

InMOTION FALL2017

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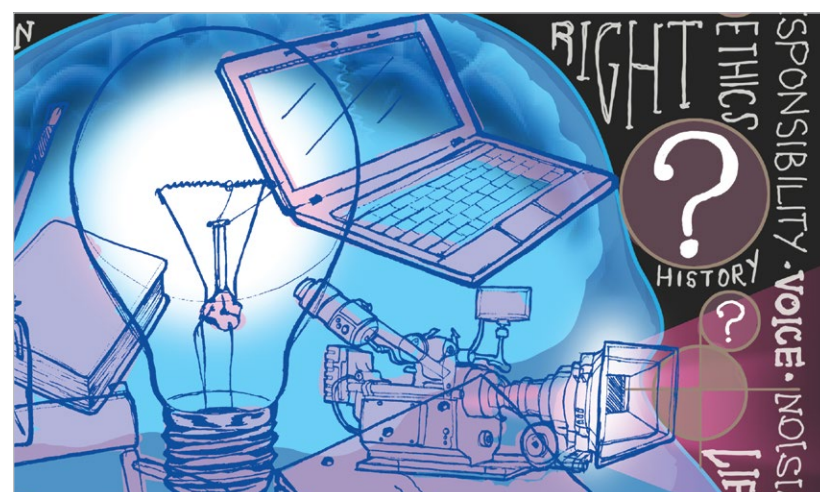
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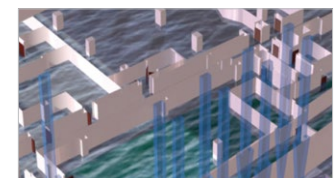
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Dean Elizabeth Daley with SCA scholarship students

MESSAGE from the DEAN

Our School of Cinematic Arts family is truly global. The students in our last graduating class hailed from 30 countries, and you can find SCA alumni in just about every media community on the planet. Many of you are reading this in a country other than the United States—whether you're on location for a project, or one of the many Trojans who live and work overseas.

Which is why I'm so proud that one of this year's milestone achievements is a gift from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) that funds the School's first scholarships specifically earmarked for international students. Every year, we recruit talented students from outside the U.S. who have to decline enrollment for financial reasons, especially since they are ineligible for the aid packages available to American citizens. Coupled with another gift this year from Melody Hobson and George Lucas to provide financial aid to underrepresented students, the HFPA scholarship is helping the School achieve its goal of a more diverse student body.

You'll find many other milestones in this issue of *In Motion*. At 88 years old, SCA is still a young institution, and still achieving exciting firsts. This year the School celebrated its first USC valedictorian, Cooper Nelson, who has now launched a career in children's animation. Media Arts + Practice Ph.D. candidate Arousiak Gabrielian, whose work focuses on the intersection

of cinema, architecture, and landscapes, has won the prestigious Rome Prize, given by the American Academy in Rome for innovative cross-disciplinary work. We also established three new endowed chairs this year, totaling 30, a record for any cinema school. One of those chairs is in Cinematic Ethics, the subject of our cover story and a discipline that asks students to consider thorny questions before they are blindsided by them in professional settings.

It's also a bounty year for anniversaries. We celebrate twenty years of our Trojan Vision television station while saying goodbye to the retiring Don Tillman, who created its award-winning programming and mentored the hundreds of USC students who have worked there over the years. The Cinema & Media Studies journal, *Spectator*, turns thirty-five and has published a book comprising some of its best publications through the years. We also take a look back at the many milestones of the Interactive Media & Games Division over the last fifteen years.

As the holiday season approaches and you begin reflecting on your own milestones of the year, I hope you will take some time to connect with us in Los Angeles to let us know what you've been up to. Regardless of how far away you might be, you can instantly connect with us @USCCinema on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, or by email at communications@cinema.usc.edu.

We wish you a happy holiday season and New Year!

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

[YEAR *in* REVIEW]



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DEMO DAY & WINTERACTIVE

1-4 Students and guests enjoy game play at USC Games' Demo Day and Winteractive

YOUNG HOLLYWOOD ALUMNI

5 Alumni Thambi Banks, Madison Ainley, Michael Lewen, Allison Tate-Cortese, Robin Williams Endowed Chair in Comedy Barnet Kellman, Kerry Furrh, Angela Beevers, and Jack Henry Robbins at the young alumni event hosted by Kellman and USC Comedy

JOSEPH CAMPBELL CHAIR

6 The Joseph Campbell Endowed Chair in Cinematic Ethics Ted Braun at the installation event

7 Braun with alum Randal Kleiser

8 Braun, USC School of Cinematic Arts Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, alum Bill Mechanic and Provost Michael Quick

9 Braun, Terri Marlow, alum Andrew Marlowe, and alum Timothy Dowling

10 Braun with his family, wife Lori Froeling, son Lucas and mother Joan Braun



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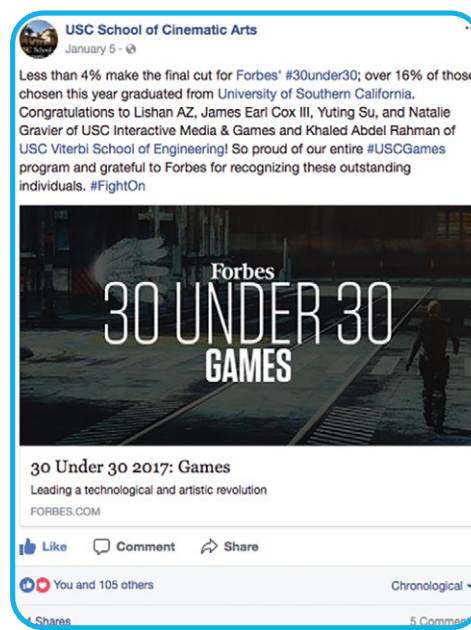
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11 Astronaut Terry Virt's visits IML 475, Art & Practice of Giant Screen Filmmaking at the Michelle & Kevin Douglas IMAX Theatre and Immersive Lab

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12-14 Robin Williams Endowed Chair in Comedy Barnet Kellman and alum Jason Reitman at the Masterclass in Directing Comedy with Jason Reitman hosted by USC Comedy

HOLLYWOOD SHUFFLE

15 Professor Robert Townsend at a screening and Q&A of his 1987 hit comedy *Hollywood Shuffle*

16 Students and faculty watching *Hollywood Shuffle*

17 Filmmaker and actor Keenan Ivory Wayans

JOHN WELLS DIVISION

18 Alum John Wells and actor William H. Macy at the dedication of the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television

19 Linda Segal with alum Peter Segal and Dean Elizabeth M. Daley

20 Wells, Writing Division Chair Jack Epps, Jr, Provost Michael Quick, and actor Bradley Whitford

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YEAR *in* REVIEW

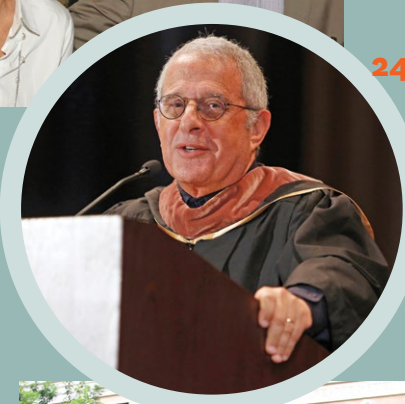
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SCA COMMENCEMENT 2017

21 President Bill Clinton, Secretary Hillary Clinton, Katherine Price and Chairman of the Board of Councilors of the USC School of Cinematic Arts Frank Price at the 2017 USC School of Cinematic Arts Commencement

22 Actress Helen Mirren, Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, and director and alum Taylor Hackford

23 Suzanne Todd and Jennifer Todd, the recipients of the 2017 Mary Pickford Alumni Award

24 President of NBC Universal Ron Meyer delivering the 2017 USC School of Cinematic Arts Commencement Address

ALL OTHER PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE Families and graduates celebrate SCA Commencement 2017



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49 likes MAY 12

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LeSean Thomas @LeSeanThomas Following

Incredible energy & vibes with these lovely @USCCinema animation students today. Thanks for listening and sharing! #USC #IllBeBack



9:55 PM - 3 Oct 2016 from USC School of Cinematic Arts (SCA)

13 Retweets 105 Likes

ROBIN WILLIAMS CHAIR

25 Michael Kellman, Nancy Mette, Kate Kellman, and Robin Williams Chair in Comedy Professor Barnet Kellman at the dedication of the Robin Williams Chair in Comedy

26 Zak Williams, Zelda Williams and Kellman

27 Kellman with alum Peter Segal, actress Lisa Kudrow, and Professor Robert Townsend

28 Kellman and SCA Board of Councilors member Jeffrey Katzenberg

SHRIRAM FELLOWS

29 Front center: Ram Shriram with this year's Shriram Fellows

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP MA+P

30 The Division of Media Arts + Practice hosted a two week program, Media Meets Message II, on transmedia for social change with participants from Jordan, Malaysia and Pakistan

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uscinema

uscinema SCA alumni Alicja Jasina, DADA MFA '16, was among those who handed out #Oscar statuettes to @theacademy award winners. She won a Student Academy Award herself for the animated short "Once Upon a Line" #Fighton sparkus.io thumbs up!

225 likes MARCH 1

Add a comment



[YEAR *in* REVIEW]

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MARK HAMILL

31 & 32 Actor Mark Hamill visits Dr. Drew Caspers' *The Star Wars Phenomenon* class.

T.C. WANG

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34 Actor James Hong at the dedication of the T.C. Wang Family Endowed Chair in Cinematic Arts

35 Professor Lippit the inaugural holder of the T.C. Wang Family Endowed Chair in front of the dedication plaque

36 Fred Wang and Dean Elizabeth M. Daley present Professor and Vice Dean Lippit with his new chair

37 Fred Wang, son of T.C. Wang with commemorative crystal plaque

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38 & 39 SCA graduate student O'Shea Myles, Professor Mike Fink, and Part-Time Lecturer and alum John Singleton at the SCA Diversity event *Our Voices: An Evening with John Singleton*. Attendees below



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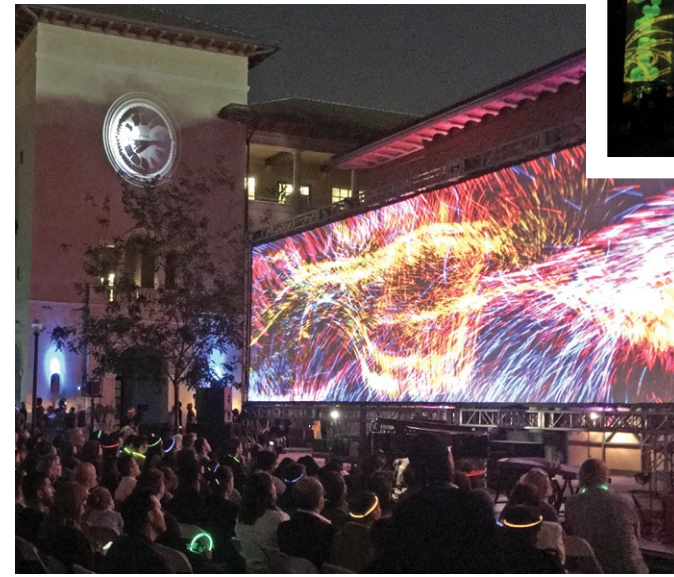
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40-42 Yimin Zhang's projection mapping project, Carmina Sadelli's weather balloon, live music with visuals by Refik Anadol and piano by Gloria Cheng, and an animated clock projection by Julia Kantor at Rhythms + Visions/Expanded + Live 3 produced by Professors Michael Patterson and Candace Reckinger

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44 Adam Pliska '95, President/CEO, World Poker Tour

45 From left: Moira Griffin, Fox Inclusion, Executive Director; Natalie Moran, CAA Multicultural Business Development, Coordinator; Matt Nocita, Becket Film Fund, LCC, CFO

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46 Students from SCA and the School of Dramatic Arts filming the fifth season of *USC Comedy Live!*

47 Alum Jay Roach visits an episode of *USC Comedy Live!*

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ALUMNI *Spotlight* HIKARI

By Naomi Iwamoto



“Is there a theme you feel like you keep going back to in your work?”

This was one of my first questions to SCA alumna, artist, and director, Hikari Mitsuyo Miyazaki, who is also known as HIKARI.

She paused for a second, then gave a big toothy smile: “I like to focus on family.”

Family has been the center of HIKARI's work, both on and off the screen. The theme is ever present, especially in the celebrated student film she made as her master's thesis in Film & Television Production. Titled *Tsuyako*, it was inspired by her grandmother and took place in Post-War Japan. The title character is a mother who lives a demanding life as a mill factory worker and must choose between her duties to her family and following her heart when an old lover, a woman, makes a surprise visit to her home. Beautifully shot in her hometown of Osaka, Japan, it went on to win awards at multiple festivals. The film is a unique story about two women falling in love in a country where lesbian stories are rarely told. And it is undeniably a love letter to her grandmother who made her own sacrifices to raise her family.

Another of her films, *A Better Tomorrow*, follows two orphans who are magically transported on a voyage by their deceased father's car. *A Better Tomorrow* had its world premiere at the Festival de

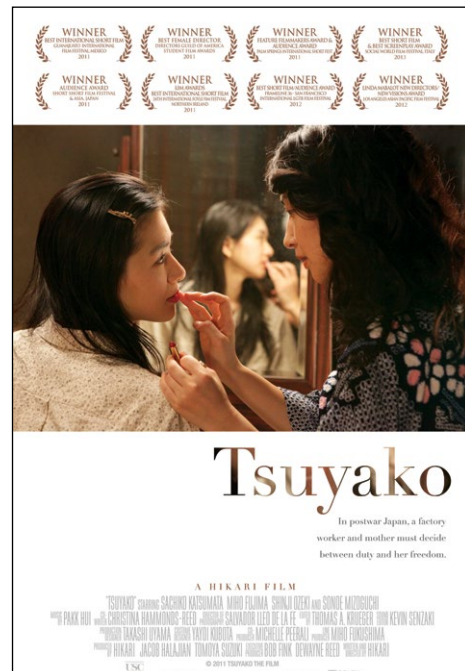
Cannes the same year HIKARI's 2011 classmate, writer/director Ryan Coogler made a splash at the festival with his feature debut, *Fruitvale Station*. She smiles fondly at the memory, especially because it inspired a special family-bonding experience. “When we premiered at Cannes, I bought tickets for my mom and sister. I took my mom on a road trip through France for three weeks afterwards. I spent like three grand in a whole month! And I was like ‘oh my gosh!’ But I had to do it. She has always been my cheerleader.”

HIKARI and her sister were raised by their single mother and their grandparents. “My parents divorced when I was a baby. I have a strong relationship with my mom's side but not much of a relationship with my father's side.” As a young girl HIKARI acted, sang, painted, and directed every chance she had in school plays but dreamed of leaving her hometown, although it didn't seem in the cards. “Growing up as a kid I never felt like I fit in in Japan. I'm from this area where there are a lot of factories in South Osaka.

Going abroad or out of that area was considered weird. I didn't think it was possible.” Despite the odds, her innate desire to experience something outside of Japan pushed her to study as a high school exchange student in Utah during her senior year. She later continued her undergraduate studies at Southern Utah University and graduated with a degree in Theater.



She moved to Los Angeles and worked as an actress, even unearthing a passion for photography and picking up a side gig shooting headshots and photographing artists for a small hip hop magazine. But after almost a decade in acting she felt the need to make a change.



HIKARI, MFA Film & Television Production '11

She had an epiphany after her mother reminded her of her enthusiasm for directing her 7th grade school program. “I went home that night and looked up ‘best film school in the country’ and USC was the first search result on Google. And it was 10 minutes away! So I applied.” At SCA, she focused on cinematography and directing.

Since graduating in 2011, HIKARI has worked as a director on Subaru commercials and has managed to fund a string of short films that demonstrate the depth of her talent. In 2013, she was in the first class of the Lexus Short Films series—a program that supports emerging directors as they direct a short film produced by The Weinstein Company and Lexus. “I got to learn how the studio works and how the client works,” she says of the experience. “I one day want to direct studio films, so it was a great experience for me.” *A Better Tomorrow* was funded by Lexus Short Films, and her third short film, *Can & Sulochan*, was funded by the Japanese company AVEEX through the Short Shorts Film Festival Asia. Her film *Where We Begin* tells an end-of-life story through dance and was funded through a private investor, Kickstarter, personal savings, and a grant she won from the HollyShorts Film Festival for *Tsuyako*. It premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival.

