly' Remote Presence system was developed by Telepresence Research (Scott Fisher) and FakeSpace Labs (Mark Bolas) for Matsushita Denki, Japan. The camera system was mounted on a mobile robot platform to enable positional changes with joystick or speech commands.



SURGICAL SIMULATION
VIEWlab Virtual World database was designed for use in surgical planning and education, in collaboration with MIT and Stanford Medical School.



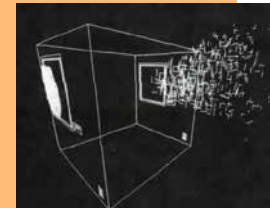
TELEROBOTICS INTERFACE

The VIEWlab system was used for simulation and training to more naturally interact with robotic arms outside the space station.



"A NEW MEDIUM: DESIGN AND VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS"

While working at the VIEWlab and Stanford University, Mark Bolas developed a thesis project with 10 different environments to map the new medium of VR.



2004-2007 WIDE5 HMD

In 2002, the School of Cinematic Arts and FakeSpace Labs secured a contract with the Office of Naval Research to create a new type of head-mounted display (HMD) that was lightweight and had a wide range of view. This new system demonstrated how immersive VR could be, introducing VR to luminaries such as Palmer Luckey and Brendon Iribe of Oculus.

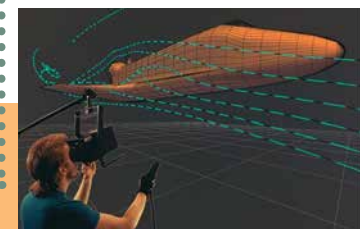


MENAGERIE

Menagerie was an interactive Virtual Environment installation by Scott Fisher, in collaboration with Michael Girard, Susan Amkraut, and Mark Trayle, which was commissioned for the exhibition "Revue Virtuelle" at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France.

VIRTUAL WIND TUNNEL, NASA AMES

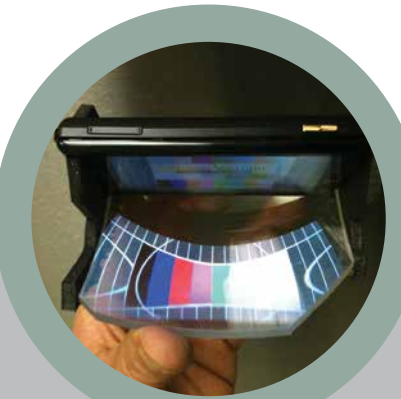
Use of the VIEWlab technology for Computational Fluid Dynamics applications enabled scientists to interactively change viewpoints of the data. Developed in collaboration with Steve Bryson and Creon Levit.



SCA GROUNDBREAKING

SCA formed the Immersive Narrative and Interactive Technology (INIT) Lab in 2005. INIT used early Wide5 prototypes for cinematic exploration of the VR medium -- such as a virtual fly-through of the new Lucas and Spielberg building.





AUGMENTED REALITY

While Virtual Reality experiences completely replace the real world, Augmented Reality overlays a virtual world on top of the real. USC and PhaseSpace Inc. developed the first AR display to leverage the power of smart phones.



2011

MXR LOW COST HMDs: "FRANKEN-VIEWERS"

At USC, there was an urgent need for a lower-cost, portable HMD alternative that could maintain an immersive field of view and be easily replaceable. A team at Mark Bolas' Mixed Reality Lab (MxR) chipped in to help make these commercially viable "Franken-viewers," with parts provided by Bolas, Palmer Luckey, PhaseSpace, and Thai Phan & Evan Suma.



2011 SMARTPHONE HMD

A design for a smartphone-based HMD laid the groundwork for the push toward making low-cost VR a reality. This solution also provided a new type of experience: mobile VR.



MED VR

Skip Rizzo and his team at the USC Institute for Creative Technologies used the 'Scuba HMD' to help treat stress disorder in Iraq veterans. Using a cognitive behavioral therapy approach—in which patients relive the trauma under controlled conditions—the clinician guides the patient through the VR environment.

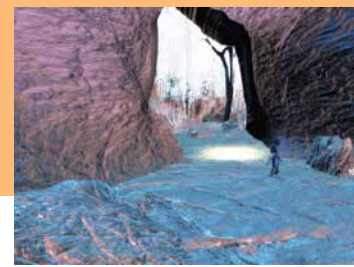


HUNGER IN LA

Nonny De La Peña's immersive journalism experience utilized the 'Antler HMD' to explore the issue of hunger in the Los Angeles area. The participant is fully immersed in the experience as if they are an actual witness to the event.

SHAYD

This mixed reality installation led by Juli Griffio encompasses an HMD, motion-capture, and multiple Kinects to produce a sensorial immersive virtual experience in an extraterrestrial world.



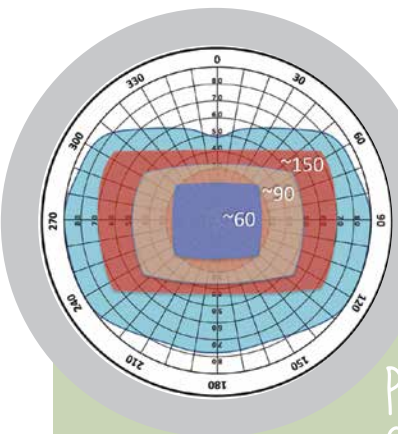
VR2GO

The USC Institute for Creative Technologies developed 3D printed designs including VR2GO, a new smartphone-based viewer that provided users with a 2D interaction surface and a 3D stereoscopic view.



SOCKET

The Socket HMD, driven by a powerful computer, incorporates a display from the Frankenvisioners and lenses from the FOV2GO(D). Nate Burba and James Illif used the Socket for content experiments that would help lead to their start-up Survivos.



2012-2013

PROLIFERATION OF THE SWEET SPOT

The FOV2GO(D) hit the sweet spot of immersion – the moment when first time users of VR say "wow" and get the hype. Because of its low cost and open source design, the FOV2GO(D) lent itself to a number of form factors and commercial products.



OCULUS RIFT

Palmer Luckey launched a campaign for his low-cost HMD prototype, the Oculus Rift, using 7X lenses and tools from the "Frankenviewers." In March 2014 Facebook purchased Oculus VR for \$2 billion dollars.



FEBRUARY 2012 FOV2GO MODEL A

CARDBOARD SMARTPHONE BASE VIEWER

To truly disrupt the trend of high-priced displays, a strong statement was needed. In 2011 the lab created a cardboard viewer and complete Unity3D library that was dubbed "VR in an Envelope". While it had a narrow field of view, the software and design laid the groundwork for USC's future VR designs.



APRIL 2012 FOV2GO MODEL D

CARDBOARD SMARTPHONE BASE VIEWER

The Wide5 display was programmed to simulate a 90-degree field of view. The lab found a suitable lens and the FOV2GO Model D was born.



SAMSUNG GEAR VR

On their first prototypes for GearVR, the Samsung team started by buying boxes of the 7X magnifier used in the FOV2GO(D).



7X LENS

The UltraOptix 7x aspheric magnifier was the lens that helped to kick off a number of consumer product efforts: the Rift DK1 lens was based on it, as were the first GearVR prototypes.

TALES FROM THE MINUS LAB

Tales from the Minus Lab was an immersive sneak peek into the IMGD thesis project of Alex Beachum. Robyn Gray ported the design to VR with Perry Hoberman's Stereoscopia package.



2014 GOOGLE CARDBOARD



MEGA

WANTS YOU TO MAKE GAMES

Student-Run Organization Brings the Family Aspect to USC Games

Making video games is a “hands-on” activity. The process of trial and error involved in making any great interactive experience takes deep knowledge of how video games work, many hours of focus, and a supportive environment that facilitates experimentation.

BY RYAN DEE GILMOUR

The Makers of Entertaining Games Association (MEGA) is a five-year-old student group hosted out of the School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) but open to students from across the USC campus. MEGA is leading the charge in making that supportive space for any Trojan who loves video games and wants to get their hands dirty. MEGA provides a welcoming environment (and a new group of friends) for anyone who wants to drop by and make something interactive and fun. By hosting game jams, skill sharing workshops, and video game study groups (which they call “games book clubs”), MEGA is SCA’s open arms for any student who wants to play.

“I’ve made several friends by working with MEGA—typically over pizza,” said Manolo Rosenberg, an Interactive Media & Games student and the President of MEGA. “Since everyone has different areas and levels of expertise, they’re always excited to try something new, whether it’s making a text adventure or modeling and rigging a character for the first time.”

