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CINEMATOGRAPHER

A publication of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers

The Canadian Society of Cinematographers (CSC) was founded in 1957 by a group of Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa cameramen. Since then over 800 cinematographers and persons in associated occupations have joined the organization.

The purpose of the CSC is to promote the art and craft of cinematography in Canada and to provide tangible recognition of the common bonds that link film and video professionals, from the aspiring student and camera assistant to the news veteran and senior director of photography.

We facilitate the dissemination and exchange of technical information and endeavor to advance the knowledge and status of our members within the industry. As an organization dedicated to furthering technical assistance, we maintain contact with non-partisan groups in our industry but have no political or union affiliation.

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By Guido Kondruss



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Cover: CSC Award Gala host Melissa DiMarco, star of Citytv's Out There with Melissa DiMarco. Photos by John Narvali courtesy of Kodak Canada

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Joan Hutton csc



he 2011 CSC Awards Gala was another success. I think everyone realizes that to mount a show of this calibre requires a great deal of effort from many people. I would like to acknowledge a few of these frontline groups, which, at times, get lost in the shuffle.

First, a big thank you to this year's host, the talented Melissa DiMarco. We were looking for something a bit different this year, and Melissa more than delivered with her unique brand of comedy. She kept the evening flowing smoothly, peppered with many laughs.

Also a special thank you to this year's guest presenters, journalist Nancy Wilson, anchor of *CBC News Today*, Ferne Downey, actor and ACTRA's national president, and actor/director Rick Roberts. Their style and grace on stage were a tribute to our Awards Gala. We are indebted to you.

Keeping the traffic on stage flowing in the right directions were our two stage managers, Sydney Kondruss and Sylvia Richmond. They made sure that the host, the presenters and the awards recipients got on and off stage without mishap. Perhaps more importantly, they made sure the presenters got the right envelopes to read at the right time and that the right award went to the right recipient. A huge thank you for making it all run so efficiently.

A heartfelt thank you goes to this year's awards personnel – Marni Novitski, Nancy Angevine-Sands, Ewanna Gallo, Joel Longland, Abraham Bankole and Graeme Kondruss – from making beautiful flower arrangements to making and organizing name tags to selling raffle tickets and everything in between. They did it all and made it look perfect.

The CSC always records the Awards Gala, and this year we took it a step further by making it a two-camera shoot under the watchful eye of director Luke Gallo. His hard-working crew consisted of shooters Ian McLaren and Alexey Sikorsky, both CSC members, and grip Jordan de Biasi. Their efforts were much appreciated. Luke is editing the production and a DVD will be sent to each of our nominees.

The CSC is a not-for-profit organization. We do not receive government funding or any grants. We exist by our membership dues, our wits and especially through the generous support of our sponsors. Without our sponsors, the Awards Gala and the CSC would be greatly diminished. We thank them for helping us achieving our common purpose, "to foster and promote the art of cinematography."

And finally, a humble thank you to CSC Executive Director Susan Saranchuk and her assistant Karen Longland for their amazing talent and skill in producing yet another fabulous Awards Gala. See everyone again next year.

LETTERS TO THE PRESIDENT

Dear Joan,

It was interesting to read the article on Serge Desrosiers csc and the shooting of Marécages in the traditional manner on film. Until very recently, every feature I shot was on 35 mm with no DI, only neg cut to interneg and entirely optical postproduction. As DI post-production started to take over, and it was possible to compare DI with my traditionally shot films backto-back in theatres, it was very interesting to see an obviously sharper image, more natural colour rendition and smoother contrast with the traditional approach. DI's, for all their convenience, are a bit of a step backwards and there is a noticeable difference, especially in image sharpness, which becomes really obvious on a big screen. Audiences now seem to be conditioned to the loss of sharpness because they don't seem to notice, but when you see a 35-mm print direct from the negative, it's quite startling. It's a bit like hearing an old vinyl record on a good turntable and suddenly realizing how much richness and depth has been lost in sound quality with digital CDs and Mpgs.

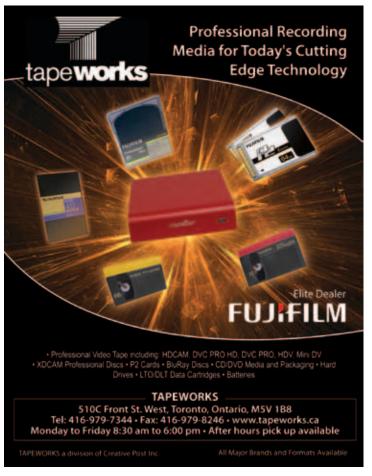
I really enjoy shooting the traditional approach because, as the DOP, I have much more direct involvement in the image and I feel I can contribute more to the emotional and visceral elements of the film as it is being created. As digital cinematography and post-production takes over (and we, as DOPs, have very little choice in the format we would like to shoot) there is less and less craft in the DOP's job. Too many elements are left to be fixed in post, with dubious cost savings.

I still fight for shooting traditionally (and it is, by the way, still by far the cheapest way to shoot with the goal of finishing with a theatrical print), but it's a losing battle with misled number crunchers that don't see the big picture and have succumbed to the digital hype. It's so refreshing to see a film still being made this way!

Yours sincerely, Christopher Ball csc







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ZTV Broadcast Services

Goes Digital By Krystyna Hunt

he success of ZTV Broadcast Productions is no doubt due to the company's 20 years as a video equipment rental company in a very competitive, constantly changing business, its diligent research of its customers' needs, warm and friendly personal service, and building on the art of being small.

"For me, integrity is important. It's important what people think of me," said founder and CEO Steve Zajaczkiwsky. "We try to make the whole rental experience easy and friendly. We'll ask you to sit down and offer you a cup of coffee. If something screwed up, or you lost something, or you don't have something back exactly by 9:00 a.m., we won't take your head off. We will listen to and help you with what you need. Also we respect the competition. If we don't have something, we'll refer you to someone who does. They'll do the same for us. We all have to play in the same park, so respect is essential. Our motto is: do a good job and they'll be back."

ZTV is located in Mississauga, Ontario in an industrial warehouse. The company carries 32 brands of equipment, including Arri, Fujinon, Manfrotto and Zeiss. This is certainly a different world than Zajaczkiwsky experienced starting out in the early 1990s. He began in the late 1980s renting equipment at David J. Woods, then working as a stagehand for the CBC on *The Tommy Hunter Show, Kids in the Hall* and *Marketplace* and then for Citytv on Much Music. In 1992, when he decided he had learned enough about the needs of the business, he went out on his own.