The acclaim she has received for her shorts provided the encouragement she needed to develop her first feature script, and HIKARI, who is currently a Film Independent Fellow, has spent the last few years trying to make that happen. “I love short films, but long format has been my goal. After graduation the one thing I wish I had was a feature script ready to move forward because there was a lot of momentum when *Tsuyako* was doing well.”

Her script, *Cantering*, follows a paraplegic female adult comic book artist who is forced to discover a new job and romance in Tokyo. Trying to get the film off the ground has been HIKARI's full-time job. Last year she participated in the NHK Sundance Screenwriting Lab, an annual workshop that invites Sundance

writing instructors to Tokyo to work with filmmakers. Most recently she went through Film Independent's Screenwriting Lab and Directing Lab. This year she participated in their annual Fast Track program, where she pitched her feature during the LA Film Festival. And now, after three years of development, she's ready to get back on set to direct again.

“It's been a long process,” she explained, detailing upcoming steps like attending IFP week in NYC, “where creators and companies come together to basically speed date. It's where projects go to find funding.” She has also been meeting with private investors, both in the U.S. and Japan.

“We are close,” she says.

And what role does family play in this intensely busy and stressful effort to succeed at feature filmmaking? Even the absent part of her family, she says, serves as a driver to get back to set. “Not really having a bond with my dad's side probably made me want to create that familial bond in my movies,” says HIKARI. “I like writing but I enjoy being on set more than anything. My creativity comes when I'm on the spot on set.”

However, her mother and sister provide the daily push she needs to keep working. They have stepped up as HIKARI's support system. “My mom told me ‘I'll do anything to support you.’ Whenever there is a moment when I was financially struggling, my mom and sister would help me with my rent for a month. I still worry, but that support has helped me have faith that the money will come.”

“I am so grateful to have them as my family. I owe them so much. That's part of the reason I really want to have success, because I want to take care of them because they took care of me pretty much all of my life.” HIKARI pauses for a second, pensive, before that big smile crosses her face once again: “So I gotta just keep making s#*t and keep hustling.”

Hollywood Foreign Press Association Funds \$2 Million Scholarship



Hollywood Foreign Press Association Scholars, Mineou Han (L) and Amy Sotnick (R)

By Hugh Hart

Last summer in Oxfordshire outside of London, 18-year-old Amy Sotnick was hanging out by the river with a few friends enjoying the warm evening air when she got an email on her phone. She recalls, "It was from USC and I'd already been accepted, so I wondered 'What's this?' Then I read that I'd won a scholarship from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. It was a massive surprise!"

Sotnick began her BA in Cinema & Media Studies at the USC School of Cinematic Arts this fall as one of the first beneficiaries of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association Endowed International Student Support Fund. The \$2 million gift represents SCA's largest endowment earmarked specifically for foreign students. HFPA International Scholars, which this year also include South Korean Mineou Han, each receive a \$20,000 deduction from tuition fees. Sotnick says, "This scholarship means the world to me because I can focus a lot more on doing what I'm interested in rather than having to get a job, for example, to help pay for college. Now I can get completely invested in my studies."

HFPA has previously used revenue from its annual Golden Globes telecast to fund SCA scholarships, but the idea for a more

robust endowment came about two years ago when the Association's then-president Lorenzo Soria met with Dean Elizabeth M. Daley to discuss possible partnerships. Soria says, "There had been some debate about giving money to a school that already gets big donations from famous filmmakers. But then Dean Daley told me about a young woman from West Africa who was accepted into the School, but because foreign students can't get Pell Grants, the School just couldn't make up the difference in financial aid. This saddened Dean Daley, and since we are an association of foreigners ourselves, that story resonated for us."

Current HFPA President Meher Tatna cites the newly created "International Scholars" program as a key component of her group's mission. "We're very interested in supporting

talented people who are underrepresented in the film and television industries," she says. Tatna, a Mumbai native, vividly remembers when she first arrived in the United States to attend Brandeis University equipped with one suitcase and \$500. "A lot of us in the Hollywood Foreign Press Association remember what it was like to be international students struggling to come up with tuition," she says. "The idea for this scholarship really hit home."

At USC, where nearly 70 percent of students receive some form of financial assistance, HFPA's scholarship fund aims to support foreign applicants who are ineligible for U.S. government loans and grants. "The film school is making a significant effort to bring in more international students," says Marlene Loadvine, Senior Associate Dean, Advancement at USC School of Cinematic Arts. "This scholarship support flies in the face of everything going on in the world right now, where people are turning inward and building fences. HFPA is making an important statement by planting its flag here and saying 'Let's make a difference.' We hope others follow HFPA's example."

Ellen Seiter is Cinema & Media Studies' Teacher of the Year



By Sabrina Malekzadah and Simran Bhari



One of the first things students do before registering for classes is look up a professor's name online to find information about their teaching style. A professor who can communicate information effectively while also being nice to students will generally have a good online rating. Usually these determinations come from other students and can be hit or miss. But Ellen Seiter, who teaches in the Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies, has official recognition that, when it comes to communicating information about the field in a way that engages and connects young people to the material, she is one of the best.

Seiter, who has been teaching at SCA since 2003, was recently awarded the 2016-2017 Pedagogy Award from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies.

The award is given to outstanding professors who are exemplary in three categories: instruction, publication and development of educational materials, and service or value in the cinema and media studies pedagogy. Professor Seiter was awarded for her efficient efforts in engaging student interest every day, authoring informational textbooks that are used in media studies classrooms, and leading a curriculum in cinema and media within and beyond the classroom.

Professor Seiter holds the Stephen K. Nenno Endowed Chair in Television Studies at SCA. Her expertise is wide ranging in the field, from the interconnections between

younger audiences and their relationship with television, to issues of gender, race, and class biases in television, to the vibrant world of anime. Seiter is also an expert in media copyright law and how it is applied to a variety of topics. Within SCA, she teaches courses on television and new media history, theory, and criticism. Importantly, she teaches *CTCS 191: Introduction to Television*, which dives into an exploration of technological, economic, aesthetic, and ideological characteristics of the medium and is required for all Cinema & Media Studies undergraduates. The course, which discusses the historical evolution of television and video, is usually the first time students look at television programs with a more critical eye. "I love teaching 191 and watching as students who enter the class completely focused on film become really enthusiastic about the amazing developments in long-form television over the last decade," says Seiter. In her upper division course (*CTCS 403 American Television History*) Seiter focuses on how new platforms such as streaming are "changing the industry and changing how we watch TV." Professor Seiter has also taught undergraduate courses on teen films, anime, and crime; and graduate theory courses on scholars such as Bourdieu, Barthes, Žižek, and Brecht.

Consideration for the Pedagogy Award covered the entirety of Seiter's career from teaching at the University of California San

Diego, Indiana University, and the University of Oregon, to the work she has done in K-12 education regarding new media and media production. "It's a very competitive honor and I am just enormously moved by this recognition of my work," she says.

Besides teaching, Professor Seiter is also the author of several books including *The Internet Playground: Children's Entertainment, Access and Mis-Education*; *Remote Control: Television, Audiences, and Cultural Power*; and *Television and New Media Audiences*.

Seiter comes from a long line of teachers—many of them women—and feels she is honoring them today by expanding her knowledge in the educational realm. She says one of the most beneficial things about teaching is imparting useful information to maturing young people, but also the open collaboration she develops with her students. "The most vital part of teaching is the process of establishing the relationship as one of mutual learning. Guiding students to the choice of a research topic, watching students discover their own capacity for reflection, as well as their strengths and weaknesses—are adventures I truly enjoy. The best mentoring happens when both of us are honest and open enough to shed unworkable projects, theses, or expectations and freely exchange ideas so that we can work flexibly to produce the best work possible."



Seiter teaching graduate students in CTCS 587: Seminar in Television Theory

John Wells

Names the Writing Division

THE PROLIFIC WRITER/PRODUCER WILL SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE.

By Keryl Brown Ahmed

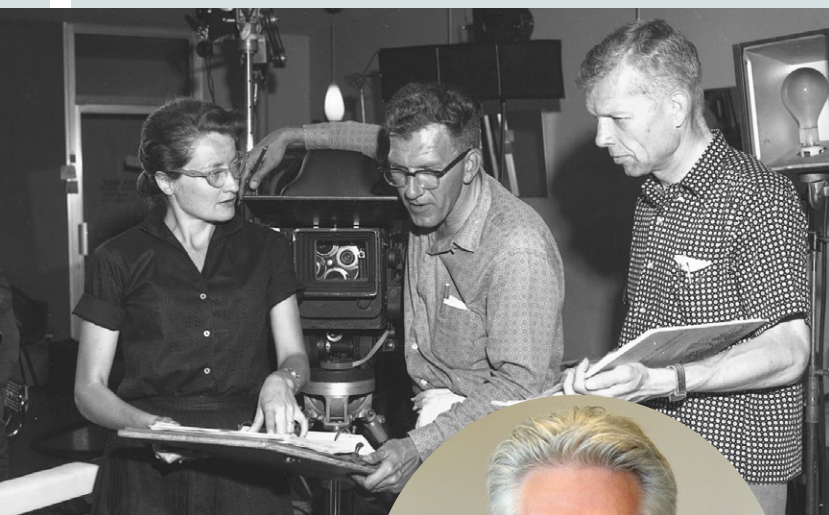


The TV boom that began more than a decade ago and shows no sign of slowing down—currently referred to as the “Platinum Age” of television—has influenced the evolution of the Screenwriting program at the School of Cinematic Arts. This spring, one of the architects of television's rise made a major gift to the program which is now known as the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television.

Wells, who has twice served as President of the Writers Guild of America, West, graduated in 1982 from the Peter Stark Producing Program at the USC School of Cinematic Arts. It was there he fell in love with screenwriting. He says he didn't make any money from the craft until age 30, eventually landing a producing job on the critically acclaimed *China Beach* where he got to show off his multi-faceted prowess. From then on it has been quite a career. Wells is responsible for television hits such as *ER*, *The West Wing*, and *Shameless*.

Having served as a producer, writer, director, and showrunner at various points in his career, Wells suggests the industry requires more business savvy of its writers now than ever before. “Writers coming out of the program need to be far more sophisticated these days about the business as a whole, and have a broader skill base,” he says, and that's exactly the challenge the Division is trying to address. Founded in 1982 by legendary screenwriting professor Margaret Mehring, the Division was originally named the Filmic Writing Bachelor of Fine Arts Program. Six years later Professor David Howard was asked to oversee a Master of Fine Arts Writing Program. In 1995 the two programs

TOP: (left to right) Margaret Mehring, founder of the Writing Division with Dave Johnson, and Dwight Bolinger; CENTER: David Howard; BOTTOM: John Furia



Jack Epps Jr., Chair of the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television with Wells



Trojan Vision live-television course). In the writing section, students generate a large number of sketches under the advisement of Professor John Bowman (*Saturday Night Live*, *In Living Color*), but only about one-tenth of that work makes the show. “There’s a lot of practice, even if it can’t all make it to air,” says Epps. The show, which is entirely student-run and taped in front of a live studio audience, airs on the Trojan Vision broadcast station and streams online. Comedy’s rise in the curriculum has led to the establishment of a very successful Minor in Comedy. “It’s a cross-divisional minor with requirements from Production and Cinema & Media Studies as well,” says Assistant Director Kristen Wiley Davis, also noting the popularity of

were combined into a formal SCA division—the Division of Writing for Screen & Television—led by veteran screenwriter and professor John Furia. In the last ten years the Division has undergone radical changes, led by current Chair Jack Epps Jr. (*Top Gun*, *The Secrets of My Success*) who has worked with faculty members like Pamela Douglas, Ted Braun, David Isaacs, and others to overhaul the curriculum and make needed changes, like an emphasis on television writing. The Division is currently home to 16 full-time faculty and around 60 part-time lecturers. The degree curriculum has been updated to include dramatic and comedic television course requirements, as well as offerings in new media such as video game narrative and virtual reality. “We really listen to the students, what they want,” says Epps. He views this as a point of pride, along with the one thing that doesn’t change: “We remain a character-based program. Great characters have great stories to tell.”

Of course, there are still classes focused on writing the feature screenplay. The Division’s multiple feature writing classes include *CTWR 435 Writing the Contained Feature*, a response to the evolution of a marketplace in which limited-location, low-budget indies are valuable commodities. But the curriculum is also a reflection of other areas that excite viewers these days, which brings us back to television. There are advanced courses in dramatic series and half-hour comedy including the *CTWR 419 Senior Thesis in Dramedy Television* class, taught by Mort Nathan (*The Fanelli Boys*; *The Golden Girls*) to undergraduates. And a bounty of comedy offerings, including half-hour comedy writing and the four courses that convene to produce three hour-long *USC Comedy Live!*, SNL-style sketch shows every spring semester: *CTWR 477 Staff writing the Sketch Comedy Show*; *CTPR 464 Directing the Television Sketch Comedy Show*; *THTHR 473 Sketch Comedy in Performance* (offered through the USC School of Dramatic Arts); and *CTPR 409 Practicum in Television Production* (the

its bedrock class *CTWR 404: Foundations of Comedy*, which is taught by Professor David Isaacs, a veteran of shows like *M*A*S*H*, *Cheers*, *Frasier*, and *Mad Men*. Isaacs has created the large lecture course as an expansive mix of comedy styles, elements, and theory, featuring screenings and speakers such as Ray Romano, Dave Chappelle and Emily V. Gordon.

The Wells Writing Division has also hired new faculty, in the past year adding Sonja Warfield (*Will & Grace*; *Liv and Maddie*) to teach comedy writing, and Barbara Nance (*In Plain Sight*/*USA*; *The Lizzie Borden Chronicles*/*Lifetime*) for dramatic TV scripts. Nance also teaches another of the Division’s popular classes, called *The TV Writer: An Agent of Change*. The 150-person lecture class explores the many ways TV writers influence social issues, push boundaries, and affect culture. Nance typically screens one or two episodes of a TV show followed by a Q&A with the show’s creator and writers/producers. “The course embodies the excitement surrounding TV right now,” says Davis, noting that most of its students have majors outside the Cinematic Arts.

Epps and the rest of the full-time faculty continually examine and update the program’s curriculum yearly to decide what to cut and add according to the industry’s ever-changing trajectory. In addition to writing technique, they consider important factors like teaching students how to collaborate across the other divisions—especially in emerging areas such as game design and themed experiences, where the working process might still be experimental. Epps also gets feedback from Davis, who is a 2006 graduate of the program and serves as a conduit to students and alumni who readily give her feedback about everything SCA. “We’ve been fortunate to have Kristen for the last ten years,” says Epps. “She plays an important role in all aspects of the Division including curriculum development.” There is also a conscientious effort

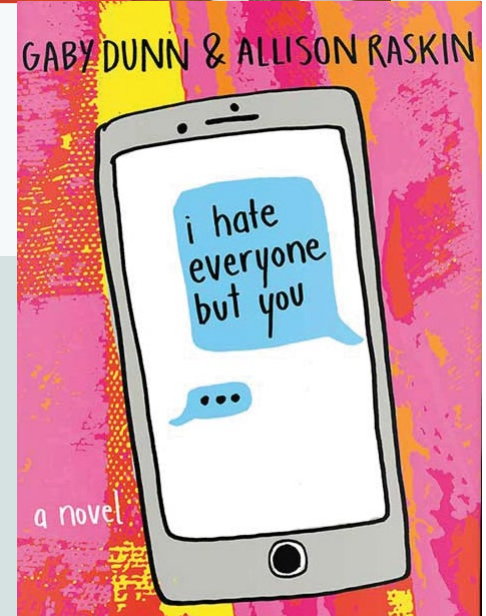
to heed feedback from graduating students, gleaned through exit interviews. These meetings are part of the Wells Writing Division exit program, which also includes an entry fee to the Austin Film Festival or Nicholls Fellowship screenwriting contest, paid for by the SCA Office of Industry Relations; First Pitch, a night-long event in which graduating students pitch their projects to 8-10 producers, managers, and agents; and Script List, an annual compilation of every graduate's loglines and contact information, that is published and distributed to agents, managers, and producers. "Our goal is to give our students the most momentum possible," Davis says of the exit programs. "We want to put them on a course to succeed by staying ahead of the curve." The many changes to the Writing program have served to enhance the experience of current students—like senior Evan Dodson, who in 2016 became the youngest writer ever to make the prestigious Blacklist (see below)—and bolster the career success of its alumni. In order to stay ahead of the curve and embrace innovations such as virtual reality and augmented reality, the Division is constantly steering its students towards new opportunities. Alumni who are working in emerging media platforms include Allison Raskin '11, (co-founder of YouTube comedy channel *Just Between Us*), Shauna Witherspoon '12, (writer at Wevr VR Lab), and Leah Folta & Lia Woodward '12, (creators of 2017 web series *DOIN' IT*).