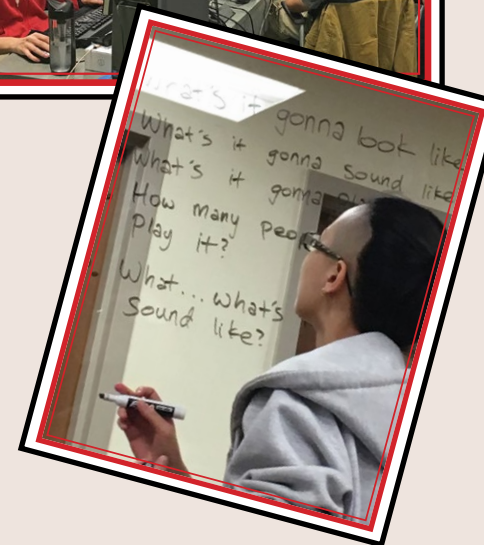
THE IMPORTANCE OF DOING

One of the things students gain by joining MEGA is a place to make games without the pressure of an investor or a grade. Students who regularly attend MEGA events can make two to three times as many games as students who don’t attend. While the expressed intention of MEGA is more about community than skill building, the lessons learned on MEGA games often find their ways into the classroom and even the commercial world.

MEGA’s game jams and skill-sharing workshops not only allow MEGA students to work on skills outside of their core competency, but also the chance to meet people with whom they can collaborate in their careers. MEGA members also meet other students they may not encounter in the classroom. MEGA is giving students the ability to work on many projects quickly with their peers in a loose, fun environment.

Past MEGA events have included participating in the Global Game Jam 2015, an event where video game design teams from around the world come together, make games overnight, and share them online. MEGA fielded 264 jammers, which was the second largest group in the United States. MEGA also hosted a study group of the classic horror video game *Silent Hill*, which served as a lesson on how horror elements are best incorporated into video games. On a less serious note, MEGA hosts potlucks during the more stressful times of the academic year for students to come together and commiserate about their struggles and play games with other gamers.

“Making games isn’t necessarily a big, high-end, up-on-a-pedestal thing that you have to work to obtain. I learned that in MEGA,” said Jocelyn Kim, a MEGA board member. “You could literally sit down one day and say, ‘I’m going to make a game,’ and you could do it.”



A BRIGHT START

MEGA is one of the youngest student groups on campus, but it’s already one of the fastest-growing and most vibrant at the entire University. One of the greatest assets to attending this School is that the people you meet become people you work with for the rest of your career. Because of the efforts of MEGA’s current students and alumni, there’s now a new place to meet people and make things. Which is what this whole thing is all about.

SCA Re-Launches Council on Diversity and Inclusion

EFFORTS WILL FOCUS ON INCLUSION ISSUES AT THE SCHOOL AND IN MEDIA AT LARGE

BY KERYL BROWN



In the fall semester of 2015, the School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) re-launched regular meetings of the SCA Council on Diversity and Inclusion. The renewed effort came as a response to the growing concern over lack of diversity on and off the screen in Hollywood and the larger media industry.

There have been three previous iterations of the SCA Diversity Council, headed by professors Mark Harris, Michael Renov, and Doe Mayer. These efforts primarily involved faculty, whereas the current Council includes faculty, staff, and students. Mayer says those councils were focused on goals specific to SCA. "The biggest thing on my own agenda was a more diverse student body, which we now have — not perfect but much better." The current Council is continuing to build on previous efforts, including proposing a seminar on diversity for all students as well as adding a workshop on diversity to faculty orientations.

The Council on Diversity is currently co-chaired by Christine Acham, Program Coordinator for the Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies, and Helaine Head, Associate Professor in the Production Division. Its first major initiative was a school-wide, student-led Town Hall meeting on February 18th, 2016. Students, staff, and faculty attended the event, but students were given an exclusive platform to voice their concerns and criticisms, and also praise the SCA learning environment. Many suggested ways the SCA community can become more welcoming and inclusive to those of all backgrounds. As a follow up to this event, each division held its own town hall meetings, either through in-person forums or via online survey.

The Council on Diversity and Inclusion also coordinated a diversity training event for SCA faculty and staff, held on April 14th, 2016. Dr. Eko Canillas, a freelance facilitator who specializes in leading organizational diversity workshops, led the well-attended event. She also led a similar training for the Production Division's faculty and staff.

In the fall 2016 semester the council introduced the SCA

Diversity Speaker and Screening Series. MFA Production student Sam Shaib chairs the subcommittee charged with bringing speakers to campus who can address diversity and inclusion in the media industries at large. "The speaker series is a necessary next step in furthering the discussion about inclusion within the SCA Community. Students, staff, and faculty within SCA must have an opportunity to connect with industry leaders and emerging artists on this subject to understand how these scenarios manifest and exist in the real world," says Shaib. The series kicked off with AMPAS President Cheryl Boone Isaacs who told the audience, "Coming up with strategies to increase diversity is the core of what we have been doing. Not necessarily telling the industry



Cheryl Boone Isaacs (second from left) with Diversity and Inclusion Council Co-Chairs (left to right) Professors Christine Acham and Helaine Head, and student Philana Payton

as a whole what they must do, because I feel very strongly — and I know I'm not alone — that at the Academy we can't go out and tell other people what to do if our own house isn't right. So we've been working on our own house first."

The Council on Diversity and Inclusion holds meetings from 3 to 4 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of every month. The first hour is dedicated to the 24 members of the diversity council addressing administrative and planning issues, while the second hour is open to all SCA staff, faculty and students to discuss any concerns related to fostering of an inclusive learning environment.

The Council on Diversity and Inclusion's Statement of Purpose can be found on the SCA website, and the Council can be contacted at diversity@cinema.usc.edu.

Collecting History

SCA'S COLLECTIONS PRESERVE THE ARTIFACTS THAT TELL THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES STORIES

BY HUGH HART



A few months ago, USC Cinematic Arts Library Associate Director Sandra Garcia-Myers got a phone call from an anonymous stranger claiming to represent a major Hollywood director. "She was talking to different archives around town and wanted to know about our collections, so I told her what we do here," Garcia-Myers recalls. "A month later I got a call back saying the director decided to donate his collection to USC. So I said, 'Well, who is it?' And she said the director was Ridley Scott."

The library's allure for a filmmaker of Scott's stature is evident. Founded in 1995, the Cinematic Arts Library (headquartered at Doheny Memorial Library) boasts about 400 collections detailing key chapters of film and television history. The treasure trove attracts scholars eager to study artifacts amassed by 20th century masters like silent-film auteur Cecil B. DeMille (including the peacock-feathered cape used in *Samson and Delilah*), *Singin' in the Rain* producer Arthur Freed, *Spanky and Our Gang* comedy giant Hal Roach. Contemporary artists range from Ron Howard to production designer Rick Carter, whose collection includes *Back to the Future* storyboards and concept art scribbled on the pages of his *Jurassic Park* script. Papers from *On the Waterfront* composer Elmer Bernstein anchor the library's world-renowned film music archive encompassing Dimitri Tiomkin, Maurice Jarre, Lalo Schiffrin, Alfred Newman and James Newton Howard.

Marlene Loadvine, Senior Associate Dean at the School of Cinematic Arts, says "These collections are kind of an untold little secret because we don't really brag about them that much. But they're really a gold mine."

In addition to individual gifts, the Library preserves material from MGM, Universal Pictures and 20th Century Fox along with a comprehensive Warner Bros. archive containing contracts, scripts, budgets, memos, and daily production reports produced between 1929 and 1977. Loadvine notes, "You can spend five days reading Jack Warner's letters to Joan Crawford and Bette Davis, which include lots of expletives about their contracts. People love to read those letters."



The Library, which includes climate-controlled archives stored off-site at Iron Mountain's Los Angeles facility, serves first and foremost as a resource for scholarly research, Garcia-Myers says: "Ultimately our job is to preserve primary source material for authors working on biographies, graduate students working on dissertations and faculty members doing research for journal articles. Donors are excited to know that their collections will be used in ways that further film and television history. They're not just going to be sitting in a back room gathering dust."

While researchers routinely travel from France, England and Germany to peruse material in the Library's on-site reading room, some collections also see the light of day as curated exhibitions. The Library's public programming originated in 1999, when it celebrated the newly opened David L. Wolper Center for the Study of the Documentary Film by organizing a John Wayne exhibit. Garcia-Myers says, "The John Wayne show was a huge success and, after that, people started coming to us who hadn't realized anyone would be interested in their collections."