"I begged and borrowed \$40,000 to \$50,000. When you're a kid, in your 20s, that's a lot of money. I bought the camera and sat in my basement for five months and thought, 'what have I got myself into?' After about five or six months, the camera started going out and then I had two cameras. A year after that, I had three cameras and then four and five, and it just kept growing."

He first rented to staging companies and his friend DOP Yuri Yakubiw csc, who was a frequent customer. Many growing pains later he had a thriving business. Today, going with the flow, ZTV has the Sony F3, Zeiss Compact and Panasonic AF100 complete camera packages, a Cinedeck solid-state recorder available for renting and the company is ready and open for the digital-cinematic business.

"You have to be very diligent, giving our customers exactly what they want. In the old days, there were two cameras, either Betacam or DVcam. Now there's different Kodaks, different recording mediums, td cards, sbs cards, flash drives, nano-flash drives – it just goes on and on and on. You have to hone in on what your customers want because there are about 10 things that will do the same job."

Before things went digital, ZTV could only supply a limited amount of equipment. Industry giants had the lock on the most sophisticated, high-end video equipment such as the Sony F23, F35 and Panavision Genesis, cameras that cost \$150,000 to \$250,000 to buy. Customers would pay as much as \$10,000 rental per day. "Our customers could never pay for that kind of stuff. If you had 10 productions going, all those productions had no choice except to go with the \$10,000-a-day rental equipment because the technology wasn't available for anything cheaper. Now with the new Sony F3, and the others, we pay \$50,000 for the entire package. Technology has become cheap enough for ZTV to provide equipment it was never before able to provide. This has opened the door for ZTV to get into the digital-cinematic market.

"Now they can go high end, or pretty darn good, for a hell of a lot cheaper. Don't get me wrong, there are still plenty of applications where you need that kind of high-end package, but today maybe two out of those 10 jobs would go with it and the otherswould go with the cheaper package." ZTV's current inventory is about 70 per cent HD. "We got it all," said Zajaczkiwsky. "We got the cameras, the state recorder, all the little widgets and adaptors – lots of little boxes that make a package complete." For more details on equipment, go to ZTV's website, ztvbroadcast.com.



Steve Zajaczkiwsky, CEO ZTV Broadcast Services

Comweb and WFW International Announce Appointments

Paul Bronfman, chairman and CEO of Comweb and WFW International, announced the appointments of Rick Perotto to the position of vice-president, business development, and David Hardy to the position of vice-president, client services. Perotto joins Comweb/WFW following a 13-year career as a business representative of IATSE 667. Prior to that, he was president of the local union for five years while working as a freelance 1st A.C. on hundreds of television productions and over 30 feature films such as *Good Will Hunting* and *Sea of Love*. In 2001, Perotto co-founded Film Ontario and currently serves as board secretary of this successful organization through which he regularly promotes film and television productions within the province.

Hardy comes to Comweb/WFW after a decade of service as a business agent for NABET 700. In that capacity, he was a key member of their management team while representing their interests on the board of Film Ontario since 2005. He is also a current board member of the Cultural Careers Council of Ontario and the Toronto Film Board. He brings significant on-set experience to this role having worked for several years as a freelance production coordinator.

CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival Screenplay Giveaway

The CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival has announced the details of its 2011 Screenplay Giveaway. The competition is a chance for one screenplay, chosen by established directors and filmmakers from across Canada, to receive many essential filmmaking resources. The winner will be announced at the festival awards ceremony in Toronto on June 5, 2011.

Valued at over \$70,000, the prize package includes: post-production services by Deluxe; studio time at Cinespace Studios; Kodak film stock; supply services from Location Equipment Supply; two programming passes for WIFT-T; legal counsel from Heenan Blaikie Solicitors; story-editing services from Super Channel; postcard and business card design by Agency 71; festival strategy consultation; and shipping and application of submissions by Ouat Media for 50 festivals within two years. The package also includes a range of consultations: an ACTRA TIP consultation, a production consultation with CFC's executive in charge of production and post and an entertainment insurance consultation from BFL Canada.

To be eligible, screenplays must have a director and/or producer attached. Entries will be reviewed by a team of readers. Selected scripts will then be put in front of a jury, who will decide the winner. Deadline for submissions is Monday, May 9, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

The Cinar Fraud Saga Continues

In March, Quebec police began to make arrests of former Cinar (the Montreal-based animation house now known as Cookie Jar) executives over their roles in alleged late-1990s investment fraud. Former Cinar CFO Hasanain Panju and Lino Pasquale Matteo, president of Mount Real, were arrested mid-month after a warrant was served by the Sûreté du Québec. Cinar co-founder Ronald Weinberg surrendered to police a week later in Montreal. Still at large, and believed to be out of the country, is John Xanthoudakis, former president of Norshield Financial Group.

All four men face 36 fraud charges associated with \$120 million in Cinar funds that were invested between August 1998 and March 2000. The Sûreté du Québec, in a statement, said they have evidence that Weinberg and Panju invested the company funds in the Bahamas without the knowledge of Cinar's board of directors and profited from those investments. The statement further alleged Xanthoudakis facilitated the high-yield Caribbean investments, while Matteo allegedly helped disguise the whereabouts of the funds.

The late 1990s Cinar story originally hinged on allegations about how U.S. scripts were represented as 'Canadian-content' by the Montreal-based animation studio to secure money from Telefilm. No criminal charges were ever brought over those allegations, following an RCMP investigation. However, the Cinar story led to national headlines when the company admitted that around \$122 million in funds had been invested in offshore accounts without board approval.

In 2002, Weinberg and his wife, the late Micheline Charest, were fined by the Quebec Securities Commission and removed as CEOs, without admitting criminal wrong doing. Charest died in 2004 owing to complications from cosmetic surgery. The surprise criminal charges mark another chapter in the Cinar story, a Canadian cartoon production company that flew high during the 1990s on the strength of hit television shows like *Arthur*, *Caillou* and *The Busy World of Richard Scarry*.

2011 Banff World Media Festival

The Banff World Media Festival is to honour Canada's king of funny, Eugene Levy, with an award of excellence at its upcoming event. The Hamilton-born Levy has performed in over 40 films, include box office earners like *Bringing down the House, Cheaper by the Dozen 2, Father of the Bride 2, Over the Hedge* and the *American Pie* franchise. Levy, who made a name as part of the legendary *SCTV* comedy troupe, has also long collaborated with director Christopher Guest on movies like *Best in Show, Waiting for Guffman, For Your Consideration* and *A Mighty Wind.* Levy will also conduct a master class while in Banff. The 32nd annual Banff World Media Festival takes place from June 12 to 15, 2011.