Gracing the Division with the name of a top SCA alum has created an effervescent buzz on the third floor of SCA, which is home to most writing

Art Murphy, who created the Peter Stark Producing Program, helped and inspired Wells



Above: Kristen Wiley Davis with students in the Andrew Marlowe Script Library. Right: Screenwriting grads create non-traditional media in addition to screenplays, like Allison Raskin (below left) and Shauna Witherspoon



WRITING Life

SCA Senior **Evan Dodson** is an example of how the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television helps students find their voices—inside and outside the craft.

A BFA candidate, Dodson used to only write feature film scripts. He was drawn to the open-and-shut narrative style, enjoyed the challenge of evoking emotions in a short span of time. He's good at it, too—in 2016, Dodson became the youngest writer to earn a spot on the coveted Blacklist, an annual publication of the Industry's favorite

unproduced screenplays. The Blacklisted script, *Two Butterflies*, is about two estranged sisters forced to reunite and confront their differences after one of them must be transported to an Alzheimer's facility.

Since coming to USC, however, Dodson has expanded his expertise to writing for television. "With TV I feel freer to express creativity. With long-form storytelling, that breadth of emotion, character, and story is developed on a deeper level that film cannot do," he says. "Both are challenging in their own ways and solving their very specific problems is exciting and frightening at the same time."

With his writing Dodson chooses to focus on underrepresented communities, be those racial minorities, sexual minorities, or other groups. "I pull from my own true stories as well as the stories of those around me. I find that if I or someone else can speak to a situation, feeling, or experience from their personal lens, it helps me create a story around that. I often find it more grounded if it comes from a place of experience or truth that I can access easily," says Dodson, "I find that I am inspired by my friends and family the most. You can always find a character in my work based off of them."

Dodson did not always want to be a writer. During his teen years, he studied the visual arts such as painting and drawing. "Unfortunately, because it was taught to me in a very strict and rigid way, I fell out of love with the craft. I found new solace in writing around 18 years old. I think because I let myself fall into it naturally and not by force, I found my passion in it." This year, Dodson will tackle a thesis in comedic TV, overseen by Professor David Isaacs. He's also developing a feature that revolves around the deportation crisis faced by so many young people and families in America right now. "My favorite non-film class at USC was *Immigrant America*," Dodson says. "It's taught by Professor Jody Agius Vallejo. She's probably one of the smartest, most badass women I've ever met. She taught that class with a no-nonsense attitude and with no tolerance for racism, xenophobia, or ignorance. I loved the subject matter and most importantly the truth of the subject matter."

When he's not writing, Dodson can be found on the basketball court. Though he played for 11 years in his youth, he gets to the gym less and less these days. "When I do, it's always such a release." When asked what else he loves outside of film, he says, "I like to pretend that I can sing. If you catch me alone, 9 times out of 10, it's me pretending I'm *Lemonade* Beyonce performing at Madison Square Garden. I'm not too good, but in those moments, you couldn't tell me otherwise."

classes and staff offices. There's no doubt Wells' gift will help the program continue to evolve with the ever-changing industry; however, its greatest impact is surely the inspiration the Wells name carries. With a relaxed tone that reveals his modest and down-to-earth nature, Wells asserts, "I would hope that students and applicants look at my name on the Division and think, 'It's possible for me, too.'" MFA candidate Zaiver Sinnett affirms they will. "Having a name like John Wells at the head of the program means only great things. It is nice to let the industry know that you have been educated in a place that values its students," says Sinnett.

With absolutely no industry connections to take advantage of, Wells navigated his way to the top of his field with a strong work ethic and education as his base. His early professional experiences taught him that "you have to discipline yourself when there's nobody there telling you to do it." When asked which of his projects he's learned the most from, Wells says, "It's the failures. The ones that completely fall apart, that you can't make work, that make people question your sanity and talent. By the way, I'm still failing with some regularity."

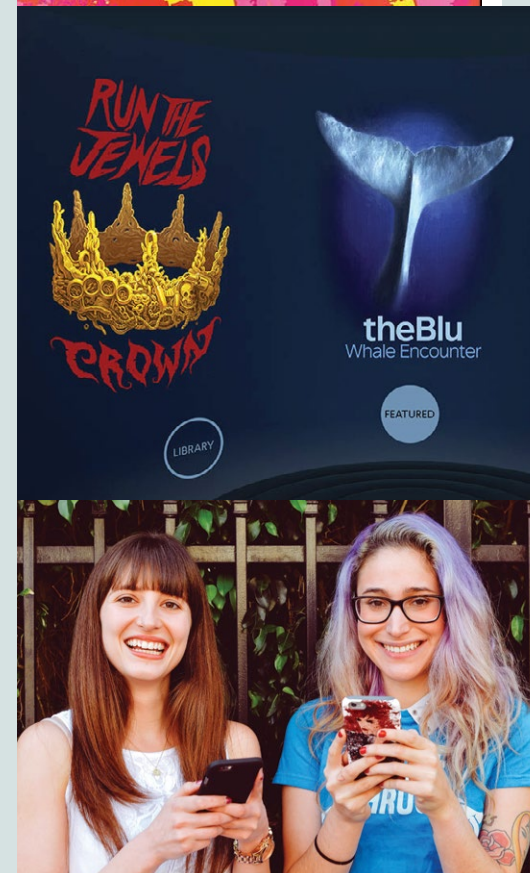
He is well aware of the impact gifts like his have on academic divisions' fortunes, and what that means for its students. He recalls that a year into Stark, his future within the program looked bleak. "I couldn't come up with the funds to continue at Stark," says Wells. "Art Murphy, the Director of the program at the time, sat me down the first week of classes and asked point-blank if I could pay my tuition. I said no. And he said, 'Okay, we'll get you the money.'" Wells asked how he could repay the generous donation, which came from an SCA alumnus. "Art said 'we at

SCA take care of our own,' and he hoped one day I could do the same for someone else."

Murphy's commitment to education and student support played a large part in setting Wells on the path to success, Wells says; these days, he's more than happy to serve as a mentor himself. "I've been looking for the right moment to do something to repay that largesse that allowed me to have a career at all."

The son of a schoolteacher, Wells' interest in the arts began with set designs for theatre productions at his high school in Arapahoe County, Colorado, and continued at Carnegie Mellon University, his first alma mater. He says he has always had tremendous respect for educators, especially those who prod the next generation towards greatness. Reflecting on his time at SCA, Wells says what he remembers most are people like Murphy, "who was brutal to me and then very kind. During the *West Wing* years, he would call me up to argue politics and storylines. It was great." With fondness in his voice, he continues, "I went to his funeral, and to be honest, I wasn't sure what the turnout would be like because he was such a curmudgeon. But there were 500 people there. When I think of SCA, that's what I remember."

Epps and his faculty try to fill that role for current MFA, BFA, and Writing Minor students, never taking a finger off the pulse of the Division. They're determined to make students feel heard and to ensure they understand their importance in shaping the various programs. "Our students write original, authentic work. We want them all to develop their voice," says Epps. The new namesake of the Wells Writing Division certainly serves as a shining example.





FRONT, left to right: Bonnie Chi, Larry Auerbach, Ali Sarafoglou. BACK, Left to right: Sandrine Cassidy, Lisa Pollack Fox, Torrie Rosenzweig, Eileen Chiao

By Ryan Dee Gilmour

The End of an Era: LARRY AUERBACH Retires

HEAD OF INDUSTRY RELATIONS CELEBRATED FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AT SCA

The USC School of Cinematic Arts is known for its deep and long-standing connections with the entertainment industry. While students today take the connections that land them first jobs and internships for granted, it wasn't always the case. One of the people who made those connections a reality has announced his retirement after twenty-five years at the School. In 2017, *In Motion* looks back at the career of Head of Industry Relations, Larry Auerbach.

Larry Auerbach joined SCA after a legendary forty-seven-year career as an agent at the William Morris Agency. While an agent, Auerbach was known as "The Man with the Golden Rolodex" and was a titan in film, television, and music who repped stars as wide-ranging as Elvis (Auerbach secured Elvis' first television performance), Sam Cooke, and Aretha Franklin.

After leaving WMA, Auerbach was looking at a career in producing but alum Marcia Lucas had a vision of opening an office that would

help talented Trojans transition into careers. She donated the funds to open what was known then as Student Industry Relations.

"There was a little story in the paper that I was leaving William Morris, and Dean Elizabeth Daley called me and asked if I would get lunch," said Auerbach. "I knew USC had a great reputation, but I had no idea I was stepping into a second career: Dean Daley wanted to get the School, and the kids, an agent. That's what they offered me. That's what I did. The talent was there. What they needed was someone to pick up the phone."

Nearly every Trojan who walked through the halls of SCA has been helped by Auerbach at some point during his or her time as a student. Between managing his office, leading talks with titans of the industry, and having impromptu meetings with students, Auerbach was the bridge between young Trojans and the film and television industry. His dedication, knowledge, and no-nonsense mentorship launched countless careers and, along with his staff, it isn't an overstatement to say he changed the face of film, television, and interactive media.

"For the last 25 years, Larry's been my partner, my mentor, my coach, my corrections officer, and an incredible friend," said Daley. "I'm so grateful that Larry came and made a second career at the School of Cinematic Arts.

What he's meant to the School and, most importantly, our students is truly amazing."

"We did some marvelous things in Industry Relations," said Auerbach. "We helped every student that came to us who wanted to work and wanted to make something of themselves. Some of them made it big. It was fun. When I first came here, I thought I had bigger plans. I was wrong. It turned out to be paradise. It's been terrific. I've had two jobs in my life and seventy-two consecutive years of work."

On April 12th, a retirement party was held for Auerbach which was attended by Daley, Mark Burnett Endowed Chair David Weitzner, television agent Alan Berger, alum/producer Jason Berman, alum/studio executive Bob Osher, alum/producer Aaron Kaplan, a video message from head of CAA Bryan Lourd, Larry's family, students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the School of Cinematic Arts. The evening was emceed by current Head of Industry Relations Bonnie Chi.

While Larry is hanging up his "golden rolodex" after twenty-five years, the Industry Relations office will carry on. And every time someone picks up the phone on behalf of a Trojan looking to make something of themselves, Larry's legacy will be felt.

SPECTATORSHIP: Celebrating SCA's Commitment to Scholarly Enterprise

By Matt Meier



Thirty-five years ago, the School of Cinematic Arts published the first issue of *Spectator*: the University of Southern California Journal of Film and Television Criticism. In celebration of this milestone, William Whittington, *Spectator*'s Managing Editor for the past fifteen years and the Assistant Chair of the Bryan Singer Division of Cinema & Media Studies, along with Cinema & Media Studies graduate and *Spectator* Editor Roxanne Samer (Ph.D. '17), have edited a special book release containing some of the most influential pieces to appear in the bi-annual student and faculty publication, titled *Spectatorship: Shifting Theories of Gender, Sexuality, and Media*.

The collected volume is not simply a sweeping "best of" omnibus from all 70 issues (37 volumes) of the *Spectator* journal, which Whittington quickly realized would have required at least ten volumes when he began the project five years ago. Instead, Whittington and Samer chose to organize the essays around the same mission that largely guided *Spectator* when Professor Marsha Kinder founded the journal in 1982: "to provide a vehicle for perspectives on the state of the art and the state of film and television discourse."

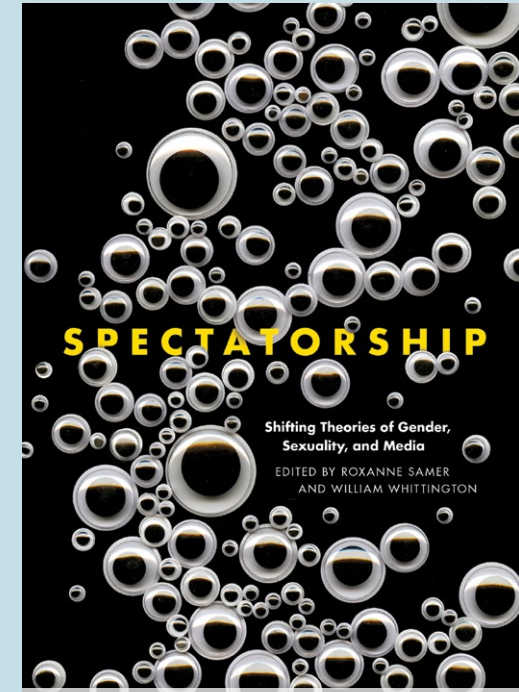
"One of the journal's greatest strengths is creating an intellectual space for students and contributors to provide new critical perspectives," says Whittington. "In their inquiry, they often ask a question or present a line of inquiry that leads to a much larger field of study."

In this sense, *Spectatorship* is far more than a celebration of the remarkable scholarship—and scholars—to come out of the School of Cinematic Arts through the decades. It is a reflection on the evolving discourse of films studies and the role of scholarship in influencing the filmmaking process itself, both here at the School and around the industry.

"Compiling the anthology revealed these hidden histories that came about and showed how our faculty were challenging mainstream discourses and taking them in new directions," says Whittington. "The overall arguments really changed the field, specifically related to spectatorship and gender and sexuality."

Unsurprisingly, many of these contributors are now leading scholars at premier institutions across the country. But especially given the School's proximity to Hollywood and reputation as the professional pipeline to the industry, this scholarship also played an important role in changing the conversation about representation in a very tangible way. As Ben Vanaman wrote in the journal's third publication, the journal aimed to "interrogate the representation of women in American narrative cinema, while simultaneously offering new possibilities of survival for women in society." That battle continues today, both in academia and in the field itself. There has been plenty of popular discourse in recent years over mainstream representations in front of and behind the camera. The Oscars have been annually under fire for issues of representation, and the 2017 Emmys were recently celebrated as a significant step in feminist authorship and storytelling.

"*Spectator* has always been about celebrating the people working in really innovative ways and seeing how they'll be influential in the field," says Whittington, and that includes both the scholarship and creation alike. Just as they did when the journal began 35 years ago, makers and scholars of film and television at USC are working together to address issues of representation across the industry. *Spectatorship*:



Roxanne Samer and William Whittington, editors. *Spectatorship: Shifting Theories of Gender, Sexuality, and Media*. University of Texas Press, 2017

Shifting Theories of Gender, Sexuality, and Media is the history of this ongoing conversation between those two sides, a celebration of the School's symbiotic relationship between the scholars who drew attention to these issues of representation, and the creators whose work would become part of the solution.

THE DUO

In Charge Of SCA's

HIGH TECH BOOM

MERI WEINGARTEN AND TARA TURNER ARE THE BUSIEST TECHNOLOGY MANAGERS ON CAMPUS

By *Desa Philadelphia*



Access to cutting edge technology has made things faster and more egalitarian for students who are making and studying media at the School of Cinematic Arts (SCA), essentially making it a lot easier for them to achieve their creative vision than in years past. Behind the scenes, however, things have gotten a lot more complicated. With seven divisions that have different creative goals, SCA now has more than 500 computers that each run about 300 distinct pieces of software, which come from multiple vendors with whom the School must negotiate a variety of licensing deals, all aimed at keeping costs as low as possible. Repeat the vendor/licensing dance for cameras, sound and lighting gear, and a variety of other specialty equipment. Then add to that annual and semi-annual decisions about what needs to be added, changed, and upgraded. Now you have an idea of the massive scope of responsibility of the School's lead technology managers, Meri Weingarten and Tara Turner.

As Director of Digital Media and Technology, Weingarten oversees the teams of technologists, engineers, and media creators it takes to run departments focused on camera, sound, computers, stages, post, and the School's television station Trojan Vision. She's also in charge of budgets for all the equipment those teams buy or use. Turner, the Manager of Creative Technology and Support, is in charge of all the resources in the School's labs, classrooms, and theaters, including computers, software, networks, servers, and projectors.