Loadvine adds, "It became a snowball effect. Like anything else, families talk to each other. 'Where are you going to put your stuff?' These collections are an avenue to connect with families who never attended USC. They trust us

as a research institution, because there aren't many places in the world where all of a film artist's things can be kept together as a collection and properly archived."

Marilyn Monroe and *Willy Wonka* exhibits based on Wolper's collection drew big crowds, and a few years after Frank Sinatra's family donated his archive, Dennis Hopper's daughter Marin asked the School of Cinematic Arts to archive the late filmmaker's massive collection of photographs and papers. In 2014, the Library

presented "Part of Being an Artist: The Dennis Hopper Collection — Selected Artwork and Ephemera." Sir Ridley Scott, trained as a painter at Royal College of Art, will receive similar treatment early next year when the Library hosts an exhibition that goes behind the scenes with the director of *Thelma & Louise*, *Gladiator*, and *Blackhawk Down*. "The storyboards are fantastic and Ridley Scott did most of them himself," Garcia-Myers explains. "He directed commercials before he started making films so part of his process was to draw out all the action. These storyboards are wonderful to see."

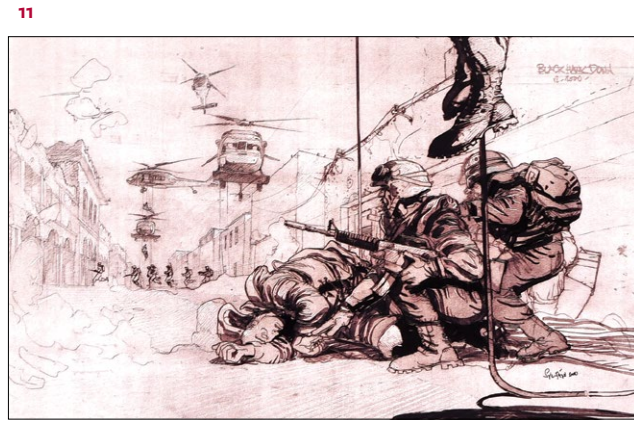
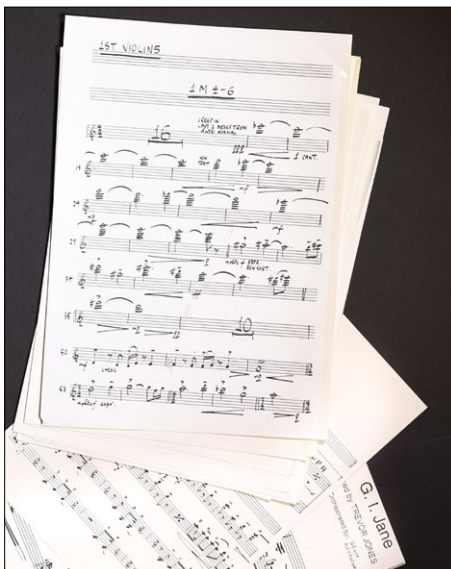
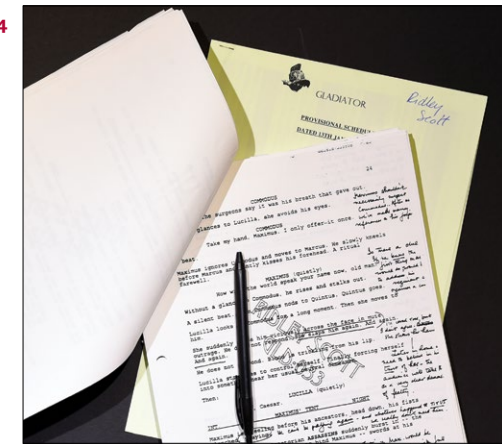
In addition to its tangible assets, the Library prides itself on forging enduring bonds with families responsible for the gifts. Garcia-Myers says, "One thing our director Stephen Hanson established early on is that we're not just bringing a collection here; we're bringing the family into it as well." Edward G. Robinson's daughter and grandson went through the iconic actor's collection after seeing him portrayed in last year's *Trumbo* movie. Elmer Bernstein's son comes in frequently to look at the scores. Filmmaker King Vidor's granddaughter

recently inquired about seeing his collection. "In many cases," Garcia-Myers says, "once we get the collection, it's just the beginning of the relationship."

Thriving amid competition from Turner Classic Movie auctions and other institutions, the Library continues to attract gifts from unexpected sources including actress Lizbeth Scott. Noted for her femme fatale roles in film noir features like *Dead Reckoning*, *Desert Fury*, and *Too Late for Tears*, she died in 2015. "Lizbeth Scott mentioned USC as the top place she wanted her papers to go," Garcia-Myers explains. "SCA Dean Elizabeth Daley got a letter from her estate and passed it over

to us. We talked to the estate managers and picked up the collection. She has some fabulous photos in there."

In conjunction with its Hugh M. Hefner Moving Image Archive—which holds more than 70,000 items including film negatives, sound effects and prints—and Louis B. Mayer Film and Television Study Center, SCA's Library of Cinematic Arts' collections provide richly detailed inspiration for student filmmakers and scholars alike. Loadvine says, "In a lot of ways, the film and music collection is the jewel in the crown here at the University. We founded the first film school in the country in 1929 and we're now on the cutting edge of new technologies."



11 Storyboard from *Blackhawk Down* - Ridley Scott Collection

12 Dennis Hopper and son, painted by artist Jack Smith

13 Series of photos taken by Dennis Hopper - Dennis Hopper Collection

14 Materials from the mini series *Roots* - David L. Wolper Collection

15 Grammy - Frank Sinatra Collection

1-3 Animation backgrounds from *Looney Toons* - Warner Bros. Archives

4 *Gladiator* script - Ridley Scott Collection

5 Concept Art for *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* - Rick Carter Collection

6 Storyboard from *Jurassic Park* - Rick Carter Collection

7 Congressional Medal - John Wayne Collection

8 Hat from *Rio Bravo* - John Wayne Collection

10 Music from *G.I. Jane* - Ridley Scott Collection

Anatomy of a *Micro* budget

SCA ALUMNUS ERIC B. FLEISCHMAN PERFECTS THE DIY MODEL

From an unmarked white building tucked away on Larchmont, just beyond the shadow of Paramount Pictures, Eric B. Fleischman quietly conducts his micro-revolution from Diablo Entertainment headquarters. The 26-year-old founding producer and USC School of Cinematic Arts alum paces the sun-bathed third-floor office delegating production preparations—their fourth this year—with decorous assertion through a set of Apple EarPods. On the surface, the scene brims with all the professional polish of a CAA executive suite; but the engine that drives it—a three-person team with six-figure production budgets—purrs with a youthful vigor and efficiency you’d sooner find in a Silicon Beach basement.

Professionalism and efficiency are the cornerstones of Diablo’s business model, which is, in simplest terms, to produce professional-quality genre films on a do-it-yourself budget. “A lot of that involves working in the non-union world with our crews,” says Fleischman. “All our movies have gone through SAG, and if we have WGA writers we go through WGA, so it’s not like we skimp out. It’s being fiscally responsible and realistic.”

Incidentally, Fleischman got his first taste of the micro-budget model just up the street at Paramount, where he had interned every year as an undergrad. In 2010, Paramount announced a new program called Insurge, the stated goal of which was to “give back to the Hollywood community” by doing ten films a year budgeted at \$100,000 each. The idea was to help bring new ideas and new filmmakers into the studio system. After three years of wandering the lot as a self-described “lot brat,” listening in on phone calls and meetings with the studio’s biggest names, Fleischman spent a summer with Insurge reading submissions from all over town for high-concept, low-budget material.

“And I was falling in love,” he beams. “USC doesn’t teach high-concept, low budget. It’s the big studio franchise tentpoles that you



learn because we’re in that world and that’s what’s existed until two or three years ago.”

After graduating from the Film & Television Production Division in 2011, Fleischman took a position at Blumhouse (led by *Paranormal Activity* producer Jason Blum) just as the boutique horror shingle was starting to explode. “We did twelve movies in twelve months,” Fleischman recalls. And as one of the first ten people brought on board under a new studio deal, Fleischman once again found himself working on the same kind of

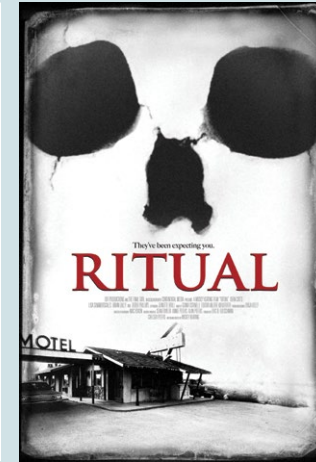
“Suddenly I had a track record,” says Fleischman. After producing three more films through a series of independent financiers, Fleischman teamed with producer Sean Tabibian, whom he met through the sales agents of *Ritual*, to finance a new film, *Recovery*. They partnered to found Diablo in 2013.