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The Best Little Awards Show in Canada

By Guido Kondruss Photos by John Narvali courtesy of Kodak Canada

f awards were handed out to awards shows, the 2011 CSC Awards Gala would, without a doubt, take home the statue for the show with the best mix of style, allure and just plain fun. The evening, which honours the best in cinematography achievement, was filled with camaraderie, good will and loads of laughs courtesy of this year's host, actor and comedienne Melissa DiMarco.

The very beautiful and very funny DiMarco is the star and the creative force behind the award-winning entertainment show *Out There*, which takes a hilarious and off-beat look at the world of celebrity. DiMarco kept the audience laughing and smiling throughout the night with her particular brand of humour and says she has a tremendous respect for shooters. "One of the biggest compliments I can give cinematographers that I've worked with is when I get stopped by a fan. 'Ms. DiMarco, is that you?' And I go, 'Heh, heh... yes!' They say, 'Wow! You look a lot better on television.'"

However, the blessing of comedy aside, the essence of evening belonged to cinematography. In her opening remarks to the 325 people in attendance at the awards ceremony, Joan Hutton, president of the CSC, said that there is much to be proud of in the face of an industry that seems to be changing daily. "Groundbreaking technological advancements in our industry seem to happen at the speed of light. Keeping on top of your game is a major challenge for today's cinematographer. However, we have risen to the occasion by meeting each new advancement head on. The brilliance of mastering these modern tools of our craft will shine through clearly in tonight's nominee clips."

And shine through they did. This year's jurors had a very tough job picking the best from a field of incredible cinematography. The big winner of the evening was Ousama Rawi csc, bsc, picking-up a pair of "eyeballs" for his rich and lush cinematography in two period pieces. Ousama won the TV Drama

Cinematography Award for the miniseries *Ben Hur* and the TV Series Cinematography Award for *The Tudors*, where he continues to work wonders with candlelight and shadows. Ousama has received the TV Series Cinematography Award twice before, in 2008 and 2009, for his outstanding work on *The Tudors*. Unfortunately, Ousama could not make the Gala because he was in Prague, shooting episodes for another historical series, *The Borgias*. In his acceptance email, he was stunned by his dual win. "I was quite overwhelmed when I received the news that I had won in both categories. I was hoping that one of them would be a winner but I never dreamed that it would be both. I am so grateful to the CSC."

The 2011 CSC Awards Gala may have a record of sorts for the most repeat winners in the same categories from the previous year. There were three of them. Last year's winner and this year's winner of the Corporate/Educational Cinematography Award was Sarorn Sim for his compelling visuals in *Hope School*, which tells the story of rebuilding three schools destroyed by the devastating 2008 earthquake in Sichuan province in China that left more than 69,000 people dead. Sarorn said it's the love of craft, not awards, which drives cinematographers and their work. "Standing there in earthquake zones in Haiti and in China, the thought of accepting any type of recognition or award for what you are about to see through your viewfinder and capture through your lens is simply unthinkable. It simply never crosses your mind. What compels us to do what we do, to go further and higher, is simply a passion that we have."

To win the Lifestyle/Reality Cinematography Award for a second straight year, Peter Rowe csc donned a refrigeration suit, a respirator and made his way 300 metres below ground to be one of the first to shoot the extraordinary giant crystals of Chihuahua, Mexico for an episode on *Angry Planet* called "Crystal Caves." Rowe recounted for the audience the hazardous conditions he and his crew endured to get those amazing

shots. "To begin making this film, I had to go into training for six weeks to handle the conditions in the cave, with 55 Celsius heat and almost 100 percent of humidity. Then we had to do the same with the camera, to acclimatize it for 12 hours to enable it to work in those conditions which were extreme."

The third repeat winner of the evening was Kirk Neff from Global News. For a second time in a row, Neff received the Stan Clinton Award for News Essay Cinematography for his expansive camera work on the report "Field of Dreams" from the show 16:9 The Bigger Picture. The report took a look at the Iowa farm that was the set for the movie Field of Dreams starring Kevin Costner, and how the owners kept that dream alive for the past 30 years.

It was a stellar night for Global News all around, because another one of their news shooters, Gord Edick, received The Roy Tash Award for Spot News for his edgy camera work documenting confrontations between protestors and police during last summer's G20 meeting in Toronto. Gord said that being honoured by the CSC with the award was the "highlight of his professional career."

The most poignant portion of the evening was the presentation of the Fritz Spiess Award for Commercial Cinematography to Gamal Elboushi csc, Acs for his stunning and vibrant visuals on *Masr El-Naharda Egypt Today*. Gamal could not attend the Gala because of the circumstances in Egypt and their impact on him personally. During the height of the uprising in Cairo, Gamal was arrested by security forces, beaten, his camera gear confiscated and rioters burned and destroyed his two vehicles. Despite his current situation, Gamal, in his acceptance email, was upbeat about his award and the future of his country. "Thank you CSC, and thank you judges for choosing me for this award. It's such a great honour to receive it. It's a dream come true for me. I was really hoping to be there with you to share this special moment with all of my talented peers. I'd like to dedicate this award to my country, Egypt."

There was very little guess work involved with the Performance Cinematography Award, since there was only one nominee. No surprises, then, when Brendan Steacy csc received the award for his stop-action cinematography on the surreal film *Last Call*. In the film, two ice dancers figure skate their way through the hot, dusty streets of Havana, Cuba. Yes, *Last call* is as quirky as it sounds and very worthwhile watching.

A surprised Samy Inayeh took the stage after hearing his name called as the winner of the Music Video Cinematography Award for his work on the V.V. Brown video "Shark in the Water," which featured the cast from *Degrassi: The Next Generation*. Actor and director Rick Roberts, who presented the award borrowed a new term in describing Samy's cinematography. "There are some 'sick-ass' shots in your video." My son and his friends are studying film and video and you hear that a lot in our house. So I just want to alert everyone to some new jargon that's coming down the pipeline."

Samy, in his acceptance speech, was quick to point out that his



Gamal Elboushi csc, acs with his wife, Rasha and daughters Nour (holding flag) and Kenzy after receiving his award in Cairo, Egypt. Although a multiple award winner, this is the first award for Gamal showing his Canadian and Australian accreditations.

"sick-ass shots" would not have been possible without his talented and dedicated crew. "On a project where you try to do interesting and creative work everyday, you know that you rest on the laurels of your crew, so first of all I would like to thank my crew, a fantastic crew that I've been working with for years."