"We plan, we talk to faculty, we figure out what we need to do for the years to come, we budget and we propose," says Weingarten, who is also a master in the art of diplomacy since she has to say "no" more often than she'd like to. "We have to be the voice of reason because we understand what it takes," she says. "It's not just about getting the new toy."

A lot of people are surprised when they find out that Weingarten and Turner started out as creatives before moving to the business tech side of things. "We understand what it takes to make a movie or make a game; We don't make rules for no reason," says Weingarten. In fact most of the people who work with them have some creative life outside the computer carrel.

Weingarten started teaching at the School in the nineties after a career as an editor for television shows, including *Saturday Night Live*, and films like Academy Award-winners *Harlan County USA* and *Arthur*. She also worked as a producer and director and came to SCA as an adjunct professor to teach *CTPR 290*, one of the School's most popular production classes. During that time students shot on Super 8, a fact Weingarten loves to point out. "I like to talk about it because my students had these broken down cameras and they came into class to show their work and they carried a boombox for their audio," she says. "There was no sync sound for Super 8. The hardest part was for them to get their audio and their video to sync up for their presentation. It's just so funny given what is expected now. And we still could see who had talent and who had a good idea." She joined the staff full time in 1996 as Manager of Editorial overseeing the various editing systems, which started her move toward tech.

Turner grew up playing guitar and has always played in bands, but she was just as interested in the behind-the-scenes jobs, particularly working on lighting, which tapped into an interest in electronics. In college at Brigham Young she majored in Electrical Engineering with minors in Math and Music. "By the time I graduated college I knew I was going to do the space program or entertainment," she says. She tried to go the space route, working some government contract jobs in Washington, D.C. "And then the space program closed up and the options I had involved carrying a briefcase so I got in my car and came to L.A." She landed in visual effects, first working in electronic shops that were making things like motion-control rigs and animation



Tara Turner (L) and Meri Weingarten (R) in the SCA server room, which supports the workflow of our student productions and our theater technology

stands before moving to jobs in technology management, including at Disney Animation, and coming to SCA in 2016. "The combination of the creative and the technology is what attracted me," says Turner. "Building a pipeline is what I've been doing the whole time I've been in the industry."

Weingarten and Turner say the Cinematic Arts Complex really inspires their job, and they enjoy exploring new technologies with the faculty. "What we are doing here is creating an incredible place where we can expand on a larger scale and have a vision for the future," says Weingarten. That vision, which includes plans to further bolster areas like VR/AR and visual effects, is especially striking when compared to the technology that existed at the School only a couple decades ago. "We had Media Composer, D/Vision, tape and film," says Weingarten. "People would fight over them because there was never enough." Students would have to cram into the small editing rooms, she says, pulling all-nighters to get their films done. "Technology was so expensive then and everything was also hardware-based. If you wanted to edit on a computer you'd have to spend a hundred thousand dollars. That's just on the editing side. The bottom line is we couldn't do a fraction of what we do now. There was a time when we were a mom-and-pop shop. Now we are an enterprise-level company in what we do and in what is expected of us."

Turner's group, which is known around the SCA complex as "Creative Tech," didn't even exist ten years ago. Back then, Creative Tech was just Avid Tech since the editing system was the most high-tech piece of equipment the School owned. Now there's a staff of fourteen who are constantly shuttling around to put out fires and calm the nerves of anxious students and faculty. "The way we sort of define ourselves is, anything the students need to do their projects or be in their classes, that is us. So if something is wrong in a theatre, classroom, or lab—that's us," says Turner, agreeing with Weingarten that the scale of the enterprise is indeed impressive. "With all the moving parts, everything that a Hollywood studio does, we do here."

Despite their enthusiasm for their jobs, both Weingarten and Turner admit that keeping up is hard. "Which is why you have to have a passion for it, otherwise you would never do it," says Weingarten. They both spend a lot of their "free" time learning about what's coming down the pike, trying to figure out how much of it is crucial to the School's storytelling mission. "Whether it's a game or film or writing or whatever, it's really kind of fun to figure out what can be done with this technology or that technique," says Turner. Lucky for SCA, she and Weingarten are at the ready to make the next best upgrades.



ZYNGA Brings the Social Game Perspective TO IMPROVING DIVERSITY

By *Simran Bhari*



Zynga, which is known for blockbuster social games like *FarmVille* and *Words With Friends*, has partnered with the USC School of Cinematic Arts for a three-year course to explore the development of inclusive social mobile games. The course focuses on game production, research of social mobile games, and expanding diversity in the gamespace by bringing underrepresented voices into the field. In addition to instructors from the School's Interactive Media & Games Division (IMGD), the course, *CTIN 482: Designing Social Games* will feature panelists from Zynga who will talk about their work, giving students insight into how social games are conceived and developed.

THE
BLOCKBUSTER
SOCIAL GAME
DEVELOPER
FUNDS AN
INNOVATIVE
CLASS AT SCA

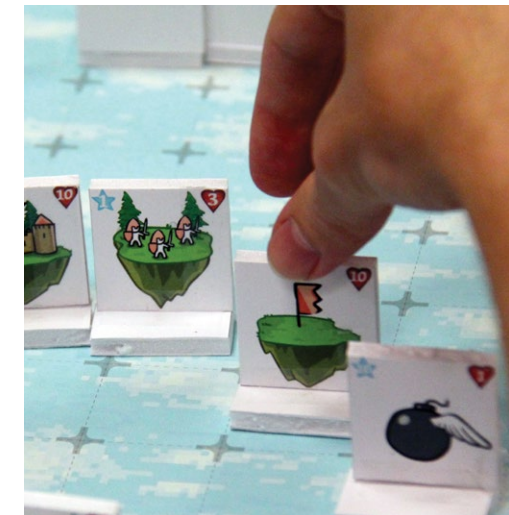
Back in May 2017, Zynga announced it would make a "substantial gift" to IMGD to launch the class in Fall 2017. The gift was announced collectively by Zynga CEO Frank Gibeau and Tracy Fullerton, Director of USC Games, the top-rated game design program that is a collaboration between IMGD and the USC Viterbi School of Engineering.

The Zynga initiative is geared towards teaching students the interconnections of creating social mobile games while using Zynga's strategic design principles. The gift also funds a series of panels, lectures, and events to promote inclusivity and diversity throughout the industry. Students from across the USC campus are invited and



encouraged to attend these speaker events on topics including production, engineering, and creative issues.

Sean Bouchard, an associate researcher at USC's Game Innovation Lab and one of the class's instructors, says the collaboration with Zynga will be very beneficial to students wanting to explore and generate games at a strategic level. "Zynga is a leader not just in mobile games, but in cutting-edge techniques for using data to drive design. They have pioneered and perfected ways of making games that strike a chord with their audience," says Bouchard. "As a company, Zynga is something we want our students to learn from and aspire to."



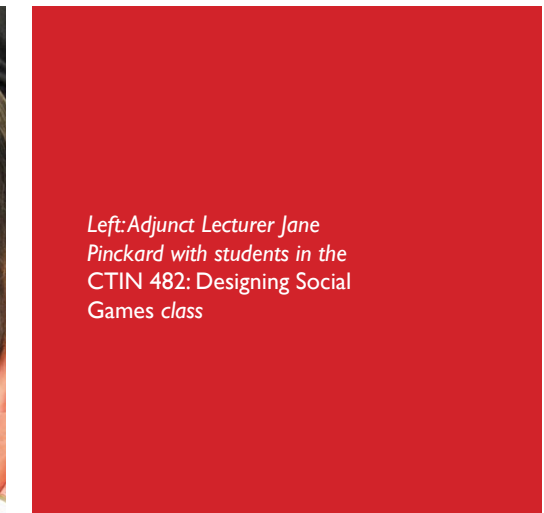
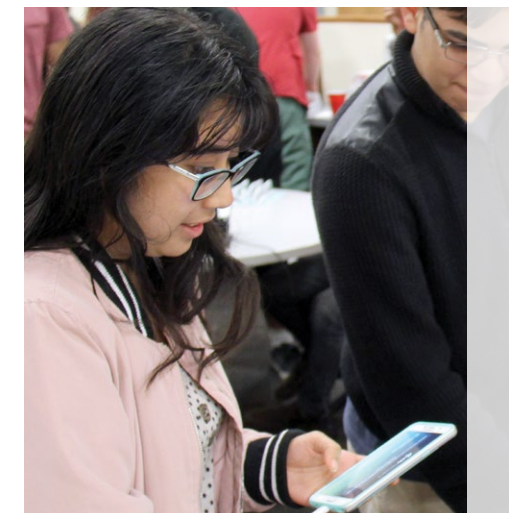
The series of panels features experts from the various Zynga divisions, including their own Women at Zynga employee group, which includes USC alums Anshul Dhawan (Computer Science Games '10) and Anna Huerta (Interactive Media & Games '09; Rossier ME Educational Psychology & Instructional Technology '10).

Jane Pinckard, an adjunct lecturer in IMGD who co-teaches the class, says there are many benefits to having input from Zynga employees. "This gift is not just about funding, but also about the involvement of Zynga designers and engineers in mentoring our students and helping to provide guidance on their projects."

Pinckard pointed out that, as USC alums, Dhawan and Huerta's involvement is especially helpful due to their deep understanding of SCA's processes and their unique input to effectively connect the IMGD program with Zynga.

"It's been absolutely fantastic having them participate at every level," said Pinckard. "From giving feedback on curriculum design to identifying individual mentors for student projects. The gift allows us to offer specific training in game design principles that are used right now by Zynga designers, and that's invaluable for our students to learn."

The curriculum is not only pushing social mobile gaming forward, but also amalgamating

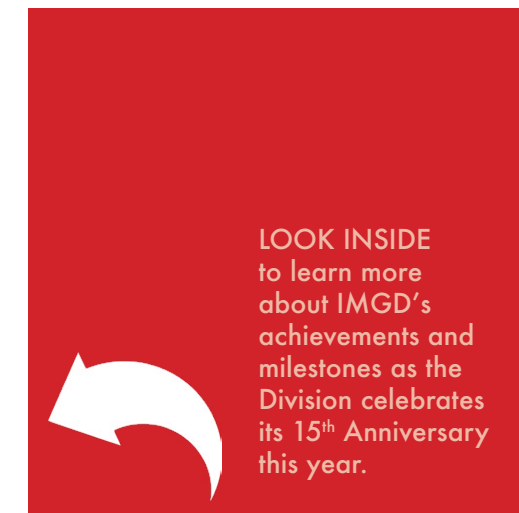


Left: Adjunct Lecturer Jane Pinckard with students in the CTIN 482: Designing Social Games class

crucial practices for team-building management. Although the course is being offered by SCA, students in all disciplines throughout the USC campus are allowed to enroll in keeping with the effort for diverse representation. Right now, the class consists of 15 students, almost half of them women. The goal is to give as many students as possible the opportunity to enter the exciting and explorative world of innovative game design through the lens of Zynga. And that practice of reaching out far and wide is exactly what social gaming is all about.

"Games have the power to connect directly and deeply with their players," Bouchard said. "When you play a game, you're called on to interact directly with the storytelling and outcome. This connection to players is what allows games to create powerful new experiences, be used as tools for discovery and learning, and make compelling and engaging entertainment."

Bouchard said Zynga and the School of Cinematic Arts both understand how impactful games are to young people, both in terms of their enjoyment and also as a burgeoning industry that offers many creative opportunities. "It is important to train the next generation of skilled and experienced game designers," he said. "This gift from Zynga allows us to continue and expand the education we provide to USC students."



LOOK INSIDE
to learn more
about IMGD's
achievements and
milestones as the
Division celebrates
its 15th Anniversary
this year.



“What Was THE RIGHT THING to Do?”

CINEMATIC ARTS 530: CINEMATIC ETHICS WAS OFFERED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE FALL OF 2017. BUT FOR **Ted Braun**, WHO CREATED AND TEACHES THE NEW CLASS, THE SEEDS OF WHAT IT WOULD BECOME WERE FIRST PLANTED OVER A DECADE AGO ON A SUNBAKED HILLSIDE MORE THAN EIGHT THOUSAND MILES FROM THE USC CAMPUS.

By *Oliver Jones*



A NEW CLASS ON CINEMATIC ETHICS HELPS STUDENTS PREPARE FOR THORNY REAL-WORLD SITUATIONS

Braun was in the middle of production on *Darfur Now* (2007), his award-winning documentary chronicling the genocide in western Sudan. More specifically, he was about to film the military exercises of Sudanese rebels when his field producer spotted something. A group of nomads, a traditional enemy of the rebels, was about to wander through a valley at the center of where the rebels would conduct their fully-armed military exercise. Suddenly Braun was faced with a question that was at once simple yet utterly complex: should he tell the rebels about the presence of the nomads?

“On the one hand, if we don’t let them know and they go down there with guns blazing and suddenly happen upon their enemies, we will have play out before us an aspect of this conflict whose story we had come to film,” recalls Braun, in the relative comfort of his office on the third floor of the Cinematic Arts building. “On the other hand if we do nothing, people will likely die. If we let the rebels know that they are there, we could quite possibly spare bloodshed and perhaps prevent the loss of life.” Braun pauses for a moment. “This was an unequivocal ethical question,” he says “What was the right thing to do?”

Braun—who recounts similar moments every Monday morning in a crowded Ray Stark Family Theatre on the first floor of the SCA building—chose to let the situation breathe. The rebels ended up spotting the nomads themselves and initiated a negotiation, a scene they did not allow Braun and his small crew to film. While the ethical crisis had been averted, he couldn’t help but play the situation over and over in his head. Months later, when production was wrapped and Braun was on a plane back from Khartoum, the same thought kept running through his mind: they sure as hell don’t teach this sh*t in film school.

Now, Braun is part of an effort to make sure that at least one film school does. When the George Lucas Family Foundation established the Joseph Campbell Endowed Chair in Cinematic Ethics and Braun, an Associate Professor in the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television, became the first to hold this position, the idea was to delve into the stickiest, thorniest issues that arise when making film and television in all its forms. From functioning in a world where the casting couch is not yet a thing of the past, to navigating an

Ted Braun, the inaugural holder of the Joseph Campbell Chair in Cinematic Ethics



expletive-laden writers’ room, to managing production schedules that expect 18-hour crew days—ethical challenges have always been part of a life in the cinematic arts, but have rarely had a place in the classroom. For USC graduates building their careers in that world, it’s a conversation that is long overdue.

“This industry is as ethically challenged as any other industry, if not more so. But what is unique about the film industry is that it is incredibly self-aware,” says **Gabriela Cowperthwaite**, director of the paradigm-shifting documentary *Blackfish*, who was pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Science at USC when she took a class at the School of Cinematic Arts that changed her life. “There are so many voices of people who make films and want to make them that I feel like the film industry is constantly being poked and prodded. People in this industry are always trying to wake up the dragon, in part because the whole world is watching films and watching us make them. People want to see themselves represented in them properly. And even more significantly, more of us want to be working on films who haven’t had that opportunity in the past.”

For many, the very idea of cinematic ethics sounds like a punchline to a joke, if not an outright oxymoron. The business and practice of cinematic arts has long been fraught with behavior that would be unacceptable in most other arenas but, in this world, is given the blind eye and often involves some of its most revered practitioners. In 2013, Bernardo Bertolucci acknowledged that Maria Schneider never consented to the infamous butter sequence with Marlon Brando in *The Last Tango in Paris* (1972). Walt Disney oversaw what was claimed

to be the suicidal migration of lemmings into the Arctic Ocean for the nature film *White Wilderness* (1958) but what was actually the staged drowning of the creatures in a river in Alberta, Canada, leaving the rodents with an unfair reputation as mindless followers.

The idea behind *CNTV 530*, which is offered during both the fall and spring semesters, is not just to reexamine and assess this often dark and troubled history, but also to use case studies—not unlike Braun’s experience in a valley in the Sudan—to prepare students for the ethical quandaries they might confront as they pursue careers as cinema arts professionals. “When you are asked how do you bring ethical questions into the life of a school and into the lives of filmmakers, I think you have to do it with the recognition that you’re asking people to imagine something that they have not experienced,” says Braun. “But the reason that you are asking them to imagine that is so they can rehearse the kind of experience that most certainly will smack them in the face someday. As it is with any kind of practice—be it athletic or artistic—the value of rehearsal is that by having worked through a grab bag of ethical questions, you will be more likely to recognize them when you see them. And having navigated a few, you will know where you are and what options are available to you.”