To date, Fleischman has produced twelve feature films, each made on budgets ranging from \$150,000 to \$300,000, each achieving healthy profits through festival sales and/or digital distribution.

high-concept, low-budget genre fare he had encountered at Paramount. “And here I am at Blumhouse learning this formula...and I also had the Insurge formula that hadn’t really been used, and in my head, I’m like, ‘Can you marry these two formulas? Can you do high-concept, low-budget genre fare for a price and not sacrifice quality?’”

He found his answer in *Ritual*, a small cult horror film written by then-Blumhouse intern Mickey Keating, who gave it to Fleischman to produce. Blumhouse gave them permission to shoot on weekends, and with a production budget of \$27,000 donated by friends and family, they completed the film by the end of summer 2013 and sold to Lionsgate in the fall for six-times the budget upfront.

BY MATTHEW MEIER



“Fleischman’s work really does define one smart and effective business model,” says School of Cinematic Arts Professor Jason E. Squire, who had been researching emerging DIY/micro-budget filmmaking since about 2007. Squire describes his early research as “mostly speculative.” “Now, I get back in touch with my excellent student only to realize that he is actually doing the kind of process and style of moviemaking that I was researching, which proved that the process worked and that people were doing it.” As a result, Squire has dedicated an entire section of the fourth edition of his industry tome, *The Movie Business Book*, specifically to the DIY model; fittingly, he recruited Fleischman to write the chapter on producing.

Fleischman and Diablo Entertainment have undoubtedly benefited from good timing. Despite its exponential growth in recent years, micro-budget filmmaking is still a relatively young phenomenon, one that would not have even been possible a decade ago. Advancements in both the affordability and quality of digital resources have been essential to the growth of the independent and micro-budget movements, and have also fueled the fires for those seeking new means of creative and professional growth outside the impenetrable gates of the Hollywood studios.

“Starting around the turn of this century, filmmakers frustrated by the traditional process started looking to the new digital tools,” says Squire. “And so, slowly, many of the forward-thinking independent-style filmmakers began to recognize the new tools as providing access directly to the customer, which was something historic in the business. Only since digital is it possible to distribute directly to the customer.”

“The film industry is changing a lot,” says Fleischman. “Studios are making fewer and fewer films a year. They’re spending more money. They’re losing more money. So what you’re seeing is this huge emergence of young filmmakers who are financing and producing

these movies that are being made for a fraction of what they used to be.”

The success of Fleischman and the other Diablo filmmakers is why Squire recruited him to speak to his case study class at SCA, which follows the production of a film from the earliest stages of development through marketing and distribution. In the fall semester, Squire still focuses the class on the industry’s biggest blockbusters. But he now dedicates the spring exclusively to the micro-budget model.

“I think this is a cautionary tale for our students, who should not be waiting for that \$10-million or \$5-million movie,” says Squire. “You can get your 480 team together and start looking for private money.”

Micro-budget is tailor made “for those who are serious about being filmmakers,” says Squire. “Like a magic carpet unfolding before

them.” However, he adds that it’s important to understand that success is incremental. “You’re not doing it for the money, initially. It’s really all volunteer or for very low pay, but that’s the tradition of the movie business: you start with nothing, but you’re getting great experience and also screen credit.”

Above all, however, whether a film costs one hundred million or one hundred thousand, as Fleischman likes to say, “content is always king.” “If someone comes in and pitches an idea that I’ve heard of—Pass. Hard pass,” says Fleischman. “What’s the point? I’m trying to make product that you haven’t seen before, that pushes the boundaries of what cinema can do.”

That’s perhaps the lesson that Squire and Fleischman most hope to bestow on today’s students. It’s not just about how far you can stretch a budget. If you can show the audience something new, something that stays with them, that they’ve never seen before—that will always be the true formula for success.



From left: Director/Co-Writer JD Dillard, Actor Jacob Latimore (“Bo”), and Eric B. Fleischman on the set of *Sleight*



From left: producer Eric B. Fleischman, writer/director Thomas Della Bella (*The Remains*), Mali Elfman (producer, *Fun Size Horror* volumes 1 & 2), Professor Jason E. Squire, writer/director JD Dillard (*Sleight*), co-writer, co-producer Alex Theurer (*Sleight*).



A MA+P to Graduation

THE DIVISION'S FIRST B.A. COHORT IS IN ITS SENIOR YEAR

In 2013 when the first complete cohort of Media Arts + Practice (MA+P) freshmen started classes, the division's curriculum was still a bit of a mystery around SCA. Although the school was home to the interdivisional Media Arts + Practice Ph.D. program, which spans all divisions, the actual MA+P division was not launched until 2013. However, a few undergraduate students—many of whom were enrolled in an honors program through the School's Institute for Multimedia Literary—started asking for the opportunity to take the same kinds of classes as the doctoral students, which married deep critical thinking on media theory and history with the ability to actually create media. Between 2011 and 2013 a handful of students were essentially allowed to create their own MA+P majors and affirmed the potential for a Bachelor's program in Media Arts + Practice.

"In some ways, MA+P was created in response to student demand," says Holly Willis, the Research Professor who is Chair of the division. In May 2017, the division's first official cohort of twenty-two students will graduate. During their four years at SCA, the division has honed and cemented its curriculum's focus on marrying research with practical experience. MA+P students make media with purpose. This year's thesis projects include a study of how web technologies (HTML, CSS, JavaScript) impact global culture, an exploration of best practices for virtual reality experience design, and a study on whether public art can be designed in such a way as to influence specific conversations and emotions.

MA+P graduates will go on to careers in a variety of fields, as media creators, filmmakers, game designers, researchers, analysts and media managers—the kinds of jobs in which creating the media product isn't necessarily the end goal. Willis says that rather than simply learning how to use tools, MA+P's students take it a step further, questioning their prescribed use. "They are actually in the labs, working with brand new tools and rather than teaching them how to use tools, we're teaching them how to question, and misuse and take apart the tools," says Willis. "It's not a vocational school where you learn how to do one thing very well and how to play by the rules. It's a place where you are constantly questioning: Who is this for? Why was it made? What can I do with it that upsets those things in some way? And how can I be a leader by making a powerful contribution in this context?"

The MA+P faculty is made up of artists, scholars, technologists and big thinkers who are united by their interest in exploring the usefulness and impact of the latest platforms. For the students they attract, a part of the appeal of the MA+P curriculum, says Willis, is that they will get a crash course in how ideas go from the lab to the mainstream. "If you think about the last four years, the Oculus Rift and other VR technologies had not yet been publicly introduced. Fast-forward four years, and suddenly we needed a VR curriculum. Snapchat also arrived and is now part of everyday communication systems. And the Apple Watch—wearable technology wasn't really on people's central radar but with the watch, suddenly people have this device. Things that are sort of on the edges really come quickly into the center and we keep pace with that." Add to that the idea that MA+P students can create any kind of media they want—from traditional platforms like films and video games to emerging areas like wearable technologies, interactive architecture and VR. "You're really encouraged to think big and believe that any idea is possible," says graduating senior Juliette Pisani. "There is no 'normal' MA+P class. We are constantly learning new skills and finding different ways to utilize them in our projects, which keeps the major exciting."

"The interdisciplinary (curriculum) attracted me to MA+P," says her classmate Christian Falstrup. "I would consider myself a generalist and the idea of choosing one very specific field to focus on frightened me, and still does. The fact that I could combine my interests in music, film, games, shared experience,

design, art, and more into one major seemed like a match made in heaven." Falstrup says his thesis project is about "the future of shared experiences" especially with regard to how patrons enjoy music festivals. "I'm using the Microsoft HoloLens to create a sonically-driven visualizer," he explains. "As a prototype, it'll point to ways in which people can become real-time creators of the visual experiences they have at musical events."

Another senior, Anna Schwartz, has been working at Activision for the past year, doing intellectual property research and pitching ideas for adapting game-world characters and stories into films and television shows. She hopes to continue working there after graduation. "I never imagined that I would find a position that combines my loves for video games, multimedia and movies. Now that I have, I hope to stay there as long as possible," she says.