The Dramatic Short Cinematography Award was presented to Calgary-based Craig Wrobelski csc for his beautiful and haunting images in the film *June*. A jubilant and somewhat astonished Wrobelski told the audience that he was in awe of what he's seen this evening. "Congratulations to all the other nominees. It's so inspiring, to see all this great work that's being done by so many people in so many different genres. It is very inspiring"

This year's recipient of the President's Award for "for outstanding service to the Canadian Society of Cinematographers," was Don Angus, the former editor of *CSC News*. When he took over the *CSC News*, which at the time was little more than a newsletter, Don told the Gala audience that he had one goal in mind. "My objective was to simply make the publication for cinematographers, by cinematographers about cinematography." He did, by bringing his hard-edged professionalism to the magazine, writing concise descriptive prose and guiding it into the digital age as a glossy, full-colour publication with a focus on technology. His tireless efforts and talent laid the ground for today's *Canadian Cinematographer* magazine. His passion for his job was only matched by his zeal for cinematographers.



Gord Edick, Global News, the Roy Tash Award for Spot News Cinematography



Kirk Neff, Global News, the Stan Clinton Award for News Essay Cinematography



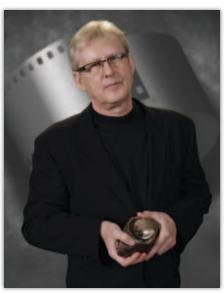
Kerry Smart, Camera Assistant Award of Merit



Sarorn Sim, Corporate/Educational Cinematography



Peter Rowe csc, Lifestyle/Reality Cinematography



Damir Chytil csc, Docudrama Cinematography



Rob Sim, President, Sim Video winner of the Bill Hilson Award



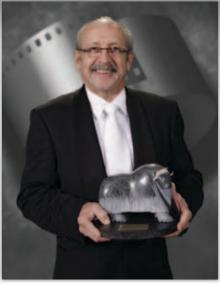
Samy Inayeh, Music Video Cinematography sponsored by Dazmo Digital



Craig Wrobleski csc, Dramatic Short Cinematography



Don Angus, President's Award



George Willis csc, sasc, Kodak New Century Award



Gaston Bernier, Sales Manager, Production Entertainment Imaging, Kodak Canada receiving the award for Nicolas Bolduc csc, Theatrical Feature Cinematography sponsored by Dazmo Deluxe



Brendan Steacy csc, Performance Cinematography



Accepting for John Walker csc on left Michael Ostroff, producer/director with Ron Silverman, President, Vistek sponsor of the Robert Brooks Award for Documentary Cinematography



Jeff Flowers, Vice-President of Marketing, Western Canada, Panavision Canada, and student winner Gregory Biskup, York University with student nominee Tess Marie Garneau, York University, Student Cinematography



David Herrington csc receiving the TV Drama Cinematography, sponsored by Sim Video, and TV Series Cinematography Award, sponsored by Technicolor for Ousama Rawi csc, bsc

2011 CSC AWARD WINNERS

The Roy Tash Award For Spot News Cinematography

Presented for Outstanding Spot News Cinematography by a Canadian Cameraperson Gord Edick, G20 Shots Fired/Protesters Confronted, Global News

The Stan Clinton Award For News Essay Cinematography

Presented for Best News Essay Where Cinematographic Distinction Is the Prime Consideration Kirk Neff, 16:9 The Bigger Picture, "Field of Dreams," Global TV

Camera Assistant Award Of Merit Kerry Smart

Corporate/Educational Cinematography

Sarorn Sim, Hope School

Student Cinematography Sponsored by Panavision Canada Gregory Biskup, Vidalonga, York University

Lifestyle/Reality Cinematography

Peter Rowe csc, Angry Planet "Crystal Cave"

Docudrama Cinematography

Damir Chytil csc, Breakout "Pittsburgh 6"

Robert Brooks Award For Documentary

Cinematography Sponsored by Vistek John Walker csc, Winds of Heaven: Emily Carr

Music Video Cinematography Award Sponsored by

Dazmo Digital

Samy Inayeh, V.V. Brown: "Shark in the Water"

Performance Cinematography Award

Brendan Steacy csc, Last Call

Dramatic Short Cinematography Award

Craig Wrobleski csc, June

Fritz Spiess Award For Commercial Cinematography

Gamal Elboushi csc, acs, Masr El-Naharda Egypt Today

Tv Drama Cinematography Sponsored by Sim Video

Productions Ltd.

Ousama Rawi csc, bsc, Ben Hur (Night 2)

Tv Series Cinematography Sponsored by

Technicolor Toronto

Ousama Rawi csc, bsc, The Tudors "Ep. 410"

Theatrical Feature Cinematography Sponsored by Deluxe

Nicolas Bolduc csc, La Cité

SPECIAL HONOUREES AT 2011 CSC AWARDS

The Bill Hilson Award Rob Sim, President, Sim Video, "For outstanding service contributing to the development of the motion picture industry in Canada."

The President's Award Don Angus, "For outstanding service to the Canadian Society of Cinematographers."

The Kodak New Century Award George Willis csc, sasc, "For outstanding contribution to the art of cinematography."

"When I stepped into the pages of the CSC News in 1994, I felt an instant rapport with cinematography and especially with you, the cinematographers. You loved your jobs as much as I loved mine. You were excited to talk about what you did and how you did it. Great stories come easy to natural story tellers, and CSC members are all natural story tellers." In retirement, Don has remained as editor emeritus with Canadian Cinematographer and still writes the occasional story.

This year's Bill Hilson Award for "for outstanding service contributing to the development of the motion picture industry in Canada" and The Kodak New Century Award "for outstanding contribution to the art of cinematography" highlighted two different ends of the spectrum of cinematographer's world – digital technology and film.

The presentation of the Bill Hilson Award was made by CSC executive member Dylan MacLeod csc to Rob Sim, founder and head of Sim Video, one of the most respected and busiest motion picture rental and service houses in the world Rob was on the vanguard of the digital revolution, becoming one its foremost experts and equipment supplier. Through his professionalism and dedication to the digital world, Rob has allowed cinematographers, directors and producers freedom of creativity and vision to push the production envelope to new levels in the film and television industry. That he could be of service, he told the Gala audience, has been very fulfilling for him through the years. "When I look around this room, I see more than colleagues and clients. I see friends old and new. I see the artist who have trusted and allowed me to help on some of the most pivotal projects. It has been an honour to work with so many of you, and I've thoroughly enjoyed helping your artistry and talent grow over the years. I couldn't be prouder to be part of this community."

George Willis csc was this year's recipient of the Kodak New Century Award, presented by Gaston Bernier, sales manager for Kodak Canada. Willis is one of the world's foremost commercial and underwater cinematographers. Known for his precise and superb lighting skills, Willis possesses the eye of an artist and treats each and every frame of film as if it were a small, exquisite miniature painting. A master of his craft, Willis says that in this digital age, the impact of film and its future should not be discounted.