What the class won’t be is a polemic list of ethical do’s and don’ts that can be readily applied to filmmaking. The class, not unlike life, will be more about valued perspectives than the right answers.

"From the perspective of our students, most undergraduates come to college craving freedom," says Braun. "They are finally spreading their wings, and this is even truer if they're pursuing a field like the arts. Efforts to constrain behavior almost always inspire an action in the opposite direction. Trying to codify ethical behavior for our students is likely to have the opposite effect of what it is intended to do and will be alienating rather than effective. By asking ethical questions, getting into the habit of recognizing them when they stare you in the face and then practicing ways to navigate them, you become both a stronger filmmaker and a stronger human being. As an institution, fostering that sense of freedom of the imagination and encouraging people to be brave and to take chances—to be daring—is something very close to the core of our mission."

In compiling situations to use as the case studies that will be the backbone of his class, Braun has been collecting industry war stories from friends and colleagues, each more harrowing than the next. He has found that the ethical dilemmas tend to fall into one of four categories: issues that documentarians confront, which are often similar to those faced by journalists; ethical questions that come into play when one is in the position of supervising someone else; the ethics of representation, whether it is violence, sex, history, or cultural identity; and questions surrounding screen comedy and what it takes to create it.

When it comes to humor, ethics comes into play not just in terms of when a joke goes too far, but also the environment required to effectively create. Indeed, students who want to become writers of television comedies have to prepare for a working environment that would turn most HR directors' hair grey.

Director and USC alum
Gabriela Cowperthwaite

"The writers' room requires your inhibitions to be laid on the table," says David Isaacs, a veteran of writing rooms for shows like *M*A*S*H**, *Frasier*, and *Mad Men*, and a co-creator of the School's USC Comedy initiative. "You are going to be talking about things that normally, in any other business atmosphere, you would be careful to avoid. In the writers' room, you are encouraged to speak up, to chime in no matter what it is you have to say. I don't want to get too Freudian, but comedy comes out of anger. It is meant to provoke. When you enter the writers' room, that is where you are starting. The ethics part comes out of how you put a room together. You have to let the people know ahead of time that things can be said and the room could take a direction that could be, even should be, offensive to certain people."

Whether in the conflict zones of documentary filmmaking or the uncharted waters of a comedy room, what do these ethical challenges have in common? High stakes.

"I was really struck by how much emotion is attached to these dilemmas," says Braun. "I talked to people in production management who were once asked to represent what had gone on during the day on the set in a way that could adversely effect how the crew was compensated. To this day they are still haunted by this. I want my students to understand that there are deep emotions attached to these case studies, and that kind of emotion is always a major indicator that something important is going on. As a filmmaker, you try to make stories that are emotional and unforgettable; so if the examples that we present in class carry a similar sense of emotion and unforgettability, I think we're in a good spot."

As for the films he plans to discuss, Braun, whose 2016 film *Betting on Zero* explored allegations that Herbalife was a pyramid scheme, is looking at a host of nonfiction and fiction films that present ethical questions both in their content and in the manner they came to be. On the nonfiction side, Braun will be looking at *Cameraperson* (2016), a meditation on documentary cinematography and personal responsibility, directed by Kirsten Johnson, Braun's DP on *Darfur Now*; and Andrew Jarecki and Marc Smerling's *Capturing the Friedmans* (2003), which explores the impact of a Long Island father and son being investigated for child molestation. As for fiction film, Braun has his sights set on classics like Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* (1942) and Carol Reed's *The Third Man* (1949) as well as more contemporary films such as Ben Affleck's *Gone Baby Gone* (2007).

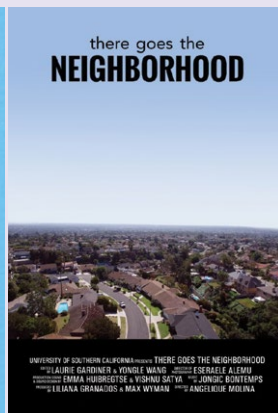
In a recent class, students discussed the ethical implications that surfaced during the opening sequence of Gillo Pontecorvo's *The*

Battle of Algiers (1966), a film that blurs the line between fiction and nonfiction. While the Italian neorealist classic has been a mainstay of film school discussions for decades, Braun's approach is a little different. He prods the students to look further: Are there limits to the extent that a filmmaker should allow an audience to sympathize with someone many would consider a terrorist? What about interrogators willing to resort to torture?

By discussing the ways that values and empathy stretch beyond cultural identity, Braun is calling to mind the work of the man for whom his Endowed Chair is named: Joseph Campbell. The American mythologist and lecturer's work in comparative religion and mythology informs not only the spirit of Braun's one-of-a-kind class, but its day-to-day substance.

"First and foremost, and it's a timely one, Campbell had a deep appreciation of the ways in which the stories of the world allow us to understand one another," explains Braun. "This has less to do with the idea of the 'monomyth' and *The Hero With A Thousand Faces* and more to do with the general power of myth and the recognition of the diversity of the stories that we tell. His work recognizes how much we share with ancient cultures as well as contemporary cultures that are ostensibly different from our own. If you meet someone, a stranger, and you are curious, you start to listen to the stories that are important to them in their life; you are drawn into a closer, more respectful relationship with that person. It deepens your sense of respect and it becomes much easier to work together and much, much harder to be contemptuous. To me, that is very powerful."

USC Comedy Co-creator,
Professor David Isaacs



For both recent and longtime SCA graduates, the complex conversations about cinema ethics taking place Monday mornings in Ted Braun's classroom are long overdue. "I think when it comes to ethics in cinema, there has been a lack of it," says Angelique Molina, who graduated from SCA last year with a Masters Degree in Production. "Why is it that we consider it the norm to have this industry be a boys club and to be predominantly white?" Molina cites the fact that less than one percent of working directors are African-American women and less than four percent of working cinematographers are female.

Ethics are not just something that Molina confronts as she navigates her career. It's the very subject of the work she makes. For her

graduate thesis film, the Los Angeles native made the documentary short *There Goes the Neighborhood* (2016), an intimate portrait of the real costs of gentrification and shifting demographics in the traditionally middle-class, African-American neighborhood of View Park in South L.A.

The film was inspired in part from conversations with her fellow students. "People were talking about moving there like it was some kind of ghetto and now was this up and coming neighborhood," says Molina. "I found it infuriating. For African Americans, View Park has always been a point of pride. It's been this gem of a community that we aspire to live in."

Molina hopes that by looking at it through the lens of longtime residents, her film reframes the 'new hot neighborhood' conversation. Similarly, talking about and confronting the issues of racism, sexism, and other forms of injustice within the industry is the first step in making them a part of the past. "It is time to wake some people up," she says. "If we can't change things for the present, maybe we can do something about the future."

The REAL WORLD of ETHICS

SCA GRADUATE ANGELIQUE MOLINA SEES THE TOPIC AS CENTRAL TO HER WORK AND CAREER

See a list of resources Professor Braun provides his students by visiting: cinema.usc.edu/ethicsresources



By Sabrina Malekzadah



TROJAN VISION *is* 20!

ALUMS SAY THEIR EXPERIENCES AT THE STATION HELPED THEM FIND CAREERS THEY LOVE

Trojan Vision, USC's student-operated television station, was launched by the School of Cinematic Arts in 1997 to teach students how to make live television. The station's programming is produced exclusively by USC students and broadcasts in HD on cable channel 8.1 to the entire USC campus, and to the greater Los Angeles area on LA36, reaching over 1.8 million homes, as well as streaming 24/7 on trojanvision.com.

As Trojan Vision celebrates its 20th anniversary, we asked alums Nick Rizzo '11, Natalie Moran '09, and Brian Murphy '04 to reminisce on their experiences at the station, especially how it prepared them for their current entertainment industry jobs.

Most students begin their Trojan Vision experience by signing up for CTPR 409: Practicum in Television Production. Then many of them get jobs at the station or continue as volunteers. Most students walk into 409, a lab-style class (the station being the lab), with no television experience. However they leave knowing how to work a camera, generate graphics, direct a show, book guests, run audio, and brief hosts.

These days, Natalie Moran, a Cinema & Media Studies alum, is the Coordinator in Multicultural Business Development at Creative Arts Agency (CAA). She started USC undecided about a major, which made her feel inexperienced compared to her peers. "Trojan Vision

is where I got my [entertainment] experience," Moran says, "As an executive producer on CU@USC, I got paid—this was my first job in entertainment."

CU@USC, a nightly talk show that was Trojan Vision's first original program, has been broadcast uninterrupted for the past 20 years. Following graduation, the executive producers of the show have become a parade of accomplished and creative industry professionals. Those we talked to attribute a large part of their post-graduate success to their CU@USC training and the support of their extended Trojan Vision family.

Nick Rizzo, a Film & Television Production alum and a producer on *Watch What Happens Live with Andy Cohen*, says that producing on CU@USC is where he discovered his love for talk shows. "Trojan Vision really helped me with the framework of where I am today. And it helped me with a foundation and really jump-started my career," he says. "I love film but I also love theatre. Talk shows are a nice combo between film and theatre. CU@USC was such a huge help to get this experience, and once I graduated and started working at all these other talk show jobs, I had a great foundation and was able to hit the ground running career-wise."

Brian Murphy, an executive producer for a variety of documentaries for CBS, History Channel, and other outlets, also felt he was well prepared because of Trojan Vision. "In between classes I was calling staff, booking guests, and getting the show up everyday," Murphy says,



reminiscing about his work at the station. "Being in that environment, working live five days a week—if you can handle this pressure then you will be prepared." As a Communications and English double major and Cinematic Arts minor, Murphy says his experience at SCA inspired him to pursue a career in the entertainment industry. "Everyone at SCA, from the students to the professors, are so motivated and passionate," he says about Professor Drew Casper's Spielberg class, which he says was his favorite. "It really is the best of the best in terms of our field, and being around that energy and creativity inspired me to pursue this career path."



Trojan Vision is not only a place where students learn how to create content for live television but also a place where long-lasting relationships are formed beyond graduation. Joel Parker, the instructor for CTPR 409, makes an effort to keep current students connected to station alums from different 409 classes and Trojan Vision shows. Natalie Moran says Parker's guidance led her to her current job at CAA. "He was great at keeping a lineage between past and current producers. He really made sure everyone stayed in touch. Joel introduced me to Elizabeth Newman, who was a producer at CU@USC before me and an agent at CAA."



LEFT: (from top) Nick Rizzo '11, Natalie Moran '09, and Brian Murphy '04

RIGHT: Don Tillman

OPPOSITE PAGE: Trojan Vision through the decades with students hard at work



Tillman's approach was to give students the same responsibilities as professional television producers, directors, and anchors. His golden rule: "Once you walk through those doors, you're a professional." His greatest achievement, he says, was helping students find confidence in their work. "The greatest story I have from my time at the station is watching these young people mature to take on very professional responsibilities. The joy for me over 20 years is being able to see them develop and move on to great careers. We've had people in high positions at Paramount, Lionsgate, and other studios, and at least 10 major TV stations across the country. It's hard to keep track of who's where because we've now graduated so many, but I get email almost daily from somebody updating where they are and what they are doing. So I've made an awful lot of young friends."

Tillman is also the Founder and Chief Operating Officer of McCarty and Company, one of America's preeminent entertainment consulting firms. As the former chairman of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, he spearheaded efforts for the School of Cinematic Arts to receive its Hollywood Walk of Fame star.

DON TILLMAN *Retires!*

THE GUIDING HAND BEHIND THE SUCCESS OF SCA'S TROJAN VISION TELEVISION STATION FOR 20 YEARS

Some twenty years ago, School of Cinematic Arts Dean Elizabeth Daley pondered a missing element in the School's curriculum: how to train production students to work in live television. Luckily she knew someone who could help. Enter Don Tillman.

Tillman, who retired this year, founded the School's Trojan Vision television station, the student-run enterprise that hosts talk shows, performances, and specials like *USC Comedy Live*, SCA's SNL-style collaboration with the USC School of Dramatic Arts. Tillman served as Executive Director since establishing the station in 1997, growing it from 8 student participants to more than 300 each year, and from a half-hour to more than 28 hours of original, live programming each week. Under his guidance the station became a model for student-run and produced television, and was named "Best College Television Station in the Country" by *Spin* magazine, among other accolades. In the last 20 years Trojan Vision has won dozens of national awards, mostly in competition with regular broadcast stations. It has become a regular tour destination for high school and college groups interested in broadcasting.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Cassie, Thomas, Bonnie and Amanda Brooksbank on set

For the **BROOKSBANK SIBLINGS**, TROJAN VISION is a Family Endeavor

Cassandra (Cassie), Bonnie, Amanda (Mandi), and Thomas (Tommy) Brooksbank found a creative way to bring their close family bond to their varied USC experiences. As each Brooksbank sibling started their academic career at the University, they followed each other's footsteps to Trojan Vision, where each created their own unique training experience.

Cassie, a 2011 Film & Television Production alum, was General Manager and Creative Director of Special Projects at Trojan Vision.

Bonnie, a 2013 graduate of the Thornton School of Music, was a Producer and Host on the entertainment news show *The SCoop*.

Mandi, who majored in Business of Cinematic Arts (BCA) and graduated from the Marshall School of Business in 2014, was the Associate Producer for the nighttime talk show *CU@USC* as well as *The SCoop*. She also created and ran the morning variety show called *The Toast*.

Tommy, who is currently a senior studying Broadcast Journalism and Political Science, is the Web Design/Social Media Manager, CTPR 409 Student Assistant, and Host of *The Morning Brew*, for which he also directs and produces.

Eldest sibling Cassie, who began the Brooksbank invasion, credits Trojan Vision with helping her discover her passion for filmmaking. "Originally, I was accepted to USC as a history major," she says. "And it was my involvement in Trojan Vision that got me accepted into the film school!" She currently runs her own production company, directing commercials, music videos, and films for clients that include Porsche, Unilever's Axe brand, and even the School of Cinematic Arts. Like other Trojan Vision alums, she says working at the student-run network prepared her for her career today. "It was through Trojan Vision that I learned how to support myself financially as a director."

A MILESTONE Year

SCA CELEBRATES ITS FIRST VALEDICTORIAN, FIRST ROME PRIZE WINNER, AND A ONE-OF-A-KIND TRACK RECORD

At the School of Cinematic Arts we look forward to celebrating the exciting milestones our students and alumni achieve each year. In addition to the many others listed throughout this issue, these are three of our favorites from 2017.

By *Matt Meier*



her commencement speech. "Don't you guys want the grad that's going to be curing diseases?"

A dual major in Cinema & Media Studies and Law, History, and Culture, with a minor in Screenwriting, Nelson is the first student from the School of Cinematic Arts to earn the distinction of USC Valedictorian. It may not come as a total surprise that the University has traditionally overlooked students from SCA, despite its reputation as the top-ranked cinema program in the world, in favor of those from ostensibly more "disease-curing" and "world-saving" fields

from the genre than they do from live-action media, books, music, or even interacting with other people.

Since graduating, Nelson has been working to prove her thesis. Her first job at Wonder Media, a company focused on the intersection of media and education, focused on creating three-minute animated programming for elementary school students with characters and stories designed to promote social and emotional learning. The CEO recruited Nelson after seeing her commencement speech on YouTube.

Nelson's call to write cartoons then led her to a full time job at Frederator Studios, the group behind *The Fairly OddParents*, *Adventure Time*, and a host of other programs from Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, and various digital formats (although she still consults and writes content for Wonder Media).

More and more evidence suggests that Nelson is right, that animation may indeed have the power to change the world by giving all kids the tools they need to learn and achieve. And as someone who already has a foot in each door—writing animated shows while researching its effects on youth—Nelson certainly seems like the ideal candidate to come up with the needed cure.