Holly Willis says the challenge for MA+P isn't inspiring students to explore nascent ideas and develop new projects but keeping up with changes that are constantly coming down the pike. "For the faculty we constantly have to adjust and readjust to keep pace," she says. "We have a lot of experience in these areas and have been working on them for a long time, so it's not a total surprise to us. But for the students, these changes are happening rapidly. They enter and by their second year there will be a brand new technology that they've never heard of. For the program, the main thing is we have the historical legacy and context, but we really need to keep abreast of the changes that are happening." MA+P, she says, gets an edge from being housed within SCA, where the focus is already on marrying theory and practice, and where the school's research labs offer an unparalleled learning environment. "We are incredibly lucky because we have these tremendous resources and we are able to expose the students to different tools in a very direct way," she says. "The other thing that is core to our program is an interest in equality, and understanding that our culture functions best when people have access equally, and that technologies are not determined solely by people in power." Graduating senior Jordan Fowler says that for her the program's success boils down to its focus on practical applications. "In the real world, I have found the following three things are crucial to success: the ability to think creatively, the ability to think critically and the ability work with your peers. This major prepares you to excel in all of those areas."

With this first graduating class, MA+P is hoping to create a legacy of teaching creative people how to question and remake things before they become so entrenched in our everyday reality that we may even stop seeing them. Senior Eric Liu, whose interests lie in exploring remix culture, has an after-graduation plan that illustrates this goal. He's planning a visit to The Museum of Printing in Haverhill, Massachusetts. "It contains an extensive collection of artifacts and ephemera that pertain to typography," he says. "The goal is to make it a road trip, and along the way document the vestiges and history of typography—forgotten road signage, for example." The cross-country drive, an American staple, is about to get a MA+P remix.

BY DESA PHILADELPHIA



Alumni Quicktakes

Jonathan Abrams '00 sold his dark family drama *Bishop* to A&E Network/A&E Studios.

Scott Alexander '85 and **Larry Karaszewski '85** are writing a script for Amazon about the sculptor of Mount Rushmore. Also, their script for the remake of 1974 *Death Wish* is filming in 2017.

Judd Apatow '85 has received a series order from HBO for his comedy pilot *Crashing*. He has also been honored with the Generation Award at the Just For Laughs Awards.

John August '94 has signed a 3-book deal with Roaring Brook Press. August will receive the WGA Valentine Davies Award.



Victoria Aveyard '12 had her debut novels *Red Queen* and *Glass Sword* reach #1 and #2 on the New York Times YA Hardcover Bestseller List.

Brian Baugh '95 has directed and co-written the feature *I'm Not Ashamed*.

Walt Becker '95 is set to direct a screen adaptation of his YA fantasy novel *Charlie Paris and the Young Ambassadors* from a script by **Joe Ballarini '99**. Becker will also write and executive produce *Storyville* focusing on the historical background of the Storyville neighborhood in New Orleans.

Patricia Beckmann '96 has had her film *Family Tale* chosen as one of the nine films selected for Lunafest's international tour.

Jason Michael Berman '06 is producing *Amateur*, an independent film set to be released on Netflix.

Adrienne Biddle '99 and Bryan Bertino of Unbroken Pictures are producing the suspense thriller *He's Out There*. She will also produce a remake of *See No Evil*.

Jeffrey Blitz '97 will direct the NBC pilot *The Trail*.

Gillian Bohrer '03 has joined Fox 2000 as the Executive Vice President of Production.

Ted Braun '88 wrote and directed *Betting On Zero*.

Sheldon Candis '03 directed *Who Will Survive America* for the Sundance Now Doc Club original series *Take 5: Justice in America*.

Trey Callaway '89 has been named Showrunner of the new Fox series *APB*. **Tim Dragga '10** has been hired as a writer's assistant on *APB* along with **Adam Weissman '10** and **Jeremy Novick '13**.

John Carpenter will executive produce a new installment in the *Halloween* franchise. **Malek Akkad** will produce the film.

Helen Childress '91 had her script *Model Woman* ordered to pilot by ABC.

Jonathan Chinn '94 is teaming up with **Doug Liman** to produce *Captive* for Netflix.

Jon Chu '03 will direct *Crazy Rich Asians*, an on-screen adaptation of Kevin Kwan's book.

Ryan Coogler '10 will direct Marvel's *Black Panther*. Coogler has also been appointed the first Warner Bros. Creative Talent Ambassador. He is also collaborating with fellow alum **Chinaka Hodge '13**, to develop *Minors*, a new drama series.

Julia Cox '11 sold her script *Do No Harm* to Paramount.

David M. Crabtree '06 sold his script *Phasic* to Mandalay Pictures. He has also set up his sci-fi script *Absolute* at Phantom Four, which **David Goyer '88** will produce.



R.J. Cutler will direct and executive produce the drama pilot *Four Stars*. He is also set to direct an event series based on the nonfiction novel *The Birth of the Pill*.

Jeff Davis '00 wrote and will executive produce a television adaptation of *Let the Right One In*.

Susan Downey '95 will executive produce a Perry Mason series for HBO.

Caroline Dries '04 wrote *Recon* for Fox.

Breck Eisner '95 will direct Paramount's *Friday* the 13th reboot.

Kristin Ellermann '09 released her first children's book *About the Belonging Doll*.

David Ellison will produce *Altered Carbon* for Netflix. He will also produce *The Flying Tigers* and serve as executive producer for *Red Mars*, a series based on the Mars Trilogy books; Amazon's recently greenlit Jack Ryan series; and ABC's newly-ordered drama *Ten Day Valley*.

Garrett Lerner '95 and **Russel Friend '95** will also produce *Altered Carbon*.

Megan Ellison is producing the comedy *20th Century Women* for A24.

Gabriel Flaksman '15 has been admitted to the Warner Brothers Writing Fellowship.

Dan Fisher '08 has secured all worldwide rights to *Better Off Single*.

Devon Franklin '00 will produce MGM's *Cooley High* remake.

Robert Funke '13 and **Matt Lutsky '14** have sold a pilot to Sony Pictures Television, with George Clooney and **Grant Heslov** attached as producers.

Jonathan Glickman, President of MGM Motion Picture Group, has re-upped with the studio in a three-year deal that will take him through 2020.

Richie Gordon '11 has started a new production company called *Tesselation*.

David Goyer '88 will write a *Star Wars* VR movie that is centered on Darth Vader. Goyer's Superman prequel *Krypton* has been greenlit at Syfy. He will also produce a film adaptation of the graphic novel *Doctors* for 20th Century Fox under his Phantom

Four Films production banner. Goyer is also set to direct *Who Am I* for Warner Bros.

James Gray '91 will write and direct the sci-fi epic *Ad-Astra*.

Brian Grazer '74 is set to produce a remake of the 1984 cult hit *Splash*. A comedy series starring standup comedian Ms. Pat, which Grazer is executive producing, has been given a pilot commitment by Fox. Grazer, **Ron Howard**, and **David Kirschner** will produce the new live-action adaptation of *Curious George*. The docuseries *Breakthrough*, executive produced by Grazer, Howard, and **Steve Michaels**, has been renewed for a second season at Nat Geo.

Vu Quynh Ha '10 produced the Vietnamese feature film *SWEET 20*.

Jason Hall will direct his script of David Finkel's book *Thank You For Your Service*.

George Heller '02 has joined Brillstein Entertainment Partners (BEP).

Dan Hertzog '91 has been honored at ICG's 20th Annual Emerging Cinematographer Awards.

Grant Heslov's Smokehouse Pictures has inked a first-look deal with Sonar Entertainment.

Ron Howard will direct the sci-fi film *Sevener* for Skydance, with producer **David Ellison**.

Jonathan Igla '05 will write a new drama series for Hulu, centered on the world of figure skating.



Cherie Martin Irwin '85 is now the director of the project management office for CMD Agency.

Angela Kang '09 has signed an overall deal with AMC. Kang has also been named one of Variety's "Top Ten Writers to Watch."

Peter Kang '96 was appointed Co-President of Production at Lionsgate.

Aaron Kaplan '90 will executive produce *Manhunt* for Showtime and *Losing It* for ABC. ABC has also bought the comedy *The Favorite* from Kaplan's Kapital Entertainment. The fashion dramedy *House of Moore* from Kaplan's Kapital Entertainment and **Daniel Barnz's** *We're Not Brothers* is back in development at ABC. CBS has nabbed Kaplan's comedies *Me, Myself and I* and *9J, 9K, and 9L*, as well as his untitled family comedy from writer Corinne Kingsbury. Freeform is developing the comedy *Stuff* which Kaplan is producing.

Jensen Karp '01 will executive produce the comedic music competition series *Drop the Mic* for TBS.