"To me, film is still the best medium to capture and convey all the subtleties and tonalities of light and shade, mood and texture in the way that still seems to elude the digital medium in a complete way," he told the Gala audience. "Although the gap between digital and film narrows, I do not believe that film is going away anytime soon. Remember, if it wasn't for this," Willis held up a strip of 35-mm film for the audience to see, "there wouldn't be a tonight."

Two awards, two men, and two different ends of the industry working towards a common binding goal of advancing the art of cinematography, a goal that is shared and celebrated by everyone at the best little awards show in Canada!



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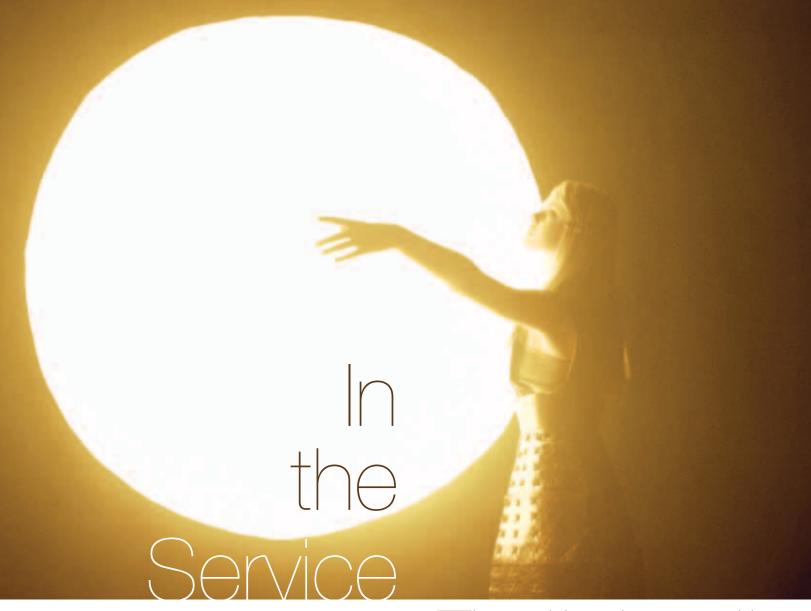
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of Simplicity

By Matthew Lloyd

he great French director Robert Bresson once said that style is everything that is not technique. In the age of digital-image making, it often seems that nothing could be further from the truth. The more we, as cinematographers, are made to adapt to new formats and imagers, the more these tools begin to dictate what can be done with the look of a picture and how we begin to affect images to accomplish certain effects.

When director Todd Cole from the Director's Bureau in Los Angeles approached me with a project for prolific fashion designers Rodarte, he immediately wanted to avoid all of the technicality that comes along with modern cinematography and return, in spirit and result, to a much simpler form of capturing a story visually. The irony, of course, was that this particular concept contained a host of very specific technical challenges that required thorough planning and technique to accomplish.

For several years now, the fashion industry has been commissioning some of the most sought-after commercial directors to make visual content that feature the newest lines of clothing, but further attempt to capture the narratives and aesthetics that inspire the brand. It's a strange hybrid production as you are trying to display a product in an appealing way but also go

further to capture the essence of the visual elements that go into developing a look for an entire line. Certainly a captivating experience for a cinematographer.

The impetus for the *The Curve of Forgotten Things* film was two fold. Aesthetically, Todd was inspired by the colour and light of northern California and the tone of 70s American films such as *Badlands* and *Days of Heaven*. On the opposite side of this was the very magical, otherworldly narrative that he had envisioned – a young girl slowly transcending the space/time relationship of the story by morphing in and out of clothing and spaces until returning to the source of her energy at the end of the story.

The casting of young actress Elle Fanning was a huge part of how this story was captured. She has such a powerful presence on screen and was able to portray beautifully the supernatural playfulness Todd was after. Additionally, our location was perfectly suited to the style of the piece. The Baldwin Heights Oil Fields in south Los Angeles offered the perfect blend of industrial wasteland and rural beauty, something between the opening of *Red Desert* and *Grey Gardens*.

The house in the story actually exists and is completely surrounded by oil pumps. It's such an interesting contrast that exists between this structure and its surroundings. We scouted the location numerous times before production to determine solutions to the host technical and effects issues we faced. The time-lapse opening sequence was especially problematic, as we simply couldn't dig a hole deep enough on top of this oil patch to make the shot work. We ended up digging a much wider and shallower hole and framing a lower angle as to not accentuate it's shallowness. In the end, Elle's small figure made the whole seem quite large.

The house plays and important role in the story. Much of our scouting was spent figuring out how to map out the effects and costume changes. The premise of the film is that the model is morphing from outfit to outfit as she passes through the various chambers in this house, which is vaguely familiar. It was certainly the intention to make the house feel magical and alive. We knew all along that some visual effects were going to be necessary to make the story work. But again, Todd's mandate was to serve the simple beauty of this relationship between the girl and her environment, and the effects really had to sell that magic.

Todd and I spoke at length about a lot of Jean Cocteau's work, specifically *La Belle et la bête*. That movie has magical effect shots that were all accomplished in-camera or with optical printing. With that in mind, we ended up producing a number of the transitioning wardrobe shots just by using the architecture and simple camera work to hide the edit. For the more complicated shots, like Elle disappearing into the wall, the producers reached out to a great team of VFX artists at Public VFX in Los Angeles. They were so great to work with, both on set and in post. It's rare to find effects people that understand genuine simplicity and understatement, but I think the guys at Public created a couple of very delicate and beautifully rendered images that don't stand out as effects at all.

In addition to the host of technical issue we were faced with, our producers at Funk Factory Films and the Director's Bureau pulled off a miracle scheduling and making the shoot work in the time they did. Due to Elle's age, and her busy schedule, everything we shot with her was done in one 10-hour day. Additionally we photographed the time lapse and the end credit sequence on that day as well. Most of the opening sequence was shot a couple of weeks later by Todd and myself. Working in such a constrained schedule, our production designer Pete Klein and the hair and makeup team really had no time waste. Kate and Laura Mulleave (who make up Rodarte) personally fitted Elle for all five outfits. When it came down to it, we really only had 20 minutes in between each scene to do makeup, hair, wardrobe, light and dress the set. And with a small crew, it meant everyone moving super fast. But Todd was so prepared and trusting in everyone's work that it all went reasonably smoothly. For Todd, the simpler the better.