Cooper Nelson Named First USC Valedictorian from the School of Cinematic Arts

Cooper Nelson possesses the kind of resume you'd expect from the valedictorian of a top-ranked research university: a perfect 4.0 GPA, internships with top companies, a semester abroad as a USC Global Scholar, and a laundry list of clubs and extracurriculars. But Nelson differs from the prototypically perfect candidate in one way: "I just really want to write cartoons," she said during

like global health and environmental studies. Last year's valedictorian, for example, was a Biochemical Engineering major who aspired to cure malaria. But Nelson convincingly spelled out why cinema and science are perhaps of equal importance, and why she is "pretty sure that animation can change the world."

"I believe in children, and their ability to love and learn and grasp meaning from what they watch," Nelson said in her speech, explaining that children "have a cognitive reaction to animation" and focus longer and absorb meanings better

Media Arts + Practice Ph.D. Student Aroussiak Gabrielian Wins Rome Prize

Aroussiak Gabrielian, a Ph.D. candidate in Media Arts + Practice, is a 2017-2018 awardee of the Rome Prize, among the most prestigious awards given for scholarship in the art world.

The American Academy in Rome has been awarding the fellowship to internationally renowned scholars and artists since

1896, thirty-three years before the first Academy Award. Gabrielian and her partner, Assistant Professor Alison B. Hirsch of the USC School of Architecture, were among the recipients of this year's coveted fellowship, awarded to 15 scholars and 15 artists, uniting practitioners of fields ranging from poetry to music composition to landscape architecture.

Chair Holly Willis. "We are excited to see how Aroussiak and Alison will integrate the methods of cinema, architecture, and landscape design into a new form of research practice."

The goal of the project, in simplest terms, is to paint Rome in a new light. Countless stories of Rome have played out in cinema and the other arts, relying on dominant imagined histories to fill the narrative gaps left in its ancient ruins. Gabrielian and Hirsch want to imagine a new story for the ancient city, one that "unearths non-dominant narratives" and plays them out "using immersive cinema techniques." In doing so, their project will offer a new vision of Rome and speculate on its possible futures.

Fourth Consecutive Starkie Awarded the PGA's Debra Hill Fellowship

The Producers Guild of America's decision to award the Debra Hill Fellowship to Montserrat Gómez García, a 2017 graduate of the Peter Stark Producing Program, means that she is the fourth consecutive, and fifth overall Stark graduate to receive the prestigious award. The Starkie sweep makes the School of Cinematic Arts the only school to boast such a track record. The fellowship was established in 2005 following the passing of pioneering producer Debra Hill, who was committed to mentoring next-generation producers.

Gómez had a career in television and digital media in Mexico before moving to the U.S., and the Fellowship will allow her to further develop her Stark thesis film, a comedy feature inspired both by her father's raising a family in 1990's Mexico and her own experience as an immigrant in the U.S.

She hailed both the Stark Program and the Debra Hill Fellowship for a commitment to diversity. "As I begin my career as a producer, I am confronted by the fact that there are still very few women, let alone women of color, occupying decision-making positions in



Aroussiak Gabrielian (L) and Alison B. Hirsch

Gabrielian and Hirsch won in the latter category as creative practitioners and have been awarded a stipend, workspace, and full room and board for up to two years while they continue their research on the Academy's eleven-acre campus in Rome.

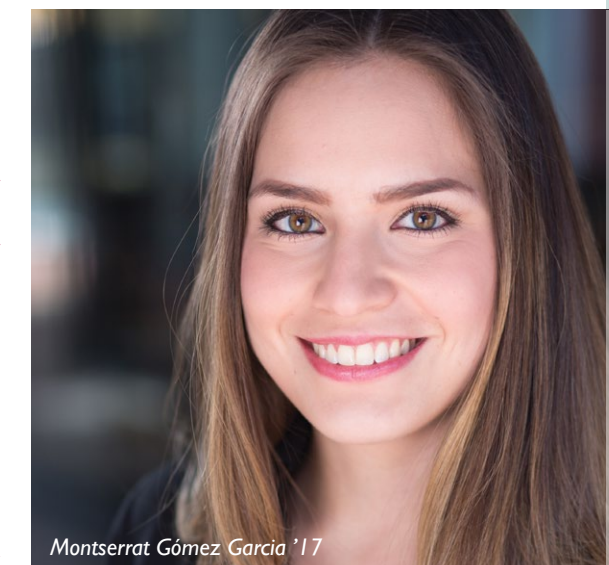
Says Gabrielian, "We are both thrilled and honored to be part of the incredible community of artists and scholars here, to be situated in the astounding context of Rome, and to be given the space and time to think and work."

Their winning project, *Rome Real-and-Imagined: Cinematic Fictions and Future Landscapes*, combines landscape architecture and cinema, focusing on "how the Roman landscape has been constructed through the social imagination through the cinematic medium."

"Receiving the Rome Prize is an incredible honor," says MA+P Division

the industry," Gómez said, adding that she has been inspired by the stories of Debra Hill and by other trailblazers she has met through the Fellowship, including fellow Starkies like Oscar and PGA-nominated producer Stacey Sher (*Erin Brockovich*, *Django Unchained*). "Being surrounded by such kind and successful women was incredibly heartwarming and encouraging."

The other Starkies who have won the fellowship are Diego Nájera Martínez (2016), Monique Keller (2015), Ashleigh Phillips Foster (2014) and Eleonore Dailly (2007). Foster credits Stark Division Chair Larry Turman and the values he instills in his graduates as a major reason why so many Starkies have won the Hill Fellowship. She said, "I've found repeatedly that true producers are the most determined, inspiring, and generous people to encounter in the film industry. I think the Stark Program is a huge part of keeping the legacy of what it really means to be a producer. That's in large part thanks to Larry Turman and the force of character and spirit with which he guides the Stark Program." Foster said the fellowship serves as a great way for the PGA to draw in new generations of aspiring producers. "It was wonderful to feel the support of the larger community of producers and how much encouragement there is for new generations."



Montserrat Gómez García '17

REPURPOSING *Reality*

TWO ALUMNI-HELMED COMPANIES REINVENT FACT-BASED STORYTELLING

By *Napoleon Martinez*



TREY ALSUP
MFA PRODUCTION
THE SITUATION ROOM EXPERIENCE

The Situation Room Experience at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library is a new type of large-scale interactive game experience that places 20-53 people in unique roles as they act out a fictional “what-if” crisis scenario in which the President of the United States has been shot. Designed by Trey Alsup, a 1994 MFA Production graduate, the “educational simulation” derives its name from the focal point of the experience: the White House Situation Room, a historic space where nine sitting presidents have made some of the most important foreign policy decisions on behalf of the country since its creation in 1961. The goal is to teach its players about the difficulties of communication in crisis scenarios and about how to manage information while making tough decisions in high-pressure circumstances.



such as assigning each player their role and providing each one with the information, decisions, and controls best suited for the position. This allows the game to adapt to the number of players and differing personalities so that important information is not missed and is quickly disseminated between players as they communicate. But technology is not the focus of the game, says Alsup.



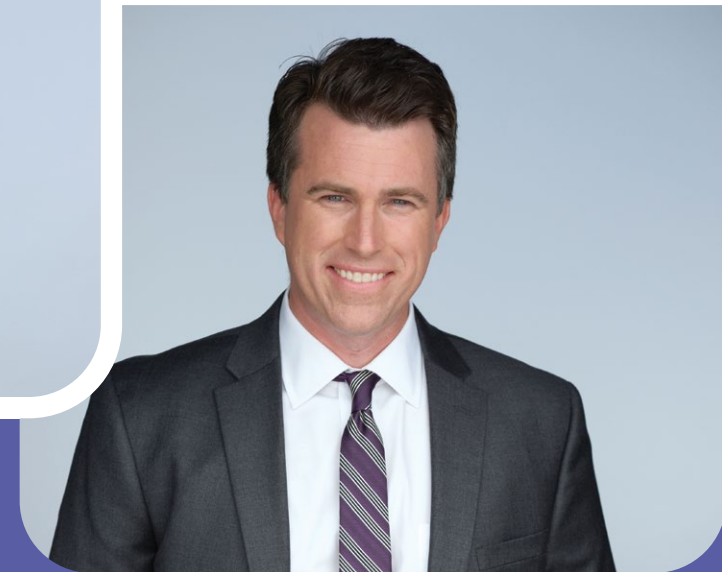
The game takes place within a large dedicated space where players are split among the Situation Room, the White House Press Room, and a remote “Hospital Command Center.” During the simulation, each participant takes on a role corresponding to actual roles in a crisis, such as the one that occurred in 1981 when President Reagan was shot. It successfully opened to the public in August 2016, with sessions booked daily for school groups as well as corporate and government clients.

The multi-level experience has been designed with a variety of new and advanced technologies, including tablets equipped with a real time app interface that every participant receives during the game. According to Alsup, the technology was important to the design of the simulation in order to facilitate a user-friendly experience by automatically managing some of the game’s administrative tasks,

“There is a lot of tech, but hopefully it is all in service to human face-to-face interaction.”

Alsup came on to the Situation Room Experience with extensive experience designing live-action role-playing games, also known as LARPs. These games usually play out much like theatrical productions as players act out off-fictional scenarios in real world spaces with props and game rules that facilitate imagination and player-to-player interaction. Alsup has written and produced many experiences for national game conventions like Gencon, where he has run both *Battlestar Galactica* and *Game of Thrones*-themed games. According to Alsup, a major difference between live-play environments and

Right: Diane Suzuki '02,
President & Creative
Director of Lucid CGI;
Michael Walsh '01,
Computer Animation
Specialist at Lucid CGI



simulated environments such as virtual reality is the ability to communicate face-to-face with other players. “The VR headset is a literal barrier to the kind of face-to-face communication that we see less and less of in our daily lives,” says Alsup.

Alsup says he used his filmmaking education to build the scenario and system architecture for the Situation Room Experience, which required a concrete understanding of and experience with production, casting, set design—all beneficial skills he learned at SCA. “All these things in film school come back,” says Alsup.

DIANE SUZUKI AND MICHAEL WALSH
MFA ANIMATION
LUCID CGI

Duke Blackwood, the Executive Director of the Reagan Library who hired Alsup for the project, says the Situation Room Experience is opening up a world of possibilities. “There’s nowhere in the world that does what we do. We look at this as just the beginning,” says Blackwood. In the future, he and Alsup would love to see these interactive simulations expand to become a unique medium. The Reagan Library is already working on other partnerships, such as an 18th Century Mt. Vernon experience surrounding the Neutrality Proclamation of 1793, and a Middle Eastern Coup scenario produced in association with the UCLA Center for Middle Eastern Development.

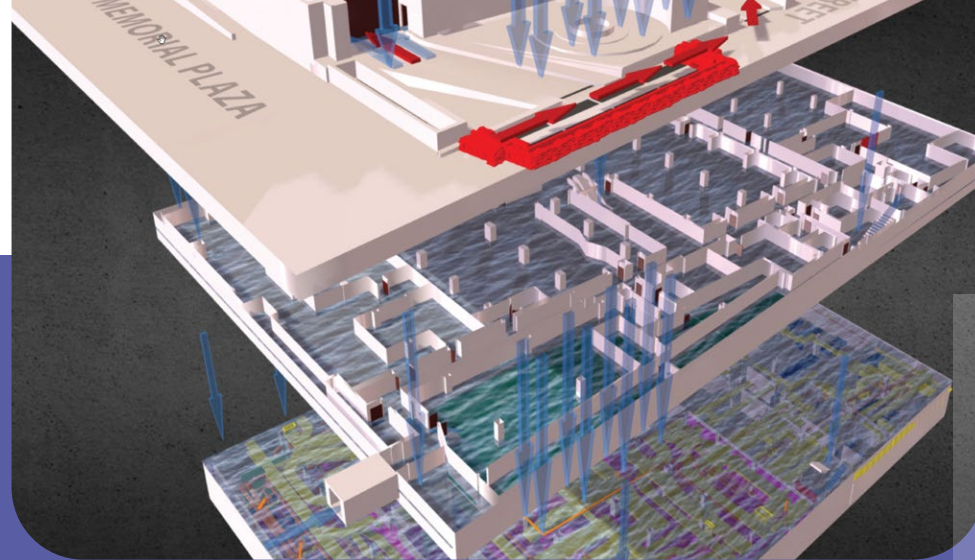
Alsup has established his company Wishcraft Simulations with this kind of expansion in mind, and is also working on more collaborations, including a disaster relief experience with the Pacific Aviation Museum in Honolulu, Hawaii. Another potential application for interactive simulations is a new platform that enables anyone to create scenarios and publish real-time interactive experiences, which would allow people to innovate and push the field in a variety of different directions.

To learn more about the Situation Room Experience, visit: situationroom.archives.gov
For more information on Trey Alsup and Wishcraft Simulations, visit: WishcraftSimulations.com

Last October, hikers found the remains of a man in a shallow grave just outside Palmdale. The bones belonged to a 20th Century Fox executive, Gavin Smith, who had been missing for over two years. Almost a year later, John Creech, 44, would be found guilty of voluntary manslaughter for the killing of Smith. One of the important participants in the trial was the prosecution’s expert witness, Michael Walsh, a 2001 MFA graduate of the School of Cinematic Arts John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts.

Walsh is a Computer Animation Specialist at LucidCGI, a litigation graphics firm located in Pasadena, California, led by another Hench-DADA MFA graduate, Diana Suzuki. Together with the team at LucidCGI, Suzuki and Walsh, who first met at USC, produce visual content to supplement attorney presentations in court cases that are often highly publicized and worth billions of dollars. During the 2017 case of *People v. John Creech*, for example, the firm provided a digitally replicated model of Smith’s bloody car that Creech had stowed away just after the murder, and Walsh testified as an expert witness, explaining the advanced technological process by which he and the team at LucidCGI recreated the crime scene—an entirely new

Right and below: Stills from murder scene recreations done by Lucid CGI



type of media-based evidence, and one that would prove critical in Creech's conviction.

"That might have been the first [model of that kind presented] in the US," says Walsh.

For LucidCGI, visual storytelling is essential. Prior to joining LucidCGI three years ago, Walsh enjoyed a successful career in motion graphics and film, working on films such as *2012*, *Beowulf*, and *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. Drawing from their SCA educations, Walsh and Suzuki are transforming the way prosecutors rely on technology and visual storytelling to win high-stakes civil and criminal cases.

"The attorneys are set up to... present a certain set of facts. But they are not looking at things the way that a visual artist would look at it," says Walsh. "That's where we come in. We shape that story for them."

To formulate their visual strategy, the team at LucidCGI meticulously reads all legal documents and pulls a story from it that supports the client's case through the use of graphics. Of course, unlike fictitious films or even stories based on truth, an accurate depiction of facts remains critical to their work.

"In a film, certain things can be embellished to quite a large degree from fact," says Walsh. "You can't make things up," adds Suzuki. "We're confined in the content of what we show, by law. It all has to be fact-based and stay extremely accurate. [But] other than that, I see no difference. Visual storytelling is visual storytelling."



Designed to be technologically agile and adaptive, LucidCGI is constantly looking at new methods of visually conveying evidence, like in the case of John Creech. "[The attorneys] wanted us to create a model for them based on photos that were taken of the vehicle," says Walsh. The older method to accomplish this would be to use a physical model. "But once I saw the amount of photos that were taken inside of these videos, I thought I could pull a model from the photos using a technique called photogrammetry," an advanced photo manipulation technique that measures the exact positions of different surfaces within photos in order to digitally map and render a three-dimensional physical location to scale. Although increasingly popular, photogrammetry remains a difficult process to execute accurately. But the tedious technique ultimately allowed LucidCGI to provide a powerful, effective 3D recreation using real evidence.

"We recreated the interior of the car [so that] you can actually look within, and placed it on the street where it happened," says Walsh. "That kind of stuff is not pleasant to look at."

"[It] works the same way that film does," says Suzuki. "People are visually oriented. You can understand the meaning of a visual much faster than you can reading, or even hearing a story."

"Because we do this so much, we're really the experts on how to present these stories," says Walsh. "A lot of [other firms] are not even aware that this technology exists."

But as Walsh knows well from his experience in the film industry, that can all change in an instant, and staying ahead of the curve is critical to sustained success. LucidCGI is currently looking into integrating virtual reality technology into the courtroom to give jurors even more immersion, letting them step into the crime scene and see the evidence for themselves in an entirely different way.