Collin Kelly '08 and **Jackson Lanzing '08** have released their graphic novel series *JOYRIDE* through BOOM! Studios. The two have also recently signed as writers for DC Comics' *Grayson*.

Nahnatchka Khan '94 has set up her own production pod at 20th Century Fox TV.

Konie Kim '16 won the Best Student Animation category with her short *Disappearance* at the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival Awards.

Erica Shelton Kodish '98 has been named the new showrunner for the fourth season of BET's *Being Mary Jane* starring Gabrielle Union.

Matthew Kunitz '90 is executive producing *Kicking & Screaming*, a competition reality series for Fox.

Gravitas Ventures has acquired *Beyond Glory*.

Jon Landau and James Cameron are executive producers.

Shawn Levy '94 will direct a feature film based on the autobiography of legendary music producer Bill Graham. He will produce *Sovereign*, a sci-fi thriller project, the film adaptation of Paolo Bacigalupi's sci-fi short story *Mike Madel*, which has been acquired by Netflix, and the sci-fi actioner *Kin*, a big-screen adaptation of the sci-fi short film *Bag Man*.

Doug Liman will direct WB's *Justice League Dark*. His CIA film *Mena* has been retitled *American Made* and will star Tom Cruise. Liman is also directing the innovative new scripted VR series *Invisible*.

Yo-Yo Lin '15 has been accepted into the highly competitive SXSW Film Festival 2016 for her installation "RICERCA."

Eli Linnetz '13 directed Kanye West's newest music videos for "Famous" and "Fade."

Katie Lovejoy '09 script *The Selection* now has director **Thea Sharrock** attached. Lovejoy's pilot *Miranda Rights* was greenlit by NBC.



Andrew Marlowe '92 will produce the crime series *Take Two*.

La Clave won the CINDY Gold Award and the Robert Townsend Social Issues Awards. **Doe Mayer '73** served as the film's Executive Producer, **Lisa Leeman** was Producer and **Patricia Cardoso** was the Director.

Rawson Marshall Thurber '99 will write and direct the action film *Skyscraper*.

Joseph Mazzello '05 sold his feature script *Undrafted* to Vertical Entertainment and will direct the film.

Lucky McGee will direct the chase thriller *Misfortune* for Radiant Films.

Nicholas Musurca '12 and **Jerome Sable '09** are partnering with Gunpowder & Sky for a thriller centered on a small-town skate crew.

Neal Moritz '85 and his Original Film production company have signed a two-year deal with Sony TV. He will produce WGN America's television adaptation of the famous alien novel *Roadside Picnic*. He will also produce a new film with Lionsgate based on the TV series *MacGyver*. Cinemax is also developing his project *The Boys*. **Eric Kripke '96** is attached to write and **Ori Marmur** will executive produce.

Justin Ostensen '04 has been promoted to VP of Post Production at Amblin.

Hannah Ozer '09 has been hired as Manager for Kaplan/Perrone Entertainment.

Charles Pratt '78 has been named showrunner of the new Fox series *Star* from Lee Daniels.

Aaron Rahsaan Thomas '02 has signed his first two-year overall deal with Sony Pictures TV, after writing for the studio on Netflix's *The Get Down*.

Allison Raskin '11 was named one of the "5 Acts to Download" by Entertainment Weekly for her series *Just Between Us*.

Matt Reeves '88 will executive produce the drama series *Family Honor*.

Jason Reitman will team with Diablo Cody and Charlize Theron on Cody's untitled new feature project. He has signed a first-look deal with Hulu for all TV projects.

Shonda Rhimes '94 will receive the 2016 International Emmy Founder's Award. She received the 2016 Norman Lear Achievement Award from the PGA, and will be working with Mr. Lear on an Epix docu-series called *America Divided*.

Jay Roach '86 received the Cinema Audio Society's Filmmaker Award.

Adam Robitel '00 will direct 2017 *Insidious: Chapter 4*.

Mike Roma '15 has written and directed a new web series called *Danny the Manny*.

Elizabeth Allen Rosenbaum '99 directed *Careful What You Wish For*, a thriller starring Nick Jonas.

Melissa Rosenberg '90 was awarded one of the inaugural Peabody 30 awards for excellence for her work on **MARVEL's** *Jessica Jones*.

Bruce Rosenblum has been named President of Business Operations for Disney-ABC Television Group.

Charles Roven will produce an adaptation of *Keep Calm*, an action-thriller novel.

Aaron Schneider '98 will direct the drama *Greyhound* from a script by Tom Hanks.

Evan Schiff '04 will edit Lionsgate's *John Wick: Chapter 2*.

Josh Schwartz is developing *Made in LA*, based on a memoir by the founders of Juicy Couture. He will adapt the *Calendar Girl* book series for television. He will also be the showrunner and executive producer, along with Stephanie Savage, for Hulu's television adaptation of Marvel's popular *Runaways* comics.



Stacey Sher '85 has been selected as the co-president of Activision-Blizzard Studios, where she will be creating film and TV titles from the company's deep library of games including *Call of Duty*, *Skylanders*, and *Starcraft*. Activision Blizzard Inc.'s first television series *Skylanders Academy*, produced by Sher, has received a two-season order at Netflix.

Lindsey Shockley '07 has sold her spy dramedy *Unit Zero* starring Toni Collette to ABC.

Ian Shorr '08 has joined the writing staff of CBS's *Training Day*.

Andrew Silver '83 will be the supervising music editor on *Going In Style*.

Bryan Singer '89 will direct and produce a new Fox adaptation of the classic Jules Verne novel *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. **Jason Taylor '00** will also be producing.

Tim Story '94 will direct and executive produce *What Goes Around Comes Around*, CBS' new single camera comedy pilot. **Aaron Kaplan '90** is also an executive producer.



Danny Strong '96 has signed a multi-year overall deal with 20th Century Fox TV where he will write, direct,

supervise and develop series for the company.

Matt Stuecken '01 sold his spec script *Horizon Line* to Svensk Filmindustri.

Jennifer Todd will produce *Bunker Hill* and Fox's *Witness for the Prosecution*.

Dave Tolchinsky will co-curate *Sick by Seven* at A Red Orchid Theater.

Louiza Vick '08 was made partner at the Worldwide Production Agency.

Kurt Voelker's script *The Bachelors* is heading to production.

Jeff Wadlow '01 is set to direct *Hitman's Bodyguard*. He will also direct the action comedy *The True Memoirs of an International Assassin* in September.

Matthew Weiner '90 has recorded an audiobook version of Frank O'Hara's *Lunch Poems* released by Audible Studios.

J.A. Weinstein '92 sold his article "Love & Mercy 2" to the all-star humor magazine *The American Bystander*.

Josh Weisbrod '15 had his thesis film *Unfriended* accepted into competition at the Louisiana International Film Festival in the Official International Animated Short Film Selections (Family/Kids).

John Wells '82 will produce a movie on the Panama Papers scandal for Netflix.

Max Winkler '06 will direct the coming-of-age film *Flower*.

Jeremy Whitman has joined the Shout! Factory team as Development Director. In this role, he will help develop scripted and unscripted series for television, digital, and premium content services.

Lia Woodward '12 short film *Luna & Lars* won Best Animated Short of 2015 and Best Score at the New Filmmakers of LA Best of the Year Awards.

Freddie Wong '08, Matthew Arnold '02 and Desmond Dolly will executive produce and direct a new sci-fi anthology series called *Dimension 404*.

Greg Yaitanes will executive produce and direct Cinemax's new crime thriller drama *Micronesian Blue*.

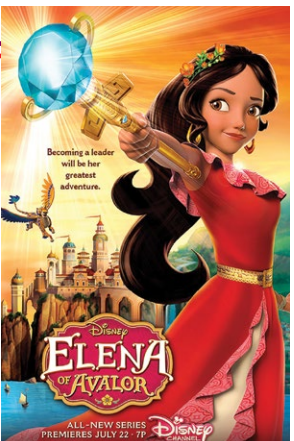
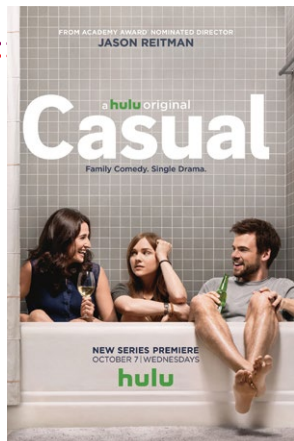
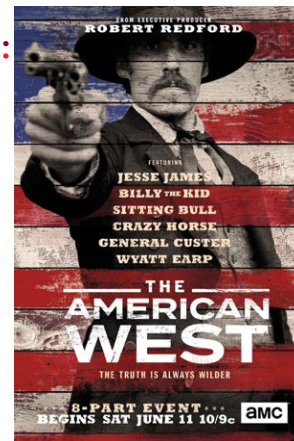
Mauricio Zacharias '91 and **Ira Sachs** will write the film adaptation to Tim Murphy's novel *Christodora* for a limited Paramount TV television series.