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The whole job was shot using two Red MX cameras, one configured for Steadicam and one for handheld/studio. Our Steadicam operator, Dana Morris, is truly one of the best young operators in LA. His work was so critical to that early walking sequence. The incline was very steep, and his beautiful operating helped capture the lightness and effortlessness with which Elle's character approaches the house. Once inside the house I operated everything myself, which I don't necessarily love doing but due to the speed we had to move, I felt it most appropriate. For lenses we used my favorite set of Cooke Pan-Chros from The Camera House in L.A. They have such a great set of these lenses, in their original housings, which is becoming more and more rare. We shot them as wide open as possible to accentuate the flaring and blooming that the glass has naturally. The image has a wonderful soft quality all achieved without diffusion or netting.

The whole job was photographed in 4K HD at 24fps. Todd and I both felt that so much of these types of projects rely heavily on over-cranking as a way to sell the mood. This didn't interest us much, and we decided to keep everything normal speed. In dealing with the native R3D format out of the Red, I used the Red Rocket system integrated with DaVinci Resolve to grade all the dailies and transcode them to Apple Pro Res 4444 where they lived all the way through the process. I have found doing this





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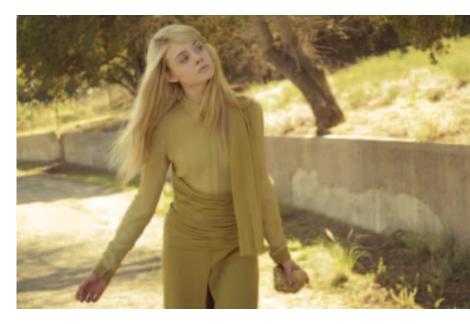
first pass on the Raw material very helpful to set the tone of the footage and not let anyone get used to something that is going to change at the end. The reality is that if DOPs don't start managing the initial delivery of these digital formats to the post side, the control of the image is completely out of our hands. Final grading was done at New Hat by renowned colourist Beau Leon, who did a marvelous job at finessing the final look.

Of all the scenes in the film, the ending "orb" sequence, as it was known, offered some of the most interesting challenges. Early on Todd came to me with the Weather Project by Olafur Eliasson that was installed at the Tate Modern in London. He asked me how we should go about creating a "sunset in Big Sur trapped in a barn." His intention was to have Elle's journey culminate in a return to the force of nature from which her being came (or something like that). He really wanted to feel this orb as "weather" or "nature" as opposed to a "light." It was about the energy and not the effect.

We worked with Source Maker Lighting in Los Angeles to try and figure out what the smallest helium balloon we could operate in this space was. It ended up being the smallest helium balloon in existence at 4.5 feet (or so I'm told), which was shipped in from New York. We had a 2x5K Tungsten Globes in there on a variac modulating between 40 and 80 per cent. The goal was to create a certain pulse to the scene. We also hazed the room to try and capture the rays emitted from the orb. The barn was an original structure on the property, so the crew had to work quickly to block a million holes where the haze would escape. Additionally the backside of the barn was dressed with large solids to try and give a sense of continuous space behind the orb. Public VFX added all the streaking and flares after the fact to further enhance the effect.

All in all, it was just a real honour to be asked to collaborate with such a talented group of people. Elle, Todd, Rodarte, Public, Funk Factory and Deerhunter all brought so much to the table that it really inspired the rest of us to go that much further. I think that if I learned anything from Todd and the whole experience it was how to exercise restraint and not get fixated on novelty. Even though we are making a dynamic project with all these great "cool" elements and technical challenges, it all really has to be in the service of simplicity and enhancing the subtly of the world you are trying to create. I think that the type of aesthetic Rodarte has developed up to this point was a perfect backdrop for Todd's filmmaking and proves that fashion film/commercials can really explore a lot more visually while still capturing the spirit of the line and the creativity behind it.

To view Todd Cole's *The Curve of Forgotten Things* by Rodarte, please visit: **nowness.com/day/2011/2/8/elle-fanning-x-rodarte-by-todd-cole**







t's indeed sometimes strange how events come together. Philippe Ros AFC was at an awards ceremony in Israel when he thought he recognized a name on one of the information boards that of his long-lost school friend Philippe Lavalette csc. After 30 years he was finally able to make contact with him. Through a sequence of events, Lavalette was instrumental in arranging for Ros to travel to Canada under the auspices of Rendezvous-vous du Cinéma Québécois Film Festival, which arranged for Ros's stay in Canada. Lavalette, who resides in Montreal, then contacted CSC President Joan Hutton csc. That is when I took over.

I tracked down Ros with the idea of arranging a screening of the remarkable film Oceans coupled with a Q&A session. I had heard about Oceans - that it was a technological marvel of cinematic splendour. Digital-imaging director and one of the 17 cinematographers, Ros was pivotal in the making of the underwater epic. But I didn't realize how pivotal and significant his job was until our first few conversations.

Oceans was an enormous and complicated undertaking. Its logistical and technological scope was mindboggling. It was a sevenyear undertaking with principal shooting beginning in 2005. It required 340 weeks of filming over a five-year period in 54 locations around the world. Oceans involved 17 cinematographers, including 10 underwater specialists, with up to six-toeight units shooting simultaneously. Many of the production's camera rigs and tools were developed and custom-built for Oceans to solve an array of movement and image conformity problems. Ros was quick to point out that the success of Oceans relied heavily on the participation and collaboration of his colleagues.

often called. Oceans is arguably the most significant underwater feature film since the groundbreaking work of Jacques Cousteau in his 1956 documentary The Silent World, where underwater cinematography was used for the first time to show the ocean deep wonders in colour. The Silent World was the first of Cousteau's two films to win Academy Awards for best documentary feature, the other being World without Sun in 1964.

Since The Silent World 35 years ago, the business of underwater filmmaking has seen very significant changes, not only in film and video technology but also in the development of diving technology. Modern divers are now able to utilize re-breather equipment, which allows for closer intimate views of sea life. Prior to the re-breather technology, traditional SCUBA diving equipment, with its cloud of exhaled bubbles, tended to frighten underwater creatures. Interestingly, the SCUBA system (first called the Aqualung) was invented by Jacques Cousteau and Emile Gagnan in 1942.

My nascent Internet relationship with Ros quickly evolved into a fascinating learning adventure. The more we spoke, the more captivated I became with Oceans. I downloaded and read the Film and Digital Times article on Oceans (April 2010) by John Fauer asc. I had all of *Oceans* press releases, studied the promo photos and I had read the article in American Cinematographer (May 2010). I figured I had a handle on what to expect from Oceans. Then a Blu-ray version of Oceans arrived in the mail from Paris from the film's executive producer, Olli Barbé. Not long after settling down and watching

Oceans on my big-screen television did I realized just how much more my expectations were being exceeded. It soon became apparent that this wasn't just an amazing film about the world under the sea, but that it was an extraordinary, mesmerizing film about the oceans, capturing their sublime gentleness and raw fury.