For more information on Lucid CGI, visit: Lucidcgi.com

[In REMEMBRANCE]

HUGH Hefner by Professor Emeritus and former Hugh M. Hefner Chair in American Film Rick Jewell



It will take years before the world can objectively evaluate the cultural contributions of Hugh M. Hefner. The controversial nature of the man is best reflected in several *New York Times* articles published after his recent death. One laudatory piece by Amber Batura argued that Hefner's *Playboy* magazine pioneered a new, more progressive masculinity that "invented the modern man." Another by Ross Doughat labeled him the "grinning pimp of the sexual revolution" and suggested he was the Mephistophelian patriarch of the rottenness which pervades contemporary society.

I held the Hugh Hefner Chair for the Study of American Cinema during the last twenty years of my career and studied his life in detail; consequently, my opinion of Mr. *Playboy* is much closer to Ms. Bastura's than Mr. Doughat's. But I will not attempt a global perspective here—I prefer to discuss the Hugh Hefner I knew, his relationship to our students, and our school.

I first met Hefner in 1993 when he underwrote a course on media censorship. Although Drew Casper and I were carrying heavy loads at the time, we shared a fascination with the topic and decided to co-teach the class. Our patron evinced considerable interest in the first syllabus, then phoned to talk about some of the films and readings we had chosen. So we took a flyer and asked Hefner to "capstone"

the class by joining us on the final day to discuss his own battles with censors. He said no. However, after cajoling by several of our brightest, most intrepid students, he changed his mind. Thus began an educationally unique and delightful relationship that transformed *CTCS 409* into one of the most popular classes in the university.

Every year from 1993 to 2013, our "third professor" departed his famous mansion to address a new crop of young people. No lecturing—but he enjoyed interacting with students and addressing their questions so much that he once turned down a prestigious honor because it would require him to travel and miss his visit to USC. He particularly relished the thorny questions. Many of our students were aware that Hefner had become a target of Gloria Steinem and other feminists who attacked him for objectifying women. Having taken feminist-friendly positions on equal rights, contraception, and abortion, he was initially blindsided by the criticism. Now he had an opportunity to present his point of view, and he did it articulately and forcefully. Everyone may not have agreed with his arguments, but they came away respecting his willingness to grapple with the issues.

Hef told me he looked forward to his one day of "professing" more than any other each year. Given his life, that statement seems quite remarkable. He demonstrated his fondness for the USC School of Cinematic Arts by endowing the Chair in American Film, as well as our Moving Image Archive and the Exhibition Space in the Lucas wing. I am one of many who will miss this titanic editor-publisher and generous contributor to the Trojan family.

JERRY Lewis by director, alum and former student of Jerry Lewis, Randal Kleiser

Lessons I learned many years ago from Professor Jerry Lewis at USC have stuck with me to this day.

In the late 60s, when my classmates and I heard he was going to teach a directing class, many of us signed up out of curiosity. What could we learn from this clown? We expected a standup routine, funny anecdotes... "*The Nutty Professor* comes to USC." We were completely surprised at the barrage of practical information he conveyed, regarding both techniques of the craft and working with actors.

On the technical side, Jerry knew how to do every job on a set—from loading a 35mm magazine to threading a Nagra to gracefully moving a dolly. A few highlights of his tech advice that I still follow:

1. When looking through the lens, imagine the shot that will be ahead and the one that will follow.
2. Never shoot a woman with the lens below her chin.
3. Never shoot a woman with a lens wider than a 35.

On the acting side, a few years ago I interviewed him for the Director's Guild Visual History Program and asked him how to handle an actor who is nervous. "You have to get him to shake lose all the crap that he brought with him. If he's trying too hard, you tell him, 'if we all did what you are doing now, we'd bump into one another. You have to relax. You're going to be fine. The reason that we push or force is because we want so much to do well. I'm telling you I'm so glad to have you doing this and I picked you because I believe you to

be perfect for it. I'll do anything I can to get this movie made, and you're a part of it."

In class, he told us that there are three kinds of directors: the technical director who knows every lens but doesn't relate to the talent, the performance director who works well with actors but is lost with the mechanics, and the total filmmaker, who combines both—that's what he wanted us to strive for.

He formed 480 hours of audio tapes of our class into the best-selling book *The Total Filmmaker*. I'm told Martin Scorsese keeps a copy on his set.

After studying with him, I asked if I could be an intern on one of his sets. He agreed and I remember witnessing an interesting technique. He was shooting an actor who was supposed to be on the verge of a nervous breakdown while making a peanut butter sandwich. As the camera rolled Jerry quickly barked out commands: pick up the knife, put it in the jar, turn the bread over, spread the butter, cut it in half, etc. In the final film, Jerry's voice was removed and the guy looked suitably nuts. When I related this memory to him on the stage of the Academy when they were honoring him, he replied, "Well, I told you when you were in the class that you were going to see great things."

We did.



In MEMORIAM



Brad Grey
(1957-2017)
Producer

Brad Grey was born in New York, NY. After earning a degree in business and marketing from the University of Buffalo, Grey co-founded Brillstein-Grey Entertainment Industry.

Grey began his career in entertainment while in college, working with Harvey Weinstein, Frank Sinatra, Bob Saget, and more. After creating Brillstein-Grey Entertainment with talent manager Bernie Brillstein, Grey developed hit shows such as *It's Garry Shandling's Show*, *Real Time with Bill Maher*, *The Sopranos*, and *The Larry Sanders Show*. Grey then began working with Paramount Pictures and in 2005 became the company's CEO. He served a 12-year tenure at Paramount, making films including *Iron Man*, *Mission: Impossible*, *Transformers*, *No Country for Old Men*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *True Grit*, *Arrival*, and *Fences*. Grey also served on the USC School of Cinematic Arts Board of Councilors.

He is survived by his wife, Cassandra Huysentruyt Grey, and his four children: Emily, Jules, Max, and Sam.

Harvey Gene Grossman
(1937-2017)
Attorney

After a successful career in politics serving in public office and working as a public defender, Harvey Gene Grossman left Washington D.C. for Hollywood to pursue his passion for film.

In 1985, he earned an MFA from the Peter Stark Producing Program. Grossman, who was born in Corpus Christi, TX, graduated from Princeton University in 1959, then Harvard Law School in 1963. He also attended the London School of Economics.

Grossman is survived by his son Christopher Bailey, sister Elizabeth Grossman Gans, and companion Emilie Farenthold.



Wendy Appel/Apple
(1944-2017)
Documentarian

Wendy Appel, who used the professional name Wendy Apple, was a producer, director, and editor in feature film, documentary, and television for over four decades.

She was born in New York and earned a BFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. She worked on acclaimed films such as *Hard Rain* with Bob Dylan, *The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing*, *Appearing Nightly* with Lily Tomlin, and more. Appel, who taught documentary filmmaking in SCA's Summer Program, was passionate about media, feminism, politics, students, friends, and protecting the environment. She was also a member of the Director's Guild of America.

She is survived by her mother Ruth Craven, brother Steven Appel, and a close-knit family of friends.

Howard E. Rieder
(1930-2016)
Executive/Documentarian

Howard E. Rieder, who was born in Los Angeles, earned both his BA and MA from the School of Cinematic Arts.

He became a well-respected advertising and public relations executive, working for companies such as Thomas Organ, Revell Toys, and Nissan Motor Corp. He volunteered for the Police Department and helped write, produce, and direct documentaries for the City of Prescott, Arizona. Rieder also wrote, produced, and directed the documentary *Go South* (2009) about Ron Barnes, a white professor from the University of Iowa who accepted a position at all-black Tuskegee University in 1960s Alabama.

Rieder is survived by his wife, Kathie; three daughters, Dee O'Reilly, Leslie Rasmussen, and Linda Gardner; and seven grandchildren.



Scott Wyant
SCA Staff

Scott Wyant was the Manager of Information Systems at the School of Cinematic Arts from 1998 to 2003.

Wyant earned a bachelor's degree from UC Irvine and later a master's degree from UCLA. He was a lifelong, avid body surfer and had a deep appreciation for the ocean. Wyant also loved music and attended the New Orleans JazzFest every year. He was a longtime member of the Culver City City Council and Culver City Chamber of Commerce and held multiple positions, including the Culver City Planning Commissioner. Wyant worked in USC School of Cinematic Arts' IT department as the Manager of Information Systems for five years.

Wyant is survived by his wife Leslie Spanier-Wyant, daughter Molly Hyant, son-in-law Doug Hyant, and father Lee Wyant.



Midori Hepburn
(1969-2017)
Manager/Technician

Midori Hepburn was born in Southern California and studied at USC's School of Cinematic Arts.

Hepburn was born and raised in Southern California. She studied production at SCA, graduating in 1992. Hepburn's successful career in the entertainment industry spanned over two decades and included stints at Fox, MGM, and Paramount. She had a keen passion for film history and was a contestant on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*. Hepburn is remembered by family, friends, and fellow SCA alums as generous, kind, and supportive.

She is survived by her mother Helen, and family members including her uncle Cheech Marin.



Jonathan Bernbaum
(1982-2016)
Videographer

Jonathan Bernbaum was born in Berkeley, CA, and studied at USC's School of Cinematic Arts.

After graduating from USC's School of Cinematic Arts in 2008, Bernbaum became a multi-talented visual artist. He garnered international recognition as a video jockey, combining lights and video projections at electronic music shows. Bernbaum toured around the world with various international electronic music groups. He was tragically killed in the Oakland "Ghost Ship" fire in December 2016, amongst other artists and friends. Bernbaum is remembered by friends and family for his intelligence, creativity, and talent.

He is survived by his parents, Edwin and Diane Bernbaum; his brother, David Bernbaum; and his grandmother, Miriam Lowe.



Lawrence Garcia
(1959-2017)
Producer

Lawrence Garcia earned his bachelor's degree from the School of Cinematic Arts in 1984.

He went on to work with Steven Spielberg, Danny DeVito, and Spike Jonze. His many notable credits include *Jurassic Park*, *Schindler's List*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and *Being John Malkovich*. After working with Amblin Entertainment and Propaganda Films, Garcia became the VP of Development at Gravity Entertainment where he worked on *Bully*, *Kids*, and *Saved!*. Garcia was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Garcia is survived by his mother and father Theresa and Larry Garcia, and large extended family.



John Nordlinger
(1963-2017)
Writer/Producer

John Nordlinger, who studied filmmaking at School of Cinematic Arts, was an avid climber, athlete, and world traveller.

He was born in Townsend, MA, and joined the army before attending Northeastern University. After college, Nordlinger embarked on a successful career in the high tech field, working for Oracle and Microsoft. Following 9/11, Nordlinger rejoined the army and became a member of the U.S. National Guard. In 2013, Nordlinger earned an MFA at the School of Cinematic Arts.

He is survived by his mother Loraine Nordlinger, sister Beth, and brothers Stephen and Francis.



Fred J. Koenekamp
(1922-2017)
Cinematographer

Fred J. Koenekamp was born in Los Angeles, CA. After studying at USC and serving in World War II, Koenekamp became an Academy Award-winning cinematographer.

Fred J. Koenekamp was the son of Hollywood cinematographer Hans Frederick Koenekamp. Growing up, Koenekamp often visited his father on set and developed an interest in film. He enrolled at USC in the commercial aviation program, but enlisted in the Navy when World War II broke. After returning home from war, Koenekamp began working in the film industry as a cameraman. Koenekamp was nominated for an Academy Award for cinematography for *Patton* (1970) and *Islands in the Stream* (1977) and won the Oscar for Best Cinematography for *The Towering Inferno* (1974). Koenekamp received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Cinematographers in 2015. He became connected to SCA through his son-in-law Denny Guyitt, who is a graduate of the production program.

Koenekamp is survived by his daughter Kathy Guyitt.

[ALUMNI *Quicktakes*]

William M. Akers '83 returns as Chair of Belmont University's Motion Pictures program.

Judd Apatow follows up his best-selling book *Sick In The Head* with a sequel. Apatow will be honored with the SAG-AFTRA Foundation Award for his work as a director, writer, and producer.

John August '94 wrote the upcoming live-action feature *Aladdin*.

Ann Austen '88 won a Daytime Emmy in the Best Animated Preschool Program category for executive producing *The Snowy Day* for Amazon Studios.

Brett Baer '88 will executive produce the multi-camera comedy *Immediate Family* that he co-wrote with Dave Finkel.

John Bailey was named the 36th President of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Daniel Barnz '95 will direct a feature based on Ryan Wash's life. Wash is an openly gay black debater who won the 2013 Cross Examination Association and National Debate Tournament championships.

Beau Bauman '01 is set to produce *Match* for DreamWorks Pictures. SCA faculty member **Peter Sollet** will direct the rom-com set in a world where the government finds your perfect partner.

Jason Michael Berman '06 will produce the Mandalay Pictures film *City on Fire* based on the West Philadelphia Fire of 1985.

Michael Berns '92 has been named executive producer/showrunner of Season 2 of *Chesapeake Shores* on the Hallmark Channel.

David Bertman '96 directed an episode of ABC's *American Housewife*. Bertman won an ACE Eddy for editing the pilot of *This Is Us*.

Chelsea Beyl '07 was nominated for a Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing in a Preschool Animated Program for *Doc McStuffins*.

Todd Black is producing a remake of the 2015 French film *Disorder* for Sony. Black will produce *Linda And Monica*, about the budding friendship between Linda Tripp and Monica Lewinsky.

Michael Bostick '90 will executive produce a TV series based on the bestselling book *Apollo 8*. Bostick will also produce a new untitled comedy with Sandra Bullock for Warner Brothers.

Ted Braun '88 is directing a documentary film focusing on Gustavo Dudamel, the artistic director of the L.A. Philharmonic.

Julian Breece '05 received a put pilot commitment from Fox for the new TV drama *Victory*. *Victory* is set in the competitive world of gospel choirs.

Xavier Burgin '15 was named one of Fast Company's "100 Most Creative People In Business" for his viral linked narrative tweets on his account XLNB.

Sheldon Candis '03 was a fellow in Sundance's 2017 FilmTwo Program, which includes **Rick Famuyiwa '96** as an advisor.

John Carpenter signed a deal with Universal Cable Productions to executive produce scripted television. Carpenter is working on *Tales For A Halloween Night*, based on Carpenter's graphic novel series, for the Syfy network.



Jason Clodfelter '00 was named Co-President of Sony Pictures Television Studios. Clodfelter will oversee all of Sony's television programming from comedy to miniseries.

Ryan Coogler '11 will direct/produce *Wrong Answer*, based on the Atlanta high school educators' standardized-test cheating scandal in 2013.

Ericson Core will direct a film based on *The Translator*, a bestseller about the genocide in Western Sudan. Core will also be directing *The Claim*.

R.J. Cutler signed a deal with Matador Content to develop nonfiction projects. He will develop a six-part series for The History Channel based on the book *The Breach: Inside The Impeachment of Bill Clinton*.

Scott Derrickson '95 will direct the new fantasy drama *Lock and Key* for Hulu. He is also tapped to direct the *Doctor Strange* prequel.

Tom DeSanto signed a deal with Critic Guoan to produce a series of international films for a global market.

Peter Dowling '97 sold his action spec script *Exposure* to Screen Gems.

David Ellison will produce AMC's straight-to-series order drama *Dietland*. Ellison will also produce *Split* for Skydance Media.

Trevor Engelson '98 will produce a new comedy for Fox. The show will focus on a divorced couple's attempt to navigate life when the ex-wife marries into the British Royal Family.

Ryan Engle '01 wrote *Breaking In*, which centers on a woman fighting home invaders.

Jason Ensler '97 is joining Fox' horror drama *The Exorcist* as an executive producer/director for its upcoming second season.

David Erickson '97 signed a multi-year deal to develop new shows with AMC. Erickson will also develop David Cronenberg's novel *Consumed* into a drama series for AMC.

Dan Etheridge '92 will produce *I Mom So Hard*, a new multi-camera comedy from CBS based on the successful YouTube webseries *#imomsohard*.

Chris Fedak '98 wrote the film *Ambulance* and **James Vanderbilt '99** is producing.

Paul Feig '84 will direct and produce the thriller *A Simple Favor* for Lionsgate.

Gary Fleder '93 signed a two-year first-look deal with Freeform. Fleder also signed a deal with ITV Studios to develop a TV series adaptation of *In The Blood*.

David Goyer '88 will produce/co-write Warner Bros' *Green Lantern Corps* film. He is also producing the thriller *Assassination Nation*, as well as a biopic about tennis champ Arthur Ashe.