Robert Zemeckis '73 will executive produce a modern-day Noah's Ark drama, *The Ark*, which has been bought by NBC.

Jake Zhang '15 had his thesis film *Pokey Pokey* accepted into the Athens Animfest 2016 festival

Stu Zicherman '93 is writing and executive producing the pilot *Mating*, a half-hour anthology comedy project exploring modern dating.

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



10 Cloverfield Lane – Matthew Stuecken '01, Writer

13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi – Erik Aadahl '98, Supervising Sound Editor

Alice Through the Looking Glass – Jennifer Todd, Producer; Suzanne Todd, Producer

Autumn Lights – Guy Kent '10, Director

Bad Moms – Suzanne Todd, Producer

Barbershop: The Next Cut – Tracy Oliver '10, Writer

Batman v Superman – Chris Terrio '02, Writer; David Goyer '88, Writer; Charles Roven, Producer; Chuck Michael, Sound Designer

The Beatles: Eight Days a Week – Brian Grazer, Producer; Ron Howard, Producer, Director

Before I Wake – Michael Fimognari '01, Director of Photography

The Benefactor – Jason Michael Berman '06, Producer; Andrew Kortschak '13, Co-Producer

The Birth of a Nation – Jason Michael Berman '06, Producer; David Goyer '88, Executive Producer

The BFG – Justin Ostensen '04, Post Production Supervisor; Gary Rydstrom '81, Sound Designer/Re-Recording Mixer

Captain America: Civil War – Kevin Feige '95, Producer; Jeffrey Ford '94, Editor; Tom Johnson, Sound Re-Recording Mixing

Central Intelligence – Rawson Marshall Thurber '99, Writer/Director

Dance Camp – Nick Turner '10, Writer; Rex New '10, Writer

Dancer – Steven Cantor '95, Director

Dead 7 – Sawyer Perry '10, Writer

Denial – Gary Foster '83, Producer

Everybody Wants Some – Megan Ellison, Producer

Equity – Meera Menon '11, Director

Finding Dory – Victoria Strouse '97, Writer; Tim Nielsen '99, Sound Designer

The Finest Hours – James Whitaker '94, Producer

Get a Job – Stacey Sher '85, Producer; Jeff Betancourt, Editor

Ghostbusters – Paul Feig '84, Writer/Director; Robert Yeoman '79, Cinematographer

How to Be Single – Dana Fox '00, Writer/Producer; Nancy Juvonen, Producer; Abby Kohn '96, Writer; Marc Silverstein '96, Writer; Tia Nolan '91, Editor

Ice Age: Collision Course – Lori Forte, Producer

Independence Day: Resurgence – James Vanderbilt '99, Writer

Inferno – Ron Howard, Producer/Director; Brian Grazer, Producer

The Intervention – Sev Ohanian '12, Producer

Jack Reacher: Never Go Back – David Ellison, Executive Producer; Caleb Deschanel '69, Director of Photography

Kevin Hart: What Now? – Tim Story, Director

Little Men – Mauricio Zacharias '91, Writer

The Magnificent Seven – Todd Black '82, Producer

Masterminds – Hubbel Palmer '05, Writer

Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates – Lee Haxall '80, Editor

Miles Ahead – John Axelrad '90, Editor

Miracles from Heaven – Devon Franklin, Producer

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children – Ransom Riggs '05, Writer

Money Monster – Grant Heslov '86, Producer; Dan Dubiecki, Producer

The Nice Guys – John Ottman '88, Co-Composer

Now You See Me 2 – Jon Chu '03, Director; Peter Chiarelli '99, Writer

Out Run – S. Leo Chiang '00, Director/Producer

Papa – Xiao Zheng '13, Director; Sevak Ohanian '12, Producer; Andrew Jeric '13, Director of Photography

Pee Wee's Big Holiday – Judd Apatow, Producer

Pete's Dragon – Jim Whitaker '94, Producer

Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping – Judd Apatow, Producer

Ride Along 2 – Tim Story, Director

Risen – Kevin Reynolds '81, Writer/Director

Sausage Party – Megan Ellison, Producer

The Secret Life of Pets – Cinco Paul '93, Writer

Southside With You – Evan Schiff '04, Editor

Star Trek Beyond – Bryan Burk '91, Producer;

David Ellison, Executive Producer

Suicide Squad – Charles Roven, Producer

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows – Bob Ducsay '86, Editor

Triple 9 – Bard Dorros '99, Producer

Warcraft – Charles Roven, Producer

X-Men: Apocalypse – Bryan Singer '89, Writer/Producer/Director; John Ottman '88, Editor/Composer/Co-Producer; Chuck Michael '88, Sound Designer

The Young Messiah – Cyrus Nowrasteh '77, Writer/Director

Zoolander 2 – Greg Hayden, Editor

Zootopia – Addison Teague '02, Sound Designer

11.22.63 – Bryan Burk '91, Executive Producer; Athena Wickham '02, Producer

12 Monkeys – Charles Roven, Executive Producer

2 Broke Girls – Darryl Bates '80, Editor

Jessica Jones – Melissa Rosenberg '90, Writer/Executive/Producer; Kevin Feige '95, Executive Producer; Jenny Klein '07, Co-Producer

All the Way – Jay Roach '86, Director

American Crime Story: The People vs. OJ Simpson – Scott Alexander '85, Writer/Producer; Nelson Cragg '03, Cinematographer; Larry Karaszewski '85, Writer/Producer; John Singleton '90, Director

American Housewife – Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

The American West – John Ealer '99, Director

Animal Kingdom – John Wells '82, Executive Producer/Director

Baby Daddy – Paul Maibaum '75, Director of Photography

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

Billions – James Foley '79, Director; Young Il Kim '04, Writer

The Blacklist – Jon Bokenkamp '95, Writer/Executive Producer; Kelli Johnson '13, Showrunner's Assistant; Taylor Martin '13, Writer's PA

Bones – Taylor Martin '13, Writer

BrainDead – Liz Glotzer '85, Executive Producer

Breakthrough – Brian Grazer '74, Ron Howard, and Steve Michaels, Executive Producers

Brooklyn Nine Nine – Prentice Penny '95, Consulting Producer

Casual – Jason Reitman '99, Executive Producer/Director

The Catch – Shonda Rhimes '94, Executive Producer

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

Chicago Med – Darin Goldberg '91 and Shelly Meals '91, Writers/Co-Executive Producers

Confirmation – Rick Famuyiwa '96, Director

Containment – Nelson Cragg '03, Director of Photography; Michael Jones-Morales '05, Writer

Divorce – Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

Documentary Now – Alex Buono '95, Director

Drunk History – Jody McVeigh-Schultz '05, Editor

Elena of Avalor – Craig Gerber '92, Creator/Executive Producer

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

Fear the Walking Dead – David Erickson '98, Writer/Executive Producer

The Flash – Joe Peracchio '13, Staff Writer

Fresh Off the Boat – Nahnatchka Khan '94, Writer/Executive Producer

The Get Down – Aaron Rahsaan Thomas '02, Writer

Grace and Frankie – David Ellison, Executive Producer

Guilt – Todd Slavkin '87, Executive Producer

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

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

How to Get Away with Murder – Shonda Rhimes '94, Executive Producer

Ice Road Truckers – John Starr '91, Lead Editor

Insecure – Prentice Penny '95, Executive Producer

Into the Badlands – Al Gough '94, Writer/Executive Producer; Miles Millar '94, Writer/Executive

Producer; Stacy Sher '85, Executive Producer; Michael Jones-Morales '05, Writer

iZombie – Aiyana White '02, Writer

Lady Dynamite – Andrew Weil '06, Executive Producer

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

Love – Judd Apatow, Writer/Executive Producer

Lucifer – Nathan Hope '95, Producer/Director

MacGyver – Brandon Willer '10, Writer; Bret VandenBos '10, Story Editor

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

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

The Middle – Jaffar Mahmood '02, Director

Narcos – Doug Miro '97, Co-Creator/Writer

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

The Night Of – Robert Elswit '75, Director of Photography

The Night Shift – Gabe Sachs '84, Writer/Executive Producer

Once Upon a Time – Leah Fong '08, Story Editor

Outcast – Chris Black '81, Executive Producer

Pitch – Paul Maibaum '75, Cinematographer

Preacher – Ori Marmur, Executive Producer; Neal Moritz '85, Executive Producer

Quantico – Terilyn Shropshire '84, Editor

Quarry – Greg Yaitanes, Executive Producer/Director

Queen Sugar – Tina Mabry '05, Writer/Producer/Director

Recovery Road – Julia Cox '11, Writer; Patricia Resnick '75, Writer/Consulting Producer