It is difficult to know where to begin when describing Oceans, because each magnificent visual seems to surpass the previous. Right from the opening, where prehistoric creatures emerge from the ocean's inner space to take the stage alongside the launch of a modern-day rocket headed for outer space, the film's magnificent visual juxtaposition style is set. We see spectacular, powerful images of ships crashing through mountainous seas in the tempest sequence, shot from a helicopter by cinematographer Luc Drion sbc, to the intimate and gentle image of a mother and baby walrus in tranquil artic waters.

There is a scene showing two blue whales, the giants of the sea, in a beautiful lyrical scene. While the sequence is stunning, we were given an even bigger treat during Ros's Q&A. We were





By George Willis csc, sasc

shown a separate full-length take where the camera captures the complete poetic ballet of these magnificent leviathans. As a diver and underwater cinematographer, this certainly brought a tear to my eye as well as goose bumps. I cannot imagine what the underwater cameraman Didier Noirot must have experienced as he witnessed and captured this most stunning and magical sequence. Truly that must have been an experience of a lifetime.

Once again, the juxtaposition of visuals takes us from the gargantuan creatures the size of 747 jets into the microscopic world inside a single drop of water photographed by Ros himself. The scene that unfolds would have us believe that we are in the cosmos, drifting by some alien forms as a planet comes into frame, its shape defined – which is actually the outside of the water droplet – with hard-edge reflected light, presumably emanating from a large terrestrial source. In a shark sequence, shot by underwater cinematographers David Reichert and Didier Noirot, an intrepid diver builds up trust with a Great White shark and then swims alongside the 12-foot monster; a creature we are always taught to fear and regard as a killer.

Dolphins stir up the ocean like a cauldron as they race along the foaming surface to where a mass of sardines is swarming in a huge organized school. But chaos ensues as hoards of birds dive into the water like bullets and surface with their trophy meals. Dolphins squeal and feed alongside the birds; sharks arrive to claim their share; and then the whales appear. Just before we leave the scene, an aerial shot shows the boiling surface as the feeding frenzy continues, in grand style for a grand feast.

From the inky blue depths where the big fish reign supreme, Oceans takes us to the intimate habitats of the smaller creatures of the reefs. Through the very naturalistic lighting by Ros, we witness the symbiotic relationship between the clown fish and sea anemone to the pugilistic sequence between the peacock mantis shrimp and a brave but foolish crab, which meets its demise. In another reef scene, shot by underwater cinematographer René Heuzey, we see hundreds, if not thousands, of crabs, two phalanxes approaching one another like opposing troops from a scene in The Lord of The Rings until they merge into a mountainous mass of crustaceous body parts.



Like an eye, a siphon emerges from a large spider shell monitoring the environment and soon the single muscle uses its strength to flip the shell over while a hermit crab enters the frame, finds an abandoned shell and climbing inside, claims it as its new home and scuttles away. Venomous lion and stonefish strike out with lightning speed at unsuspecting prey, while a ribbon eel puts on a dazzling dance display. Night comes to the reef and new life emerges with the creatures that inhabit their domain; Joe the Crab moves about the coral heads with scuttling purpose known only to itself.

Extreme close-ups of many different species show in exquisite details what nature has provided to the small creatures of the reef for a myriad of purposes, from feeding to camouflage. It's the survival of the fittest; or should that be the fishiest, because some of these creatures captured on film barely resemble what we assume to be fish. In the bright light of day and in another ocean, seals cavort and penguins speed through crystal clear water like jets in a clear blue sky. Pure white beluga whales gather under the ice as a group of pointy nose narwals, the unicorns of the sea, gambol in an icy opening. A lone polar bear doesn't feel like company as it dives into the frigid waters, protected by its hollow hair strands.

The visual content of *Oceans* is far too lush and expansive for words to do it justice. *Oceans* needs to be seen relished and understood for the cinematic marvel that it is. While there is a voice track, I find it superfluous and unnecessary to a story that can be told through its images. Some refer to *Oceans* as a feature film, others call it a documentary. But to me, it's a magnificent, lyrical opera.

Diver and Camera by George Willis csc, sasc and the

The spectacular underwater visuals in *Oceans* have been captured in a variety of ways, from specially designed rigs and camera systems to the basic SCUBA diver operating a camera underwater. While setting aside the technical aspects for a moment, let us concentrate on the requirements to capture an underwater scene.

It goes without saying that the diver's specific qualifications and certifications are not only a must, but in most cases are a legal requirement for safety reasons. The underwater environment can be as tranquil as a pond but also as violent as a churning sea, and the diver has to be prepared to deal with both.

Underwater cameras are essentially regular cameras that are placed in waterproof housings. Above water, these units can weigh anywhere from 50 pounds to well over 150 pounds. However, when underwater, these same units can weigh almost nothing because of the air contained within the housing. In fact, the actual weight of the housing in the water is approximately two pounds, resulting in a slight negative buoyancy.

Why the buoyancy factor? The simple explanation is that a diver should be neutrally buoyant if he is able to hover in the water. Adding or subtracting lead weights worn around the diver's waist, until the diver attains a hover position, accomplishes this buoyancy control. Once the diver has the camera housing in his hands, further fine tuning of

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the overall weight can now be achieved by the diver adjusting the air within his buoyancy compensator, which also serves as a piece of safety equipment. This results in the diver and the housing being in a stable free floating and weightless position, hence the term 'inner space.'

But this attitude of hovering brings its own set of idiosyncrasies, bearing in mind that the photographic requirement is for the camera movement to be as stable and smooth as possible. The slightest movement of the diver will result in movement of the camera and unless that movement is controlled, the resulting image could not only be bumpy and distracting, but also be rendered unusable through bad operating.

Herein lies the key to underwater camera operating. The diver has to forget that he is a diver and leave behind all thoughts of being in an underwater environment, encumbered by life-sustaining equipment, breathing through a mouthpiece, having little peripheral vision, potential mask-squeeze, ear pressure equalization and being too conscious of buoyancy control. There is only one thing to focus on, and that is the scene unfolding before him. SCUBA diving has to be second nature, yet the diver has to be able to react at a moments notice to any given factor, which might compromise his safety.

While maintaining a swimming position, as opposed to a hovering position, the diver must not only pay attention to the framing of the subject and obtain a smooth movement while finning, but also pre-empt any possible movement of the image in his viewfinder.