Daniel Y-Li Grove '12 made his directorial debut with the film *The Persian Connection*.

Taylor Hackford will direct *Signal Hill*, a drama focusing on Johnnie Cochran's pursuit of justice in the Signal Hill police brutality case.

Paul Haddad '91 is an executive producer for Sundance TV and AMC Networks. He was nominated for a Daytime Emmy for his work on *Close Up With the Hollywood Reporter*.

Jason Hall will rewrite and direct *The Virginian*, the origin story of George Washington, for New Line.

Poppy Hanks '95 will produce a remake of Nicolas Lopez's Chilean film *Sin Filtro*. Hanks will also executive produce a new political drama *Indivisible*.

Grant Heslov '86 will executive produce the dark comedy series *On Becoming A God In Central Florida* for AMC.

Todd Hoffman '93 will executive produce Crackle's new show *The Oath* for Storied Media Group.

Adam Hyman '98 was nominated for a Los Angeles-area Emmy for producing *Tale of Two Mountain Lions* for KCET.

Javier Grillo-Marxuch '93 will co-executive produce/write *The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance* for Netflix; the series will be a prequel series to the 1982 feature *The Dark Crystal*.

Ron Howard will direct and produce and **Brian Grazer '74** will produce an adaptation of J.D. Jakes's memoir *Hillybilly Elegy*.

Martin Hynes '96 will write the screenplay for a movie musical about the life of Pharrell Williams.

Hilde Susan Jægtnes '09 won the Grand Prize at Japan's Skip City Festival with the film *Handle With Care*. She was nominated for best Screenplay at the 2017 Amanda Awards.

Nancy Juvonen will produce *Black Rose Anthology*, a horror series for CW that will be completely written and directed by women.

Aaron Kaplan '90 launched a joint venture with CBS Corporation and his Kapital Entertainment.

Paul Kewley '97 won an International Emmy for *Shaun The Sheep: The Farmer's Llamas*.

Arif Khan '17 is an assistant producer at Oculus Story Studio; her VR film *Dear Angelica* has been nominated for an Emmy in the Outstanding Original Interactive Program category.

Nahnatchka Khan '94 will executive produce her comedy *Jalen vs. Everybody*, which received a pilot pickup by ABC. Khan received a script commitment plus penalty deal from Fox for the new single-camera comedy *Not Ready*. She is executive producing *Revival*, a new comedy which has also received a put pilot commitment at Fox.

Erica Shelton Kodish '98 signed a multi-year deal with CBS to develop new television projects.

Aby Kohn '96 and **Marc Silverstein '96** wrote and will direct *I Feel Pretty*, starring Amy Schumer.

David Kramer '92 was named Co-President of United Talent Agency along with Jay Sures.

Lee Toland Krieger will direct/executive produce a TV adaptation of *Ascendant*.

Tim Kring '88 sold the techno-thriller *In The Cloud* to Crackle.

Eric Kripke '96 wrote the script for *The House With A Clock In Its Walls*, an adaptation of the 1973 John Bellairs book. **James Vanderbilt '99** will produce with Kripke.

Jon Landau will executive produce the television adaptation of James Cameron's *True Lies*.

Doug Liman is directing and executive producing *Impulse* for YouTube Red's new subscription service.

Alex Litvak '95 wrote Sony's period action/adventure *Medieval* for producer **Neal Moritz '85**, and also wrote Stan Lee's superhero thriller *Realm*.

Shawn Levy '94 is set to helm a biopic about the famous rock concert promoter Bill Graham for Fox.

Matt MacDonald '11 created *Not Normal*, a 12-minute thriller, set entirely within the computer game *Grand Theft Auto V*.

Chuck MacLean '11 and **Jennifer Todd** received an official pilot order for their new criminal justice drama *City On A Hill*.

Philip Malamuth '86 was named the editor on Warner Bros. Animation's new series *Dorothy Wizard* of Oz.

Jen McGowan '05 co-created the television series *Angelica*, which has been named on WeForShe's 2017 WriteHer List as "one to watch."

Gerard McMurray '11 is set to direct the upcoming fourth installment in *The Purge* franchise.

Bill Mechanic '79 will produce the adaptation of Bennett Fisher's play *Damascus*.

Zeresenay Berhane Mehari '02 is set to direct the film adaptation of Camilla Gibb's bestseller *Sweetness in the Belly*.

Julian Meiojas '06 is shooting the season 2 finale of CBS's *Code Black*, which he co-wrote and co-produced. He was also recently wrote and co-produced for CW's *The Flash*.

Valerie Meraz '99 has been promoted to SVP of Content Acquisitions & Strategy for Turner's entertainment networks.

F. Hudson Miller '84 accepted a three-year position as Vice President of the Motion Picture Sound Editors Guild.

Neal Moritz '85 will produce a film adaptation of Square Enix's video game *Sleeping Dogs*.

Scott Nemes '95 now heads the television division for Brad Weston's independent studio Makeready.

Barry Neil Creque Williams '13 was named a 2017 Sundance Creative Producing Fellow. He will be work-shopping *Miss Juneteenth*, written and directed by **Channing Godfrey Peoples '11**.

Jeffrey Nachmanoff '94 is set to direct Sony's action thriller *Five Against A Bullet*, starring Jackie Chan.

Hiro Murai '06 is set to direct and executive produce the Amazon comedy pilot *Sea Oak*, starring Glenn Close.

Stu Pollard and **Harris McCabe '15** executive produced *The Outdoorsman* which premiered at the Austin Film Festival and had over ten Trojans in key positions including Production Coordinator **Kevin Matre '14**, Gaffer **Philey Sanneh '17**, 1st AD **Tim Astor '14**, Director **David Haskell '13**, Producer **Chris Abernathy '13**, Line Producer **Christina Jobe '16**, Key PA **Jamie Napoli '15**, Editor **Andrew Nackman '12**, Sound Editor / mixer **Peter Bawiec '16**, writer **Ryan Dee Gilmour '10** and Sound Editor / mixer **Jan Bezouska '14**.

Matt Reeves '88 will direct Warner Bros' *The Batman* film. His high-profile drama series *The Passage* has also been given a pilot order from Fox.

Jason Reitman will direct the film adaptation of *The Possibilities*, Kaui Hart Hemmings' follow up novel to *The Descendants*. Reitman will write, direct, and produce *The Frontrunner*, about the rise and fall of Gary Hart.

Shonda Rhimes '94 is developing a television show based on Luvvie Ajayi's essays titled *I'm Judging You: The Do Better Manual*. Rhimes will executive produce *Adult Behavior* for ABC. Rhimes' Grey's Anatomy spinoff about firefighters received a straight-to-series order from ABC.

Jay Roach '86 is set to direct/executive produce HBO's miniseries about the 2016 presidential election.

Aaron Schneider '88 will direct Sony's World War II drama *Greyhound*, which will star Tom Hanks.

Allison Schroeder '06 won a Humanitas Prize in the Feature Film category for *Hidden Figures*, which she wrote.

Josh Schwartz's *Fake Empire* has received a pilot order from Freeform to make *Misfits*, a supernatural drama inspired by the British series.

Peter Segal '84 is directing *Second Act*, a romantic comedy for STX Films.

Ian Shorr '08 sold his spec script *Infinite* to Paramount Pictures.

Bryan Singer '89 is set to produce *August One*, a futuristic sci-fi thriller where the Roman Empire never fell.

Ariel Sobel '17 advanced to the semifinal round of the Nicholl Fellowship Competition with a screenplay entitled *Assemblance of Truth*.

Melissa Stack '04 closed a deal with Fox for her untitled comedy script, which she will direct.

Josh Stolberg '97 wrote the novel *Incarnate*, which was published by Simon and Schuster.

Tim Story will direct New Line's reboot of *Shaft* (1971). Story also is developing a feature with HBO Films about the life of Stephanie St. Clair, a mobster in 1920s Harlem.

Danny Strong '96 sold a new TV project titled *Infamy* to Fox.

Victoria Strouse '97 has been tapped by Fox 2000 to adapt Katherine Sharp Landdeck's nonfiction book *The Women With Silver Wings*.

Matt Stuecken '01 will write and **Trevor Engelson '98** will produce *Scythe*, based on Neal Shusterman's YA novel, for the big screen.

Stephen Susco '00 will write the television adaptation of Fiona Cummins' upcoming debut novel *Rattle*.

Patrick Tobin BA '88, MFA '90 will write the TV adaptation of Katie Williams' soon-to-be-published science fiction drama *The Happiness Machine*.

Scott Thompson '94 will adapt the Pulitzer Prize winning memoir of Peter Balakin, *The Black Dog of Fate*.

Liza Treviño '05 published her novel *All That Glitters: Sex, Drugs, and Hollywood Dreams*, which won the 2017 International Latino Book Award for Best Fiction and the Mariposa Award for Best First Fiction.

Pam Veasey is set to act as show runner for the TV show *The Secret World*, based on the videogame of the same name.

Kurt Voelker wrote and directed *The Bachelors*, starring J.K. Simmons.

Jeff Wadlow '01 had his script *Truth or Dare* picked up by Blumhouse. Wadlow will also direct and executive produce the film.

Matthew Weiner '90 created, wrote, and produced his new series *The Romanoffs*.

John Wells '82 will direct the Vietnam War drama *Khe Sanh*.

Max Winkler '06 sold his dark comedy *The Flower to The Orchard* Production Company. Along with Winkler, SCA alumni **Matt Spicer '06**, **Eric Fleischman '11**, and **Brandon James '91** produced the project.

Jared Yeager '02 was named Director of Production of 21st Century Fox's new interactive/gaming division.

Scott Zabielski '01 directed the comedy *Where's the Money*, which was recently picked up by Lionsgate.

Robert Zemeckis '73 and his company ImageMovers have received a straight-to-series order from History to produce the UFO drama *Blue Book*.

Stu Zicherman '93 wrote the half-hour drama *Sweetbitter*, which is being put into development for Starz Network.

Randy Zisk '81 will direct and executive produce *The Good Cop*, a dramedy crime procedural for Netflix.

Peter Zhou '17, **Amanda Tasse '15**, **Devon Manney '17**, **Li Xia '16** and **Ariel Heller '17** were finalists for the 2017 Student Academy Awards. Heller won Best Narrative for *Mammoth*, and Manney won Best Animation for *Cradle*.

[FILM and TV RELEASES]

Baltimore Boys - Sheldon Candis '03, Director; Justin Wilson '98, Producer

The Big Sick - Judd Apatow, Producer

The Book of Henry - John Schwartzman, Cinematographer

Boston - Jon Dunham '00, Producer/Director/ Cinematographer

Buster's Mal Heart - Jonako Donley '07, Producer

The Dark Tower - Brian Grazer '74, Producer; Ron Howard, Producer

Despicable Me 3 - Cinco Paul '93, Writer

Detroit - Megan Ellison, Producer

The Emoji Movie - Michelle Raimo '95, Producer

The Fate of the Furious - Neal Moritz '85, Producer

Five Came Back - Will Znidaric '96, Editor

Gerald's Game - Michael Fimognari '01, Director of Photography

Get Big - Dylan Morgan '15, Writer/Director

Girls Trip - Tracy Oliver '10, Writer

Hitman's Bodyguard - David Ellison, Producer

Ingrid Goes West - Matt Spicer '06, Writer/ Director



Jamie Napoli '15, Key PA; Andrew Nackman '12, Editor; Peter Bawiec '16, Sound Editor / mixer; Jan Bezouska '14, Sound Editor / mixer

Rebel In The Rye - Danny Strong '96, Director; Jason Shuman '96, Producer

Spider Man: Homecoming - Kevin Feige '95, Producer

Step - Steven Cantor '95, Producer

Transformers: The Last Knight - Tom DeSanto, Producer; Don Murphy '88, Producer

War for the Planet of the Apes - Matt Reeves '88, Writer/Director; Amanda Silver '89, Producer



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

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

Black-ish - Lindsey Shockley '07, Writer/ Supervising Producer

Casual - Jason Reitman, Executive Producer/ Director

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

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

Code Black - Julian Meijos '06, Writer/Co-Producer

Crashing - Judd Apatow, Writer/Executive Producer

Divorce - Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

Documentary Now - Alex Buono '95, Director

Dynasty - Josh Schwartz, Writer/Executive Producer

Elena of Avalor - Craig Gerber '92, Writer/ Executive Producer

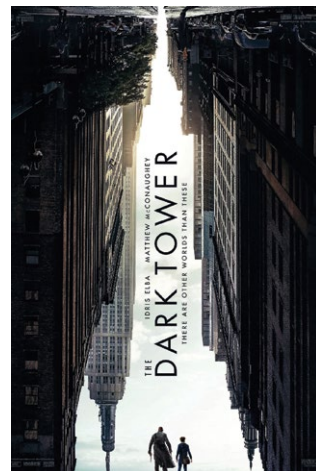
Empire - Danny Strong '96, Writer/Executive Producer; Brian Grazer '74, Executive Producer

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

Feud - Gina Welch, Writer/Co-Producer

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

Halt and Catch Fire - Chris Cantwell '04, Writer/Executive Producer



Jigsaw - Josh Stolberg '97, Writer

Little Evil - Eli Craig '04, Writer/Director; Jason Michael Berman '06, Producer; Nicholas Nesbitt '84, Poucher; Tia Nolan '91, Editor

The Outdoorsman - Kevin Matre '14, Production Coordinator; Ryan Dee Gilmour '10, Writer; Philey Sanneh '17, Gaffer; Tim Astor '14, 1st AD; David Haskell '13, Director; Chris Abernathy '13, Producer; Christina Jobe '16, Line Producer;

Wonder Woman - Charles Roven, Producer; Matthew Jensen '94, Cinematographer

American Gods - Bryan Fuller, Writer/Executive Producer

American Housewife - Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

House of Cards - Joshua Donen '79, Executive Producer

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

I Love Dick - Dara Resnik '03, Writer/Co-Executive Producer

Ice Road Truckers - John Starr '91, Lead Editor

Insecure - Prentice Penny '95, Writer/Executive Producer; Dayna Lynne North '95, Writer

L.A. Burning: The Riots 25 Years Later - Yvette M. Amirian '05, Editor/ Producer

The Leftovers - Carly Wray '05, Writer/Co-Producer

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

Lost in Oz - Abram Makowka '03, Writer/ Executive Producer; Darin Mark '03, Writer/ Executive Producer; Jared Mark '08, Writer/Executive Producer

Love - Judd Apatow, Writer/Executive Producer; Mason Fink '12, Writer; Michael Lewen '11, Producer/Director



Lucifer - Nathan Hope '95, Producer/Director

The magicians - Mike Moore '11, Writer

Marvel's Runaways - Josh Schwartz, Executive Producer

Me, Myself & I - Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

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

Nashville - RJ Cutler; Executive Producer/Director

The Night Shift - Gabe Sach '84, Writer/ Executive Producer

The Originals - Talicia Raggs '94, Writer/Producer

Outcast - Chris Black '81, Writer/Executive Producer



Prison Break: Resurrection - Guy Ferland '88, Director

Quantico - Terilyn Shropshire '84, Editor

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

Rebel - John Singleton '90, Executive Producer/ Director; Sheldon Candis '03, Director

Rectify - Kate Powers '07, Writer

SEAL Team - Spencer Hudnut '08, Writer/Supervising Producer

A Season With Navy Football - Scott Stone '79, Executive Producer

Shades of Blue - Jack Orman '93, Writer/Executive Producer

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

Shameless - John Wells '82, Writer/ Executive Producer

Skylanders Academy - Stacey Sher '85, Executive Producer

Snowfall - John Singleton '90,



Writer/Executive Producer/Director; Trevor Engelson '98, Executive Producer; Meera Menon '11, Director; Michael Lehmann '85, Director; Hiro Murai '06, Director

Speechless - Erin O'Malley '96, Consulting Producer; Tim Doyle '87, Consulting Producer; Carrie Rosen '09, Writer

Stranger Things - Shawn Levy '94, Executive Producer/Director; Kevin D. Ross '90, Editor

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

SWAT - Aaron Thomas '02, Writer/Executive Producer; Neal Moritz '85, Executive Producer

This is Us - Kay Oyegun '13, Writer

Turn - Andrew Colville, Writer/Supervising Producer

The Voice - Keith Dinielli '96, Supervising Producer

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

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

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

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