Rectify – Kate Powers '07, Staff Writer

Rizzoli & Isles – Sasha Alexander '97, Actor

Roadies – Bryan Burk '91, Executive Producer

Roots – Mark Wolper '83, Executive Producer

Rosewood – Vahan Moosekian '75, Co-Executive Producer

Rush Hour – Ross La Manna '77, Writer; Jon Turteltaub, Director

Scandal – Shonda Rhimes '94, Writer/Executive Producer

Scorpion – Bobby Roth '72, Director

Scream Queens – Joaquin Sedillo '89, Director of Photography

Secrets and Lies – Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

Shades of Blue – Julian Meiojas '06, Writer; Jack Orman '93, Writer/Executive Producer

Shadowhunters: The Mortal Instruments – Angel Dean Lopez '91, Writer/Supervising Producer; Todd Slavkin '87, Executive Producer/Showrunner

Shameless – John Wells '82, Writer/Executive Producer

Shannara Chronicles – Al Gough '04, Writer/Executive Producer; Miles Millar '04, Writer/Executive Producer; Matthew Okumura '02, Co-Producer

Skylanders Academy – Stacey Sher '85, Producer

Sleepy Hollow – Heather Regnier '08, Writer

Speechless – Carrie Rosen '09, Staff Writer

Stitchers – Paul Maibaum '75, Director of Photography

Stranger Things – Shawn Levy '94, Director

Summer of 8 – Ryan Schwartz '00, Writer/Director

Supergirl – Caitlyn Parrish '12, Staff Writer; Ann Musky '14, Staff Writer; James DeWill '14, Staff Writer; Gabe Llanas '08, Co-Producer

Timeless – Eric Kripke '96, Writer/Executive Producer

Turn – Andrew Colville, Writer/Supervising Producer

The View from Tall – Caitlin Parrish '12, Writer/Director

Vikings – Sherry Marsh '83, Executive Producer

The Voice – Keith Dinielli '96, Supervising Producer

The Walking Dead – Scott Gimple '93, Writer/Executive Producer; Angela Kang '09, Writer/Executive Producer

Westworld – Bryan Burk '91, Executive Producer; Richard Lewis '87, Co-Executive Producer/Director; Athena Wickham '02, Producer

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

Z Nation – Jen Derwingson '00, Writer/Co-Producer

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

In Memoriam

This year the School of Cinematic Arts lost two inspiring faculty members who were as well known for their generosity as for their talent—alumnus and lecturer Ian Sander, and Production Division professor Kenneth Hall. Dean Elizabeth Daley said the loss would be felt throughout the SCA community. “Ian and Kenny both embodied the very best in everything they did as instructors, as professionals, and—above all—as people,” she said. “Both were such amazingly generous and warm spirits who inspired all those who knew them. I speak for many when saying that I feel truly lucky to have known them and will miss them greatly. This was truly a difficult year for our SCA family.”

We will remember them for their celebrated work, their inspiring mentorship and, most of all, for their friendship.



Kenneth Hall

Kenneth Hall, holder of the Ken Wannberg Endowed Chair in Music Editing at the USC School of Cinematic Arts, passed away August 25. Hall joined the SCA as the inaugural Wannberg Chair holder in 2005, overseeing and teaching many courses on sound. His best-known class, “Directing the Composer,” was so popular that alumni would return every year for the final session of the semester. This warm and welcoming spirit that brought so many students back to his classroom years after graduating was well known throughout the SCA community.

“Ken Hall was one of the most generous people I’ve ever known,” recalls Richard Hyland, SCA Sound Department Manager and a close friend of Hall. “He was more than willing to share his time, incredible talent, words of inspiration and positivity with the students, staff and faculty of Cinematic Arts. He was a joy to be around and is greatly missed.”

Production Division Chair and Professor Michael Fink echoed Hyland’s sentiments: “Kenny Hall was a friend, mentor, and illuminator of my life and the lives of so many, especially his students. His good will and humor were limitless, and in a time when such qualities are rare, his loss is even more keenly felt. We miss Kenny, and will do our best to continue to honor the light he shed on our lives.”

Prior to joining the SCA faculty, Hall worked with some of the most respected film composers in the industry, such as John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith, Alex North, Henry Mancini, and so many others. As a music editor, Hall contributed to hundreds of films and television shows—including many Oscar winners like *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial* and *L.A. Confidential*—and was nominated seven times for the Motion Picture Sound Editors (MPSE) Golden Reel Award.

Hall is preceded in death by his son, Timmy, and survived by his wife, Marie, as well as their three children—Terry, Darrell and Chris—and seven grandchildren.



Ian Sander

USC Alumnus and Professor Ian Sander, the veteran executive producer behind over 600 hours of primetime television, died in May at the age of 68. Sander co-headed Sander/Moses Production with his wife and producing partner, Kim Moses, with whom he also co-taught the popular “World of Television” course at SCA since 2006.

“Ian was a true role model and a tremendous mentor who cared deeply for his students,” says Professor Michael Fink. “He approached his role as an educator with the same heart and generosity that characterized his entire career, always welcoming current and former students alike with an open door. He will be greatly missed.”

A New York native, Sander executive produced and directed sixteen episodes of the Emmy-nominated series *Ghost Whisperer*, which ran for five seasons on CBS from 2000 to 2005 before airing in syndication on three U.S. networks and in 170 territories worldwide. He also executive produced and directed *Profiler* (NBC), *Reckless* (CBS), and *I’ll Fly Away* (ABC), for which the PGA named him as Producer of the Year.

Sander was also at the forefront of the new digital movement in entertainment. For the past ten years, Sander co-created and produced entertainment event programming under his SLAM digital media shingle, including all digital media IP for *Ghost Whisperer* as well as content for *Desperate Housewives* (ABC), *Ugly Betty* (ABC), and *Comic-Con*.

Sander is survived by his wife and their two sons, Aaron and Declan.

In Memoriam



Benjamin Brunkhardt

Graduate of the Production Division Benjamin Brunkhardt passed away in his hometown of Kansas City, Missouri on August 30th, 2016. A respected director and cinematographer at USC, Brunkhardt is remembered as a gifted and enthusiastic technician and tinkerer who experimented with transferring digital content to 35mm film as an undergraduate. He also became active in experimentation for large-format filmmaking.



Jack Larson

Playwright, actor, and philanthropist Jack Larson died on September 20th, 2015. Larson was the benefactor of the James Bridges Endowed Scholarship at SCA to benefit graduate students in the Film and Television Production Division, named in honor of his long time partner. Larson was a mentor to many students and alumni of the School and a valued advisor to School of Cinematic Arts family.

As an actor, Larson is best known as portraying Jimmy Olsen in *The Adventures of Superman*.



Ken Robinson

Professor Emeritus at Vassar College, editor, and alum of the School of Cinematic Arts Ken Robinson passed away on January 28th, 2016. Robinson is credited with being one of the primary visionaries at the Vassar College Film Department and shaping the Vassar’s film department into its modern form. As an editor he is best known for editing Prince’s *Purple Rain*. He is also remembered for his enthusiastic opinions on proper editing and his hands-on approach to teaching.



Howard Rieder

Cleo Award-winning advertising executive, documentarian, and alum of the School of Cinematic Arts Howard Rieder passed away on September 16th, 2016. Rieder worked as an executive at companies including Thomas Organ, Revell Toys, and Nissan Motor Company. Rieder used his gifts as a documentarian to help the Prescott Police Department by writing, producing and directing civic films for the city. His work with the Prescott P.D. won the Remi Award at the Houston International Film Festival.

James Eddy Hatch

Alum James Eddy Hatch died on October 9, 2015. Hatch was an accomplished playwright, photographer and documentary filmmaker, and taught at Indiana State University for 38 years. He was known for creative work that was funny and insightful in its commentary on everyday life. Hatch’s photograph Sterling Vineyard is included in the permanent collection of Indiana’s Swope Art Museum. His documentary work includes the award-winning films *Tor House: Lines from Robinson Jeffers* and *Jack London: The Sailor on Horseback*. He was also known for his fanatic support of both USC Cinema and USC Football.



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