Let us take, for example, from the diver's perspective, the requirements when photographing the two blue whales. Cinematographer Didier Noirot brings buoyancy skills into play as he maintains his hover state while filming this sequence. But during the lengthy uncut sequence, because of his perfect buoyancy, he will be able to fill his lungs, thereby rising in the water or exhale in order to bring himself to a lower level. Judging from the sequence, the variance in depth of the diver is anywhere between 60 and 120 feet.

The camera in this sequence is extremely steady and controlled throughout the varying depth and serves to acknowledge the diver's superb buoyancy control and his ability to equalize (an absolute physiological must) without relinquishing hold of the camera. This description only touches on the very basic requirements of shooting underwater, but it serves to underline the complexities that have to be dealt with when attempting to capture some of the extraordinary imagery in *Oceans*.

Complexities that arise when shooting underwater include the smaller creatures of the reef, which demand even more stringent control of the camera movement. There are situations when one can obtain extreme close-ups of reasonably stationary sea life. But where unpredictable creature movement is concerned, the handheld camera, in its large and awkward housing, simply is not a very viable option or solution. We then have to address the special camera requirements and resort to different approaches in which to capture those visuals that stand out from the ordinary.

The various specialized rigs, shooting techniques other ground-breaking technology that were used in the production of *Oceans* will be described in depth in the next issue of *Canadian Cinematographer*.



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Sony BVW-400a Betacam SP Camcorder camera used by professional cinematographer (one owner), never rented out. Comes complete with Fujinon A15x8BEVM-28 lens, Petroff matte box with 4x4 and 4x5.6 filter holders, remote zoom and focus control for lens, six Cadnica NP-1 batteries, Sony BC-1WD battery charger, Porta-Brace fitted cover with rain jacket (like new) and Sony factory hard shipping case and manuals. Lens and camera professionally maintained by factory technicians. Usage hours are: A - 1,918 hours; B - 1,489 hours; C - 4,286 hours, **\$10,000.00** obo. Contact: Craig Wrobleski csc at 403-995-4202

Aaton XTR Super 16 package including body, video relay optics, extension eyepiece, three magazines, Cooke 10.5-mm–60-mm S-16 zoom lens, Zeiss 9.5 prime lens, 4x4 matte box, 4x4 filters (85,85N6, polarizer, ND6, clear), follow focus and cases **\$17,500**. Nikon 50–300-mm F4-5 E.D. lens with support, **\$1,000**. Kinoptik 9–8-mm 35-mm format lens c/with sunshade. Contact: stringercam@shaw.ca or mike@imagegearinc.com

New Video Camera Rain Covers. Custom rain covers for sale. New design that fits and protects most Sony PMW EX3, Canon XHHDV, Panasonic VX200 cameras with the viewfinder extending toward the rear of the camera, \$200. Noiseless rain cover for the external camera microphone, \$30. Onboard Monitor rain cover, camera assistants can see the focus during the shot. No more hassles in the rain, \$60. Custom Red One camera covers available upon request. Also can sew various types of heavy-duty material. Repairs and zipper replacement on equipment and ditty bags. Contact: Lori Longstaff at 416-452-9247 or Ilong@rogers.com.

NEW PRICE – DVW700WS Digital Betacam with viewfinder and two widescreen zoom lenses. Canon J1 5x8 B4WRS SX12 and Fujinon 5.5-47. Very low hours on new heads, **\$8,000** plus tax. Contact: Michael Ellis at 416-233-6378.

Betacam SP Camera package including BVP550 Betacam SP camera with BVV5 recorder, complete with Fuijinon 15x8 broadcast zoom lens, "Red Eye" wide-angle adapter, 6 IDX Li-lon batteries, IDX quick charger with AC adapter, flight case, soft carry case, Sony monitor and 10 fresh Beta SP tapes (\$140 value), **\$2,500**. Contact: Christian at 416-459-4895.

Fujinon XA17X7.6 BERM-M48 HD Lens in new condition, bought and mounted but never used. As new in box (camera is sold), **\$7,900**. Panasonic Digital AV mixer WJ-MX50 (missing a few knobs from the lower right corner on the audio mixer), **\$400**. JVC TN-9U 9-inich colour monitor, \$60. Photos available for everything. Contact: johnbanovich@gamail.com or 604-726-5646.

FOR SALE

28-Foot Black Camera Trailer with new brakes and tires, 20-foot awning, dark room, viewing lounge, two countertops with lots of storage space, heating and air conditioned, side windows and three access doors. Contact: jwestenbrink@rogers.com

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Production Notes

Against the Wall (series); DOP Miroslaw Baszak; OP Perry Hoffmann; B Cam OP/Steadicam Brian Gedge; to August 31, Toronto

Alphas (series); DOP David Perrault csc; OP Frank Polyak; to August 19, Toronto

Cobu 3D (feature); DOP Gregory Middleton csc; to June 24, Toronto

Combat Hospital (series); DOP Gavin Smith csc; OP Sean Jensen; to July 15, Toronto

Covert Affairs II (series); DOP Colin Hoult csc & Jaime Barber (alternating episodes); OP David Sheridan; to October 17, Toronto

Degrassi: The Next Generation XI (series); DOP Alwyn Kumst csc; OP Jeremy Lyall; to November 17, Toronto

Flashpoint IV (series); DOP Paul Sarossy csc, bsc & Stephen Reizes csc (alternating episodes); OP Tony Guerin; to September 15, Toronto

Frenemies (series); DOP Michael Storey csc; OP Glenn Warner; to May 16, Toronto

Life with Boys (series); DOP Mitchell Ness csc; to July 7, Toronto

Look Again (TV movie); DOP Daniel Villeneuve csc; to May 20, Montreal

Mirador (series); DOP Jérôme Sabourin csc; to June 8, Montreal

Passport (TV movie); DOP Pierre Jodoin csc, to May 11, Montreal

Rags (TV movie); DOP Glen Winter csc: to June 22, Vancouver

Reel Love (TV movie); DOP Gerald Packer csc; to May 20, Toronto

Sanctuary IV (series); DOP Gordon Verheul csc; OP Ryan Purcell; to August 19, Vancouver

S.O.S. II (series) DOP Marc Gadoury csc; to June 30, Montreal

Warehouse 13 III (series); DOP Mike McMurray csc & David Herrington csc (alternating); to July 22, Toronto

Yamaska III (series); DOP Daniel Vincelette csc; to December 16, Montreal

Calendar of Events

MAY

4-5, Hot Docs Forum, Toronto

14–15, CSC Lighting Workshop, Toronto, csc.ca

JUNE

1–6, CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival, Toronto, worldwideshortfilmfest.com

2–6, Toronto Italian Film Festival, festivalfocus.org

12–15, Banff World Media Festival, banff2011.com



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- MERCEDES BENZ commercial

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